

# TAMIL

## Information

THE  
EELAM  
ECONOMY

Are  
Jayawardene  
Athulath  
mudali

et al,  
International  
Criminals ?

Sinhala  
empire  
spreads  
into  
Tamil Vavuniya

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'Sri Lanka: racism and the authoritarian state', *Race & Class*, Summer 1984, 200 pages, £3.50, publication date 23 July, 1984. Available from The Institute of Race Relations, 247, Pentonville Road, London, N. 1.

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## Now Available!

To mark the anniversary of the July 1983 pogrom in Sri Lanka, in which 2,000 Tamils were killed and thousands made homeless, *Race & Class*, the journal of the London-based Institute of Race-Relations, has published a special double issue — 'Sri Lanka: Racism and the Authoritarian State'.

The articles not only include a narration of the events, but look to their causes — at class formation and the type of racism that has developed; at the position of the Tamil plantation workers in an overall examination of state racism; and at the culture of racism as political diatribe — notably in the speeches and writings of Cabinet Minister Cyril Mathew. The issue also contains background materials on discrimination and state aggression against Tamil people, human rights violations and the first comprehensive bibliography on July 1983.

All this is set in the framework of 'Sri Lanka: racism and the politics of underdevelopment', by A. Sivanandan, the Sri Lanka editor of *Race & Class*. In this article, he traces the history of state racism, setting his analysis in the context of underdevelopment and imperialist strategy, and points to the symbiotic relationship between racism and dictatorship in Third World countries.

# **TAMIL** **Information**

**Editor: S. Sivanayagam**

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## **Thoughts on War and Peace**

That jaw-jaw is preferable to war-war is an axiom that no one will contest on principle; particularly if the wisdom has at last dawned on the Sri Lanka government that the only jaw-jawing worth having should be with the Tamil Eelam militants and not with the political eunuchs who once led the Tamil people under the banner of the TULF and took them for a ride on the Eelam bandwagon. The question has to be answered however, whether the recent moves made by the government to initiate a dialogue with the people who matter is really the end-product of wisdom or the beginning of a new aggressive design, Mossad-style? "War", said Karl von Clausewitz, "is nothing more than the continuation of politics by other means". With President Jayawardene who knows his Clausewitz and Machiavelli better than many other leaders, dialogue itself can be nothing more than the continuation of war by other means!

It is unfortunate therefore that a body of people styling themselves under the pretentious United Religious Organisation (URO) in a country where the people elect their leaders and the leaders are led by Buddhist monks, should try to carry a seemingly innocuous olive branch all the way to Madras like carrying a bo-sapling to Buddha Gaya, when Tamils are regularly subject to murder and mayhem in their own country, in the hands of the very State that is meant to look after its citizens. The Sri Lankan army kills and tortures Tamil youths who are Sri Lankan citizens; the Sri Lankan Navy shells coastal towns like Valvettiturai which are part of Sri Lankan territory; the Sri Lankan air force strafes from the air boats that carry Sri Lankan citizens. If the argument is that Tamils are not Sri Lankans and Valvettiturai is not part of Sri Lanka, then obviously President Jayawardene has conceded one significant point — that they belong to Tamil Eelam. If the argument is otherwise, how come Jayawardene's government is engaged in a war with his own people and parts of its

own country? What is the use of looking for Peace in Madras when there is War in Jaffna? After all, this war is not the Tamil militants' war. This is Jayawardene's war, by his own confession. The Tamil liberation war has yet to start, perhaps.

As far early as June 4, 1983, even before the disgraceful pogrom of July last year, the Colombo newspaper SUN quoted a Defence Ministry spokesman as saying that what the army faced in Jaffna was a WAR situation and that the forces there had to be given the "freedom of the battlefield", Having thus started the "war" and donned uniforms, occupied Tamil areas by force got guns with U.S. aid, gunboats from China, SAS training from Britain, Mossad "intelligence" from Israel, how ridiculous it is for the Sri Lankan government and the Sinhala people to sob and squeal at the door steps of various world capitals, complaining of a handful of Tamil "terrorists" killing their army men and their specially trained anti-guerrilla Police commandos! When you start oppressing a people in their own soil, killing innocent citizens, men, women and children on roads and market places, and sleepy unarmed passengers in buses, burn shops, homes, libraries, all in the name of "war" and under cover of uniform, what do you expect in return, if not an occasional bullet? Bouquets of Roses? Bo-saplings?

Even well-meaning religious men have to have a sense of history. Peace is not an exercise in patchwork. When two, three generations of over three million people have undergone humiliation, loss of self-respect, loss of status, of lives, wealth and property, and have learnt to live in fear of their own rulers in what they thought was their own country, and over a period of near-thirty years, that surely is bound to have taken a heavy toll? And now to try to initiate a peace dialogue on abstractions like provincial councils in 1984, is like trying to discuss how best to fasten the stable door, when the dear horse of a united Lanka had bolted in the year of our Lord 1956!



## Sri Lanka: Labour M.P. speaks out



**Jeremy Corbyn MP**

The Tamil people cannot just be eliminated out of existence as easily as the Jayawardene government seems to think. Eventually this government will have to surrender to the will of the Tamil people and give them a constitutional right to live in an autonomous Tamil area.

## Sinhala policemen hoot at Tamil I.G.P

Sri Lankan Tamil Inspector General of Police, Mr. Rudra Rajasingam was hooted at and insulted by low-ranking sinhalese policemen when he visited Point Pedro in Jaffna on 2nd of September. Some of them are reported to have shouted behind his back in Sinhala "Loku Kottiya" (Big Tiger or Old Tiger). The I.G.P. had flown down to Jaffna to investigate the damage done by armed forces following the killing of 20 police commandos and the injuring of over 10 others by a land mine exploded by Liberation Tigers at Thikkam the previous day.

That was the firm view expressed by Mr. Jeremy Corbyn, Labour MP for Islington North when i interviewed him at his office in Seven Sisters Road, London N7, says E. Elhak, writing in NEW LIFE, an Asian newspaper published in UK, in the issue of September 28, 1984.

Mr. Corbyn visited Sri Lanka with his political assistant Ms Liz Phillipson in April 1984.

According to him, Sri Lankan government Ministers' response to the killing of Tamil people is at times so callously brazen that they try to conceal the blood on their hands by saying that the killing is due to the 'bad elements' in the Army.

Jayawardene's government, after taking over from Mrs. Bandaranaike, has become more and more authoritarian as well as more and more Sinhala Buddhist.

How they manage to reconciie Buddha's eternal teaching of unconditional non-violence with the indiscriminate bloodshed of human beings is beyond comprehension.

Jeremy Corbyn told me that they are 'managing' it by finding 'intellectuals' to justify the killings in the 'light' of Buddha's teachings.

The 'paradise island's' major source of revenue was tourism but with the present law and order situation there is a rapid decline in that. This factor alone may sooner or later bring Jayawardene down to earth from his power-laden thoughts, to normalise for money if not for humanity.

In Jeremy Corbyn's words, a real federal constitution will emerge then and the Tamil people would have equal human and citizenship rights with the Sinhalese.

In the western press also, stories of human rights' violations in Sri Lanka started filling the columns after the tourist hotels were threatened.

US involvement in Sri Lankan affairs is the focal point of the present situation.

Some of them are also reported to have shouted at him in Sinhala — "Get back to Colombo. We will do what we did in July 1983. Let us see what you are going to do."

The I.G.P. had thereafter gone to Jaffna and when he was about to board his helicopter, there again some policemen are reported to have whistled at him and taunted him.

Mr. Rudra Rajasingam is incidentally married to a Sinhalese.

## Chatwal for Canada :

Mr. J.S. Chatwal, a Sikh career diplomat now High Commissioner in Colombo. Sri Lanka, would take up the post of High Commissioner in Ottawa, Canada. Earlier the Indian foreign office had announced

as is perceived by Mr. Corbyn.

The American fleet is using Sri Lankan waters and ports as if they were part of their own country. This can be clearly linked to similar facilities which they enjoy in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

This triangle of three countries suits America's enormous interests in the Indian Ocean without India's cooperation. US investment in Sri Lanka has grown to the extent of making its economy import-based. Along with that military ties have also been established. This has increased the volatility of the issues all the more.

The Sri Lankan Army, consisting mostly of Sinhalese, is said to have gone on the rampage in Mannar where, after drinking heavily, they started the savage game of looting and arson.

The innocent Tamil people killed during this act were called 'terrorists' by the government.

Tamils are being surrounded in a way that indicates the Jayawardene government wants them only to get killed and not even to flee the country to travel to Tamil Nadu.

In the East, at Trincomalee and in the North fishermen's outboard motors over 15hp have been confiscated on the ground that by them they may travel to Tamil Nadu. This may be a formula for the phased extermination of a race. Added to it is the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Jeremy Corbyn joined with Tamil people from all over London in a large demonstration on July 28 to protest against the stranglehold of the military rule on the Tamils of Sri Lanka and the incessant deadly policies of that government since last year.

Together with 22 other MPs he took the floor of the House to call on Her Majesty's Government to use its influence to stop the abuse of human rights in Sri Lanka.

that the governor of Himachal Pradesh State, Mr. G.C. Swell was to take up the Ottawa appointment.

## Air Force helicopter opens fire :

A Colombo report quoting unnamed sources in Jaffna said, Sri Lanka's Air Force helicopters on a reconnaissance patrol over the northern waters of the island opened fire on a boat carrying guerillas. According to the sources in Jaffna, the guerillas who had entered the surveillance zone were trying to escape when the helicopter spotted the boat.

At least 10 of them had left the boat and fled into the nearby jungle, from where they allegedly shot at the helicopter the report said.



# Sri Lanka govt. prepares for battle at Vavuniya

*"We have started moving towards liberation", said a squatter-village headman, 20 miles from Vavuniya, formerly a tea plantation worker, "here everybody is for Tamil Eelam".*

*On the up-country estates they ask: "What good will Eelam do to us? Will it find jobs for one million plantation workers?". But here they say, "We are fighting for the next generation". Free of the suffocation of the line-rooms and the shackles of serfdom, this is a new political language and a new defiance.*

**VAVUNIYA, NOT JAFFNA, IS THE FRONT-LINE OF THE TAMIL STRUGGLE, AND ON THIS BATTLEFIELD, THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE DEFEATED".**

— DAVID SELBOURNE — 1982

*Writer, journalist and Tutor in Politics at Ruskin College, Oxford, writing in the ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY OF INDIA*

Vavuniya, which David Selbourne referred to as "the front-line of the Tamil struggle" nearly two years ago, has today become the front-line of Sinhala aggression.

The Vavuniya-based Gandhiam Society which service the poor Tamils in that district and outside, by setting up integrated farms, pre-schools and mobile health clinics, and fought a dedicated war against poverty, ignorance and disease, has been smashed up by the Sri Lankan armed forces during the past two years. The orphanage buildings were set on fire, the offices ransacked, the vehicles which took milk powder and Triposha to the children of the settlement villages gutted, and finally in July last year the one man who was chiefly responsible for the Gandhiam heroism and achievements — S. Rajasundaram — was murdered in cold blood at the Sri Lanka government's maximum security Welikade jail.

NOVIB from Holland gave splendid support to Gandhiam, CARE donated all the Triposha, Asia Fund for Human Development, Australia, sent donations. Oxfam, England gave funding to train village workers, World Vision International, America, aided the self-help programmes, International Year of the Child gave assistance to equip pre-schools. But all what the Sri Lanka government saw in Gandhiam was **TERRORISM!**

Thousands of Tamil plantation workers who were uprooted from their southern and central habitats by racial violence and sought refuge in Vavuniya and through hard seat and labour made a new life for themselves with the helping hand of Gandhiam have been systematically terrorised by the armed forces, deprived of the lands they tilled by administrative fiat and uprooted again.

While public attention was cleverly diverted to the Round Table Conference circus in Colombo on the one hand and the "anti-terrorism" operations in the north on the other, the government has been over the past several months furtively carrying on its designs in Vavuniya.

Here is a situation report on the various measures that are being adopted to Sinhalese Vavuniya and to push "the front-line of Tamil struggle" further north:

## STATE-AIDED SINHALA COLONISATION:

Padaviya in the Vavuniya district is one of the earliest of the colonisation schemes, designed to reduce Tamil ethnic composition in the eastern segment of the district which when expanded later would effectively cut off the contiguity of Tamil area between the Vavuniya and Trincomalee districts. The Padaviya colonists were in fact responsible for much of the anti-Tamil violence in the 1958 riots. Tarzie Vittavhi in his book, EMERGENCY '58 referred to them as the "Padaviya Panzers"!

The present government scheme is to settle those Sinhalese who were ejected from Vadamunai in the Eastern province after their encroachments in state land became a raging controversy last year, along the Padaviya borders, and eventually form a line of Sinhala defence from Padaviya to nedunkerni in the north in the Mullaitivu district. This is a fertile area and the Peraru (Maha Oya) which divides the two districts from the North Central Province has many small tributaries running into many tanks (reservoirs) as well, such as the Sooriyan Aru and Kivul Oya running into the cluster of tanks like Navalankulam, Ariyakundam, Ramanankulam etc. This is expected to be the terminal point of the Mahaveli diversion and the waters of the Mahaveli could be diverted into these tanks and tributaries.

The army has set up a camp along the Padaviya border and all persons passing that way are intercepted, and if they happen to be Tamils are terrorised and chased away. Army Personnel have also been observed working tractors and bulldozers and are apparently constructing a big bridge across Maha Oya into the Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts.

Jungle areas are being cleared close to Ariyakundam, Dollar Farm and other places. Four roads have been opened up from Padaviya to the Dollar Farm, Kumbakarnan Malai, Ariyakundam, Kokkachankulam, Kokuthudovai, and Vedukanmalai. Jeeps and vehicles belonging to the army, Agrarian Services, the Ilmenite Corporation, Petroleum Corporation and Tobacco Corporation are being used for various purposes connected with this being used for various purposes connected with this project. Some Sinhala families have already been installed near the Dollar Farm.

## SECRET ADMINISTRATION:

Since the Tamil areas are not represented in Parliament in the absence of MPs, at least the top Tamil officials in these Tamil areas should by right, know the various schemes undertaken in the areas. But these Tamil officials are kept completely in the dark. A special Sinhalese Chief co-ordinator, a man named Bandaragoda has been appointed to cover three Tamil

districts — Vavuniya, Mullaitivu and Mannar. He is assisted by the Sinhalese Additional Govt. Agent, Vavuniya (Sirisena) and some officials from Colombo.

Neither the Government Agents of Vavuniya or Mullaitivu nor the AGAs nor Land Officers, who are Tamils, know anything of what is being planned. The area is well protected by the army and an air of secrecy surrounds the district. Sounds of bulldozers working in the night are heard by the villagers along the Mullaitivu borders. Huge pipe pipes are being seen transported.

### Settlement of ex-Army personnel

1700 acres of land were given to about 299 allottees for Cadju cultivation at Paramanalankulam in the Cheddikulam AGA's division. Some allottees had already developed the land, put up huts and sunk wells, while others are awaiting governmental assistance. The Additional Govt. Agent recently went with army personnel and inspected the site. The Land Commissioner has now been ordered to cancel the earlier allotments and make way for a settlement of ex-Army personnel!

### Evacuation of Indian Tamil families

Vepankulam, a tank in the Cheddikulam AGA's division, which was in disuse, is now to be renovated (the work has already started) at a cost of 45 lakhs on the recommendation of the Sinhala District Minister. That a development work of this nature is undertaken in a Tamil area is a fact that is too good to be true. But of course the fact is, the project has been undertaken in order to set up an exclusive Sinhala colony in the tank development area. Within this area is a place called Kandasamy Nagar where there is already a settlement of Tamils of recent Indian origin. These families are being ordered out of the area administratively, with no alternative lands provided for them. At the same time several families from the Sinhala Division are

being moved in there. Names of more Sinhala families have been sent to the Lands Ministry for "advanced alienation".

### Re-naming with Sinhala names

The two tanks renovated by the Irrigation Department from the Ministry vote — Kokachchankulam and Vepankulam, have now been re-named in Sinhala as Bogeswewa and Kohombagaswewa. Sinhala settlements are to be expanded in these two tank development areas.

### Re-writing of History and Archaeology

Some years ago a Buddha statue was planted at the Vavuniya junction, and despite protests by Tamil MPs and despite assurances by President Jayawardene that the statue would be removed, the statue not only continued to remain, but a "museum" was built on the site. Now the museum is being stocked with a large number of Buddhist remains alleged to have been unearthed from Vavuniya. During the last Vesak and Poson celebrations, army men went round compelling Tamil shops to fly Buddhist flags; besides putting up the flags they were forced to buy them at stiff prices.

### Appointments and Recruitments

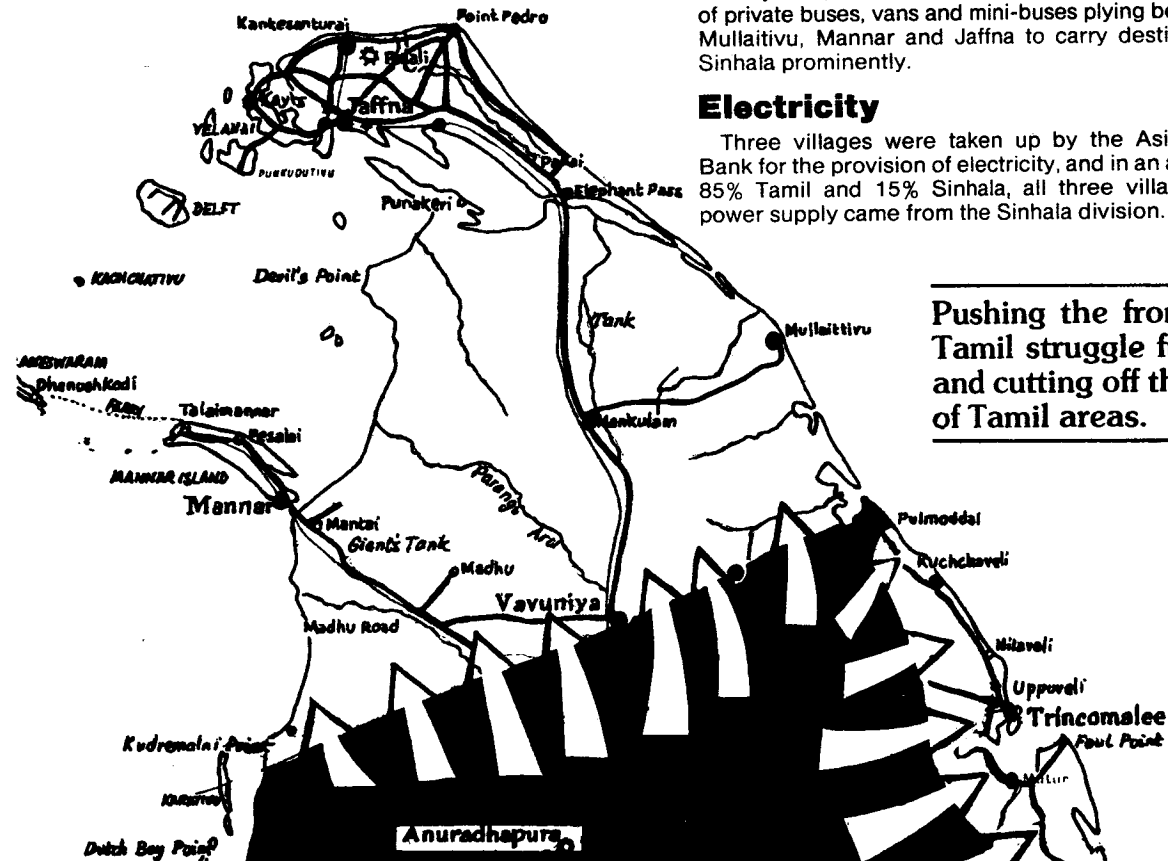
There is not a single Tamil officer or officer with knowledge of Tamil in the District Minister's office. At the Vavuniya Kachcheri, several clerks, food control clerks, casual clerks, office labourers and minor employees were appointed within the past few months, and except for one Muslim, all others were Sinhala — All jeep drivers, except one, are Sinhala.

### Use of Sinhala language

Army men, assisted by Air Force personnel compel all owners of private buses, vans and mini-buses plying between Vavuniya, Mullaitivu, Mannar and Jaffna to carry destination boards in Sinhala prominently.

### Electricity

Three villages were taken up by the Asian Development Bank for the provision of electricity, and in an area consisting of 85% Tamil and 15% Sinhala, all three villages selected for power supply came from the Sinhala division.



Pushing the front — line of Tamil struggle further north and cutting off the contiguity of Tamil areas.

# Are Jayawardene, Athulathmudali et al, International Criminals ?



**Dr. M. Sornarajah,**

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Head, Faculty of Law,  
University of Tasmania, Australia

International law has always recognised that certain crimes affect the whole of the international community and can be suppressed only through international co-operation. Since such a need for the suppression of piracy and slavery were seen from very early times, these crimes were regarded as international crimes to which the principle of universal jurisdiction applied. The idea behind the formulation of the principle of universal jurisdiction is that any court could assume jurisdiction even if the crime had not been committed within the jurisdiction of that court. It was on that basis that Eichmann was kidnapped from Argentina and tried by the Israeli courts — a factor that will assume significance in view of the assistance now given by the Israelis to the genocide of the Tamils in Eelam by the Sinhalese government.

Progressively, additions were made to the list of international crimes. The Nuremberg Tribunal in the trial of Nazi leaders who conducted the Second World War, found them guilty as international criminals on the basis of the principle of universality of the crime of conducting aggressive wars and characterized their persecution of the Jews as a crime against humanity. In the finding of the Nuremberg Tribunal lies the genesis of the Genocide Convention which now characterizes genocide as an international crime.

The list of international crimes grew rapidly having regard to two factors, one related to new international phenomena affecting the security of peoples on a transnational basis and the other to the moral consciousness of the international community and human rights movement.

The creation of hijacking as an international crime is an example of the first factor, for hijacking which usually originates in one country and terminates in another affects security of peoples transnationally and is crime which could only be controlled through international co-operation. The example of the second factor are the crimes of genocide, the crime of torture and crimes committed in warfare. The latter crimes originate from the idea that conduct such as torture, genocide and crimes committed during warfare such as the indiscriminate killing of civilians are so offensive to the moral consciousness of the international community that they must be regarded as international crimes.

The most spectacular decision in modern times applying the principle of universal jurisdiction has been the decision of an American court in *Penalav. Filartiga* (1980). In that case an action in tort was brought against a Paraguayan police officer who was on a casual visit to the United States, by a sister of a man who the police officer had tortured to death. The initial issue related to the question of jurisdiction because the alleged torture had taken place in Paraguay outside the territorial jurisdiction of the courts. But the American court upheld its jurisdiction to inquire into the claim. It did so on the basis that as a result of the many developments concerning the prohibition of the use of torture, principally United Nations resolutions, torture is an international crime subject to the principle of universality so that any court could have jurisdiction over a torturer wherever the act of torture occurred.

It is in the context of these developments briefly detailed above that the question should be raised whether Jayawardene, Athulathmudali, the other members of the Sinhalese government and the officers and men who act at their behest are international criminals. The present writer's view is that there is evidence that these men are international criminals and that suitable steps should be taken to ensure their punishment at the appropriate time. Meanwhile, one can only hope that their characterisation as international criminals will deter them from committing further international crimes. The list of crimes committed by these men may now be outlined and the legal steps that could be taken to ensure the punishment of these men will then be considered.

## 1. The Crime of Torture:

There is overwhelming evidence of continuous and protracted torture practised by the Sinhalese security forces. In many instances death has resulted from torture. This evidence has been accumulated by impartial international agencies such as the Amnesty International, the British section of the International Commission of Jurists, the Human Rights group of Lawasia and the Australian section of the International Commission of Jurists. Despite knowledge of such torture, Jayawardene who presides over the Sinhalese government and Athulathmudali, his Minister for "National Security" have not taken any measures to prevent the continuation of torture in the "five star democracy" that they run. Rather they have aided the torture by passing legislation enabling the Sinhalese army of occupation to cover up their nefarious deeds on the innocent civilians of the Northern and Eastern provinces. These men are, therefore as guilty of the torture and the resultant killings as the men of the army they control. Evidence must be collected of every act of torture. The torturers must be identified. They and those who exercise authority over them — a chain of authority extending upto the Sinhalese President — must be made to stand trial when events making such a trial possible come about. After all they did come about for the equally arrogant men of the Third Reich. They will come about for Jayawardene, Athulathmudali and those of their kind.

## 2. The Crime of Genocide:

There is little doubt that genocide is now an international crime. On his own admission, Jayawardene is guilty of such a crime. When the President of a country admits, as Jayawardene did to a correspondent of the Daily Telegraph, that he does not care about what happens to the minority community in his state, he is in effect condoning its annihilation. But





*Israeli massacres of Palestinian civilians at Shabra and Chattila camps (16 – 18 September 1982).*

Jayawardene's sin is not one of omission alone. He had, in the course of many Cromwellian and senile delusions he has had, issued orders for the annihilation of the Tamils. Beginning with his order to his kinsman, Brigadier Weeraturge, he has issued orders in such grandiose language to the army that they could only be interpreted to mean that the army was to wipe out the Tamils.

His cabinet members have let loose their personal armies of thugs to murder, rape and loot Tamils. Many of them, like Cyril Mathew and Gamini Dissanaike, were identified in the international press as men who had exhorted the mobs in their frenzied looting and killing of Tamils. Athulathmudali by hiring mercenaries to let loose on the Tamil people has contributed his share. The thin veneer of civilisation he had acquired at Oxford share. The thin veneer of civilisation he had acquired at Oxford has vanished and he stands revealed as a man responsible for the brutal killings of the Tamils. The Government controlled Sri Lanka News (19th July, 1984) described the army as an "Athulathmudali controlled force". Total responsibility for the conduct of the army must be borne by this man not only on the basis of Westminster political traditions which in any case are no longer relevant in Sri Lanka, but also because he has been responsible for the formulation of a policy that the army adopts in the occupied areas of Eelam on the basis of advice given to him by the Israeli government, which is well known for its oppression of the people of the West Bank it has occupied and even better known for its massacres at Shabra and Shattila.

**3. War Crimes:** The Tamils are fighting a war of national liberation against an army of occupation. What is taking place in Eelam is not a civil war but a war between two nations. The Tamil youth are waging their freedom struggle in accordance with the conventional norms relating to wars accepted by the international community. As Athulathmudali himself has admitted attacks against government forces are carried out by men dressed in military uniform. (16th August, 1984, Sri Lanka News). They carry arms openly and satisfy the requirements of the Geneva Conventions. On the conduct of Wars 1949 and the Protocols to the Conventions (1978) thus entitling them to be treated as participants in an international war. The Tamil youth are fighting against oppression by the Sinhalese. They are fighting for the right to self determination of their people. Their struggle is akin to the struggle of the black people of South Africa and the struggle of the Palestinian people for their homeland. It is not unusual that the Sinhalese government should have found an ally in Israel and the Mossad in fighting against the just cause of the Tamils. On the basis of this view, the four Geneva Conventions on the conduct of wars (1949) and the Protocols to the Conventions (1978) apply to the hostilities taking place between the Sinhalese forces and the Tamil guerrillas. The consequence of this conclusion is that the Tamil guerillas are entitled to be treated as prisoners of war on capture. The civilian population in the area of hostilities is immune from attack. The latter rule applies under Protocol II even if the hostilities are characterised as a civil war. The brave Sinhalese soldiers

are violating this rule. All that they do in response to the attacks by the Tamil guerrillas is to go out in convoys in their armoured cars and shoot civilians and round up young Tamil boys and torture them to death in the safety of their camps, thus giving a lie to the much vaunted Dutugemunu myth about bravery in war against the Tamils. Athulathmudali has disgraced himself in his attempt at playing a modern Dutugemunu, who received the blessings of the so called "Buddhist" sangha to wipe out "terrorism" but having failed to do so, is now venting his frustration on the innocent. In view of the above opinion, certain positive measures should be taken to deter future crimes against the Tamil people. These measures are:

- (1) To identify every international criminal in the Sinhalese government and the Sinhalese armed forces and gather evidence against them.
- (2) To ensure that when Eelam is achieved, those responsible for these international crimes are tried as international criminals. If they are not voluntarily handed over, abduction is a measure for which the Israelis, the allies of the Sinhalese, provide a precedent when they kidnapped Eichmann.
- (3) to constitute an impartial body of jurists and distinguished men (like the Bertrand Russell Commission which inquired into American atrocities in Vietnam) to which evidence of international crimes committed by Jayawardene, Athulathmudali, et al. could be presented. Apart from the fact that the exercise will be useful when the real trial of these criminals is held, it will serve to marshal international public opinion against the Sinhalese government.

PRESIDENT ADVISES  
TERRORISTS TO TRY  
SATYAGRAHA .



SATYAGRASS

Wijesoma

Two cartoons by Sri Lankan cartoonist Wijesoma  
(THE ISLAND, Colombo)

S.L.F.P. CAN ERADICATE  
TERRORISM - Sivima

Hello Indira!  
Do me a favour like a  
good girl - Handover  
those Terrorists and ask  
your chaps not to allow  
any Training Camps in  
Tamil Nadu, honey!  
Of course, I'll give  
you Non-Alignment!



Wijesoma



# The need for an EELAM GOVERNMENT IN EXILE

*The following letter dated August 16, was sent to TULF leader A. Amirthalingam, by an ex-Tamil MP "in Exile" who wishes to remain anonymous:*

Dear Mr. Amirthalingam:

The Peace Conference has failed. JR only wants to fool India and the world and gain time to finalize his deal with America on Trincomalee and armed help in return. You should have called his bluff and walked out when he invited all and sundry to the conference to consider "everybody's grievances" instead of Tamil grievances.

The North and East have witnessed in March/April and August 1984 the same events as on July/August 1983 in South Lanka.

If only Tamils had about two years ago a government in exile, somewhere in the world, (opposed then by the T.U.L.F.), they could have been in a better position to plead their case with the nations of the world, to ask and get help and recognition (as the PLO of Arafat) and bargain with them and even invite some power to take over Eelam as a protectorate under it (even as Sikkim joined India).

Once more from the days of Sir Ponnambalam Aranachalam, the president of the Ceylon National Congress, our leaders trusted the Sinhalese and were fooled and betrayed by them, the latest being by the so-called Peace Conference of JR.

It is not late even now. In fact there is no alternative to the ex-Tamil MP's (as many as possible) authorizing the creation of a Government in Exile to act as the representatives of the Eelam nation in all matters regardless of what the Sinhalese Government might do in Lanka against us.

The world must be told that:

(a) Even tiny countries of a few square miles in extent are free and in the U.N.O.

(b) That the Tamils of North and East Lanka were a free people for centuries before the Portuguese invasion of 1619 with their own kings and kingdoms when the Sinhalese had their separate low country and Kandyan Kingdoms although JR impertinently claims Lanka was a unitary Sinhalese State for 2,500 years, contradicting thereby all recorded history of Lanka even by Sinhalese authors and by famous explorers like Ibn Batuta and by the historical records and archives of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, the three foreign nations that ruled Lanka or some parts thereof.

(c) That only the Tamil Kingdom of North Lanka, fought and lost in battle its kingdom to the Portuguese in 1619 unlike the two Sinhalese kingdoms in Lanka.

(d) That the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Lanka were homelands to the Tamils and almost fully inhabited by the Tamils to begin with and later also by the Tamil-speaking Muslims but only recently after 1948 by large numbers of State-aided Sinhalese colonizers who have been planted into Trincomalee and other vital areas to make them ultimately non-Tamils areas.

(e) That the Tamil Kingdom and its identity and area and boundaries are clear and proved by ancient records, and treaties between foreign powers. Trincomalee is the carrot dangled by JR and Premadasa and their Government before the Americans. In fact the only people who can deal with or bargain about or even hand over Trincomalee to America are we Tamils, the lawful owners of Trincomalee, and not the recent interlopers into that area who chased the indigenous Tamils in organized pogroms from 1956 onwards. Even the Portuguese asked for and obtained permission of the Tamil King of Jaffna to put up some structures there. This fact may be verified in the Portuguese archives if necessary i.e. before the Battle of Jaffna in 1619.

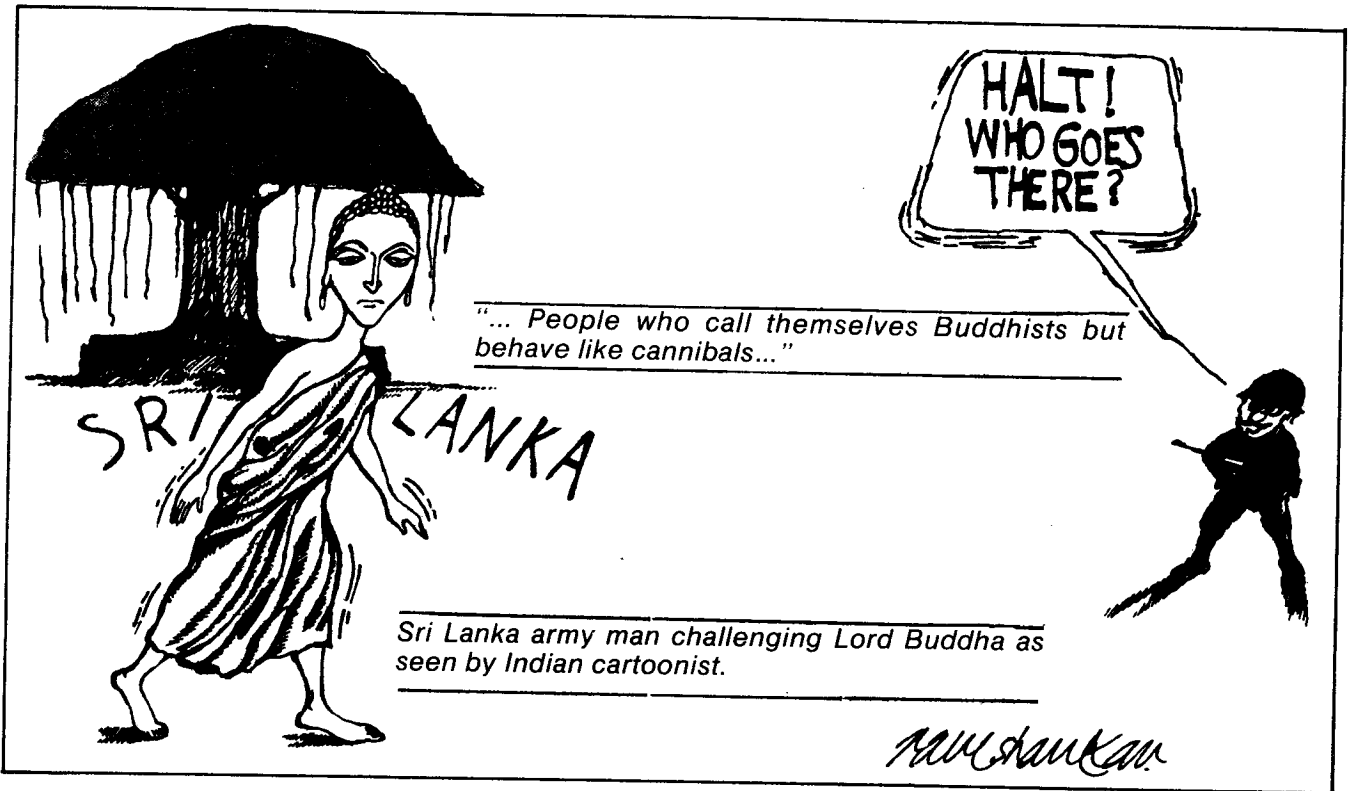
(f) Even Dr. Paul Peries speaks of Koneswaram and other numerous Hindu Shrines of Lanka and G.C. Mendis in his "Our Heritage" mentions the payment of levy to the Tamil King by his low country Sinhalese counterpart which was stopped by Alagaronara by executing the Tamil Tax collectors in about 1300.

(g) That all the wishful thinking of JR and the mushroom Sinhalese Pundits and Professors cannot falsify history. The Tamils and Sinhalese fought each other, had separate kingdoms. They fought as invaders vs invaders and not for ethnic reasons or to prove ethnic superiority of one over the other. They lived during years of peace happily and must have inter-married and mixed up freely; even during the British rule which brought the three units of Lanka into one in about 1833 they lived as brothers happily and in peace until 1948 when Pax Britanica was replaced by Viz Major of the Sinhalese or the Pax Dharmista of JR.

(h) That even regardless of past history a homogeneous people having contiguous territories as theirs are entitled to ask for and fight for and obtain it as theirs. For example we have Singapore a free country cut out of the Federated Malay States and Pakistan and Bangladesh, the last one even more to the point.

(i) That we have come to the parting of ways and co-existence with people (who call themselves Buddhists but behave like cannibals) is impossible. JR might quote Buddha, Christ and Gandhi or claim to emulate Abraham Lincoln. Satan used the Bible. The Free Press of the world, the Amnesty International, and other important world Jurists and organizations despite the most disgraceful censorships in Lanka have told the world what happiness there is in the so-called Paradise Island Lanka, as far as the Tamils are concerned — how the Tamils are killed, and live in fear and tension and anxiety as to what next happens to them and their children and properties.





The Government in exile must be free to speak and deal for the Eelam Tamils of Lanka and to inform Reagan not to be fooled by JR, the Machiavelli of this century, and not to praise him as the ideal democrat and call Lanka a democracy as that recognition means the doom of the Eelam Tamils. Reagan must be told that even if JR was saluted with 21 guns he must be told as a condition precedent to American recognition not to harass and kill and destroy the Tamils but to conform to democratic, if not humanitarian, standards. Reagan must know and must be told that even Trincomalee legally and morally belongs to the Tamils and that only the Government in exile can deal with it legally to bind any one. It is another matter however, if in their wisdom to join even the Devil to succeed, the Exile Government offers Trincomalee to Reagan before JR the Machiavelli does it, if that must be the price for the freedom of the Tamils and to escape from the wicked Sinhalese masters.

Non-alignment and Indian Ocean as an ocean of peace have

been exploded by skunks who never believed in either, especially Sri Lanka. It is therefore best to act on the footing that these ideals and dogmas don't exist.

What ever happens, even if America alone is our redeemer or protecting partner with Trincomalee's use as the price of our freedom from the Sinhalese the Indians must know and must be told that we of Eelam alone, with or without American ties, would be the only dependable friend of India, our beloved mother country and not the Sinhalese who have fooled India and Indira and are now challenging and insulting India after the CIA and Pentagon and Israel have become their allies.

The Government in Exile must have a free hand. May God Bless its leaders to think deeply and take correct decisions to save the Tamils of Eelam. Our only hope is the creation forthwith of a Government in Exile. Let us not miss the bus again and finally.

## Massacre at Vavuniya and Falsehood in Colombo !

When fifteen sleepy defenceless Tamils were pulled out of their long-distance coach from Colombo to Jaffna and machine-gunned to death at Vavuniya at 2.30 in the morning of September 11 — a cowardly crime that will shock any civilised society — the Sri Lanka government found it difficult to cover its embarrassment, because the killers were Sinhalese members of the island's armed forces.

But Lalith Athulathmudali the Minister for National Security who has now turned out to be a fluent liar (after all, the man's job demands it and his Oxford education gives him the articulating ability) was in no loss for words. He told foreign Press

correspondents in Colombo that Tamil guerrillas had done it, in order to put the blame on the army.

The one correspondent who did not fall for that story was Roland Edirisinghe (himself a Sinhalese — may his tribe increase!) who reports for the GUARDIAN, London. The TIMES, London, included the government fib in its account, but carried it in such a way that the discerning reader could see through it. The FINANCIAL TIMES, London, fared disastrously. In the body of the copy it spoke of "gunmen" who ambushed the bus and killed the passengers, but an apparently sleepy sub-editor went and headlined it thus: SRI LANKA TENSION

RISES AS GUERRILLAS MURDER 14 IN BUS AMBUSH, thereby equating "gunmen" with guerrillas. Probably he did not know that Sri Lanka army men carry guns; but more to the point, they do not wear uniforms always when they are engaged in killing Tamils. Then there was Vilma Wimaladasa, a poor widow who earns her living by filing government propaganda to her paper — the DAILY TELEGRAPH — who said: "Police believe the gunmen were guerrillas fighting for a separate minority Tamil state and that they had killed the passengers to put the blame on the army".

Working widows certainly deserve our sympathy, but this is like quoting Goebbels to provide an alibi for Hitler!

# THE EELAM ECONOMY

Satchi Ponnambalam

The land and resources comprised in the territory of Eelam present many similarities and uniformities throughout the area in terms of eco-system that the whole area makes up one integrated regional entity. This distinctiveness should have dictated the economic development of the area on a regional basis. But the more important ethnic and cultural distinctiveness of the people who live in this land of Eelam had led to a systematic policy of wilful neglect of its development. As a result, the pronounced undevelopment and virgin barrenness of the areas comprising Eelam stand out as a monumental testimony to the discriminatory policies pursued over the last thirty years.

## DISCRIMINATORY EXCLUSION AND ECONOMIC STAGNATION

While over these years, irrigation, land development, peasant colonization in Gal Oya, Minneriya, Giritale, Elahera, Parakrama

centre and Mannar areas in the South-West Eelam were flourishing agricultural regions with some of the oldest and biggest tank-fed, river-based irrigation systems. The Iranamadu tank in Wannu, the Giant's tank and Akattimarippu tank near Mannar are river-based irrigation systems that are disused. The Giant's tank draws its water by channels from Aruvi Aru and Akattimarippu from Kal Aru. The Pomparippu area below Mannar was in the historic period called the 'Golden Plains' but today is the dust bowl. Similarly, the Batticaloa area, the rice bowl and granary of Eelam has several disused tanks drawing water from channels connected to a number of rivers. In the Jaffna Peninsula itself, there are the famous Nilaveli, known as the 'bottomless well', Thondamanaru and others, which should have been priority projects of development for irrigated agriculture.

From 1948 to the present day, irrigation, land development and peasant resettlement have been the principal areas of state

*A position Paper presented at the Second World Tamil Eelam Convention held in Nanuet, New York - June 1984.*



*The new Parliament building at Kotte, re-named Jayawardhanapura*

Samudra, Rajangana, Kantalai, Padaviya, Allai, Hurulu Wewa, Udawalawe, Mahaweli Ganga, and construction projects like the Anuradhapura New Town building, Kandy King's Pavilion, Kotte Parliament Building, high-cost and low-cost houses, Gam Udawa, and several others have been the first things in the lips of those in power and in the front pages of the newspapers, never was anything said about developing the North and East. It was as though these lands and the people never existed. This was because these are the homelands of the Tamils, which had come to be joined to theirs in the wake of colonialism and were left yoked with theirs on decolonization. They evinced no interest over these lands except for settlement by colonization. But to the more than two million of our people who live there, the development of these areas meant everything for their progress.

There was then, and is today, so much of development to be effected in the Tamil areas. In the historic past, Wannu in the

investment and government activity. Between 1948 and 1974, Rs. 3.4 billion was spent in this field. From 1977 to date, foreign aid from the Western donor countries to the tune of more than Rs. 50 billion has been spent on dam construction, irrigation, land development and peasant resettlement. Of these amounts, not even 0.001% accrued to benefit the Tamil-speaking people of Eelam.

The Committee of Rational Development, consisting of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers, in its report (published in the **Lanka Guardian**; Colombo; November 1, 1983) stated:

"Foreign aid utilization in the Jaffna District for the period 1977 to 1982 was zero... The per capita capital expenditure in the Jaffna District is Rs. 313, while the national per capita capital expenditure is Rs. 656"

Since, of the Rs. 50 billion funds in foreign aid between 1977 and 1982, nothing was spent in the Jaffna District, can anyone

# THE EELAM ECONOMY

seriously dispute that there was deliberate discriminatory exclusion of the Tamil people and their lands from national economic development ?

What of the major industrial development projects established with foreign aid over the last thirty years? All the industrial and manufacturing factories established during this period have been located outside the Tamil areas. And the predominant consideration was employment. These projects included a steel factory at oruwella, a foundry at Enderamulla, a Tyre factory at Kelaniya, a sugar factory at Gal Oya, a glass factory at Nattandiya, an integrated plywood complex at Kosgama, a paper board mill at Embilipitiya, three large textile mills at Tulhiriya, Veyangoda, and Kandy, a hardware factory at yakkala, an asbestos factory at Colombo, a urea factory at Sapugaskande, ceramic factories at Nittambuwa and Piliyandala, oil refinery at Kelaniya, an industrial estate at Ekkala, a barbed wire factory at Colombo, a fertilizer factory at Hunupitiya, cement processing factories at Puttalam and Galle, a flour mill at Colombo, and many others.

Between 1970 and 1975 alone, Rs. 11 million was spent as capital investment in state industrial ventures. Although a Russian prospecting corporation carried out a seismic survey of the Island and recommended Jaffna and Mannar for oil exploration, petroleum prospecting commenced in Mannar, which turned out to be a failure. Jaffna was not tried at all, being the heartland of the Tamil people, as any success would have made the Tamils economically strong.

## LAND & PEOPLE

**The land area of Eelam is about 8,000 square miles or about 5.1 million acres. The population of Eelam, at the 1981 census was 2,087,943. The total Tamil-speaking population of the Island was 3,753,740 comprising the 1,871,535 Sri Lanka Tamils, 1,056,972 Muslims and 825,233 Tamils of Indian origin.**

In the early 1960s, the World Bank, after survey of the entire Island, recommended the establishment of a large sugar plantation and factory at Thunukkai-Pooneryn area, which the Bank considered the ideal location for sugar in the Island. Because these were Tamil areas, the projects were shelved.

The numerous requests by the Tamil MPs for the development of Kankesanthurai and Trincomalee Ports were turned down, but millions were spent to turn the uneconomical port of Galle, as the second port. Even the U.S. Government's offer to develop the Kankesanthurai port as a grant-in-aid project was not accepted.

During the foreign exchange crisis period of the mid-1970s when the farmers were exhorted to produce or perish the Tamil farmers rose up to the situation and produced subsidiary food crops like chillies, onions, and others and the Island became self-sufficient in them. The resulting prosperity of the Tamil farmers even earned the surprise and envy of those in power. Many went to the North to see how it was being achieved and were amazed at the enterprise and hard work of the Tamil farmers. But with no consideration for the efforts of the Tamil farmers by which the country benefited, an open economy and liberalized imports was instituted from 1977 and the prosperity

of the Tamil farmers collapsed soon thereafter. Imports of chillies, onions and other subsidiary foodstuffs became the order of the day. Here is the text of a typical tender notice for the import of dried chillies, which appeared in the SUN of 27th July 1982:—

### "TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY OF DRIED CHILLIES

Quotations are invited from suppliers abroad for the supply of 500 metric tons Dried Chillies for shipment during August/September 1982. Offers should be addressed to reach the Secretary, Tender Board, Co-operative Wholesale Establishment, 440 Union Place, Colombo 2."

Due to the absence of development over the last thirty years of the land and resources of the Tamil people they lie barren and atrophied. Devoid of any development the Eelam economy languished and stagnated. Constricted by discriminatory exclusion, the people lost their creative vigour and vitality and their self-reliance and capacity for enterprise and progress.

## Land, People and Resources of Eelam for Economic Development.

According to the 1981 census, there were 1,111,468 people in the Northern Province, distributed among the four Districts as follows:

Jaffna	831,112
Mannar	106,940
Vavuniya	95,904
Mullaitivu	77,512

The distribution of population among the three Districts of Eastern Province, are as follows:

Batticaloa	330,899
Trincomalee	256,790
Amparai	388,786

Of the 1,111,468 people of the Northern Province, Tamil-speaking people numbered 1,075,866 and of the 976,475 people of the Eastern Province, Tamil-speaking people numbered 726,652.

Taking the entire Tamil-speaking people of the Island as the citizenry of Eelam, the man-land ration would be 1.4 acre. If the nearly one-third land area that is not arable is excluded, there will be 0.9 acre per person in Eelam. This area per person is considerably more than in many other countries, hence on a comparative basis there need be no concern for land-shortage or land-hunger in Eelam. On the contrary, land and labour power become Eelam's most abundant resources.

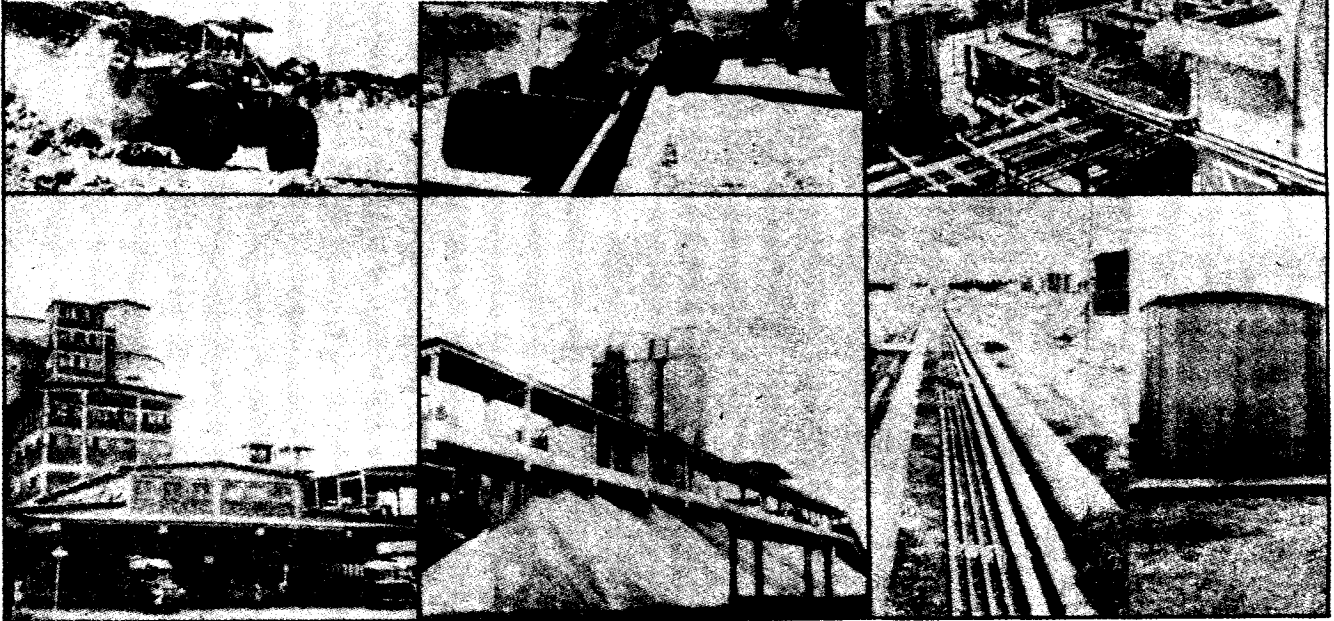
The conventional wisdom, which heavily influences our thinking is that nature's distribution of good soil and water in Eelam has been very selective. This does not hold true. In the traditional system of farming nature's niggardliness in regard to soil and water operated as serious constraints. But in terms of today's scientific and technological farming practices, these are not serious limiting factors. Technological advances in agriculture have broken through the stranglehold of soil and water, weather and seasons. Deficiencies in soil nutrition are today easily corrected by applying lime and fertilizers. More importantly, there are crops that have been identified and seeds which have been bred to suit the nutrient deficient soils. We may at this stage briefly consider just one plant — sunflower. Sunflower



# THE EELAM ECONOMY

*Author of SRI LANKA: THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND THE TAMIL LIBERATION STRUGGLE (The Tamil Information Centre) and DEPENDENT CAPITALISM IN CRISIS: THE SRI LANKAN ECONOMY, 1948-80. (Zed Press 1981)*

*All industrial projects during the last 30 years were located outside the Tamil areas — Steel factory, hardware factory, paper mills, textile mills, oil refinery...*



has today come into the centre of stage as a superior edible oil of high commercial value. Sunflower oil is nutritionally better than all other edible oils. The plant performs exceedingly well in the worst drought conditions and is ideally suited for extensive cultivation in Eelam soil conditions. Its export market and foreign exchange earning potential is many times more than tea, coffee, cocoa, rubber, coconut produces, etc. Sunflower is predominantly a dry crop and comes to harvest in 140 — 150 days. The cost of cultivation, in comparative terms is exceedingly low — Rs. 1,000 per acre and can be estimated to bring in a profit of Rs. 6,000 per acre, a rate of profit substantially more than any other tropical crop.

Even nature has not been that niggardly as has been made out to be to Eelam. The northern lowland region consists of fertile rolling plains intersected by rivers and ridges. There are several rivers traversing the northern plains. There are the Mandekal Aru emptying out at Pooneryn, the Pali Aru emptying out near Vellankulam, the Parangi Aru emptying out north of Vidulthaltivu, the Aruvi Aru the second longest in the Island — 104 miles emptying out near Mannar, the Modarakam Aru emptying out below Mannar, the Kal Aru and the Yan Aru, south of Mullaitivu and north of Trincomalee, respectively. The lands of the extreme north-west around Mannar are described as "arid", yet the rainfall averages in this area around 40 inches per year. It is misnomer to describe an area that receives such amount of rain as "arid". Those were the descriptions of foreigners who knew little about how the monsoons were superimposed on the equatorial regime and the intricacies of tropical agriculture.

They made a simplistic generalization that all lands which received less than 50 inches of rainfall a year are "arid". And it has been perpetuated by local bureaucrats who have no commitment to development of indigenous resources.

The Mannar-Vavuniya-Mullaitivu belt contain plenty of reddish brown alluvial soil suitable for many crops for local consumption as well as for export. In this belt, and in particular along the Aruvi Aru banks vast acreages of land could be cultivated with cereals like wheat, barley, sorghum and millets, as well as cotton, oil seeds, leguminous pulses, fruits, in particular citrus. This area is ideal for mangoes, bananas, pineapples, passion fruits, etc. Cashew, the "king of nuts" which has an unsatisfied demand in the US grows wild in most places around Mannar and Batticaloa. Cashew belongs to the same botanical family as mango — Anacardiaceae — and both thrive in the same agro climatic zones and soils.

An estimate of the export market for tropical fruits in the Middle East alone, according to one report is as follows:

"In 1979, imports of tropical fruits into UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman amounted to nearly US \$50 million. India, Pakistan and Lebanon were the leading suppliers. Mangoes remained the most popular fruits among all varieties. Bananas have a very big demand in the area — estimated around 50,000 tons a month. The most popular are the long bananas, now imported from Latin America, Ivory Coast and Philippines".

(To be continued)

# NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER TO DISCUSS SRI LANKA WITH MRS. GANDHI.



"The Federation of Labour has asked the Prime Minister Mr. Lange to protest at apparent policies of genocide against Tamils in Sri Lanka. In a letter to Mr. Lange dated August 29, the FOL asks that he initiate an effective expression of concern by the New Zealand Government at developments in Sri Lanka, and protest at the apparent policies of genocide being implemented by the Sri Lanka authorities against the Tamil people".

"FoL secretary Mr. Ken Douglas tells Mr. Lange in the letter that the FoL national executive has decided to endorse an approach to the Government on the Sri Lanka question.

The FoL as an affiliate of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) would refer its concerns to the Asian regional organisation and request information as to what action that organisation had taken on the matter.

"The national executive's decision and letter to Mr. Lange follows an approach to Mr. Douglas by a prominent Wellington Tamil Mr. Ganesh Nellailingam.

"Mr. Nellailingam's main concerns, he said today, are to stop the "genocide attempt" against Tamils and to help bring about a withdrawal of Sri Lankan armed forces from Tamil territory in northern Sri Lanka."

"He wrote to Mr. Douglas on August 13 enclosing information and asking the FoL to take an initiative on the matter by among other things, bringing it to the notice of the New Zealand People.

"I said that only through an aroused world opinion could genocide of Tamils be prevented" Mr. Nellailingam said."

"In reply, Mr. Douglas enclosed copies of the national executive decision and letters to Mr. Lange and the secretary of the ICFTU's Asian Regional Organisation, Mr. V. Mathur.

"The Federation of labour has long involved itself in the matter of the rights of working people and national minorities not only in New Zealand but other countries throughout the world", Mr. Douglas said.

"Our executive had no hesitation in responding to our request for solidarity and initiative on this matter. It accords with the traditional practice and approach of our organisation on such issues.

"I trust that the small contribution made by the Federation of Labour in this question will assist in bearing positive results that will avoid any further violation of human rights of the people concerned".

Mr. Nellailingam said he was satisfied with the response. He understood that Mr. Lange was to meet Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi during a world tour later this month and that he was to raise the matter with her.

Mr. David Lange, Prime Minister of New Zealand will be discussing problems of Sri Lankan Tamils with the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi when he visits India shortly. He has said this in the course of a letter written to Mr. Ganesh Nellailingam, a prominent Wellington Tamil.

In the letter to Mr. Nellailingam Mr. Lange States: "I do not underestimate the seriousness of the situation. I shall indeed be discussing the question when I see Mrs. Gandhi. In the interim period,

our High Commissioner in Singapore, Ms. Judy Trotter who is accredited to Colombo, will be visiting Sri Lanka and will report back to me. In short we are doing what we can to monitor the situation and Ms. Trotter will be expressing concern over the turn of events to Sri Lankan Ministers next week."

The Wellington newspaper "The Evening Post" in its issue of September 5th carries the following report:

"Mr. Nellalingam said he would like to see Mr. Lange about the Tamil problem."

Meanwhile, New Zealand's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Frank O'Flynn in a recent radio interview made a statement, which while being couched in diplomatic language, virtually expressed disbelief at the Sri Lanka Government's version of events in that country. Here is the Radio transcript, in toto:

Announcer: The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Frank O'Flynn, says the Government will ask the High Commissioner in Singapore to report on the

violence between Tamils and Sri Lankans in Sri Lanka. This follows a meeting at Parliament today between Mr. O'Flynn and a group of Tamils and Sri Lankans who live in New Zealand. Mr. O'Flynn said that while the Government is concerned over the conflict in Sri Lanka, there's little practically... practically the Government can do.

Frank O'Flynn: We haven't ever supported the call that is made by the Tamil minority, or some of them, for separatism or a separate state in North East Sri Lanka and, speaking personally, I would have thought that was not the solution, nor have we supported any kind of terrorism.

On the other hand, as I pointed out to one of the groups, the world is full of recent examples where terrorism has commenced because people have left hard problems like this unattended for a very long time, and frustration eventually causes it. Now I'd be bound to say after reading all the cables I could put my fingers on, from countries that have got missions in Sri Lanka, as we have not, that one or two somewhat sensational incidents reported in the news in recent times and in July last year I THINK THE EVIDENCE FAVOURS THE VIEW PUT FORWARD BY THE TAMILS RATHER THAN THE GOVERNMENT VERSION."

## Sinhala backer of Tamil cause in trouble

Terry O'Halloran writes in the NEW STATESMAN, London, of 21st September:—

A RANDOM passport check by the DHSS, whose own guidelines forbid such checks, led to an ill-explained suspension of benefit payments to a Manchester claimant, and then to an unexplained restoration, minus a £2 deduction. He just happened to be Viraj Mendis, threatened with deportation to Sri Lanka, where his liberty and even life could be at risk.

Labour-controlled Manchester city council has been officially backing efforts to defend Viraj Mendis — and others in the area—from publicity. Sri Lankan born, he came to the city in 1973 at the age of 17 as a student, but by 1975, under financial pressure, had to give up studying and work as a labourer.

This meant he couldn't renew his student visa. In May this year more than eight years later, his passport was confiscated by Manchester police in order to check his status. He is not yet been informed of any outcome from this

'checking' — and fears he'll be deported.

It was this August that the DHSS joined in. Viraj Mendis has been unemployed for some time and signing on at Aytoun Street employment office in Manchester. On 25 August he had a letter from the DHSS in Great Ancoats Street, asking him to produce his passport. Phoning to ask why, he was told it was 'a random check'.

He told the DHSS he didn't have his passport but expected to be able to give them information about it in the near future. The DHSS seemed satisfied with that.

The following week, on 30 August, his benefit payment didn't arrive when he asked why, he alleges a local DHSS official told him 'Mr. Mendis there has been a lot of publicity about your case and questions have been raised about your status' — an explanation which

contradicts the earlier remark about 'random checks'.

In fact, DHSS guidelines on this matter forbid random checks. Mendis adds that the DHSS refused to say who had raised 'questions' Mendis points out that if the DHSS knew of the publicity about his case then they'd have know he didn't have his passport. Following further publicity and local pressure from the Viraj Mendis defence campaign, his benefit has been restored without explanation. The DHSS hasn't explained why it has been reduced by £2.

Viraj Mendis is Sinhalese but has publicly supported the Tamil people against the present Sri Lankan government. He believes that if he is returned to the island he'll face the possibility of detention without trial. He points out that known supporters of the Tamil people have been assassinated in Sri Lanka.

## Fate of Tamil youths in the balance

Berne: Lack of grounding in matters of protocol earned the newly appointed Sri Lankan ambassador to Switzerland D.K. Bandusena de Silva, a reproof from the Swiss government, even as he handed over his letters of credentials to Swiss President Leon Shump, recently; a reproof considered unprecedented in diplomatic history. Mr. Bandusena de Silva was told that he must observe certain properties while he holds a diplomatic appointment in that country.

What angered the Swiss government, as it would any government, was the ambassador's summoning a Press conference the day before he submitted his

accreditation papers, to air the Sri Lanka government views on an internal problem of "Tamil terrorism". The envoy is stated to have told the Press that there was absolutely no danger to Tamil youths in his country, and those of them who had sought asylum in Switzerland should be deported to Sri Lanka. They envoy was pulled up for his lapse in protocol by the President himself, in the presence of the country's Foreign Minister Pierre Avbort.

The Swiss government, although worried about the presence of nearly 2000 Tamil youths who had sought political asylum, was wary of deporting them, in the absence of guarantees that no harm

will befall them on their return. A Swiss fact-finding mission that was sent to Sri Lanka to study the situation, has however submitted a report that appear to have been influenced by Sri Lankan government authorities. Public citizens in Jaffna have complained that the fact-finding team did not appear to be interested in finding out facts on their visit to Jaffna, but had come there with a closed mind on the subject. This has placed the fate and lives of these two thousand Tamil youths in jeopardy now. Practically all of them are living in fear that they might end up in Sri Lankan jails and become victims of torture.



# The Tamils of Sri Lanka

Those who followed events in Sri Lanka over the last two years would remember that when President Jayawardene was interviewed on TV he said that the Sinhalese people would not agree to the division of the country that had been united for 2,500 years — in fact those who watched him would remember too that at first he said 2,000 and then as an after-thought added another 500 years to his estimate.

This is not something new in Sri Lankan politics. Throughout history the Sinhalese kings and politicians have had to resort to myths to raise people's hopes and emotions and invariably found themselves caught in a trap. It is indeed an irony that the late S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was killed by a member of the Buddhist clergy that swept him to power.

Professor Ludowyk has observed: — "Nationalism in the East has long been regarded as the twentieth-century acceptance of an outdated Western mode, the result of the heady intoxication which followed upon draughts of Western European political thinkers. It would seem that it was known in Ceylon two thousand years ago. The myth which made religion expedient and sanctified politics becomes a fact of history". *E.F.C. Ludowyk, 'The Story of Ceylon', Faber and Faber, 1967, pp 64-65*.

What prompted Professor Ludowyk to make the above observation was the account of the war between Dutugemunu, the Sinhalese King and Elara, the Tamil king, written by a monk, Bhikku Rahula, who viewed Dutugemunu's war as a "great crusade to liberate Buddhism from foreign rule. His cry was 'Not for kingdom but for Buddhism'. The entire Sinhalese race was united under the banner of the young Gamini. This was the beginning of nationalism among the Sinhalese. It was a new race with healthy young blood, organised under the new order of Buddhism. A kind of religio-nationalism, which almost amounted to fantaicism, roused the whole Sinhalese people. A non-Buddhist was not regarded as a human being". (Ibid).

This is the type of history that is taught in monasteries and even in schools. Historical facts count little in Ceylon politics, and everytime there is a need to propagate a myth, a historian is at hand to provide the necessary material based on emotion and imagination.

The purpose of this article is to place historical facts based on research findings before discerning readers. In an attempt to be objective, almost all references are taken from research works by Sinhalese scholars.

According to 'Yalpana Vaipava Malai', the first historical work extant on Jaffna, the first sovereign ruler of Jaffna was Ugra Singham from Kalinga in South India, who had his headquarters at Kadiramalai in Chunnakam, the villae that has retained its ancient name to the present day. Ugra Singham succeeded in conquering and ruling over half the country by about 795 A.D. Later he moved his capital to Sangadaka Nagar, identified by Mudaliyar Rasanayagam as near or in Vallipuram in the extreme North of Jaffna.

Father (Dr.) Xavier S. Thani Nayagam contends that Tamil has been spoken in Ceylon for at least three thousand years. He maintains that "the punch-marked coins of an early era point to connections that Ceylon may have had with Mohenjodaro and the Indus Valley civilisation. Tamil poetry composed in Ceylon has been included in the earliest Tamil anthologies, and the Tamil spoken in Ceylon represents a pre-Pallava period with its ancient morphological and grammatical forms and its repertoire of words considered obsolete for centuries on the neighbouring continent". (*Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, 'Tamil Culture — Its Past, Its Present and Its Future', Tamil Cultural Society, Ceylon, 1955, pp 8 & 9*).

Research by others, notably Sinhalese historians, supports the above claims. For instance, Murphy Rhoads writes:— "Tamil settlers, who had been arriving off and on since before the Christian era, occupied the Jaffna peninsula and much of the area between it and Anuradhapura, known as 'Wanni' (as indicated by the large number of old Tamil place names in the Wanni); they had been joined by Tamil members of invasion armies, often mercenaries, who chose to settle in Ceylon rather than return to India with the rest of the army (they often also jointed forces temporarily with later invasion or raiding groups against the Sinhalese)". *Murphy Rhoads, 'The Ruin of Ancient Ceylon', Journal of Asian Studies, April 1957, pp 188 & 195*.

B.J. Perera, a Sinhalese scholar lends support to the findings of Murphy Rhoads. He observes:— "Tamil place names are found mostly along the sea-coast and in the Anuradhapura, Chilaw and Puttalam districts. Though there are no native Tamils living along the sea-coast south of Colombo, the Tamil origin of most of the present inhabitants there is seen from the fairly large number of Tamil place names. The 'ge' names of these people too attest to their Tamil origin. The word 'malai' meaning in Tamil a mountain or hill is found in even the central parts of the island. They are come across in literature produced many centuries before the opening up of plantations and show that the Tamil element in the composition of the Sinhalese is far greater than is usually conceded. Ranmalaya, Kotmale, and Gilimaie are some of the examples." (*B.J. Perera, 'Some Observations on the Study of Sinhalese Place Names', The Ceylon Historical Journal, Vol. II, 1953, pp 241-250*).



**"A non-Buddhist not regarded as a human being"  
Tamil victim of army killing and burning in Jaffna.**

Commenting on the Fall of the Sinhalese Kingdom Professor Paranavitana, the eminent Sinhalese archaeologist and historian writes:— "It is in keeping with the history of all similar civilisations of a despotic character and dependent on forced labour for the maintenance of large irrigation works on which their prosperity depended that the institutional machinery in time weakens and breaks down from obvious internal causes, let alone the invasions which plagued Raja Rata. While these latter may occasionally have served to rally national feeling and infuse new vigour, their cumulative effect must have been destructive, especially as they were accompanied or followed by renewed outbreaks of the internal dissension which has harried and drained Ceylon through most of its history. These forces must progressively

# The Tamils of Sri Lanka

have eaten away at the basic fabric of a state and society already losing its vigour with age. One would not expect evidence of this in the chronicles or inscriptions, given their nature and purpose.

However, a fragmentary inscription on a slab of rock at the main anicut (derived from two Tamil words 'anai' and 'akttu' meaning a dam) on the Mahaweli describing the Kalinga invasion of A.D. 1210 reads in part as follows: 'The great host of Tamils descended on this Lanka, destroyed the Minister named Ati, and unhampered in all mountain fastnesses and forest fastnesses, swept over the whole of Lanka in the manner of the world-consuming flames at the end of aeon, having destroyed the entire social structure and the religious organisation'. (S. Paranavitana, *Epigraphica Zelanica*, V. 1955, p 160).

Dr. C.R. De Silva, another Sinhalese historian takes us to the sixteenth century when the first European power set foot on the island. By then there were three separate kingdoms with fairly well defined boundaries, namely Kotte in the West, Kandy in the central hills and Jaffna in the North. Dr. de Silva takes on:— "The kingdom of Jaffna was in many ways distinct from the two other major kingdoms of the island. It was peopled by Tamils, a race distinct in language and culture from the Sinhalese who inhabited Kotte and Kandy. Moreover the people of Jaffna were Hindus while the Sinhalese of the south were adherents of Buddhism. The position of Jaffna in the Northern extremity of the island made it a link (and sometimes a buffer) between the two Sinhalese states in the south and the powers of South India. Jaffna itself had special ties of culture and commerce with the South Indian empire of Vijayanagara and its successor states of Tanjore and Madura, but since it was also exposed to attacks from them, independence for Jaffna meant warding off threats from across the Palk Straits as well as from the south. Jaffna too was based on subsistence economy but the relative infertility of the soil in this area had stimulated crafts such as production of cloth.

"Lesser principalities extended from the western coastal region south of Mannar across north-central Ceylon and then southwards along the eastern seaboard up to the boundaries of Kotte. These principalities often of no more than a few dozen square miles in extent, were ruled by petty chieftains called the 'Vainiyars'. During the sixteenth century most of the 'Vainiyars' of the eastern coast came under the overlordship of Kandy while those in north-central Ceylon yielded allegiance to Kotte, Jaffna or Kandy as circumstances dictated". (C.R. De Silva, *The Portuguese in Ceylon, 1617-1638*, H.W. Cave & Co., Colombo, 1971, p2).

Writing in 'Tribune' (Sri Lanka) of 24 September 1977 Dr. C.R. De Silva went further:—

"A separate kingdom centred in the Jaffna Peninsula existed in Sri Lanka from about the early thirteenth century to 1619. In fact, one can even go further. During certain periods within these four centuries this kingdom was the most powerful in Sri Lanka and for a brief space of time it even seized the western seaboard almost up to the environs of Colombo. The Portuguese, coming to Sri Lanka in the early sixteenth century, often used and word CEYLAO to denote that part of Sri Lanka south of the Tamil Kingdom." (C.R. De Silva, 'Tribune', 24 September, 1977).

The Portuguese were followed by the Dutch and later by the British.

Once Ceylon gained independence in 1948 a strident and aggressive racial ethos began to emerge among the Sinhalese. When the proposal to abandon English was originally mooted in 1945 it was taken for granted that Sinhala and Tamil would be

the official languages. In 1956, however, the Sinhala Only Act was passed by a majority of 65 against 28. Already the disenfranchisement of a large number of Tamils in the hill country by the Indians and Pakistanis Citizenship Act of 1949 had given the Government the majority it needed to impose its will on the minority by sheer force of numbers.

Lord Soulbury (Chairman of the Commission that recommended the post-independent Constitution of Ceylon) in his Foreword to Professor B.H. Farmer's 'Ceylon — A Divided Nation' quotes Sir Charles Jeffries as writing in his own book 'Ceylon the Path to Independence', as follows:— "The Soulbury constitution had entrenched in it all the protective provisions for minorities that the wit of man could devise. Nevertheless in the light of later happenings, I now think it is a pity that the Commission did not also recommend the entrenchment in the constitution guarantees of fundamental rights.....". Lord Soulbury was himself not too optimistic of the validity of such constitutional safeguards. Professor farmer too in his Introduction is cautious when he says that the island without problems could no longer be regarded as such and regrets the impasse that has been created in placing too much hope in humanity. (B.H. Farmer, *Ceylon — A Divided Nation*, Oxford University Press, 1963, London).

Observed Wriggins:— "The alarming riots of 1958, unparalleled in the island's history were the direct result of these reforms (the language reforms of 1956) and of government reluctance to insist that public order be maintained and individuals protected. The memory of these events will retard the creation of a unified, modern nation-state commanding the allegiance of all communities". (W.H. Wriggins, *Ceylon: Dilemmas of a New Nation*, Princeton, N.J., 1960, p 248).

Prophetic as Wriggins' observations have proved to be no one in his senses could have believed that Sinhalese nationalism could go to such extremes as to allow the police and army to stand by, and even aid and abet in some instances, acts of violence, arson and brutal murder by the mob. The 57 Tamil prisoners bludgeoned to death in their 'tight security' cells are a lesson to the whole world engulfed in discussions about human rights. The growing fear is that the 'Black Law' that allows internment without trial and interment without postmortem now directed against the 'Tamil Tigers' will sooner or later be used against the bulk of the opposition.

Although many Tamils were disillusioned at the time the youth movement was born, there can be no doubt that over the years both the attitude of the governments and the run of events have compelled the majority to become hardliners themselves and directly or indirectly support the cause for a separate state for the Tamils. For example, since independence successive governments have embarked on a policy of colonisation of traditional Tamil areas by Sinhalese with the ulterior motive of eventually outnumbering the indigenous Tamil population.

Between 1956 and 1970 the proportion of Tamils in government service declined from 30 per cent to a mere 5 per cent. Since 1970 the exercise has been to promote a few Tamils to positions of power in order to give credence to the government's claim of impartiality, but one has to live under such a regime to understand what it means to be a Tamil. For all intents and purposes the Sri Lankan government has shown itself to be incapable of tackling a national problem of the greatest significance and committed irretrievably to the division of the country which it purports to fight against.

K. PARAMOTHAYAN

# INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

**UNITED NATIONS:** Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, Ram Niwas Mirdha, who had a 40-minute meeting with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on September 21, took the opportunity to brief Mr. Cuellar also on the latest developments in Sri Lanka affecting the minority Tamils there. Mr. Mirdha is here to lead the Indian delegation to the 39th session of the General Assembly

**LONDON:** British Intelligence officers had advised Prime Minister Thatcher against undertaking a journey to Sri Lanka, according to INDIAN EXPRESS London Correspondent B.K. Tiwari. Mrs. Thatcher was scheduled to inaugurate the newly-built Victoria Dam on Mahaveli river in Sri Lanka on September 24. Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe who was to take her place was also in turn advised by British Intelligence not to go there, following reports that Tamil terrorists had threatened to blow up the dam. The dam was built at a cost of £130 million and the British contribution was about £120 million.

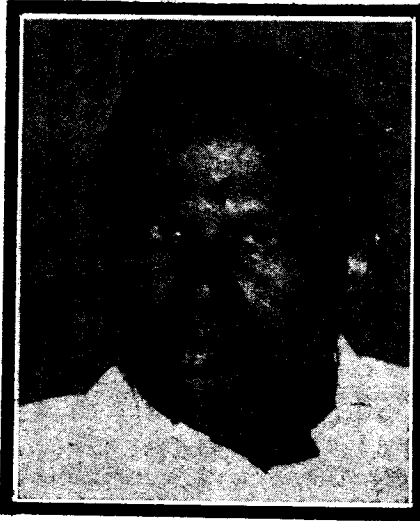
**COLOMBO:** Rural Industrial Development Minister and President of the Ceylon Workers' Congress S. Thondaman told a Press Conference here on September 14 that terrorism could never infiltrate the plantation sector unless the authorities themselves created a situation to force plantation youth to become terrorists. He said efforts by Northern terrorists to recruit plantation youth into their ranks would prove abortive if the government avoided the mistakes it had committed in the north. Asked what he meant by "same mistakes" the Minister replied: "Arresting innocent people on mere suspicion that they were terrorists and harassing them".

**JAFFNA:** One expectant woman was killed in her sleep, her husband seriously injured and about eight houses damaged when a gunboat of the Sri Lankan navy opened fire on Karanavai village, adjoining Valvettiturai on the northern coast of Sri Lanka on the night of September 15. Both husband and wife sustained injuries when a shell hit the roof of their house. Intermittent firing by naval boats has been reported in the Valvettiturai area.

**COLOMBO:** A Police constable attached to the Piliyandala Police went berserk and stabbed to death two bus drivers attached to the Kesbewa bus depot. Following this, a crowd of men

hijacked a bus belonging to the same depot and went careering towards the constable's house and in the process ran over 10 pedestrians at Kohuwala, killing one person and injuring many others.

**MADURAI:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran has voiced his concern over reports that Sri Lanka was training its military on Kachchathivu island near Rameswaram. The Chief Minister who was replying to a question before his departure to Madras at the Madurai airport on September 19, said that this would mean violation of the Indo-Sri Lanka Pact on Kachchathivu. He hoped that the Centre would take necessary action.



**THONDAMAN :**  
*"Terrorism cannot find recruits in the plantations, unless..."*

**CANBERRA:** Prime Minister Bob Hawke broke down and cried at a Press Conference in Australia when asked about Opposition allegations that he has protected criminals. A tearful Hawke told the packed news conference that if Opposition leader Andrew Peacock repeated the allegations against him he would take legal action to protect himself and his family.

**TEL AVIV:** Israel is putting refurbished Soviet tanks captured from the Arabs on the international arms market, it was disclosed here. Consisting mostly of old T-54 and T-55 Soviet tanks, these have been fitted with more powerful American engines, the standard 105mm NATO tank gun, a laser range finder, with other modifications.

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka's 16-month old state of emergency was extended on September 17 for another month, but laws under it were relaxed to enable the holding of Parliamentary by-elections outside the Tamil areas. Defence Ministry officials said President Jayawardene, who ordered extension of the country-wide emergency, relaxed some laws in all parts of the island except in the troubled northern and eastern provinces. They said the President's move was in accordance with the promise he gave to four opposition parties to ease regulations which could hamper holding of bye-elections in areas not affected by guerilla violence.

**MADRAS:** The General Secretary of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front Mr. M.K. Eelaventhan has called upon Mr. S.Thondaman, leader of the plantation Tamils in Sri Lanka to quit his Ministerial post, according to a report in the INDIAN EXPRESS. Mr. Eelaventhan said that if Mr. Thondaman was sincerely interested in the future of his own people, he should cease to think of piecemeal adjustments, but think of permanent safeguards for his people. A permanent guarantee of safety and security of the Tamils of Indian origin was possible only by shifting them to the northern and eastern provinces.

**MOSCOW:** A monument of Mahatma Gandhi is being created by Soviet sculptor Dmitry Ryabichev as a gift to India, reports TASS. The Soviet Communist Party organ "Pravda" said the sculpture is well portayed in Gandhi's simple home-woven cloth as one knows him. There is something unsaid both in the figure, sitting on a low stool, and in the movement of the hands. It draws your attention, making you take a look at the monument from different angles, and each look seems to add to your knowledge of that remarkable man, the paper said.

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka Police are probing what they call the mysterious disappearance of a clergyman in central Sri Lanka. They say that this clergyman withdrew cash to the tune of nearly 230,000 dollars from his bank account and distributed this money among a large number of families. Police investigations follow an allegation that some Christian missionaries with foreign funds, were attempting to mobilise youths for an underground movement.

**TUNIS:** The Palestine National Council will hold its 17th session, even if it has to do it on board a vessel sailing under a UN flag in the Mediterranean, the PLO executive committee chairman

Yasser Arafat has said. The Palestinian people, both inside and outside the occupied areas are determined to have this meeting, Mr. Arafat said. He condemned the manoeuvres to block the session in spite of the seven-month long talks between Palestinian factions.

**COLOMBO:** The CID is looking for a young man called "Ambalangoda Parakrama" who is believed to be having connections with certain northern terrorists, according to the Colombo newspaper, THE ISLAND. A dossier is stated to have been prepared on "Ambalangoda Parakrama" following a statement obtained from a man identified as Uduwarage Henry Perera alias "Uduwara" who was arrested recently by investigators for alleged connections with northern terrorists. "Uduwara" was taken in by the CID for questioning after he was found carrying 67 explosives at Wategama recently.

**COLOMBO:** President Jayawardene celebrated his 78th birthday on September 17, by extending the 16-month old state of emergency in the island by a further month.

**WEST BERLIN:** Thirty nine Sri Lanka Tamils were held in temporary custody after detention in a swoop on West Berlin's local railway stations, police said. The Tamils had arrived at East Berlin's Scheenefeld airport and crossed into West Berlin without valid residence papers.

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lankan Prime Minister R. Premadasa accused former Prime Minister Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike of encouraging Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi to adopt certain measures against the island. He was speaking in Parliament on September 21. Mr. Premadasa said the Indian Premier had no idea of intervening now, but Mrs. Bandaranaike had said she did not know how long Mrs. Gandhi could resist it. Mr. Premadasa also affirmed that the government would not surrender the sovereignty of Sri Lanka at any cost.

**SINGAPORE:** Singapore will have for the first time a soldier politician with the announcement of Brig. Gen. Lee Hsien Loong as one of the 24 new People's Action Party candidates for the coming general elections. The eldest son of the Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, Brig. Gen. Lee, 32, became the youngest General this year when he was promoted to No. 2 in the armed forces as Chief of Staff and Director of Joint Operations and Planning.

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka President J.R. Jayawardene has written to the former Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, inviting her Sri Lanka

Freedom Party (SLFP) for a discussion on his latest proposals to resolve the island's ethnic problem, reports UNI. The SLFP had pulled out of the round table conference on the ethnic issue after the first few sessions, charging that the Government was trying to impose unilateral solutions on the conference. The SLFP was also unhappy that the Government had not, as expected, restored Mrs. Bandaranaike's civic rights, stripped off in 1980 after a presidential commission found her guilty of misuse of power while in office.

**BEIJING:** China and Britain initialled on September 26 a historic joint declaration under which Britain agrees to return sovereignty over its prized crown colony of Hong Kong to China on July 1, 1997, ending over 140 years of British rule. Under the joint declaration Hong Kong will come under Chinese rule in 13 years and China will accept from 1997 onwards an unprecedented government formula of coexistence of socialism and capitalism within the same country. The agreement is also known to contain a pledge by the Chinese communists to preserve Hong Kong's economic and social systems for 50 years after the handover in 1997.

## INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

**TALAIMANNAR:** Sri Lanka government is now viewing all passengers who use the Talai Mannar ferry with suspicion, thinking that there might be "wanted terrorists" among them travelling on forged passports. Over 75 percent of those who travel from Sri Lanka to India use the ferry because they cannot afford the expensive air fares, and moreover the journey to Colombo itself has become both risky and expensive. Tamil passengers now fear that this suspicion can lead to further harassment of all passengers using the Talaimannar route.

**JAFFNA:** A scheme is to be formulated to pay government pensioners in the Jaffna district through the rural banks functioning under the auspices of the multi-purpose co-operative societies' unions. Authorities are contemplating this arrangement in view of the closure of several banks in the Jaffna district following recent disturbances. Meanwhile, the pensions for September, as was done the previous month, were paid at the temporary office set up at the Jaffna Stadium.

**COLOMBO:** The Tea industry in Ceylon is getting ruined, affecting not only government revenue but employment in estates, according to the Vice-President of the Lanka Estate Workers' Union, Mr. U. Navaratne. In a memorandum sent to President Jayawardene, Mr. Navaratne says that several large estates giving very good yields have been taken over by the government and distributed among landless Sinhalese peasants. The union is not against giving land to the landless, but there are several other neglected estates that could have been taken over for distribution. Several hundreds of Tamil plantation workers who have obtained Ceylon citizenship are now on the streets without work, and several tea factories were being demolished and sold to second hand goods dealers.

**UNITED NATIONS:** Sri Lanka has told the U.N. General Assembly that terrorist groups were posing a "rising threat of destabilisation" in the country and indirectly suggested that India was giving them "encouragement". The Sri Lanka Foreign Minister Mr. A.C. Shahul Hameed in his address on September 24, said that the motley group of terrorists who sought creation of a separate state for the Tamils based on racist groups had made the application of the democratic process much more difficult. Without making any direct reference to India, Mr. Hameed said: "The terrorist groups find refuge, training, sympathy, and even encouragement in foreign territory..."

**NEW DELHI:** Indian Communist Party of India M.P.M. Kalyanasundaram condemned Sri Lanka's efforts to dub the youths arrested by it recently as "terrorists trained in India". In a statement here on September 24, Mr. Kalyanasundaram alleged that the youths rounded up from Tamil areas by Sri Lankan army were forcibly put on fishing boats seized from Indian waters near Kachchattivu and taken back to the island to create an impression that the so-called terrorists were trained in India and sent to Sri Lanka.

**MADRAS:** S.D. Somasundaram, dismissed Tamilnadu Minister who has formed a new party after his expulsion from the ruling AIADMK said on September 19 that he would launch "direct action" against the Central and State governments if they failed to take steps to protect the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Asked what form the "direct action" would take, Somasundaram said he and his followers were prepared to lay down their lives in the cause of Sri Lankan Tamils struggling for a separate state.

## THE ARTS

# Nathaswaram and Thavil

Give them a place in the Sun!

— N. Sivaramakrishnan

The Sonorous music of Nathaswaram and Thavil, play an important role in the life and temple worship of the Tamils from time immemorial. Known as "Mangala Vaththiyam" no auspicious occassion is complete without this music. There are many sculptures, ancient manuscripts, etc to show the antiquity of this great art. Some references:

1. Some German Scholars who have studied "Rig Veda" are of opinion that the word "Uthalamu" used therein denotes Nathaswaram.
2. Aralatra in his "Bharata Sastra" writes "கிசுக்கு வேதத்தில் நினறெறு - நாகஸ்வரத்தின்"
3. Abraham Pandithar in his "Karramrida Sagaram" is of the opinion that Nathaswaram was in use before 3500 years. (Reg.: The book Page-9, lines 20-22, Page 12 lines 4 & 5.)
4. In Singaraja Purnam written in AD 1100 "Mowrigala Verana Sanga Nagasara".
5. In Chidambaram Nataraja's temple, around the Kanakasabha Mandapam two sculptures, depicting persons

playing Nathaswaram is found. This mandapam is said to be built in the 6th Century AD.

6. Supradeepa Kavirayar (18 Century) in his Koolappa Naiekar Kadal" writes "நாஸா, தவரி, நயண்டை, துடி - நாகஸ்வரம்"

This art has a great tradition of its own. During temple worship and marriage, there is an accepted unique system on what type of music is to be played, during which kind of rituals, and on which particular days.

The Thavil artistes are the unquestionable authorities in the laya aspect of music that is the mathematical calculations while playing. They have composed rare "Jathis and Korvais". (Rhythms based on calculations) and have contributed them to the music and Bharata Natyam arts.

These great artistes always show great respect for the senior artistes. The Gurukula system (free tuition with free boarding lodging in the teacher's house) is still followed by the traditional Nathaswaram and Thavil artistes, inspite of several problems like poverty etc., in the villages. They do not engage in any other work for

their livelihood except the pursuit of their art and vocation. But what a great shame to our cultural values that Tamil Society has yet to accord the status that these artistes and their art deserve!

1. No national Indian award has yet been given to any Thavil artiste so far.
2. The cultural organisations of Madras, (capital city of Tamilnadu) which conduct annual music festivals in December every year, have never felicitated any Thavil artiste so far.
3. These artistes are never given any chance in the cultural troops going abroad, to take part in international festivals. Our Nathaswaram & Thavil are still unknown instruments to the outside world except where Tamils live.
4. These artistes are not appointed as staff artistes in the all India Radio.

Many, more acts of discrimination have been shown to these artistes, inspite of the central place they occupy in the Tamil musical world.

It is a matter of our sentiment and self-respect that the Nathaswaram and Thavil are given an honoured place.







## Love Poems

Everything seemed real, by the beach at Besant Nagar on the nights of September 15 and 16. There we were, over a hundred of us, men and women, many of whom were not exactly young, and at least one of whom we knew who was cheerfully chasing the 70-mark from the wrong direction! But there was romance in the air. A feeling of joie de vivre in the groins! We were there to watch a dramatisation of ancient love poems translated from a classical Tamil anthology by A.K. Ramanujam.

### by the beach !

There was the blue sky above our heads, and we were all seated with our fundamentals firmly planted on Earth. Where we were seated was the Mandala Theatre at SKILLS on Elliot Beach, but it seemed wrong to call it a "Theatre". It looked too real and authentic a setting for ancient love poems, to be invested with a dramatic purpose. Traditional homes in rural areas in Tamil Eelam, where this writer comes from, look just the same — "theatres" of real life. Even the Director Ranvir Shah and his cast of "He" and "She", "Her girl friend", "Her foster mother" and "Concubine" looked too young to have tasted the fruits of love or suffered its torments. They were not "dressed" either, and they sat with the audience. The voices came from all directions. Had this writer, from where he sat, suddenly started looking soulful and begun to say: "Our man of the hills... grows thin longing for your love/like a tethered bull in summertime/not knowing that here you are, wasting away/for/sake..." no one in the audience would have thought immediately that something was amiss! (Except of course that this writer would have delivered the line so badly that poor Ranvir Shah's judgement on the selection of cast would have been called to question). So there we were, to many of whom torrential outpourings of the heart may have been a memory from a vanished youth, but nevertheless determined to snatch some vicarious nostalgia from watching young beautiful, shapely things speaking tender, sensuous words and making soft gossamer-like floating movements. At the end of it all, there were no actors and no audience. There was a sense of participation in a common experience

Thank you Ranvir Shah and thank you "Skills"

S.S

Love Poems  
by the beach !





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### LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

The Insecurity of Tamils in Sri Lanka by Tamil Information Centre –  
12 pages, 1983, 60 g., £1.00.

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Report of an Amnesty International Mission to Sri Lanka, 31st January to  
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Sri Lanka: The National Question & The Tamil Liberation Struggle by Satchi  
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Dear Sri Lanka Ambassador... Your Slip Is Showing – A Tamil Information  
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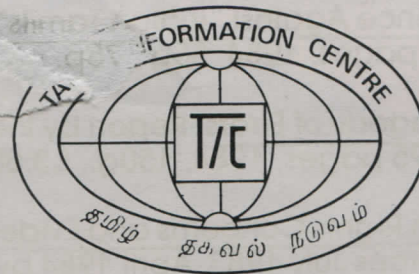
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*"Without the knowledge that Human Rights exist,  
people cannot seek their own protection.*

*Without the knowledge that Human Rights are violated  
no individual or organisation can seek to provide  
protection.*

*Both the promotion and protection of Human Rights  
therefore require that INFORMATION BE AVAILABLE  
FOR ALL....."*



## TAMIL INFORMATION CENTRE