

# Tamil TIMES

Tamil Times  
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publication.

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A displaced Tamil family in eastern Sri Lanka (top left); Displaced Muslims in temporary shelters in eastern Sri Lanka (top right)  
Tamils from foreign countries stranded in Jaffna at the Trincomalee jetty before travelling to Colombo

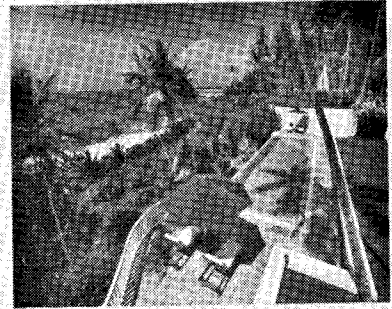
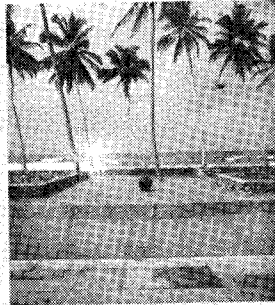
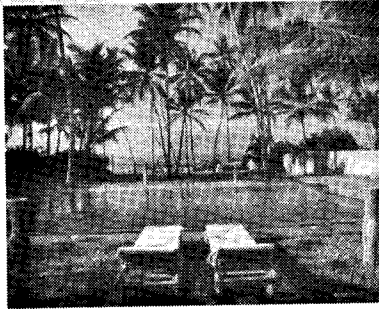




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*"I do not agree with a word  
of what you say, but I'll  
defend to the death your  
right to say it"*

- Voltaire

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## Confronting the Crisis Facing Sri Lanka

One cannot but be deeply troubled by the deteriorating human rights, security, humanitarian and political situation in Sri Lanka exacerbated by the latest round of fighting between the Tamil Tigers and Government forces. This has resulted in a mounting human rights and humanitarian crisis mainly in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

Hundreds of people have been killed or disappeared. Though many cases remain unreported for a variety of reasons (one example being for fear of reprisals against other members of the victim's family), the newspapers and websites are replete with reports of abductions, disappearances and summary and arbitrary executions that have become rampant almost assuming epidemic proportions in recent weeks particularly since the latest round of fighting commenced.

In northern Jaffna, reliable reports indicate that at least on an average three to five persons are routinely abducted or disappeared or arbitrarily killed on a daily basis so much so the terrified members of the civilian population choose to remain indoors. It is the same tragic story in the in the east of the island too.

In the capital city, Colombo, and its suburbs, recent weeks have seen a rapid rise in the number of persons, mostly Tamil businessmen, journalists and political activists, abducted from their homes or work places, some released after the demanded ransom had been paid, some released with stipulated warnings as to what they should or should not do, and others brutally killed. According to police, over 20 Tamil business people have in the recent past been abducted by one or the other Tamil group and a ransom demanded, after which they have been released. "It is a clear case of demanding ransom as they are wealthy businessmen. Most of them have textile and jewellery shops in Colombo and so far one Tamil militant group or the other is being paid some form of ransom in order to continue with their businesses unhindered. Somehow, there is a new extortion racket, and people are not simply being fleeced, those who refuse are being abducted as well," a police officer from Colombo is quoted as saying.

According to UNHCR and the ICRC estimates, over 250,000 civilians have been uprooted from their homes and find themselves displaced not for the first time. Then there are those estimated to be around twenty thousand who, out of fear of their children being forcibly drafted into fighting, have undertaken the perilous journey across the Palk Straits to find refuge in South India.

The recent outbreak of war has shattered any confidence the civilian population had in the possibility of peace. In the main, the Tamil and Muslim civilian populations have had to bear the brunt for the military agendas of the security forces, the LTTE and the Karuna faction.

In these columns, we have frequently and consistently emphasised the danger that human rights violations in time would lead to the collapse of the peace process launched five years ago. Indeed, it is the unwillingness or lack of political will on the part of all actors, including the international community represented by the Co-Chairs – EU, Japan, Norway and US - and the human rights community, to anchor and underpin the peace process within the framework of an effective and enforceable human rights monitoring regime that permitted the flagrant violations of the Ceasefire Agreement, violations which at the same time constituted gross violations of human rights.

A human rights and humanitarian crisis of the magnitude that the people of the island are called upon to endure requires the attention of the United Nations at the highest level.

In an otherwise deplorable and depressing situation, what is salutary is the apparent renewed interest of the international community that is much in evidence in the recent past. The contents of the two resolutions of the European Parliament in quick succession, one adopted two months ago and the other this month, together with the latest two statements of the Co-Chairs – EU, US, Japan and Norway – signify not only their renewed interest, but also represent a much more interventionist role that they are committed to play in the current context in Sri Lanka. They seem to have much belatedly realised that, having proposed and helped to launch the peace process in Sri Lanka followed by the Donors Conference held in Norway on 25 November 2002 declaring support for it and later by the Donor Conference held in Tokyo on 12 June 2003 setting out a 'Road Map' for the progress of the peace process, they took the "eye off the ball" and left it to Norway as facilitator to carry the entire burden.

In April 2003, the LTTE had already unilaterally pulled out of peace talks and what occurred and what was permitted to occur thereafter can be seen in retrospect as all downhill and certainly not conducive to the progress of the peace process. Though the parties remained ostensibly committed to the Ceasefire Agreement, no serious attempt was made by any of the relevant actors, the GoSL, the LTTE, Norway or the Co-Chairs, to reactivate the peace process with a view to resuming peace talks, which again in retrospect can be seen as a grave failure on the part of the Co-Chairs who purportedly represent the international community. Even the much publicised gross violations of the Ceasefire Agreement numbering over 6,000 in the intervening period and the threats and counter-threats by the parties against each other to resume armed hostilities did not disturb the Co-Chairs from their apparent deep sleep. It took the assassination of the island's Foreign Minister, Lakshman Kadirgamar, in August 2005 to wake up, realise the danger of the developing situation and reactivate them and re-engage in the peace process in which they have invested so much.

The Co-Chairs' call "for independent, international investigations of allegations of serious human rights abuses" in Sri Lanka deserves to be supported. Any mechanism to monitor and carry out investigations should be appointed under the auspices of the UN and immediately begin the work of investigating some of the most glaring instances of gross human rights violations, such as the murder of aid workers and Muslims in Muttur in August 2006, the murder of five youth in Trincomalee in January 2006, and massacres in Alaipiddy, Welikanda, Vankalai, and Kebetigollewa in May and June 2006. A special investigation should be carried out surrounding the circumstances in which over 400 adolescent girls (between the ages of 17 to 20) from 18 dif-

ferent schools found themselves in a building on 14 August 2006 at Vallipuram in Mullaitivu, 55 of whom were to become victims of a bombing raid by the Sri Lankan Air Force.

A UN human rights monitoring mechanism is absolutely essential to rein in this pattern of human rights violations and to carry out investigations into thousands of such cases since the initiation of the peace process in 2002. The forthcoming sessions of UN Human Rights Council will provide a unique opportunity for the UN member states to address the human rights crisis in Sri Lanka.

For a variety of valid reasons, it is generally recognised that India is an important actor in any efforts aimed at the resolution of the conflict in Sri Lanka. If restoration of permanent peace is the objective, the Co-Chairs and India need not only to coordinate and push for necessary mechanisms that will address not only the human rights and humanitarian crisis that beset the country, but also to bring pressure upon the Government and the political parties in the opposition to move towards a consensus to address the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil and Muslim communities.

It should be reiterated that there is no military solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka. Only a political solution can address the aspirations of all the communities while safeguarding their human rights, humanitarian needs and economic development.

Any sustainable and just peace will require a political solution that addresses the aspirations of all the communities including the Tamil and Muslim communities. As the Co-Chairs pointed out, the GOSL "must show that it is ready to make the dramatic political changes to bring about a new system of governance which will enhance the rights of all Sri Lankans, including the Muslims." Pointing out that the "legitimate interests and aspirations of all communities, including the Tamil, Muslims and Sinhala communities, must be accommodated as part of a political settlement", they have urged the "Parties to resume negotiation and show real political commitment to achieve a political solution based on the previous six rounds of negotiation". They have also called upon the LTTE to "abide by all agreements and renounce terrorism and violence", and to "show that it is willing to make the compromises needed for a political solution within a united Sri Lanka." The Co-Chairs have also warned: "Failure to cease hostilities, pursue a political solution, respect Human Rights and protect Humanitarian Space could lead the international community to diminish its support."

Fundamentally, the acute crisis facing Sri Lanka reflects the lamentable failure on the part of its political elite to reform the State so as to address the political aspirations of all its peoples. The Co-Chairs in coordination with India should as part of a reinvigorated peace process, actively develop a roadmap for peace and reform that will promote and encourage the GOSL and the opposition political parties to reach a political consensus that will pave the way for a permanent political solution. ●

# Govt and LTTE Talks set for next month

Both the government and the LTTE have agreed for unconditional talks following the intense diplomatic initiatives launched by several actors in the international community, including peace facilitator Norway, and the talks are expected to start as early as October in Oslo. The breakthrough came just hours before the Co-Chairs of the Sri Lanka peace process the USA, Norway, Japan and the EU – met on Tuesday (12) in Brussels to finalize their statement on Sri Lanka.

It is learnt that behind-the-scene diplomacy entailed assurances from both the government and the LTTE that they will abide by the Ceasefire, the agreements reached in Geneva in February 2006 and a complete halt to all military actions by the Government and acts of violence and terrorism on the part of the LTTE.

It would seem, Mr Eric Solheim that the LTTE conveyed its readiness for “unconditional talks” only a short time before the Co-Chairs commenced their meeting on 12 September. LTTE’s political head, S P. Tamilselvan had earlier said that the Tigers would not agree to any talks with the Government unless and until the security forces had withdrawn from eastern enclave overlooking the port town of Trincomalee.

Norway’s International Development Minister Erik Solheim told journalists after the meeting of the Co-Chairs that he was cautiously optimistic that the talks could start as early as October. “I am cautiously optimistic because the government has said it is ready for unconditional talks with the LTTE. The President told me this when we had discussions last week. The LTTE confirmed today (Tuesday (12)) they are also ready for unconditional talks. We expect them to come for talks in Oslo in October,” Solheim said.

“We got the expression of willingness, we got signals from the Gov-

ernment and the LTTE, to come to talks unconditionally,” EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner said adding, “Provided both sides agree, the meeting should take place urgently, at the beginning of October in Oslo.” Ferrero-Waldner called on both sides to immediately end the violence, which she said was damaging prospects for lasting peace. “There is a huge challenge, we want both sides back to the table,” she said.

Solheim further said it was now very important that they do not get bogged down on technicalities. “What is very important now is that we are not again bogged on whether helicopter or sea planes are used for transport or whether one or two weapons are allowed. There is a very clear expectation from the Co-Chairs that all practical matters can be solved immediately,” Solheim said.

Asked whether this means that all military offensives will stop since both parties have agreed for unconditional talks, Solheim said, “That is the clear expectation of the international community that no military operations or terrorist acts will take place or that they will stop with immediate effect.”

Meanwhile, the Co-Chairs in their joint statement issued in Brussels, welcomed the expression of willingness of the government and the LTTE to talk unconditionally as conveyed to the facilitator. Saying that the political challenges of the north east cannot be resolved through war, urged the Parties to resume negotiation and show real political commitment to achieve a political solution based on the previous six rounds of negotiations. They emphasised that the legitimate interests and aspirations of all communities, including the Tamil, Muslims and Sinhala communities, must be accommodated as part of a political settlement.

The Co-Chairs said that the LTTE

must abide by all agreements and renounce terrorism and violence. The LTTE must show that it is willing to make the compromises needed for a political solution within a united Sri Lanka. The Government must ensure its military abides by the Ceasefire Agreement and implements the pledges from the Geneva meeting in February 2006.

Condemning the numerous violations, such as the disappearance and feared killings of large number of Muslims in Mutur, the murder of 17 aid workers from the French NGO Action Contre la Faim, the claymore attack on a civilian bus in June and the bombing of the school in Mullaivituvu in August, the Co-Chairs said that both parties must stop further violations of fundamental principles of Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

The Co-Chairs are expressing particular concern that even major cases of human rights’ abuses are not successfully investigated or prosecuted, the Co-Chairs said that as in any modern state, the culture of impunity must stop.

The Co-Chairs welcome the call of the President for international assistance, and offer to send a mission of high-level experts to review the current situation and suggest further actions before the end of October on the needs for international support to correct it.

The Co-Chairs expected guarantees for the safety of NGO workers and for ensuring access for NGOs and international organizations to help citizens and communities in need of essential humanitarian assistance and valuable reconstruction and development work. They warned that failure to ensure safe working conditions of NGOs could result in the withdrawal of some international NGOs and their funding from Sri Lanka, which would be extremely detrimental to the situation of all Sri Lankan citizens in the concerned areas.

They said that the parties must guarantee safety of media representatives, civil society activities and religious leaders and ensure true freedom of speech and expression can be exercised without fear. Intimida-

tion, attacks and killings of such persons from any quarter on all sides are reprehensible.

Welcoming the President's offer to other political parties to work together with a view to move towards a common national agenda and a lasting peaceful constitutional settlement of the conflict, the Co-Chairs encouraged moderate forces on all sides to engage constructively in the peace process, and in this regard they further encouraged civil society actors to continue to play a major role in promoting and supporting a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Finally and most importantly, the Co-Chairs sounded the warning that the failure to cease hostilities, pursue a political solution, respect Human Rights and protect Humanitarian Space could lead the international community to diminish its support.

#### 'Seize opportunity' says India

Meanwhile, Indian Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, who is visiting Colombo to attend the conference of Commonwealth Finance Ministers, urged Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa to seize the 'opportunity' for talks with the Tamil Tigers of Tamil in the wake of the Co-Chairs of Sri Lanka statement. After meeting the President, Mr. Chidambaram told journalists that he was happy to learn about the possibility of the resumption of talks between the Sri Lanka Government and the Tamil Tigers. "I urged the President to seize the opportunity for talks as we believe that talks could bring down the tensions and halt the flow of refugees into India," he said.

The meeting of Mr. Chidambaram assumes significance in the backdrop of the security situation in Sri Lanka. Hostilities between the government forces and the LTTE have stepped up since April. India and Sri Lanka have been in close contact on the developing situation. Committing itself to strengthening the defence capabilities of the Sri Lanka military, India in recent months has repeatedly emphasised the need for revival of the political dialogue by the Sri Lanka Government to resolve the ethnic conflict.

#### Discordant note

Shortly after the Co-Chairs statement, the Government's Peace Secretariat struck a discordant note in a statement issued on 13 September expressing concern about "making commitments regarding dates and venue without prior consultation with the Government." However, the statement reiterated that, "The Government is appreciative of the efforts made by the Co-chair members to resume peace talks. The Government reaffirms the declaration of President Mahinda Rajapaksa on 22 August 2006, following a meeting with the Co-Chair Ambassadors in Sri Lanka that the Government remains ready to engage in talks with the LTTE following a clear commitment by the LTTE Leader to a comprehensive and verifiable cessation of hostilities. The Government is pleased that the Co-Chair members have endorsed this approach and stated that the LTTE must abide by all agreements and renounce terrorism and violence."

Noting that "the peace process in Sri Lanka is conducted between a democratically elected government of a sovereign State and an armed group practicing terrorism", the Peace Secretariat statement added, "It has been the experience in the past that the LTTE has always used peace talks as a period to enhance its military capabilities. The Government hopes that the Co-Chairs and the Facilitator will do the utmost to ensure that the past practices of the LTTE are not repeated in this instance. In this regard, the Government would urge the international community to put in place a practical mechanism to prevent the illegal procurement of arms and an effective blockade to the induction of weapons by the LTTE. This is an essential element to ensure a successful progression towards a political settlement.

"While the Government notes the above concerns, it remains fully committed to participate at peace talks with the LTTE. However, the specific modalities relating to dates and venue must be discussed and agreed between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Facilitator."

While the Government appears to

be not averse to resuming talks with the LTTE it seems displeased that the Co-Chairs were led into saying that the talks would take place in Oslo in October without prior consultation with the Government. It is understood that at a meeting between Government's Chief negotiator Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva accompanied by Foreign Secretary Mr S. Palihakkara and the Norwegian Ambassador Hans Brattskar on 14 September, the displeasure of the Government was conveyed regarding what has been described as the unilateral statement by Norwegian Minister Erik Solheim and the Co-Chairs deciding on the location and imposing a deadline for peace talks. It is also learnt that Mr De Silva conveyed the Government's position that the LTTE leader, V Prabhakaran should assure the Government, the Co-chairs and the peace facilitators that the LTTE would end all its armed attacks and its killing spree.

Defending Norway and the Co-Chairs statement Mr. Brattskar is learnt have said that what the statement did was to propose a meeting in Oslo in early October to be agreed by signatories to ceasefire agreement. The Ambassador is said to have dismissed the notion that there were procedural irregularities of the statement in making commitments regarding dates and venue without prior consultations with the government.

#### LTTE reaction

Welcoming the call by the Co-Chairs of Sri Lanka's donor community for the Colombo government to abide by the February 2002 Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) and implement the pledges it made in Geneva, the LTTE said it was the responsibility of the Norwegian facilitators and international community to ensure the Rajapakse government adhered to the territorial demarcations, terms and conditions of the CFA and thereby creates a conducive atmosphere for talks.

Speaking to Tamilnet Wednesday (14) evening, the head of the LTTE's Political Wing, Mr. S. P. Thamichelvan welcomed the Co-Chairs insistence that the Sri Lankan government "must ensure its military abides by the Ceasefire Agreement and im-

plements the pledges from the Geneva meeting in February 2006.”

“It is the Sri Lankan government which, launching major aggression against our controlled areas, has carried out breaches of the CFA of the utmost seriousness. It is therefore the primary responsibility of the Rajapakse regime to create a conducive environment by respecting the lines of territorial demarcation underpinning the CFA so that the peace process can move forward,” Mr. Thamichelvan said.

Reaffirming the LTTE’s commitment to the peace process, Mr. Thamichelvan said it was the responsibility of the Norwegian facilitators supported by the international community to ensure Colombo takes concrete steps towards the speedy creation of a conducive environment for talks.

#### Muslim representation

In the meantime, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress called for a separate Muslim representation in the event the Government and the LTTE resume peace talks. Party General Secretary Hasan Ali told media that Muslims should be treated as a stakeholder in the peace process. He said the absence of Muslim representation at the previous peace talks was a big anomaly.

Mr. Ali said three communities were involved in the ethnic issue and not Sinhalese and Tamils alone. “Muslims are involved in the issue due to the ethnic cleansing in the East and therefore they are also a stakeholder,” he said. Mr. Ali said the Government and the LTTE cannot take decisions for Muslims. “Muslims should be allowed to voice their aspirations,” he said.

Responding to a question as to whether the party intends to talk to the Government on the matter, he said the party had already made this point to the Government and the international community.

#### Karuna too seeks representation

The Karuna faction which defected from the LTTE said it had written to the Co-chairs stating that in any future peace talks should also should be included as a party to the

# War not the solution - Co-Chairs

*Statement by the Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Donor Conference on Sri Lanka Brussels 12 September 2006:*

1. The Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Donor Conference, Norway, the European Union, the USA and Japan met in Brussels on September 12.

2. The Co-Chairs welcome the expression of willingness of the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE to come to talks unconditionally as conveyed to the Facilitator. The Parties should cease all violence immediately.

The Parties should use this opportunity to show maximum flexibility regarding the arrangements to be proposed by

negotiations. It is reported that the Karuna faction is scheduled to make a written submission to the Sri Lanka government as well.

A senior spokesman for the organisation is quoted as saying that the Karuna faction held power in the Eastern Province and it had a large following which did not accept the leadership of the LTTE. Hence if talks were to be held in Oslo, the Karuna faction should have representation there to articulate the grievances of the Tamils of the Eastern province. Talks would certainly fail, if the Co-chairs failed to accommodate Karuna’s representation, he said.

However, he acknowledged that Karuna Faction anticipated resistance from the LTTE to their demand and would place obstacles to negotiations. The European Union in its latest resolution noted that the Karuna faction should involve themselves in the peace negotiations, and the EU Parliament resolution adopted on September 7 called for ‘an immediate, comprehensive and veritable end to hostilities including political assassinations and suicide bombing’, and asks ‘Prabhakaran and Karuna to resume peace negotiations on a constructive basis with the government of Sri Lanka without delay.’

□

the Facilitator.

The meeting should take place urgently in Oslo at the beginning of October, to be agreed to by the Parties. The Co-Chairs will meet at the end of October to review progress of the talks.

3. Until now, the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE have engaged in military ground operations and neither has responded adequately to our call in Tokyo and taken the necessary steps to reverse the deteriorating situation as we recommended.

4. The Co-Chairs are deeply alarmed by the recent deliberate violations of the Ceasefire Agreement by the Parties. These have escalated violence and resulted in massive and widespread human suffering, including the abuse of human rights, the displacement of innocent citizens, a humanitarian crisis and an exodus of refugees to India.

5. The political challenges of the north and east cannot be resolved through war. The Co-Chairs urge the Parties to resume negotiation and show real political commitment to achieve a political solution based on the previous six rounds of negotiation, there should be no change to the specific arrangements for the north and east which could endanger the achievement of peace.

The legitimate interests and aspirations of all communities, including the Tamil, Muslims and Sinhala communities, must be accommodated as part of a political settlement.

6. The LTTE must similarly abide by all agreements and renounce terrorism and violence. The LTTE must show that it is willing to make the compromises needed for a political solution within a united Sri Lanka. The Government must ensure its military abides by the Ceasefire Agreement and implements the pledges from the Geneva meeting in February 2006.

7. Both parties must stop further violations of fundamental principles of Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. The Co-Chairs condemn the numerous violations, such as the disappearance and

feared killings of large number of Muslims in Muttur, the murder of 17 aid workers from the French NGO Action Contre la Faim, the claymore attack on a civilian bus in June and the bombing of the school in Mullaitivu in August. The Co-Chairs are particularly concerned that even major cases of human rights' abuses are not successfully investigated or prosecuted. As in any modern state, the culture of impunity must stop. The Co-Chairs welcome the call of the President for international assistance, and offer to send a mission of high-level experts to review the current situation and suggest further actions before the end of October on the needs for international support to correct it.

8. The Co-Chairs expect guarantees for the safety of NGO workers and for ensuring access for NGOs and international organizations to help citizens and communities in need of essential humanitarian assistance and valuable reconstruction and development work.

Failure to ensure safe working conditions of NGOs could result in the withdrawal of some international NGOs and their funding from Sri Lanka, which would be extremely detrimental to the situation of all Sri Lankan citizens in the concerned areas.

9. The Parties must guarantee safety of media representatives, civil society activities and religious leaders and ensure true freedom of speech and expression can be exercised without fear. Intimidation, attacks and killings of such persons from any quarter on all sides are reprehensible.

10. Co-chairs encourage moderate forces on all sides to engage constructively in the peace process. In this regard, the Co-Chairs welcome the President's offer to other political parties to work together with a view to move towards a common national agenda and a lasting peaceful constitutional settlement of the conflict. Co-Chairs further encourage the civil society to continue to play a major role in promoting and supporting a peaceful solution to the conflict.

11. Failure to cease hostilities, pursue a political solution, respect Human Rights and protect Humanitarian Space could lead the international community to diminish its support.

12. Co-Chairs and other members of the international community continue their support for the tireless efforts of Norway to facilitate the peace process and the SLMM to monitor the Ceasefire Agreement.

## NEWS REVIEW

### Tiger 'arms ship' sunk after 6-hour battle

Sep 17 - Even as efforts by peace broker Norway to recommence peace talks are under way, Sri Lankan battle-ships and warplanes intercepted an alleged Tamil Tiger rebel weapons shipment off the island's restive north-eastern coast on Sunday (17), sinking the ship and killing up to 15 insurgents, military officials claimed.

The defence ministry said in a statement on Sunday (17) that naval craft called for air support after the unnamed vessel opened fire on patrol craft which ordered it to head to the eastern naval port of Trincomalee.

"When ordered by navy patrol craft to sail towards Trincomalee for checking, the vessel opened fire," the statement said, adding that fighter jets were called in to attack the ship. The vessel was "suspected to be one ferrying arms and ammunition for the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam)," the ministry said.

The vessel's crew had refused to identify themselves when challenged to do so, but hoisted a the Tiger flag during an eight-hour sea battle, before being bombed and sunk around 120 nautical miles (220 kilometers) off the eastern coast of Batticaloa district, military officials said.

Navy commander D.K.P. Dassanayake said the ship was carrying about 12-15 insurgents. He said there were no navy casualties.

The ship, allegedly carrying artillery and missiles, is believed to have been headed for the Sampur area, which government troops captured from the Tigers earlier this month. The Tigers had warned that the move was a grave violation of a 2002 cease-fire and threatened retaliation.

The navy assault was reinforced by gunboats and fighter planes, said chief military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe. A handful of Tigers kept up resistance for several hours until the damaged vessel went under, he said.

There was no immediate reaction from the guerrillas to the military claim.

Analysts say the LTTE gets arms from manufacturers in various south countries including China, Cambodia, Burma and states that were part of the

former Soviet Union. They say the arms are transferred at mid-sea from large merchant ships owned by companies with links to the Tamil Tigers, into small LTTE owned boats which are then unloaded near LTTE-controlled Mullaitivu in northeast Sri Lanka for use in the rebels' military battles against the Sri Lankan security forces.

### Sri Lanka pushing island to "full scale war" - LTTE

Sep 13 - Continuing offensives by the Sri Lankan military will compel the Liberation Tigers to switch from defensive operations to launching their own offensives, the LTTE said on Wednesday (13). In an exclusive interview with Reuters, the head of the LTTE's Political Wing, Mr. S. P. Thamilchelvan said the Sri Lankan military's offensives and continuing forcible occupation of Tamil areas had rendered the 2002 Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) "meaningless" but "since the facilitators and the international community are eager to strengthen peace efforts, the LTTE is also continuing to examine options for strengthening the CFA."

The full text of the interview as released by the Peace Secretariat of the LTTE is as follows:

**Question:** What will the Tigers do if the army continues to mount offensive operations?

**Answer:** If the Sri Lankan armed forces continue with their military offensive attacks, violating the CFA in the most serious manner possible, then, unfortunately, LTTE too will be forced, from their current position of having to take defensive military operations, into the situation of having to launch offensive operations. I am afraid there is a possibility that this will turn into a full scale war.

**Q:** Is the CFA now completely dead? Do the Tigers now consider it to be void?

**A:** Within the context of the military offensives by the Sri Lankan armed forces and their continuing forced occupations of the Tamil homeland, we do consider that the CFA has become meaningless. However, since the facilitators and the international community are eager to



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strengthen the peace efforts, the LTTE is also continuing to examine options for strengthening the CFA. In this regard the LTTE continues maintain its communications with the facilitators.

**Q:** Are the Tigers prepared to resume talks with the government and the mediators?

**A:** The LTTE is ready for talks. However, the opportunities for resuming the talks will be much stronger when the Sri Lankan government ceases its military attacks and all the CFA articles are fully respected and implemented.

**Q:** What will it take to stop this new chapter of the Sri Lankan war?

**A:** The present CFA had greatly contributed to bringing peace in this island that had been torn by two decades of civil war. This CFA helped to avoid large scale war for four and half years and maintain semblance of normalcy. It is only by implementing 100%, this CFA that came into being with the support of the international community and the efforts of the facilitators that this situation can be halted.

**Q:** Do the Tigers think peace talks with this administration are destined to fail-

ure given President Rakapakse's refusal to consider a separate Tamil homeland?

**A:** Beyond considerations of what is and what is not useful, everyone must understand what is realistic and come to a common position accordingly. At some point in time in the future, everyone has to arrive at such a realistic and practical position. I believe it will be meaningful if we all continue to search for opportunities to arrive at that realistic position. Mahinda Rajapakse also most certainly needs to change his position. No one can deny the rights of the Tamil people. At some stage everyone must accept this. Therefore Mahinda Rakapakse too must take up a decent position in this regard.

**Q:** What will the Tigers do if the government does not vacate Sampoor?

**A:** Since the Sri Lankan government, in violation of the CFA, has occupied new areas that were administered by the LTTE under the CFA, we believe we must take all necessary actions to recover these areas according to the CFA.

**Q:** If attacks by the army on the Tigers continue, will the Tigers bring war to Colombo?

**A:** If the Sri Lankan armed forces con-

tinue with their cruel war all over the Tamil homeland, and continue to put the people in the Tamil homeland in great misery, I do believe that the spread of this war to all parts of the island will be unavoidable.

**SLFP-UNP to seek bipartisan consensus**

Sep 16 - Following the much publicized talks between President Mahinda Rajapakse and Opposition and UNP leader Ranil Wickremasinghe, it is said that the two main political parties, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the United National Party are on the verge of striking a common position in approaching the national question, with the successful completion of the first phase of talks between the leaders of the two parties, political sources said.

After the talks, the parties appointed a joint sub committee comprising Ministers Maithripala Sirisena and John Seneviratne, UNP frontliner G.L. Peiris and former UNP Chairman Malik Samarawickrama to identify topics to be discussed at the next rounds of talks.

According to UNP Deputy Secre-

tary Tissa Attanayake, the task of the committees would be to negotiate and work out a common policy in matters relating to the ethnic conflict.

It was reported that the first round of talks between President Mahinda Rajapaksa and Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe ended on a positive note, and that there would be future regular meetings between the two party leaders in parallel to committee meetings.

Questioned about the party's declared stance of a federal solution to the ethnic conflict, Attanayake said the party was open for negotiations and the committees would find a common ground and to develop a common approach. "We will support any solution that will not hurt the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity," he said.

He said the party will remain in the Opposition and will function as the main Opposition while pledging its support to the Government in solving the ethnic conflict.

It is now learnt that further progress was made in the latest round of talks between the SLFP and the UNP that took place on 15 September with both parties expressing optimism that they could reach consensus on vital issues facing the country.

Issuing a joint statement signed by Mr. Sirisena and Prof. Peiris after the talks at the parliamentary complex, the parties said the sub-committee would draw up a list of topics and submit them at the next meeting.

Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickrematunge led the SLFP delegation which included Ministers Nimal Siripala de Silva, Maithripala Sirisena, Susil Premajayantha and John Seneviratne. UNP deputy leader Karu Jayasuriya led the UNP delegation which included Prof. Peiris, John Amararatunga, Rukman Senanayake, Milinda Moragoda, Ravi Karunanayake and Malik Samarawickrama.

Mr. Sirisena in his opening address stressed the need to work towards a consensus on national issues and said it was apt, in keeping with the initiative of President Mahinda Rajapaksa to embark on such a mission.

Premier Wickrematunge expressed his pleasure that the UNP accepted the invitation extended by the President and thanked the party for its prompt response. He said the government wished to explore avenues for achieving a consensus between the parties on a series of issues identified by mutual consent as

being critical for the well-being of the nation. He emphasized that all options were open and that it was not the intention of the government to confine the proposed collaboration to any particular area.

The government's desire, Mr. Wickrematunge said, was to arrive at an agreement on modalities for the fullest possible co-operation in the national interest without departing from the identity and the essential policies of each party.

Mr. Jayasuriya, responding, thanked the President and the SLFP for the invitation extended to the UNP. He said there was a high level of expectation and enthusiasm in the country regarding the talks and vowed his party would make every effort, in keeping with its principles, to achieve a positive outcome.

The delegations addressed issues in detail and decided to formulate a common agenda, consisting of priority areas. Once an agreement was reached on the policies to be implemented in respect of the fields identified, the delegations would proceed to deliberate on the modalities appropriate for the co-operation between the parties with a view to implementation of the policies agreed upon, the joint statement said.

## 'No peace moves until Govt respects CFA borders'

Sept 6 - The Sri Lankan government's aggression on LTTE-controlled territory has blocked progress towards peace, the LTTE told the Norwegian facilitators on Wednesday (6). The LTTE's Political Head, S. P. Thamichelvan, told Norwegian Ambassador Hans Brattskar during his visit with his deputy to Kilinochchi that Colombo's invasion and occupation of LTTE-held territory had put an end to peaceful ways of stabilising the 2002 Ceasefire Agreement (CFA).

"As far as we are concerned, the Government of Sri Lanka has withdrawn from the CFA," Mr. Thamichelvan told reporters after the meeting. "We consider the Sri Lankan aggression on Sampoor as having put an end to the CFA," Mr. Thamichelvan said. The Tigers would be compelled to respond militarily if Colombo did not cease its aggression with immediate effect, he told reporters.

"There can be no efforts at peaceful resolution [to the conflict] unless Sri Lanka withdraws its military forces to the positions held by the parties when the CFA was entered into," Mr. Tham-

ichelvan said.

The Tigers also urged the International Community to take proactive steps to address the needs of the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people in the Northeast. Mr. Thamichelvan criticised the International Community for being impassive while a major humanitarian crisis was being deliberately escalated by Colombo's aggression.

"The humanitarian situation on the ground is worsening rapidly," he said. The Tigers were fully prepared to cooperate with the ICRC to allow humanitarian supplies to the civilian population in Jaffna through the A9 land route, he said. Whereas the Government wanted to send relief supplies by ship to Jaffna, the Tigers were only prepared to allow supplies through the A9 highway, he added.

## International Commission to probe abductions and killings

The Government would invite an international independent commission to probe abductions, disappearances and extra-judicial killings in all areas in the country, President Mahinda Rajapaksa said on 4 September. However, human rights activists are sceptical that the President's proposal will materialise in practice.

Queried on the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) report which accused the Security Forces for the killing of 17 local NGO workers in Muttur last month, President Rajapaksa said the Government would invite internationally reputed judges, human rights activists and civil society representatives to form the independent commission.

The commission will have full powers to investigate all such incidents and the Security Forces and the Police have been requested to extend their fullest cooperation, he said.

The President said such a commission was essential in the light of attempts being made in various quarters to discredit the Government, Security Forces and the Police. The Government has categorically denied the SLMM charge that the Security Forces should be held responsible for the killing of the 17 local workers of the French NGO.

It has already invited Australian forensic experts to conduct investigations on the Muttur killings.

Some believe that the decision of President Mahinda Rajapakse to appoint

an 'international independent commission' to probe recent abductions, disappearances and extra judicial killings is an attempt to squash allegations of human rights violations by the security forces and to identify any anti-government forces responsible for the offences.

It is learnt that as an alternative to an 'international independent commission', a five-member Special Presidential Commission (SPC) of inquiry to investigate selected high profile cases may be appointed and persons of international repute will be invited to act as members of the commission or as observers of the workings of the SPC.

Cases such as the massacre of 17 aid workers in Muttur, the massacre of 13 civilians in Allapiddy in Kayts, the Kebitigollewa massacre of bus passengers and murders of Joseph Pararajasingam, General Parami Kulatunge, Kethesh Loganathan and the murder of the five students in Trincomalee will be some of the cases that will be referred to the SPC.

The London-based Tamil Information Centre (TIC), which has been continually calling for an independent international mechanism to investigate human right violations in Sri Lanka, in a statement issued on 6 September has welcomed the announcement of President Mahinda Rajapakse that the Sri Lankan government would invite an international commission to probe abductions, disappearances and extrajudicial killings in the island.

Meanwhile, Disaster Management and Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe and a group of international human rights organisations met with President Mahinda Rajapaksa on 9 September to discuss the terms of reference over the appointment of the proposed International Commission to investigate the recent abductions and killings in the country. "We discussed matters with regard to the formation of the commission including the number of members and from how many countries, what are they and the parameters of selection," Samarasinghe said.

## Child recruitment on the rise

Children have once again become the unwilling victims of the current bout of escalated violence to hit the country. Aid agencies and monitors have warned that recruitment of children into armed groups

is on the rise in the last three months.

According to UNICEF reports, over 117 cases of child recruitment by the LTTE have been reported between the months of April and June. The Karuna group has also been responsible for recruiting 70 children since breaking away from the Tigers in 2004.

While the security and human rights situation has deteriorated within the past few months, the escalating conflict has had a dire impact on the security of the civilian population.

In a report released by the UN aid agencies titled Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP), it states that inadequate protection of the civilian population, child recruitments, abductions, torture, murders and the high risk of violent death or injuries by being caught in cross fires are only some of the immediate consequences of escalating conflict for the civilian population.

"Investigations into violations and abuses are not often conducted or concluded, while their objectivity is often questionable," the report said.

Meanwhile a report by the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) said that child recruitment and child abductions continued on a relatively high level in June, July and August. However unlike earlier months, a majority of cases reported were not against the LTTE but against the Karuna faction.

"While it is evident that the LTTE was behind most of the child recruitment as confirmed by several of the victims and the LTTE, there are also strong indications that the Karuna faction was behind several of these abductions," Former SLMM Head, Ulf Henricsson said in the report.

The report added that child recruitment was an issue, and said both issues would be dealt with in the period after the Geneva talks.

However the SLMM observed that neither side had complied with this so far as in addition to the regular child recruitment continuing on the LTTE side, additional abductions and recruitments are now being done by the Karuna faction on the east coast without the government making any attempts to curb this development. "While it is evident that the LTTE was behind most of the child recruitment as confirmed by several of the victims, there are also strong indications that the Karuna faction was behind several of these abductions," the SLMM said.

Meanwhile, according to latest figures released by UNICEF there are at least 4635 underage recruits within the LTTE. UNICEF said that it was currently investigating 1545 underage recruitments by the LTTE but added that this reflects only a third of the actual number of children recruited.

According to UNICEF figures as of August 31, out of the 1545 outstanding cases, 643 were under the age of 18 and 902 were recruited while under 18 but have now passed that age.

"UNICEF continuously checks its database on under age recruitment and only withdraws recruits from its database when it is able to verify their release through an official letter of release, or by establishing that the child is reunited with his or her parents," UNICEF said in a statement.

It added that as of August 31, there were also 101 outstanding cases of underage recruitment by the Karuna group.

## Lanka set for record growth

Sept 13 - Despite the island being mired in escalating violence, Sri Lanka's economy gained 7.9 per cent in the first half of 2006, the Central Bank Governor said on Tuesday (13), as farming, manufacturing and service sectors put it on track for the fastest growth in nearly three decades.

The figures indicate that the island nation is set for its best performance in 28 years. The economy gained 8.2 per cent, its highest in 1978, a year after the nation embraced an open economy.

"We are well on the way for at least seven percent overall growth this year and on track for an eight percent growth in 2007," Governor Nivard Cabraal told visiting finance ministers from Commonwealth Countries.

The surge in growth follows a dip after the December 2004 tsunami. It was led by aid agencies, foreign and local, who pumped in funds for reconstruction efforts.

The influx of aid funds and money from Sri Lankans working abroad helped foreign currency reserves gain to 2.55 billion dollars as at the end of August, from 2.45 billion dollars at end of 2005. Sri Lanka has offered new incentives to about 1.5 million overseas workers in an attempt to double remittances by 2007 from 1.92 billion dollars in 2005, Cabraal said.

He said in the first six months of the year, remittances reached 1.36 billion dollars. The incentives include low-interest housing loans by banks against foreign currency deposits and health insurance plans to encourage more foreign currency remittances.

"Our estimate is that around 30-35 percent of remittances came through the formal banking channel last year. We hope these incentives schemes will encourage people to send more money home," he said.

## TRO protests against freezing of its funds

The Sri Lankan government has frozen the funds of the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) with immediate effect. The directive has been given by the Central Bank on the basis the law relating to the combating financing of terrorism, the paper said.

Though officials of the TRO strenuously reject the charge, many reports have labelled it as a front organisation of the Tamil Tigers.

TRO officials came to know about the freezing of TRO only when they sought to make a withdrawal from their accounts in the Bank of Ceylon branch in Kilinochchi and in Colombo. The bank account in Kilinochchi had TRO deposits amounting to Rs. 20 million when the order to freeze the accounts was given. In Colombo, TRO officials who visited a private bank were told about the order and their cheques were not accepted.

The TRO was granted Rs 2,000 million (20 million US dollars) for tsunami relief work from international organizations including UN agencies.

In January this year the Government called on the US government to ban the TRO operations in that country. The matter was raised by Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera during his visit to the US.

According to its officials, the TRO is registered as a charity organization in Sri Lanka, the US and functions in 28 other countries.

## TRO protests

The TRO protested the freezing of its accounts in Sri Lanka Sunday, saying the Colombo government had made no communication with the NGO, which has been registered as a charity there since 1985. Warning that "the current humanitarian situation in the NorthEast of Sri

Lanka is reaching a critical stage," the TRO said "there is a desperate need, recognized by all who are involved in humanitarian work, which the international community is being prevented from responding to effectively." TRO appealed to international institutions, human right bodies and humanitarian organizations to make representations to the Sri Lanka Government and intimate the importance the continued functioning of TRO.

"The [Sri Lankan] Central Bank's actions [to block TRO funds] will lead to further deprivation and suffering for the tsunami and war affected populations of the NorthEast. The people of the NorthEast will again be denied much needed relief, rehabilitation and development," the TRO said in a statement.

"Humanitarian assistance to the recently displaced people of the NorthEast by local NGOs, INGOs and even UN agencies has now been effectively shut down by the actions of members of the Sri Lankan security forces. Currently, due to the pullout of most international agencies from the NorthEast, TRO is one of a handful of organizations assisting those recently displaced by war."

"TRO as always will assist and fully support any enquiry or investigation into any aspects of its operation, however, this action by the central bank exerts extreme pressure on its ability to operate and will negatively impact the tsunami and war affected populations," the TRO said.

The move by the Sri Lankan authorities to freeze the funds of the TRO has come in the wake of the decision, some two months ago, of the European Union countries to list the LTTE as a terrorist organisation.

A recent probe by the Federal Bureau of Investigation into activities of LTTE supporters in the U.S. revealed that the TRO had "largely been engaged in funding terrorism in Sri Lanka," the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defense said. "Sri Lanka took this measure as the TRO had been found facilitating and financing the terrorist actions of the LTTE," the government said.

Defence spokesman and Minister Keheliya Rambukwella told 'The Hindu' "it is a follow up to the arrest of eight persons by the U.S. on August 19 on charges of conspiring to provide material support to LTTE as well as legislation by Sri Lanka Parliament last month against money laundering. There are certain charges against the TRO and if the

investigations do not reveal any link, the freeze would be lifted."

## Court order

The High Court in Sri Lanka has allowed authorities to freeze assets of the TRO for further six months. Central Bank of Sri Lanka in a petition to Colombo High Court had requested more time to investigate accounts held by TRO in Sri Lankan banks. The petitioner, Intelligence Unit of the Central Bank, had alleged that the TRO, a registered charitable organisation in the island, had close links with the Tamil Tigers.

The Central Bank had initially ordered banks freezing the TRO's assets in all banks but it had no legal authority to freeze assets longer than for 7 days and hence it went to the High Court.

K P Regi, Executive Director of TRO, said their employees in Colombo were refused access to their money by bank officials earlier in the week. He said he was not aware of the reasons for the Government to freeze nearly Rs.78 million of its funds in Sri Lanka. All funds received in Sri Lanka were coming through "legally" via government and private banks, according to TRO. "The Central Bank has already monitored all the bank accounts and our audit reports. The parliamentary select committee also recently received these reports," he said.

The TRO denies the accusation that it is a LTTE-front organisation. "We are not giving money to LTTE but yes we are working in LTTE-controlled areas," Regi said.

The TRO was removed from the list of charities in UK after an investigation that concluded it liaised with the Tamil Tigers "in determining where funds could be applied". The UK investigation also concluded that the TRO had failed to "account satisfactorily" for funds held by the organisation. Following the investigation by the Charity Commission in the UK, the funds held by TRO in the UK were transferred to another organisation known as the Tamil Support Group (TSG), another charitable organisation which was now functioning, Regi said.

There have also been accusations that LTTE has been using its front organisations, including TRO, to raise funds. Police in the United States last month accused the LTTE of using charities sympathetic to the Tigers as a front for money-laundering and fund-raising purposes. The FBI in the US took into custody a number of persons on charges of



conspiring to buy arms for the LTTE using money collected by its front organisations. The LTTE denied that it had any connection with those charged in the US and that they were not acting on their behalf.

It is said that the TRO is considering the prospect of appealing against the Colombo High Court ruling which saw the freezing of its accounts for a six-month period. TRO project consultant Arjunan Ethirveerasingham told the media that his organization was currently holding discussions with legal experts as to what their future course of action should be, and was also looking at the possibility of appealing the court decision.

"We are going to make every effort to secure the release of our funds," he said. But according to Mr. Ethirveerasingham, apart from the private banks informing them of the TRO accounts being frozen, the organisation has not received any official charge sheet from either the Central Bank or even the Courts spelling out the charges. "But our lawyers are at work trying to obtain the charge sheet after which our next step will be decided on," he noted.

He also categorically denied that his organisation had any links to the LTTE. "If we are to enter into a LTTE-controlled area, as a regular procedure, we approach the LTTE to gain permission to get into the area. This is normal; we apply the same rule when entering government-controlled areas," Mr. Ethirveerasingham said.

## UK gives \$1 million to help victims of conflict

Sept 13 - Gareth Thomas, Minister at the Department for International Development, announced on 13 September that the UK would make a new \$1 million contribution to the UN and Red Cross to help Sri Lankans displaced by recent violence in their country.

The UK contribution follows a \$37.5 million appeal by the UN and a \$25 million appeal by the Red Cross to provide emergency aid to Sri Lanka.

Mr Thomas said: "I am glad to be able to announce these additional UK funds for all those recently displaced within Sri Lanka as a result of the upsurge in violence. UK funds will help to meet the immediate needs of almost 250,000 people who have fled their homes because of security concerns. It is imperative that the hostilities should stop

soon so that those displaced can return to their homes without fear of violence or intimidation.

"In the meantime it is vital that the government and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) allow safe humanitarian access to all parts of the country, so that much needed assistance can reach the displaced wherever they are. And it is crucial that basic human rights are upheld by all.

"The people of Sri Lanka want and deserve peace after more than 20 years of conflict. This can only happen if the cease-fire agreement is fully complied with, the fighting stops and meaningful negotiations are resumed. The UK stands ready to do what we can to support this, but lasting change can only come from within Sri Lanka."

UK funds will be split evenly between the UN and the Red Cross and help meet emergency humanitarian needs until the end of the year. The funds will help the UN and Red Cross ensure that:

- \* People in the north-east of Sri Lanka have access to safe drinking water and sanitation to reduce the risk of infectious diseases such as cholera;

- \* People receive quick and effective medical treatment to prevent unnecessary loss of life;

- \* Children living in temporary settlements continue to receive a basic level of education; and

- \* The government and LTTE recognise the need to uphold the civil rights of those arrested during the conflict, inform families about missing relatives and prevent the recruitment of child soldiers.

Since the increase in violence in April 2006 some 250,000 people have been displaced with 11,000 fleeing to India. An estimated 1000 people are thought to have been killed over the past five months.

## SL not bound by rulings UN rights body - Court

Sep 16 - Sri Lanka's Supreme Court says rulings by the UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) in Geneva can be ignored if they go against the country's constitution or the legal framework, the BBC reported Friday (15). A five-member bench headed by Mr. Silva has ruled that Sri Lanka's judiciary is not bound to implement UNHRC recommendations against Sri Lanka's constitution or the legal framework, the BBC reported.

Chief Justice (CJ) Sarath Nanda Silva

also observed that Sri Lanka's leaders "should be more responsible in signing international treaties affecting the country's sovereignty," the BBC reported.

The UNHRC had earlier pointed out that as a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Sri Lanka has accepted the UN body's authority to rule on breaches of the Covenant. The UNHRC had said in its ruling that by becoming a State party to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Sri Lanka had recognized the competence of the UNHRC to determine whether there has been a violation of the Covenant or not.

Although Sri Lanka has signed the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Covenant has not been incorporated into the constitution, the Supreme Court ruled.

The Supreme Court made its remarks after refusing another appeal by Nallaratanam Sinharasa to abolish a prison sentence imposed upon him by a Sri Lankan court. According to Amnesty International, Sinharasa, a Tamil, was arrested in July 1993. In his appeal to the UN he said Sri Lankan security forces subject him to severe torture following his arrest. A doctor later found scars on his back and eye resulting from the torture. In December 1993 his thumbprint was forcibly placed on a 'confession' written in Sinhala. The first time Sinharasa had access to a legal representative since his arrest was in September 1994. In September 1995 he was convicted under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) including conspiracy to overthrow the government. He was sentenced to 50 years imprisonment.

In July 2004 the UNHRC reviewed Singarasa's case and concluded that his right to a fair trial had been violated as his conviction was based solely on his supposed "confession" and as he had been denied access to an interpreter during interrogation.

The UNHRC also criticised the fact that the onus was put on Singarasa to prove that his confession had been obtained by torture and concluded that the government had failed in its obligation to effectively investigate allegations of torture.

The UNHRC found the Sri Lankan state was obliged to provide Singarasa "with an effective and appropriate remedy, including release or retrial and compensation."

But Sri Lanka's Supreme Court has rejected both Singarasa's appeal and the UNHRC directive, saying it cannot order the state to override the constitution by implementing such rulings.

## Rights groups blame 'state agents' for abductions

Leading international rights groups have blamed "state agents" for the spate of recent disappearances of Tamil civilians in Jaffna and Colombo and have urged the international community to put pressure on the government to bring the perpetrators to book.

Amnesty International (AI), whose head recently met President Mahinda Rajapaksa in London, said the pattern of "disappearances" carried out by state agents was re-emerging in Sri Lanka following the introduction of new Emergency Regulations in August 2005 that granted sweeping powers to the security forces.

"Sixty-two cases of "disappearances" in the north of the country have been registered by the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka over the past year. The Commission is also investigating the status of 183 other individuals who are still missing under unknown circumstances," AI said while drawing special reference to the disappearance of a priest and his aide in Allaipiddy last month.

The University Teachers for Human Rights in Jaffna (UTHRJ) said it was concerned that a substantial part of the Tamil population were now potential targets for elimination by state killer groups which included the Karuna faction.

On some days the number killed in Jaffna is above half a dozen. The Government along with its proxies is also recklessly targeting persons mildly suspected of links with the LTTE. A number of the victims were supporters of the TULF that later merged into the LTTE-backed TNA," UT-HRJ said on its web-site.

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHR) notes that, in Sri Lanka, a white van without a number plate is a symbol of terror and the disappearances that occurred in all parts of the country. These reports are available at [www.disappearances.org](http://www.disappearances.org). Now such vans have reappeared and do so frequently in the Jaffna peninsula. A report from one family states the fear of the white van in the

day and specially in the night is killing everyone [with fear] in the peninsula," AHR head Mr. Basil Fernando said in a statement.

Military spokesman Brigadier Prasad Samarasinghe, at a press conference earlier this week, urged the public to come forward and produce any evidence they may have which links the involvement of the security forces with the disappearances.

He said officials found guilty will be taken to task while government defense spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella also expressed concerns over the incidents and assured proper investigations.

The University Teachers for Human Rights in Jaffna says the killings of the 5 students in Trincomalee on 2nd January and the Bojan sisters two weeks later were early signs of grave things to come. When international human rights actors have raised the case of the 5 students in Trincomalee or the killing of ACF workers in Mutur, the response has been articles in the Sri Lankan press blaming these agencies for not mentioning the Kebbitigollawe claymore bombing of Sinhalese civilians. It is as though we must judge

the Government by the standards of the Tigers. One is an internationally accredited state and the other is a group that has been banned by nearly all the leading governments.

The important question is whether the Government has shown good faith in response to the restraints placed on the LTTE by the international community, which made its military successes possible," UTHRJ said.

The Jaffna based rights group laments that although international actors have repeatedly drawn attention to the activities of state-related killer groups such groups continue to act with even greater brazenness.

The way to tackle it is by a political approach and not by mass murder. The LTTE is intrinsically very weak. The way the State has bungled minority issues has guaranteed the LTTE a political base. We do not see any means of safeguarding the life and well being of the Tamils and Muslims except by appropriate humanitarian and human rights intervention that would take both the Government and the LTTE to task," UTHRJ said.

(Daily Mirror, 16.9.2006)

## Anadasangaree wins UNESCO Award

Sept 13 - The Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura has designated President of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) Veerasingham Anadasangaree as the laureate of the 2006 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence. The Prize was attributed on the recommendation of an international jury. The members of the jury are: Andrés Pastrana Arango, former President of Colombia; Bahia Hariri, President of the Commission for Education, Science and Culture of the Lebanese Parliament; Inder Kumar Gujral, former Prime Minister of India; Sergei Markarov and Manu Dibango, both UNESCO Artists for Peace.

Born in Sri Lanka in 1933, Mr Anadasangaree became the President of the Tamil United Liberation Front in 2002, after working as a teacher and lawyer. As an indefatigable advocate of democracy and peaceful conflict resolution, he has contributed to raising awareness of the

Tamil cause in a spirit of dialogue, while seeking to promote non-violent solutions to Sri Lanka and opposing terrorism.

The \$100,000 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize was created in 1995 on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the birth of the Mahatma Gandhi, thanks to the generosity of the Indian writer and diplomat Madanjeet Singh, who is also a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador.

Dedicated to advancing the spirit of tolerance in the arts, education, culture, science and communication, the Prize is awarded every two years to an individual or an institution for exceptional contributions in the promotion of tolerance and non-violence.

In 2004, the UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence was attributed to the Bangladeshi writer and journalist Taslima Nasreen. The Prize-giving ceremony will be held on International Day for Tolerance celebrated every year on 16 November.

# 'Disappearance' of Catholic Priest Fr. Jim Brown

Rev. Fr. Thiruchelvam Nihal Jim Brown, age 34, Parish Priest Allaippiddy, Jaffna has been reported missing since 20 August 2006. A lay person, Mr. Wenceslaus Vincent Vimalathas, age 38 who accompanied the priest is also missing.

Fr. Jim Brown was taking care of his Allaippiddy parish people, about 800 in number now staying as refugees at St Marys Church in Kayts and went to say mass in Mandaitivu around 12.30 pm. Permission was denied by the military to go to Mandaitivu and he proceeded to Jaffna from where he returned towards the islands along with Rev. Fr. Peter Thurairatnam, Parish Priest, Naranthanai-Kayts.

Fr. Thurairatnam testifies to the fact that Fr. Jim Brown and the lay person stopped at the Allaippiddy military check-point seeking permission to enter Allaippiddy to say Sunday Mass. He had seen the two entering Allaippiddy after being permitted by the military around 2 pm. All this happened during the time curfew was relaxed. When it was found that these two persons had not returned to Kayts or Jaffna, another priest went to the check-point at Allaippiddy and made enquiries regarding Fr. Jim Brown's and Mr. Wenceslaus's whereabouts and was reportedly told that both returned had from Allaippiddy. But these two have still not shown up in any of the possible locations.

This mysterious disappearance has caused serious alarm among the clergy and the parishioners. It is appropriate to mention here that Fr. Jim Brown was appointed to the Allaippiddy parish only a month ago to succeed the earlier priest who was a witness to the Allaippiddy massacre and consequently faced threats to his life and therefore transferred out to Punakari outside military occupation. Incidentally, Fr. Jim Brown was the priest at Allaippiddy when the latest massacre took place and was the one who was responsible for the transport of the injured and was instrumental in arranging a judicial inquiry. It is feared therefore that Fr. Jim Brown and his companion may have been made to 'disappear' by interested parties.

## Silent protest

A silent protest march was held Friday (25 August) morning in Mannar town demanding the release of the 'isappeared' Allaippiddy Parish Priest Rev. Nihal Jim Brown. The march began around 10.15 am. from Mannar St. Sebastian Church arriving at Mannar District Secretariat building at about 11 am. About six thousand people including the Head of the Mannar Diocese and Parish Priests of Pallimunai and Mannar and other several priests, nuns numbering about seventy five and parliamentarian Mr. Vino Noharathalingam and representatives of EPRLF (Suresh Wing) and TELO and other humanitarian and civil rights' groups participated in the march carrying placards with the photograph of missing priest.

A memorandum addressed to President Mahinda Rajapakse was handed over to Mannar Additional District Secretary Ms Mohanathan by the Head of Mannar Diocese. Copies of the memorandum were handed over to representatives of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, and Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka based in Mannar.

Thereafter the silent march proceeded to the office of the Mannar office of the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC). Representatives of the peace march handed over a copy of the memorandum to ICRC delegate there.

## Protest hunger strike

A token hunger strike and a special Mass were held Monday (28) from 9.00 am. to 3.00 p.m. at the St. Theresa's Church, Kilinochchi, demanding the release of Rev. Fr. Jim Brown and his aide Venseslos Vincent Vimalathas. All Catholic priests belonging to the Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu Dioceses and devotees from Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu Districts participated in great numbers.

Following the prayer and hunger strike, the participants marched to the UNHCR office in Kilinochchi along the A-9 road and handed over a memorandum requesting Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, to influence the release of the abducted priest and his aide. Rev.

Fr. A.P. Bernard handed over the memorandum to M. Camilla Kragelund, the Resident representative of UNHCR for Kilinochchi District, on behalf of the priests and people of Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu Dioceses.

Rev. Fr. Bernard, speaking to journalists, expressing concern over the abduction said, "In general, the abductions are carried out in order to frighten other priests and persons involved in serving the public and particularly to punish Fr. Jim Brown for his involvement in taking the injured people in the Army shelling to Allaippiddy Church.

As far as I know, an Army shell hit the Church, where Fr. Jim served, and killed 20 people and injured many. He tried to take the injured people to the hospital and when the Army denied permission, he approached the Jaffna District Judge. That might have provoked the Army and made them to kidnap him. I do not have any concrete evidence on this so far, because the Bishop is dealing with the matter. However, incidents of this nature affect our services in the military controlled area."

## Vatican appeals

Sept 2 - The Vatican's representative to Sri Lanka has appealed to the humanity of those responsible for the disappearance of a Catholic priest in the northern Jaffna peninsula while Jaffna Bishop Thomas Savundaranayagam said he is yet to get a response to even his second appeal to Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse over Father Jim Brown's disappearance. The church-run Centre for Peace and Reconciliation (CPR) in Jaffna joined calls for a proper investigation.

"We appeal to the sentiments of humanity of those responsible for his disappearance, asking them to recognize their fault and to act consequently," apostolic nuncio Archbishop Mario Zenari said. "We feel sad and discouraged about the disappearance of Father Nihal Jim Brown," Archbishop Zenari said.

## Amnesty's urgent appeal

Amnesty International, in an urgent appeal on Tuesday (29 August), called for an investigation into the disappearance of the priest. "As Kayts Island is strictly controlled by the Sri Lankan Navy (SLN), there are suspicions that the two men may have been taken into custody," said Amnesty.

But the Navy Commander of the  
(continued on next page)

## Disturbing 'disappearances'

Human rights activists and even politicians have begun to express serious concern about the rampant increase in the number of abductions and 'disappearances' that have been occurring recently in and around Colombo.

According to complaints made to the police during the last few months, at least 20 persons, mainly Tamils, have been abducted following which some have been released but others continue to remain 'missing'. All the abductions have taken place either in the heart of Colombo city or its suburbs.

Several complaints have been made concerning these abductions to local politicians, the police and including President Mahinda Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake. Reportedly, the President is gravely concerned and even called his Tamil friends including UNP parliamentarian, T. Maheswaran, and asked him what the government should do to stop these abductions, which the President sees as a serious embarrassment to his government.

Deputy Minister of Vocational and technical training P. Radhakrishnan said prominent businessmen are being abducted and added one of his party men was also abducted. He said he has complained to the authorities but to no avail.

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north, Rear Admiral Upali Ranaweera, denies the two Catholics were ever arrested.

The church-run Centre for Peace and Reconciliation (CPR) in Jaffna echoed Amnesty's concerns, saying: "We have seen a sudden increase in the number of civilian people who are arrested and then disappear." The CPR noted a disturbing refusal of the security forces to assist in inquiries about missing persons. "The security forces are refusing to acknowledge reported arrests and to cooperate," said the centre. "Our official request to uncover truth regarding the disappearances is rejected by the security forces."

Amnesty International said "There are fears that a pattern of 'disappearances' by state agents is re-emerging following the introduction of new Emergency Regulations in August 2005 that granted sweeping powers to the security forces." □

"We do not know who is behind this. Nowadays people identify themselves as CID or army intelligence and ask people accompany them in a white van.

"When we checked the registration numbers of the vehicles, we find that they are bogus. We suspect whether army intelligence are behind this," he said.

### Some cases

\* On 4 August 2006 Gunasekaran Mahindan (24 years), Kandasamy Sridharan (24 years) and Ramakrishnan Rajkumar (21), staying at AKB Lodge, at No. 9, Grandpass Road, (Opposite Sulaiman Hospitals) Colombo 14 were abducted by armed persons who came in a white van at midnight. All three have gone 'missing' since then.

\* A leading Tamil businessman, S.Sriskandarajah was abducted from his residence at Horton place Colombo 7. It is reported that Sriskandarajah's family has paid ransom money over Rs.30 million to certain unidentified persons for the release of Sriskandarajah. However he is still missing. He was a leading Sugar merchant and owner of Kala Traders at 4th Cross Street, Colombo 11.

\* Kunjupillai Sivakandan (34) was abducted from his business premises at Messenger Street, Colombo 12 at 2 pm on 23 August 2006 by armed persons who came in a white van. Sivakandan has been missing since then. He is a businessman and a politician belonging to Up country Peoples Front (UPF) led by Cabinet Minister P.Chandrasekaran.

\* Nadarajah Manivannan (28) was shot dead near his shop, Sennan Groceries at Chitra Lane in Colombo 5 on 2 September 2006 by armed men who came in a motor cycle. He was a small boutique owner,

\* Edward Reginold Jesudasan (30), an executive of Union Assurance who left for work from his office at Colombo 3 on 1 September 2006 evening did not return home at Farm Road, Mattakuliya, Colombo 15. His highly tortured and subsequently murdered body was found near Kelaninadhi Temple (Viharaya) at Ferguson Road in Colombo 14, the following day morning and was identified by his mother Mary Matilda Jesudasan. The father of Edward Reginold is a retired police officer.

\* Sivarajah Haran (22) was abducted from at No. 8, Station Road, in Colombo 6 on 26 April 2006. Haran, originally from Jaffna, had come to Colombo for the treatment of his sick mother and has been staying at the above address. He has been missing since then.

\* Shanmuganathan Manivannan (28), a video shop owner was abducted from his shop, Shan Video at No. 44 Kotahena Street Colombo 13, by armed men and he is missing since then.

\* Vinasithambi Chelvanayagam, a corporal (service No. IQ01009) in Sri Lanka army has gone missing since 2 May 2006. Corporal Chelvanayagam worked at Army Head quarters in Colombo. His wife Mrs. Parameshwary Chelvanayagam has made complaints to the Human Rights Commission in Colombo and Local Police in Kosgama. He was living at 139, Anandagama, Akaravita, Avissawella.

\* Loganthirajah Komathy (36), Finance director of Aero Lanka Pvt Ltd, a private firm which is operating flights between Colombo and Jaffna was abducted from her residence at Rathmalana, at around 10pm by armed men who broke into her residence on 22 August 2006. She has been missing since then.

\* Lal Premaratne (28), an employee of Aero Lanka Pvt Ltd, a private firm which is operating flights between Colombo and Jaffna and his wife Mrs. Premaratne (25) are also reported missing since the evening of 22 August 2006. They were last seen leaving the office after work. Both are missing since then.

\* Nadarajah Guruparan (age 39), news manager of Sooriyan FM, Tamil Radio channel was abducted by armed men near his residence at Mt. Lavinia, on 29 August 2006 early morning, when he was on his way to work. Subsequently Guruparan was blind folded and taken to a place, one hour away from the location of abduction. After being interrogated, Guruparan was dropped at Kohuwela, the following morning. Since his release, Guruparan has chosen to remain silent regarding his abductors reportedly for fear for his own security.

\* Thavarajah Thavamani, a graduate computer engineer at MTV, a private media enterprise, was abducted on the morning of 1 September 2006 at Vivekananda Road in Wellawatte, when she was on her way to work. She was released by her captors on the same day night 10.30pm in Kirulapone.

(continued on next page)



# Time for an international human rights monitoring mission', Says UN Expert

Sept. 5 - The situation in Sri Lanka has deteriorated significantly. It is time for an international human rights monitoring mission in Sri Lanka. Recent events have confirmed the dynamics of human rights abuse identified in his report to the UN Human Rights Council and demonstrate the urgent need for an international human rights monitoring mission, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, Philip Alston, said in a statement issued on 5 September.

Welcoming the announcement by Sri Lanka's President Mahendra Rajapakse of his intention to invite an international commission to inquire into recent killings, disappearances and abductions in Sri Lanka, Philip Alston said, "This is a poten-

tially very important initiative". "A truly independent international inquiry holds out the prospect of resolving some of the horrendous events of recent weeks and months and bringing the country back from the abyss".

The challenge now, according to Alston, is to ensure that the commission is independent, credible, effective, and empowered to make a difference. "If the commission does not meet these requirements the initiative will fail and set back the cause of peace. If the requirements are taken seriously the move will prove to be courageous and could break the vicious circle that currently grips the country. Various other countries have opted for a similar approach according to Alston and he suggested that

the ideal way forward would be for the Government to seek the advice of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in establishing the commission to ensure its independence and effectiveness.

The Special Rapporteur, who visited Sri Lanka less than a year ago, indicated that his forthcoming report to the UN General Assembly would also urge the creation of an international human rights monitoring mission.

Mr. Alston observed that the month of August had seen a series of tragedies, all serving to undermine respect for human rights as well as the prospects for peace. In addition to deploring the various military and naval engagements in recent weeks he made particular reference to several incidents of major human rights concern including the killing of a leading Tamil intellectual, the disappearance in Jaffna of a highly respected priest, Father Jim Brown, and the shooting of 17 aid workers, all in the space of a couple of weeks.

"I deplore the assassination of the Deputy Secretary-General of the Government Peace Secretariat Mr. Ketheshwaran (Kethesh) Loganathan, with whom I had met in Colombo. He was a man of great vision, insight and courage and his killing, in an incident that apparently bore all the hallmarks of the LTTE's systematic elimination of Tamils who hold independent views, is a tragedy", said Mr. Alston. Similarly, he noted that "the recent ruling by the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission that the killing of the 17 civilian aid workers employed by Action contre le faim in Muttur on 4 August 2006 seems most likely attributable to the Government security forces, highlights the urgency of the Government ensuring adequate accountability on the part of those forces."

## Alston's preview

The Special Rapporteur has indicated that he would be making specific proposals in his forthcoming report to the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly. In that regard he also released the following statement intended to give a preview of some of the more general analysis

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\* In June, 2006 five headless bodies of men were found in an estate at Avissawella. DNA tests indicated that two bodies of the five were Tamils, who had gone missing since May, 2006. The two identified are Sivasamy Sukumar (40), a three wheeler driver, resident of Paradise place, Armour Street, Colombo 12 and Mahalingam Narendrakumar (31), a businessman, from Telangapatha Road, Wattala. The identities of other three bodies are not yet confirmed but believed to be of Tamils.

## More abductions

A news report datelined 14 September said that a leading Sea Street businessman, his son and one of his employees were allegedly abducted by an unidentified gang as Colombo Tamil residents said the number abducted in recent weeks was more than 50, police according to police sources.

The victims, Egamparam (64) Saravanan (27) and Ganesh Muhandan (22) were on their way home after closing the shop when the alleged abduction reportedly took place.

Meanwhile, Tamil residents in Colombo claimed more than 50 Tamils had been abducted in recent weeks and some of them were released after paying massive ransom while the whereabouts of others are still not known. They said people were not coming forward to provide information regarding such incidents due to threats on their lives.

Pettah ASP Premalal Ranagala charged that a Tamil group was behind most of those incidents. He said this group involved in extortion, at times demanded large sums as ransom to release those abducted. The ASP said relatives made complaints when they went missing, but refrained from telling the rest of the story due to fear.

contained in his report:

The situation in Sri Lanka has deteriorated significantly since I visited Sri Lanka and met with Government officials, members of civil society, and representatives of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at the end of 2005. Recent events have confirmed the dynamics of human rights abuse identified in my report (E/CN.4/2006/53/Add.5) and demonstrate the urgent need for an international human rights monitoring mission.

International human rights monitoring is not, of course, an invariably effective response even to situations involving widespread human rights abuse, but there are specific factors indicating that such an approach would be extremely valuable in Sri Lanka. One of these is that civilians are not simply "caught in the cross-fire" of the conflict: Rather, civilians are intentionally targeted for strategic reasons. Such killings are quintessentially human rights violations demanding a human rights response.

Another factor suggesting the value of international monitoring is that the conflict between the Government and the LTTE is ultimately a struggle for legitimacy, not territory. The conflict has no military solution, and mere adjustment of the facts on the ground will not fundamentally change either party's position in future negotiations. The LTTE's hopes for autonomy or independence rest on persuading the domestic and international communities that this would be the best solution in human rights terms. However, the LTTE has a record of using killings to deter civilians from exercising freedoms of expression, movement, association, and participation in public affairs. "As it stands, no outside observer could wish rule by the LTTE on the entire Tamil community, much less on the Sinhalese and the Muslims of the North and East."

The Government should not, however, interpret the widespread proscription of the LTTE as a terrorist organization as an endorsement of its own record. Indeed, it is an enduring scandal that convictions of government officials for killing Tamils

are virtually non-existent, and many Tamils doubt that the rule of law will protect their lives.

A resolution of this conflict that would merit the international community's endorsement will require the Government, the LTTE, or both, to demonstrate genuine respect for human rights. The strategic importance of achieving and maintaining international legitimacy grounded in respect for human rights is not completely lost on either the Government or the LTTE. Indeed, the discourse of human rights is central to the parties' own understandings of the conflict's origins and conduct. However, by using proxies, the subversion of accountability mechanisms, and disinformation, both parties have been able to commit deniable human rights abuses. Effective monitoring would foreclose the possibility of employing a strategy of deniability, pressuring the Government and the LTTE to seek legitimacy through actual rather than simulated respect for human rights.

When I visited Sri Lanka, my conclusion was that the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), which was established to monitor the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) of 2002, could be strengthened in ways that would permit it to provide relatively effective human rights monitoring. Indeed, the SLMM has played a commendable and increasingly assertive role with respect to extrajudicial killings. However, as I observed in my report, "For pragmatic reasons [strengthening the SLMM] seems to be the best interim measure, but before long significantly more will be needed. If the ceasefire fails, and that now appears to be an all too real possibility, the SLMM's role will be in question and there will be an urgent and pressing need to establish a full-fledged international human rights monitoring mission." (E/CN.4/2006/53/Add.5, para. 47). Since then, the SLMM has been severely weakened by the LTTE's decision to insist on the withdrawal of monitors who are nationals of EU member states, and either party could elect to unilaterally terminate the CFA at any time, thus withdrawing the

SLMM's mandate. It is time for an international human rights monitoring mission in Sri Lanka.

It is thus appropriate to reiterate some of the requirements for effective monitoring in the particular situation of Sri Lanka today:

\* The details of alleged incidents, the results of investigation, and the basis for the monitoring mission's determination of responsibility should be made public (even if information is redacted to protect individuals).

\* The investigative process should be designed to prioritize the protection of witnesses against intimidation and violence.

\* The mandate of the monitoring mission should not be geographically-limited, inasmuch as conflict-related human rights violations occur throughout the country.

\* Because a key purpose of monitoring is to limit the possibility of conducting deniable human rights abuses, the monitoring mission should command a high level of investigative and forensic capacity. This requires, inter alia, persons with police training, persons with medical training, and Sinhala and Tamil interpreters.

\* The monitoring mission should be independent of any peace process. Two implications of this are that:

- Regardless whether the CFA remains in force, the monitoring mission should not be called upon to investigate violations of the CFA. The distinction between violations of human rights and humanitarian law, on the one hand, and of violations of a ceasefire agreement, on the other, must be preserved.

- The monitoring mission should report to a neutral body.

This list should not be considered comprehensive. It is intended simply to highlight certain requirements for effective monitoring that are specific to Sri Lanka in light of the dynamics and logic of human rights abuse in that country. The United Nations would be well-situated to establish a mission fulfilling these requirements. □

# European Parliament resolution on Sri Lanka

Sep 7 – The following is the full text of the resolution on the current situation in Sri Lanka adopted by the European Parliament on 7 September 2006:

The European Parliament,

- *having regard to its previous resolutions on Sri Lanka of 18 May 2000, 14 March 2002 and 20 November 2003, its resolution of 13 January 2005 on the tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean and its resolution of 18 May 2006 on the situation in Sri Lanka,*

- *having regard to the decision of the Council of the European Union of 29 May 2006 to formally proscribe the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE),*

- *having regard to the Tokyo Conference Co-chairmen's statement of 30 May 2006,*

- *having regard to the appeal of 12 August 2006 by the Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Donor Conference (EU, USA, Japan, Norway) that both sides put an end to all breaches of the 2002 ceasefire,*

- *having regard to the statement of the Presidency of the European Union of 17 August 2006 on Sri Lanka,*

*having regard to the Tokyo Declaration on the Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka of 10 June 2003, which linked donor support to progress in the peace process,*

- *having regard to the Cease Fire Agreement signed between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE which entered into force on 23 February 2002, - having regard to the Oslo Declaration of December 2002, in which the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE agreed to explore a solution based on a federal structure within a united Sri Lanka,*

- *having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,*

A. whereas, in the past few

months, the situation in Sri Lanka has deteriorated miserably with hundreds of deaths, some 200 000 people displaced from their homes, 500 000 civilians in the Jaffna peninsula deprived of essential food and water supplies, and vital post-tsunami reconstruction work disrupted,

B. whereas the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) has found that the LTTE was responsible for the bombing of a civilian transport bus in a land mine attack on 15 June 2006 that killed 64 people and injured more than 80 in Kebetigollewa in northern Sri Lanka and declared the incident to be a gross violation of the Cease Fire Agreement,

C. whereas the failure to seize the opportunity for the resumption of peace negotiations has diminished severely the possibility of real political progress,

D. whereas the SLMM has found that 17 aid workers employed by the French humanitarian agency Action Against Hunger had been shot dead by government forces in Muttur,

E. whereas the SLMM has been depleted and many of its monitors have been withdrawn from northern and eastern Sri Lanka following the ultimatum issued by the LTTE,

F. recalling the primacy of respect for human rights and humanitarian norms by all parties to the conflict, not only as an immediate response to the worsening situation but as a fundamental building block in a just and enduring resolution of the conflict,

G. whereas a deal to share international aid in the aftermath of the tsunami has never been properly implemented, reconstruction has been slow and there is real concern that funds may have been misappropriated,

1. Deplores the resumption of large-scale and widespread violence and the breakdown of peace nego-

tiations; is alarmed by the deterioration of the security situation with military clashes in the east and the north; stresses that the immediate re-introduction of the nominally extant Cease Fire Agreement is essential for any progress towards a political solution and a lasting peace;

2. Condemns the daily attacks in and around Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa, which have resulted in enormous humanitarian suffering and the deaths of hundreds of civilians and military personnel; notes that the Muslim community in the east of the country has suffered disproportionately from the renewed fighting with the displacement of 50 000 people in Muttur alone;

3. Deeply deplores the murder of the 17 Sri Lankans working for the French NGO Action Against Hunger in Muttur; acknowledges the Government's initiation of a full investigation into the incident and the participation of a forensic expert seconded by the Government of Australia; reiterates its demand for effective and impartial investigations into all alleged atrocities and serious human rights violations and for the full force of the law to be brought to bear against those found to have been complicit in such activities;

4. Condemns the operation on 14 August 2006 against Mullaitivu which resulted in the deaths of 51 children and young people;

5. Welcomes the announcement by Sri Lanka's President Mahinda Rajapaksa of his intention to invite an international independent group of eminent persons as observers of investigations into abductions, disappearances and extrajudicial killings in Sri Lanka; considers the setting-up of an independent, credible and effective commission, in the interim, to be a courageous move that could break the vicious cycle of violence in Sri Lanka; recommends that the Government of Sri Lanka seek the advice of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour in establishing the commission, so as to ensure its independence and effectiveness;

6. Underscores the long-term need for a wide-ranging human rights agreement between the parties and

its facilitation by an effective, independent international monitoring mission, complementing the agreement on the ground, as recommended by UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston, with unhindered access to both Government and LTTE controlled areas;

7. Emphasises the need for Government forces engaged in counter-insurgency and domestic security operations to exercise maximum restraint in accordance with international law in order to minimise any risk of innocent civilian casualties, and to behave impeccably in all their actions; recommends that the Government of Sri Lanka strengthen its National Police Force to ensure effective police investigation of all extrajudicial killings; recommends the immediate appointment of members of the National Police Commission by the Constitutional Council, as provided for by the Constitution, and that its key role in promoting and disciplining police officers be confirmed; recommends programmes to recruit Tamil and Tamil-speaking police officers, especially to work in the North and East, and programmes to train all police reservists in criminal detection and investigation;

8. Reiterates its condemnation of the appalling abuse of children through the recruitment of child soldiers, which is a war crime, and calls on all rebel groups to stop this practice, to release those whom they are holding and to make a declaration of principle that they will not recruit any children in the future; urges the Government of Sri Lanka to put into place legal measures to prevent and criminalise the practice; welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Alan Rock of Canada as a Special Advisor to Radhika Coomaraswamy, UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, to conduct a fact-finding mission to Sri Lanka on this issue;

9. Condemns the intransigence of the LTTE leadership over the years, which has successively rejected so many possible ways forward, including devolution at the provincial level or Provincial Councils; devolution at the regional level or Regional Coun-

cils; as well as the concept of a federation with devolution at the national level;

10. Expresses its concern that elements on both sides of the divide in Sri Lanka are intent on conflict and insists, for the sake of all the people of Sri Lanka, that they pull back from the brink;

11. Calls therefore for an immediate, comprehensive and verifiable end to hostilities, including political assassinations and suicide bombing, and calls on Prabhakaran and Karuna to resume peace negotiations on a constructive basis with the Government of Sri Lanka without delay;

12. Calls for respect for human rights and humanitarian norms by all parties to the conflict, not only as an immediate response to the worsening situation but as a fundamental building block in a just and enduring resolution of the conflict;

13. Calls on all parties to the conflict to guarantee the security of the SLMM at all times; regrets the LTTE's insistence on the withdrawal of EU nationals from the SLMM; commends the departing Danish, Finnish and Swedish monitors for their invaluable work; supports Iceland and Norway for increasing the number of monitors they each provide to the SLMM and expresses the hope that the SLMM will be able to perform its duties without fear of hostile action; calls on the Council to provide financial or technical support for any measure that could make up for the loss and to adjust the SLMM equipment to match the challenges of its task;

14. Calls on the Government and the LTTE to grant unhindered access for humanitarian aid workers, UN organisations and truce monitors to all parts of the country and to ensure their security;

15. Calls on the Government of Sri Lanka to clearly set out what the requirements are for NGOs to be active in the North and East and to speed up the process of issuing work permits for international staff working with NGOs, ensuring that the process is efficient and transparent;

16. Whilst the LTTE remains proscribed, calls upon EU Member States and the wider international community to take robust and deter-

mined action actively to investigate the agents of the LTTE; considers that this should include a properly enforced travel ban to inhibit movement of recruiters and couriers; the arrest and repatriation of those involved in terrorist support activities; confiscation of assets associated with the LTTE, such as its commercial shipping fleet; freezing of suspect bank accounts; and closing companies or undertakings associated with the LTTE; consideration can be given to lifting proscription if there is an effective ceasefire, an end to terrorism and resumption of serious negotiations on a constructive basis;

17. Notes the closure of the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation in the UK and the current investigations into the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation and the World Tamil Coordinating Committee offices in the United States and Australia;

18. Insists that more effective measures be taken by all governments of EU Member States to prevent the indoctrination and intimidation of Tamils resident in their countries and the extortion of money to fund LTTE activities;

19. Reiterates its call, as an immediate gesture of goodwill, for both sides to cease the use of anti-personnel landmines and to assist in their removal and, to this end, calls on the Government of Sri Lanka to set an example by signing the Ottawa Convention banning the use of such mines and on the LTTE to sign the Geneva Call 'Deed of Commitment';

20. Notes the decision of two Tamil political parties, the Ceylon Workers Congress and the Up-Country People's Front, to join the governing coalition;

21. Calls on the Government of Sri Lanka, the United National Party and other parties to agree to work in close cooperation to take robust action against terrorism and to address legitimate Tamil grievances, and to come forward with a bold gesture of reconciliation towards the Tamil peoples of Sri Lanka; considers that a major step in creating the right framework for such action would be early revision of the Constitution of Sri Lanka, as one of Asia's longest-



standing democracies, to define the state as a secular, democratic republic in which all religions are respected;

22. Welcomes President Rajapaksa's expressed commitment to 'maximum devolution' for the Tamil people and calls for this to be given substance; accordingly, urges the work of the All Party Representative Committee to be expedited in order to produce realistic and acceptable proposals within weeks rather than months, which would win the hearts of the Tamil communities in the interests of an agreed solution; reiterates the Co-chairs' statement of 30 May 2006, calling for the Government of Sri Lanka to 'show that it is ready to make the dramatic political changes to bring about a new system of governance which will enhance the rights of all Sri Lankans'; calls on the Government of Sri Lanka and the Co-Chairs to reiterate the Tokyo Declaration, and the LTTE to abide by it;

23. Expresses concern at the impact of the renewed conflict on reconstruction and the delivery of international aid, noting that although the EU has allocated almost EUR 125 million in post-tsunami humanitarian and reconstruction aid for Sri Lanka, the enduring political gridlock on the 'Post-Tsunami Operations Management Structure' continues to delay the release of a further EUR 50 million in aid, hindering vital reconstruction work in the north and east of Sri Lanka; notes also the decision of the Asian Development Bank to reschedule some funding and the difficulties in taking forward many infrastructure projects;

24. Supports the current action plan of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for the benefit of the displaced population;

25. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Governments of the Member States to redouble their efforts to help bring a stable and just peace to Sri Lanka and restore security and prosperity;

26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Government of Norway and the other Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Donor Conference, the President and Government of Sri Lanka and other parties to the conflict. □

# Is talking a continuation of war by other means?

Rajan Philips

To talk, or not to talk: that seems to be the question. The answers have been mixed and many, triggered by the surprisingly sensational announcement out of Brussels. Even if well intended, the Co-Chairs spokespersons could have avoided the impression of jumping the gun, or stealing the thunder, whatever the metaphor. The news about the talks should have been broken simultaneously in Sri Lanka and Europe following protocol consultations.

These are sensitive times and the international mediators and facilitators should not only be neutral, they should also seem to be neutral. Individuals involved in this process must eschew ego boosting publicity and careerism. There is too much at stake here, especially the lives and livelihoods of people who are neither seen nor heard on the matter.

The Co-Chairs representing 58 donor countries interested in Sri Lanka must do everything in their powers to persuade the government and the LTTE to stop the violence in every form, starting immediately and lasting interminably. But as for the actual talks, rather than rushing them the two sides should be guided to proceed in small but firm steps.

## No Military Solution

Amidst all the insistences about terms and conditions for the talks, it is heartening that both the government and the LTTE do really want to talk. The recent military successes have brought on the government considerable pressures, from within its ranks and outside, to reject the resumption of talks and to continue the attacks on the LTTE. The government seems to be resisting such pressures and is emphasizing the search for a political solution.

A military solution to the Tamil question can only mean one thing: turning the whole of the North and East into permanent high security

zones and feeding the people there with daily dry rations. Such an ending, even if it were feasible, will not bode well for the rest of the country politically, economically and socially. That will be the end of Sri Lanka as a moral entity.

International agencies have been warning about an impending humanitarian disaster involving over a million displaced people in the North and East. The recent fighting added close to 250,000 displaced people to the 750,000 already displaced by the tsunami and the war before it. That leaves nearly 40% - or four out every ten - of the 2.6 million people in the two beleaguered provinces in the category of internally displaced people.

To the lot of the displaced we should add the tales of the disappearing. Kidnapping and targeted killings of Tamils have become a daily occurrence in Jaffna and Colombo. The ominous White Van used in kidnapping that sent shivers through the South in the late 1980s has now re-emerged in Colombo as well as in Jaffna. The East is in turmoil again - a return to the dreadful 1990s, when over a thousand Tamils disappeared and they are still unaccounted for.

The LTTE has no moral bone in its body to complain on behalf of the affected Tamils but that does not excuse the State of its basic responsibility to all its citizens including Tamils. A state consumed by military operations will invariably fall short of its civic responsibilities, and the State of Sri Lanka has fallen far, far short of this responsibility, time and time again. For this reason alone the resumption of talks should be welcomed as a positive development.

There has been much complaining by government circles about the international community treating the Sri Lankan State and the LTTE as equals in regard to the ceasefire agreement. The fact though is that when an agreement is signed between two

parties in regard to a particular matter the two cannot be treated differently in the execution of that agreement. That does not make the two parties equal in all respects. Clearly, there is, or ought to be, more to the State of Sri Lanka than its ceasefire agreement with the LTTE, but this difference has to be manifested not through vacuous verbal assertions but positive actions on other fronts that fall within the legitimate purview of the State.

### The tail wagging the Lion

Thus, the government could and should act on reaching a consensus with the UNP in the South, opening a forum for identifying the concerns of the Muslims in the East, dealing with non-LTTE Tamil groups, and reaching out to the Tamil Diaspora. There is nothing preventing the government from acting on these fronts while engaging the LTTE in bi-lateral talks. What is important, however, is that the government has to be open, generous and consistent in its dealing with all the multiple stakeholders. It would be counterproductive to try to play one against the other, especially the Muslims against the Tamils, or the non-LTTE Tamil groups against the LTTE.

Next to the LTTE talks, the other positive news this week has been the initiation of talks between the PA government and the UNP opposition. Kumar David, in his article last Sunday, persuasively argued that a PA-UNP marriage should be based on a definite program centered on the political solution to the ethnic problem. The consequences of the PA and the UNP not reaching a consensus cannot be over emphasized.

Together, the PA and the UNP represent the vast majority of the Sinhalese and allowing the JVP and the JHU to dictate the government's policy on the ethnic question is really a case of the tail wagging the lion. The JVP's overtures to the armed forces and its access to the soldiers through the Manel Mal movement can be ignored by the PA and UNP leaders only at their peril and that of the country.

Unlike Pakistan and Bangladesh, Sri Lanka has been spared of military coups and the ordeals of military rule because of the close social and kinship ties linking the military person-

nel and the Sinhalese society and the resulting lack of exclusive elitism among the military top brass. This was the social backdrop to the common front of the government and the army against the two JVP insurrections of 1971 and 1988. The common front saved the South from the fate that has befallen the North under the LTTE.

The question has often been raised that if it was alright for the army to crush the JVP, why should there be qualms about letting the army to finish off the LTTE now? The answer is simple: it is the ethnic disparity between the army (which is all Sinhalese) and the LTTE (which is all Tamil) with the result that any fight between the army and the LTTE takes a far heavier toll on the non-combatant Tamils than the army's attacks on the JVP (all Sinhalese) drew on the general Sinhalese population. The army in fact saved the Sinhalese from the JVP, but the Tamils are tossed between the fire and the frying pan as the army and LTTE battle on.

The JVP is now using the fight against the LTTE to make inroads into the army that it once denigrated and attacked. If the PA and the UNP do not act now to reach consensus and put to rest the Tamil question, Sri Lanka may have to suffer JVP inspired military putsches in the future. The LTTE cannot hope for a better reason for its continued existence in the North than a JVP-military government in the South.

### Calling the Tiger bluff

The government's second major concern about being rushed into talks is that the LTTE, as in the past, will use the cessation of hostilities to regroup and arm itself for future fighting. If the results of the recent fighting are any evidence, the last ceasefire period does not seem to have done LTTE much good by way of enhancing its military capabilities.

There is no question that the ceasefire and the political distractions played a role in the Karuna split and the blunting of the LTTE's fighting edge. Only those who insist on an untrammelled military solution will insist in denying the weakening effects of the ceasefire on the LTTE.

That said and given the context of continuing ceasefire violations,

the government has already called upon the international community "to put in place a practical mechanism to prevent the illegal procurement of arms and an effective blockade to the induction of weapons by the LTTE." But the practicality of such a mechanism and blockade is highly doubtful given the open market on weapons.

There is a widespread notion in Colombo that the LTTE has been given preferential treatment by the international community compared to other armed organizations in similar conflict situations, e.g. the PLO, Hamas, IRA etc. There are a number of factors, in my view, for any differential, but not preferential, treatment of the LTTE by the international community. What is unique about the LTTE, in comparable world situations, is that the international community has had no alternative Tamil agency to formally and effectively deal with.

Even the late lamented Lakshman Kadirgamar never articulated a non-LTTE Tamil position for the benefit of the international community even though all of the diplomatic mileage he secured for Sri Lanka was based on the fact that he was an ethnic Jaffna Tamil. Nor did he make a concerted effort to build a constituency among the Tamils at home or abroad for a non-LTTE Tamil position.

The failure of every government since 1994 to adopt and enact a constitutional framework that would have satisfied the criteria of the international community, regardless of the organizational needs of the LTTE, has also made it impossible for the international community to conclusively call the LTTE's political bluff. The most important factor of all is the devastation that the war has wreaked on the people of the North and East and the inability of the government and the LTTE to work together even for the limited purpose of providing redress to these people.

The resumption of talks gives the government a new opportunity to address the omissions of previous governments in building a southern consensus, reach out to the Muslims and non-LTTE Tamil groups, address the needs of the displaced people, put an end to kidnapping and targeted killings, and develop a federal solution to call the LTTE's political bluff. □

# An honourable peace for all should be the aim

Jehan Perera

The government's victory in Sampur came unexpectedly easily, and has led to much speculation about the LTTE's real military strength in the aftermath of the twin setbacks of its break up in the east and the tsunami that followed in 2004. Although the government declared an end to military actions after taking control of Sampur in the east, more fighting is now taking place in the north. At present government troops are advancing from their positions in Jaffna in the direction of Elephant Pass that connects the Jaffna peninsula to the mainland.

Elephant Pass was the location of the second biggest military base in the north until it was overrun by the LTTE in 2000. Erasing the memory of that humiliating defeat would be a priority of the present government and its nationalist allies. But as in Sampur, the government's justification for its current military offensive in the north would be that it is defensive, and is spurred by the LTTE's attacks on the government's positions on the Palali airforce base during the battle for Sampur.

The government appears to be having the upper hand in the military battles for control on the ground. In addition the government's morale is high, not only militarily, but also politically, with more opposition parliamentarians looking set to join the government to reap the benefits of being part of the government's ever increasing cabinet of ministers. The challenge for the government is to ensure that its strength is used for the welfare of the people.

So far the LTTE has not been able to find a convincing answer to the government's strategy. The government appears to have exposed the LTTE's vulnerability in a way that the opposition was unable to. The LTTE's military resistance has been less costly to the government than anticipated. Both on the battlefield of Sampur and in its attempts at gue-

rilla warfare in Colombo, such as the abortive attack on Colombo port, the LTTE has been foiled. The LTTE's political response has been even less convincing, with its spokespersons berating the international community and simultaneously threatening to attack soft targets in the south.

Ever since it pulled out of peace talks in 2003 the LTTE has been charting a political course that is proving to be self-destructive. It ensured the election of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, by preventing Tamil voters from voting from his opponent, although it was patently obvious that the President was the choice of the nationalists and pro-war sections of the polity. The LTTE followed this by repeatedly ambushing government troops in the north east, thus giving the impression that it was spoiling for a fight. Thereafter they closed the water canal in Marvil Aru, providing the government with the moral upper hand in the fighting that followed.

## International sanctions

There can be no denying that the LTTE needs to change its strategy to achieve justice for the Tamil people. The LTTE's long use of armed violence and terror to achieve a position of political parity with the government appears to have reached its limits. A continued use of the traditional LTTE strategies is not likely to take either the LTTE or the rest of the country to any place that is good. A renunciation of violence and a readiness to enter into political negotiations is the acid test that the world demands of the LTTE.

On the other hand, if the LTTE persists in its old ways, the sanctions of the international community are likely to become more stringent. International human rights and accountability for abuses is a rapidly growing branch of international law. Only last month a former militant leader in the Democratic Republic of

the Congo who is accused of recruiting child soldiers became the first individual to face charges at the International Criminal Court. He could face life in prison if found guilty by the court.

Lubanga Dyilo, who was arrested in March this year, is the President of the Union des Patriotes Congolais (UPC) and was the commander-in-chief of its former military wing, the Forces Patriotiques pour la Libération du Congo (FPLC) in 2002-03. FPLC commanders systematically abducted boys and girls and then forcibly incorporated them into their ranks to help them in their conflict in the Ituri district in the north-eastern Congo.

Established by the Rome Statute of 1998, the International Criminal Court can try cases involving individuals charged with war crimes committed since July 2002. The United Nations Security Council, the ICC Prosecutor or a State Party to the court can initiate any proceedings, and the ICC only acts when countries themselves are unwilling or unable to investigate or prosecute. The day that those accused of horrendous human rights crimes in Sri Lanka are brought before the same court may not be far off.

At the same time, the government also needs to be concerned about the international response to the deterioration of the human rights situation in the country. Already the UN and several donor countries have sent their special representatives to Sri Lanka to assess the humanitarian and human rights situation. In the 1990s, no less a nationalist than President Ranasinghe Premadasa was forced by the international community to consent to a list of over 30 recommendations made by Amnesty International.

## Government strategy

The government's present strategy appears to be focus on strengthening itself relative to the LTTE. Unfortunately, the government is showing little or no concern about the costs being piled upon the affected civilian population. On the one hand, the government is attempting to take out LTTE positions on the ground that could pose a threat to its own military bases in the north east. In doing so, the displacement of civilians has been of little consequence

to the government.

On the other hand, the government is also attempting to weaken the LTTE's hold in the east. It appears to be utilizing the breakaway Karuna group to make it difficult for the LTTE to remain in the east. The Karuna group is present in government controlled areas, and their political offices are given government protection. However, along with the LTTE, the Karuna group also stands accused of child recruitment. Extra-judicial killings, abductions sometimes for ransoms, appearance of bodies in public spaces, some decapitated, and some mutilated and burnt beyond recognition all contribute to creating an environment of terror especially to the Tamil community.

There also appears to be a deliberate government strategy of restricting humanitarian relief to LTTE-controlled areas by non-governmental agencies. One of the basic requirements of a state is to provide for the basic human needs of the people. By freezing the bank accounts of the LTTE's non governmental arm, the TRO, and by restricting international humanitarian access to the LTTE controlled areas, the government has effectively undermined the LTTE's claim to be a state, or even a semi-state. But if the government is itself unable to make up for the shortfall, it will undermine its claim of caring equally for all its citizens.

A heavy responsibility in steering the country between the excesses of heady military success and increasing human rights abuses lies with President Mahinda Rajapaksa. During his Presidential election campaign, he promised an honourable peace, as opposed to his characterization of the Ceasefire Agreement as providing for a defeatist peace. Speculation is rife that with the military campaigns in the north east being successful, the President might decide to go in for a General Election. But for peace to be truly honourable it must be for all of Sri Lanka's multi ethnic population, and not only for the ethnic majority who voted the President to power. (12 September 2006)

## US Justice Department Launches Prosecution on 'terrorism' charges

The US Justice Department authorities on Monday (21 August) charged at least 13 men with providing material support to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the US Justice Department said. Amongst the charges are conspiring to buy surface to air missiles for the Tamil Tigers and bribing US officials to have the LTTE removed from a list of terrorist organizations and to obtain classified intelligence, a statement said. The evidence included consensual recordings of telephone conversations and meetings with US officials, it added.

The LTTE is designated and outlawed as a "terrorist organisation" in most western countries, including the US, Canada, UK and 24 other countries of the European Union. The outfit has remained banned in India since the assassination of its former Prime Minister, Rajive Gandhi, in which the LTTE and its leaders were charged as being directly involved.

Though the LTTE has not made an official statement, they have denied any involvement in the activities of the individuals charged in the United States. However, the Sri Lankan government hailed the development.

"We don't have any connection with those people. It is not our way of operating," LTTE military spokesman Rasiah Ilanthiraiyan is reported to have told Reuters soon after the news broke out.

Sri Lankan government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella was quoted by AFP as saying that "this is tangible support in the global war against terror. They [US] not only banned the Tigers in 1997, but have been cracking down on the group."

The men charged on Monday (21 August) were involved in "the procurement of military equipment, communications devices and other technology, fundraising and money laundering through charitable organiza-

tions and a myriad of other criminal activity, including conspiracy to bribe public officials," the US Justice Department statement said.

In a police operation, undercover agents posing as Department of State officials were offered millions of dollars during a series of secret meetings in a New York apartment, one of the two complaints setting out the charges said.

According to the US authorities, at a meeting in July 2005, Socrates, one of those facing charges, asked undercover agents whether they "could stop the United States government from sending arms to the Sri Lankan government" and "provide intelligence about this issue," the papers said.

According to two complaints unsealed, 13 Sri Lankan ethnic Tamils, domiciled in Canada and the United States, are being charged with multiple crimes, including conspiracy to provide material support and resources to a designated foreign terrorist organization, namely the LTTE, which is a crime under U.S. terrorism laws.

The complaint also charged that the defendants attempted to obtain classified information, conspired to bribe U.S. public officials in an effort to remove the LTTE from the U.S. State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations, and dealt in illegal financial transactions and money laundering.

The FBI documents have deleted the names of some documents and persons in the complaint reports with a view to withholding their identity. It is speculated that these persons may be some individuals who may have decided to cooperate with the agency to facilitate the prosecution. It also has

The US charges say the defendants are "closely connected" with LTTE leadership in Sri Lanka, and many of them have "personally met"



with LTTE leader, Velupillai Pirapaharan, and other senior leaders of the terrorist group.

### Persons charged

Among those who have been taken into custody and charged are: (1) Suresh Sriskandarajah, also known as "Waterloo Suresh," (2) Thirukumaran Sinnath-amy, (3) Thirukumaran Sivasubramaniam, (4) Murugesu Vinayagamoorthy, also known as "Dr. Moorthy" and "Vinayagamoorthy Murugesu," (5) Vvijayshanthar Patpanathan, also known as "Chandru," (also known as —deleted—, also known as —deleted—) (6) Nachimuthu Socrates and (7) Ramanan Mylvaganam, (8) Sathajhan Srachandran, also known as "Satha," (9) Sahil Sabaratnam, also known as "Sahil" and "Shakil," (10) Thiruthanikan Thaniga-salam, also known as "Thani," (11) Nadarasa Yograrasa, also known as "Yoga," and (12) Piratheepan Nadarajah, also known as "Nada,"

They were being held without bail and had initial appearances before a federal judge in Brooklyn on Monday (21). Since they more arrests have been reportedly made in Canada in connection with the same charges.

Socrates, described in court papers as a Tamil Tigers supporter based in North America, is a US citizen of South Indian origin. The others are said to be Canadian or Sri Lankan nationals.

### An alarming departure

The alleged efforts by North American-based supporters of the Sri Lankan Tamil Tigers to buy weapons in New York represent an alarming departure from their traditional activities, say experts and analysts.

Two US federal criminal complaints unsealed earlier this month charge eight named men and several others whose names remain secret with a series of offences including attempting to buy shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles and AK47 assault rifles for the group. They are also accused of plotting to bribe US State Department officials to remove the group from a list of terrorist organizations.

According to the complaints, those accused in the sting operations include "senior [...] supporters" of

the group, formally known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE), who "have direct and frequent contact with LTTE leadership in Sri Lanka and are often dispatched by the LTTE to countries around the world, including the US, to facilitate LTTE projects."

And court documents presented at a hearing for one of the accused in Canada said that he employed counter-surveillance techniques after the FBI asked Canadian authorities to keep an eye on him.

He said Canada and, to a lesser extent, the US were "very important hubs for fundraising and propaganda work" for the group, which was designated a foreign terrorist organization by the US government in 1997.

The complaints say that the group's supporters in the US have been under investigation since 1999. "This was a long-term intelligence gathering operation," Steven Siegel, spokesman for the FBI's Newark field office is quoted as telling ISN Security Watch.

He said 15 people were in custody in various places in the US and Canada, most of them Sri Lankan by origin, if not nationality. The first arrests took place on 17 August following a meeting in Long Island, New York with undercover FBI agents. During the meeting, four LTTE supporters agreed to buy 500 assault rifles, ten Russian-made SA-18 shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles and training for the missiles for US\$900,000, according to Siegel.

Other arrests followed in San Jose, California; Seattle, Washington; Buffalo, New York; Connecticut and Canada.

Siegel said that hundreds of federal agents from 20 FBI field offices in the US and law enforcement agencies in ten countries abroad had taken part in the investigation.

According to the complaints, some of the activities charged date back to October 2001. They include the bribery of a purported US immigration official (actually an undercover agent) to issue fraudulent travel documents to several aliens to allow them to enter the US.

Also enumerated in one complaint is an effort in 2004 to pay US\$1 million to a man they believed was a US State Department official, to help

get the Tigers off the department's list of foreign terrorist organizations.

But the chain of events that ended with the meeting about the missiles was initiated with a phone call on 30 July this year. Officials said the call was part of pattern of more aggressive acquisition activities that had recently emerged and helped prompt the arrests.

"Recently, the individuals concerned became more and more determined in their efforts" to acquire advanced weapons and sophisticated dual-use technology like night-vision goggles, GPS equipment and software programs to assist in the design of submarines, Siegel said.

Experts said the timing was significant, given the military situation in Sri Lanka, where a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire has effectively collapsed, and the LTTE has resumed attacks against Sri Lankan military and government targets.

The US criminal complaints include charges of laundering and illegally raising funds for the group and quote one of the defendants as saying "we have sent millions" to the Tigers through fake charities.

The defendant went on to explain that "in total more money is raised in Canada, but that the LTTE relies more heavily on donors in the United States for more time-sensitive financing needs."

### Denial

Reached at his home in Simsbury, Connecticut, Nachimuthu Socrates' son, Aristotle Socrates, told CNN that the charges were "absurd," that his father was innocent and that he would be contesting the charges. Socrates said his father was a businessman who had lived in Simsbury for 24 years, adding: "They've made a gross miscalculation."

Dr. Murugesu Vinayagamoorthy, who is a resident in the United Kingdom and running a medical practice, is one of the suspects remanded by the USA with the charges of attempting to purchase arms for LTTE and bribing the American State Department Officials. His house in London was reportedly searched by police officers of the Special Branch of Scotland Yard who took away computer and other materials from the doctor's premises. □

# Steps towards peace in Sri Lanka

Prof. Kopan Mahadeva

It is 12 years since my 'PLAN FOR PEACE IN EELAM' (published by Century House, ISBN 1-873265-06-9, 105pp, 1984) copies of which were sent to the President, the Parliamentary Select Committee, LTTE Leader, UN, Commonwealth Secretariat and others concerned for deliberation and appropriate action. Later events have been in line with some of my suggestions. Then lots happened, including the CFA of 2002.

But four years of the CFA haven't brought the desired peace, despite much talking. And, deliberate fighting is presently going on, with hundreds of deaths each week. There is so much tension, hatred, propaganda, counter-propaganda, and posturing.

One feels sad to have to helplessly watch all the confusion carnage and destruction. Are We, Sri Lankans not capable of being honest and fair to one another, and solve our mutual problems through dialogue? What is the use of our so-called high-level rate of literacy, and the teachings of our four great world religions? By our bangles we have become the laughing stock of the world, which is trying to help us, as best as it could, in our interests as well as theirs. We need to start radical thinking now.

Unless something concrete and urgent is done by Sri Lanka's Government, as the major and 'should-be-more-responsible' protagonist in the current conflict, the war would erupt again with full force, killing many more thousands, destroying a lot of the Island's infrastructure. And in the end, there can be no real winners. Even with international aid, it will take 25 years or more to raise our head as a world nation.

## Who Wants This War?

Who really wants this war to go on? Not any of the people of Sri Lanka. Not

the LTTE. And certainly not the Government of Sri Lanka, or, even the world outside. Then why are we going on fighting? Because of egos on both sides? No, because each party is suspicious, hateful and afraid of the other at various leadership levels!

It will be a safe assumption that the actual fighters on both sides, however inspired and motivated, would like peace to return to the Island as soon as practicable. And the politicians, who have learnt over the past 25 years that this war is not winnable, really prefer to earn their glory by ushering in peace. If they know how to do it!

## So, How Can The Current Fighting Be Stopped?

When people live in and with a problem for such long periods, it's natural that they lose objectivity and run out of ideas. Violence begets violence. State violence gives birth to violent resistance from the population. It happened with the JVP years ago. That is now the situation with the LTTE who do represent over 90% of Sri Lankan Tamils and who are sacrificing their lives to win assured rights for not only Tamils but concurrently for all the Island's minorities. They took up arms as a last resort. They self-learned the art of armed resistance by sheer dedication and sacrifice, and on the way, maybe made some mistakes, but always sincere to their noble mission. They have matured a lot over the years. They are prepared for serious, honest talks. That is how I, as a non-politician and an impartial observer, see the situation. I also believe that the LTTE will shelve their idea of separation, if Tamil rights are constitutionally guaranteed with a workable federated self-government in the North-east.

But, the path to success in this endeavour is being lost and re-found, and lost again, and yet again, due to dearth of objectivity and sincerity on the governmental sides. What we gained in the process is nothing but loss of reputation, individually and as a country and the postponement of real development and peoples welfare for good. It is not possible for one individual, however clever and objective, to suggest a full fledged solution for Sri Lanka's problems, which are growing more complex daily. But the following steps seem obvious to me, which, if taken, will arrest the current trend, rapidly improve the situation, and will take us soon towards a peaceful path.

**1. Stop the Air Raids:** Air Raids are cowards' weapons. Blind shots into darkness. In Sri Lanka's context they are acts prone to contempt and ridicule. Who would bomb people they claim they are governing and caring for? Air Raids are a silly waste of hard-earned foreign exchange, counter-productive shots aimed at peace. These must be stopped forthwith, once-for-all, and never resumed - at any time!

**2. Back to Barracks:** After a five-year jaunt (on foreign roundabouts) since CFA, can we come back to Square One? The second 'quick-step' towards peace is to confine all armed personnel back to barracks, 'as-we-were' in 2002. Once they see the State's cadres in barracks, there needs be no doubt, LTTE's boys & girls will resume their self-education schemes, social reforms and rural development. They will no more be interested in fighting and killing, any more than the State!

**3. Quit Sampoor:** The Government will act wise in ordering a speedy withdrawal out of Sampoor as a 'deliberate military tactic' or 'diplomatic and magnanimous voluntarily made gesture'. This is another urgent step needed towards peace.

**4. Strengthen the SLMM:** The SLMM came into the Island at our invitation, and has been doing a dedicated, magnificent job, despite pinpricks and direct insults. Presently they are weakened, morally and numerically. They are



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probably at the brink of pulling out due to the current armed assaults which undermine personal security of their staff, restricted mobility and diminished authority of facilitation. It is important that both parties to the conflict support and strengthen the SLMM without losing time. Or else, we could lose their services and also world support.

**5. Consult Opposition and the Religious Leaders:** War and peace are matters that are taken out of narrow, political considerations, as they should be, in advanced democracies. It is heartening to find that the President has invited the Leader of the Opposition recently for consultations. The past experience of the Opposition Leader as a signatory to the CFA and also Prime Minister for many years would be of great help. Similarly, it will be a sure and sound step, if at least one single initial overall consultation is made by the above two Leaders, with

the Chiefs of the Island's main religions, invited all together, to secure their combined wishes and blessings for the new peace efforts. All sections will respect such a gesture.

**6. Check the Facts, Appeal to the Hearts, and Communicate:** We, Lankans, by nature readily believe rumours, mainly due to misunderstanding and ineffective communication. For example, many Tamils believe that Sinhals, through their majority Governments are performing genocide on their race. Many Sinhals do believe that LTTE craves to capture the whole Island, hell-bent on killing all of them. Both these are obviously untrue, though reading seeing and hearing what fragments they do, lead them to those unhealthy negative fears and conclusions. Can't both parties inform each other of the realities and keep on repeating facts? It was a positive step that LTTE took to broadcast the reality

in N-E. in Sinhala. Can't the President and the Opposition Leader include small passages in Tamil in their speeches, as a promotional gesture? Can't the Government implement the Tamil Language policy sincerely and conscientiously so that Tamils do not suffer due to lack of knowledge of Sinhala? What will history record of the past 50 years of Sri Lanka's events? Do we care? Are our hearts made of real stone?

#### Conclusion

Some urgent and vital steps are highlighted above, to be taken principally by the Government, to ease the present impasse, and to pave the way for renewed peace initiatives. The Government is the major protagonist in this war. Depending on its actions it is sincerely believed that LTTE and the outside world will co-operate to end our half-a-century of strife and struggle. May God forgive us, and bless us all! □

**Two men killed in Vavuniya:** Aug 25 - A Sri Lanka Army (SLA) soldier reportedly in mufti and another person were shot dead by suspected Tamil Tigers in Vavuniya, around 9:15 pm on Thursday (24). The soldier was identified by an SLA officer who visited the site, as D.M.Dissanayake, 33. The other was identified as Andare Uppul, 30. Both are natives of Anuradhapura. 9 m.m. bullets were recovered from the site, police in Vavuniya said.

**STF kills 5 Tamil youth in retaliation:** Aug 25 - Sri Lanka Special Task Force (STF) personnel who came from Navatkerny, a suburb of Batticaloa town, where an STF patrol was targeted in a grenade attack, shot and killed five Tamil youths in the nearby New Muhathuvaram Road Cemetery Junction, 3 km northeast of the town on Thursday (24). The killings were allegedly carried out by STF men as "revenge killings" for the grenade attack. The STF has claimed that the killed persons were Tigers carrying weapons. Meanwhile, the STF trooper, wounded in the grenade attack at Navatkerny, later succumbed to his wounds when he was airlifted to Colombo hospital, medical sources said.

Two of the victims were identified as Tharmarajah Anandarajah, 28, the worker from Jegathees Rice Mill, from Senkalady and Soosaipillai Sutharsan, 26, from Punnacholai, Kumarapuram. The other victims, yet to be identified, were from Palameenmadu and Thiraymadu. The STF trooper who succumbed to his wounds was identified as Hevajalage Jayantha, 25. According to STF claims, a T-56 rifle, 3 magazines, 3 grenades and a pistol were captured from the killed youths.

**3 persons abducted in Colombo:** Aug 25 - Unidentified men riding in 3 cars abducted three Tamil youths in a lodge on Grandpass Street in Colombo 14 on Wednesday (23), according to the employees at the lodge. The lodge owners have informed their relatives and police about the abduction. The abductors had claimed they were taking the youths for interrogation. However, the police had told the relatives that they had no information about the abducted persons. The abducted persons were: Kunasegaram Mahindan, Kandasamy Sreetharan, both from Varani in

Kodikamam and Ramakrishnan Rajkumar from Trincomalee.

**Fish trader shot dead:** Aug 25 - Motorbike riding gunmen shot and killed a fish salesman near Kaddudai Junction, in Manipay in Jaffna on Friday (25) after following the trader as he rode to work in a motorcycle. The victim was identified as C. Lingeswaran, 40. His body has been taken to the Jaffna teaching hospital mortuary, by the Jaffna police who recovered his body from the crime site.

**LTTE cadre killed, 2 policemen wounded:** Aug 25 - A Tamil Tiger cadre was killed and two policemen riding in a three-wheeler were wounded, in a shootout on Thambiluvil Road in Amparai district Friday (25) noon. The LTTE cadre was gunned down when the policemen retaliated after an attack. Meanwhile, LTTE Political Head in Amparai, Jeya,

said the person shot dead was a political cadre of the Tigers. Mr. Jeya said STF personnel gunned down Mr. Sudar, 21, and said. Sudar was a political cadre who had gone to the town, controlled by the Sri Lankan armed forces, according to the Amparai Political Head of the LTTE. The policemen wounded in the shootout were identified as M Dharmaratne, 35 and W Abeyaratne, 33, and were admitted to the Akkaraipattu Hospital. The LTTE cadre killed in the shootout was in possession of a micro pistol, grenade and a cyanide capsule, police said.

**6 SLA troopers killed, 4 wounded:** Aug 26 - Six Sri Lanka Army troopers were killed in a bomb attack by suspected Tamil Tigers between Eluthumadduval and Muhamalai on Saturday (26). The SLA troopers were on a road clearing mission when the explosion occurred. Four troopers, wounded in the explosion were rushed to Karainagar Sri Lanka Navy hospital, military sources said. Military sources claimed that the bomb was an "improvised explosive device."

**Tiger arms cache recovered in Uswetakeiyawa:** August 27 - On a tip-off a combined team of STF and Pamunugama Police raided location in Uswetakeiyawa on Saturday (26) and found a weapons haul. A police source said that the weapons and explo-

## NEWS TRACK

sives including two claymore mines, a T 56 rifle with two magazines and 116 rounds, eight hand grenades, four detonators and wire cords were dug out from a piggery and police suspect that the arms were buried there few months ago for LTTE's future operations. Police said that 16 suspects were arrested for questioning. \* Meanwhile an unidentified corpse of a male, with gun shot injuries was found by troops on a clearing patrol at Welikanda near 109th mile post on Baticaloa - Polonnaruwa main road on Friday (25).

**LTTE releases Sri Lankan Policeman:** Aug 27 - The Liberation Tigers on Saturday (26) handed over the Sri Lankan Policeman, B.W.Bopetigoda, who was held in LTTE custody since October 2005. The release was made following a request from the outgoing Head of SLMM Major General Ulf Henricsson, LTTE sources in Kilinochchi said. The policeman was handed over to Major General Ulf Henricsson by S. Puleedevan, director of LTTE's peace secretariat, Saturday morning. B.W.Bopetigoda was the last of four policemen attached to the National Child Protection Service who were abducted in October 2005 and held in detention by the LTTE when they reportedly crossed into LTTE held territory as they were in hot pursuit of a foreign paedophile who had been holding and sexually abusing two girl children.

**Two men killed in Jaffna:** Aug 27 - Two men were shot dead by unidentified men in separate incidents in the Valikamam sector of the Jaffna peninsula on Saturday (26). Sithamparapillai Sivashankar was shot dead by men who followed him, while he was riding in a motorbike along KKS in Mallakam, around 9 a.m. The assailants escaped with his motorbike, police said. In a separate incident, C. Vijeyakantharasa, 38, was shot dead near police

station in Punnalaikadduvan, around 5 p.m., while curfew was in force. His body was removed from the site, around 9 am after the curfew was relaxed.

**7 SLA soldiers wounded in mine attack:** Aug 27 - At least seven Sri Lanka Army soldiers wounded in a Claymore landmine attack by suspected Tamil Tigers at Selvanagar, a Sri Lanka Army (SLA) controlled gateway towards Tamil Tiger controlled Muthur East, Sunday (27) were rushed to Polonnaruwa hospital, Police sources said.

**Sister and brother shot dead following attack on army:** Aug 27 - Armed men shot and killed two members of the same family on Saturday (26) on Udhayan Street, Sithandy, in Batticaloa district. The killings took place in the wake of two separate shootout incidents, on Friday (25) and Saturday (26), in the area where 2 Sri Lanka Army troopers were injured when a group of suspected LTTE attackers fired at road clearing patrol units of the SLA. The civilian victims, the brother and sister who had come to visit their sick mother, were identified as Sinnarasa Wimalakumari, 44, and Sinnarasa Ratnavel, 36. Armed men who approached their house called them out by name. When the sister and brother answered the call, both were gunned down at close range, neighbours said. The killings took place in Batticaloa Eravur Police division Sithandy, located 20 km northwest of Batticaloa town. An SLA soldier, K.M.Sisirakumara was wounded around 05:15 p.m., 3 hours before the killings, in a shootout with the Tigers near Vanthamoolai school, 3 km southeast of Sithandy. On Friday, an SLA trooper, W. Vasanthakumara, 34, had sustained injuries when a group of gunmen attacked a road clearing patrol of the SLA, around 5:15 p.m in Mavadvembu, Nagarkovil area. The soldier was admitted to the Polonnaruwa hospital.

**Abandoned LTTE Jaffna office set fire:** Aug 28 - Armed men set fire to building which functioned as the political office of the Liberation Tigers in Jaffna, Sunday (27) night, local residents said. The building is located at Potpathy in Kokkuvil, near Jaffna University Medical Faculty. Armed men came on foot and set fire to the two-story building. The office had remained closed since the LTTE's political wing withdrew from Sri Lanka Government controlled areas in December 2005.

**Former president of Fisheries Society killed:** Aug 28 - Former President of the Suppar Madam Fisheries Society was shot dead by unidentified men, around 3:30 pm on Monday (28). Sellathurai Gopalasingham, 53, was abducted from his house situated close High Security Zone (HSZ) in Jaffna. His body was found close to Kali tempel in Supar Madam, source said. Assailants came to his house located along seaside, took him for questioning to Athisoodi Pillaiyar temple and shot him in his head, according to local sources.

**Two soldiers shot dead:** Aug 29 - Two dead bodies with gun shot injuries were found on Tuesday (29) morning near Kandaswamy temple, where an attack on Sri Lanka Army by suspected Tamil Tigers left two soldiers killed and another injured, around noon on Monday (28).

**Three men killed in Jaffna:** Aug 29 - Three men were shot dead in three separate incidents within 24 hours on Monday (28) and Tuesday (29) in Jaffna. Jesuthas Deminian, 31, was shot dead at Kali kovil road, between Clock Tower road and Kannathiddy junction in Jaffna town, around 10:45 a.m. Rasaratnam Ganeshalingam, 40, was shot dead at his home in Thampalai in Achchuveli, around 8 p.m, Monday, while curfew was in force.

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Ariyaratnam Sathyaseelan, 26, was shot near Muththirai junction, along Chemmani road, around 1:30 p.m., on Tuesday.

**Fisherman shot to death:** Aug 30 - Periyathamby Veluppillai, 27, a fisherman by profession and a father of two children of Kalmadu in Valaichchenai police area, was shot and hacked to death by unidentified assailants on Tuesday (29) night around at Koraweli Road, Kannhipuram in Batticaloa district. He had been residing in 50 Housing Scheme in Kalmadu. He took refuge in a neighbouring house when unidentified gunmen tried to abduct him from his home. He was shot in the leg as he was trying to escape. Gunmen thereafter conducted a search operation in the area and took him out of a house where he was hiding. His body was taken to the Valaichchenai Base Hospital for post mortem. The reason behind this killing was not known.

**Man shot dead near army camp:** K.Thavarajah, 44, a father of 4, from Kayanmadu was reportedly shot dead by Sri Lankan Army (SLA) soldiers near Vavunatheevu camp, 3 km. west of Batticaloa town, at 7.35 a.m. on Wednesday (30) while he was returning home from Batticaloa Town. His body was taken to the Batticaloa Teaching Hospital for inquest and later handed over to the relatives at 3.30 p.m.

**Policeman injured in grenade attack:** Aug 31 - One police constable was injured when unidentified men lobbed a grenade on Thursday (31) morning. This incident took place in front of the Chenkalady Vellimalai Pillayar Temple located in Eravur police division in Batticaloa district. Unidentified men lobbed a grenade targeting three policemen who were on their way from Chenkalady police station to buy provision. A Tamil youth was arrested by the Police regarding this incident. The injured policeman has been warded in the Eravur hospital.

**SLA trooper killed in ambush:** Sept 1 - A Sri Lanka Army Lance Corporal was killed and five troopers wounded in a Claymore blast when a group of SLA soldiers on a road clearing patrol were ambushed near Karaveddy Predeshiya Sabha (PS) office in Vadamradchi, around 7:45 a.m., on Friday (1). The attack took place at Navalaramandam in Karaveddy on Jaffna - Point Pedro road. Following the attack, SLA announced over its radio that curfew has been re-imposed in Vadamradchi sector from Friday noon and launched a cordon and search operation in Karaveddy. Lance Corporal Ratnayake was killed. Lt. Tharsan, 22, Lt. Thisanayake, 28, Corporal Nimal, 22, soldier Sandirasena, 28, and Thilakaradne, 43, were wounded in the attack and rushed to Manthikai hospital, SLA sources said.

**Policeman killed in Eravur:** Sept 1 - A police constable who was shot by unidentified armed man on Thursday (31 Aug) evening around 6 p.m. succumbed to injuries around 11 p.m. on the same day at Batticaloa Teaching Hospital. He was identified as 37 year-old Meerasahibu Riyal, father of three children. The shooting incident took place along Punnaikuda road in Eravur police division in Batticaloa district. An armed man in hiding had shot the policeman when was on his way home after duty from Eravur police station. Injured person was first admitted to Eravur hospital and later transferred to Batticaloa Teaching Hospital for emergency treatment.

**Maharaja TV abductee released:** Sept 2 - The IT employee of Maharajah TV who was abducted on Friday (1) morning was released later that night around 10:30 in Wellawatte, Colombo. The abductors had reportedly blindfolded the victim and questioned her about her previous engagement at Central Bank as IT consult-

ant. Thavarajah Thavamani, 26, the niece of Colombo district UNP MP T.Maheswaran, employed in the computer section of the Maharaja Television (MTV), was abducted Friday around 7:30 a.m., 200 meters from her residence in Wellawatte, Colombo. Thavamani, a native of Karainagar, Jaffna, is an engineer by profession. She had recently joined MTV and was attached to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka prior to her employment in MTV.

**Private air line employees abducted in Colombo:** Sept 2 - Three employees, including a woman Finance Director of the Aero Lanka Air Line were abducted in Colombo by unidentified persons who reportedly came in a white coloured van on 22 August, according to a complaint lodged with the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL).

The woman Finance Director, Longendrarajah Gomathi, 36, was abducted from her residence located along Porupana Road in Valgambaya Mawatte in Ratmalana, around 10 p.m. on 22 August. Abductors who reportedly conversed in Sinhala had taken the computer and other documents from the house of Ms. Gomathi. Earlier on the same day, Lal Premaretna (28) and Lal Premaretna (25) were abducted, from their residence in Borella, around 5 p.m., according to the complaint. omplaints also have been lodged with the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC), Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM). Aero Lanka Air Line, a private company, had been conducting commercial flights between Colombo and Jaffna till the fight between the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) and the Tigers broke out last month.

**NGO official, mother gunned down in Jaffna:** Sept 2 - Sathiyamoorthy Selvaroopan, 25, a Project Officer attached to Tsunami reconstruction project of the Sewalanka, a non governmental organization, was shot dead at his home in Karaveddy in Jaffna, around 8:45 p.m., on Friday (1). His 55 year-old mother, Sathiyamoorthy Thangaratnam, who attempted to block the killers, was also killed by the armed men. The NGO officer's wife, Shopana (21) an undergraduate at the University of Jaffna, and his brother Gajaroopan, 20, have been admitted at the Manthikai hospital with injuries. The family had gathered to hear news broadcast on Friday night when unidentified armed men stormed their house and opened fire. Their house is situated about 300 metres from the site where SLA soldiers were hit by claymore mine blast on the same day.

**Abductee found dead in Colombo:** Sept 2 - An Actuarial Manager of Union Assurance in Colombo was found dead Saturday (2) morning at Thotalanga, Grand Pass in Colombo. The victim, Reginald Jesudasan, 31, son of a retired Tamil Inspector of Police, was abducted on Friday (1) around 7:20 p.m. when he left the office. The victim's body, bearing marks of severe torture, was wrapped up from head to knees with polyethene, Police sources said. According to friends of the deceased, Mr. Reginald had left the office around 7.20 p.m. Friday and didn't return to his home in Muttakkuliya till 9 p.m. Family members had called around to check his whereabouts and following day, Friday morning, the dead body was found.

**Two men killed in Jaffna:** Sept 3 - Two men were shot dead separately by unidentified men ridding in motorbike in the northern Jaffna, on Sunday (3). Baskaran Suresh, 31, owner of a garage at 5th Cross Street in Jaffna, was shot dead around 11 a.m. He is native of Sandilipai. Later in the afternoon, C.Mathan, 28, a tailor by trade living at 4th Cross Street of Pt. Pedro was shot dead in Pt. Pedro town.

**Ex-EPDP member shot dead in Eravur:** Sept 3 - Unidentified gunmen shot and killed a former member of Eelam Peoples Demo-



cratic Party (EPDP) in Eravur on Saturday (2) night around 7:40 p.m., Police said. Ganesharajah Thiyagarajah, aged 28, father of two, was shot dead while returning along School Road in Eravur after closing his shop for the day. Eravur Police, conducting investigations into the killing, handed over his body to the Eravur hospital. Eravur is located 12 km north of Batticaloa town.

**Three Tamil civilians shot dead:** Sept 4 – Unidentified gunmen shot and killed three Tamil civilians in the area between on Sunday (3). in Pethalai and Pattiyadichenai in Valaichchenai-Kalkudah police division in Batticaloa district. An armed gang who claimed that they were conducting a search operation in the area took the three victims to roadside and shot them. 22 year-old Thiyagarajah Senthoran, owner of a hair dressing saloon and a resident of Pattiyadichenai, was brought out of his house located along School Road and shot dead around 7:00 p.m. Sunday. The victim's pregnant wife was attacked by the paramilitary cadres. In the second incident, 26-year-old Shanmuganathan Nagendran, father of one child, was taken out of his house located along Nagathambiran Kovil Road in Karunkalichcholai and shot dead. In the third incident, 23-year-old Kandiah Karunakaran, father of one child and a native of Vakaneri and a resident of Peithalai was shot close to his house located along Vishnu Kovil Road. He succumbed to injuries later in the Batticaloa Teaching Hospital, sources said.

**7 bodies buried in Allaipiddy:** Sept 4 - Seven more bodies of civilians killed in artillery fire in Allaipiddy 20 days ago, were photographed and buried on Monday (4) in the presence of Jaffna District Magistrate, E. T. Vignarajah. Around 40 civilians were reportedly killed in Allaipiddy. So far, 25 deaths have been verified by humanitarian sources. Bodies of L.Gnanapiragasam, 70, K.Nadarajah, 60, S.Anandam, 51, A. John Robert, 41, J.Mary Manjula, 45, K.Micheal, 55, M.Ramesh, 26, P.Velicia, 20,

K.Thevakumar 28, K.Menis, 19, K.Uthayakumar, 34 and P.Thevanayaki, 30 are said to have been lying in their houses since August 12th, HRCSL was told.

Relatives of 12 more civilian victims have appealed to the Jaffna regional office of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka seeking help to remove the bodies lying inside the houses located in Ward No: 4 of Allaipiddy. Sri Lanka Navy is not allowing any civilians to enter Allaipiddy. There are more bodies, lying along the coast, according to the latest civilian reports.

**Three killed, 2 children, mother wounded:** Sept 4 - Motorbike riding Sri Lanka Army (SLA) men in civil clothes, alleged to belong to the army, shot and killed three civilians in three separate shooting incidents in Jaffna on Monday (4). Muthuthamby Jeyakanthan, 43, an internally displaced father of one, residing in Maruthanarmadam was shot dead while he was returning home from Tellippalai Thurkai Amman temple at Marutharmandam junction on Monday noon. He was riding in bicycle with his wife, Rajeswari Jeyakanthan, 35, and their 8-year-old daughter. The mother and the daughter were seriously wounded and rushed to Jaffna Hospital. Kanthasamy Nagulanathan, 28, a house painter, was shot dead at Udupiddy junction in Vadamaradchi around 12:30 p.m. while he was shopping in a supermarket Monday. An 8-year-old boy from American Mission School, Ramachandran Thanushan, waiting for a bus, was wounded in the shooting and admitted to Manthikai hospital. The gunmen shot and killed Sundaramoorthi Baskaran, 31, owner of a garage, located on Stanely Road, was shot and killed 100 meters away from a SLA sentry point..

**Tamil teacher shot dead in Batticaloa:** Sept 5 - A Tamil teacher was shot dead by unidentified gunmen at his home in Mavadvembu, 20 km north of Batticaloa town, around 6:45 p.m. on Monday (4). Krishnapillai Sivananthan, 35, was a teacher at the Thalavaai Govt. Tamil School and was living with his wife at the time of the incident.. His body was handed over to the Chenkalady hospital by the Eravur Police.

**Soldier killed, 4 wounded:** Sept 5 - A soldier was killed and four wounded when Tamil Tigers fired artillery shell hit the Selvanagar SLA camp in Muthur division on Tuesday (5) around 7:15 a.m., according to Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) report quoting military officials. The SLBC report further said the injured soldiers were transferred to Pollonaruwa hospital.

**Claymore ambush injures 7 soldiers:** Sept 5 - Seven Sri Lanka Army troopers were seriously wounded in a Claymore attack by suspected Tamil Tigers targeting a SLA truck in Valikamam East in Jaffna district on Tuesday (5). The ambush took place, between Neerveli and Masivan Junction, on the main road to the SLA base in Achchelu when the vehicle was transferring SLA troopers between checkpoints. Wounded soldiers were rushed to Palaly military hospital.

**One killed, 2 injured in rocket attack:** Sept 5 - Sri Lanka Army fired Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher shells hit Kathiraveli, 10 km north of Vaharai, where Internally Displaced People (IDPs) from Muthur East and Eacchilampatru have sought refuge. At least one civilian IDP who recently fled Eachchilampattu was killed and two other civilians were wounded in the attack around on Tuesday (5). The MBRL attack on Kathiramalai in Batticaloa district, came amid speculation that Sri Lankan military was planning another offensive towards southern Trincomalee and northern Batticaloa areas where thousands of IDP's have taken refuge. The IDP victim killed in Kathiraveli was identified as the driver

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of Eachilampathu Co-operative, Subramaniam Mahendrarajah, 45. ICRC personnel have transported two wounded civilians, M. Arulchelvam, 38, and S. Indra, 32, to Valaichenai hospital. The wounded were later transferred to Batticaloa hospital.

**Two Tamil civilians shot dead:** Sept 6 - Two persons described as supporters of the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) were shot dead by suspected Tamil Tigers on Tuesday (5) night between 8 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. in Valaichenai area in Batticaloa district. A message saying "death for traitors", was written in posters signed by Ellalan Brigade found near the bodies.

One of the dead was Nallathamby Poopalaratnam, 48, was the President of Peithalai fisheries society. His residence was located on Vipulananda Road, Valaichenai. It was alleged he had been supplying news to the EPDP run radio programme "Ithayaveenai" from Colombo. He was forcibly abducted from his residence and shot dead in Main Street in Kalkudah in eastern Sri Lanka. The other victim, Kanapathipillai Rangan alias Sathyakumar, a resident of Murugan Kovil Road, Peithalai was also shot dead the same day for allegedly providing information to EPDP.

**Two civilians killed, 2 more injured in Jaffna:** Sept 7 - Around 7:30, on Tuesday (5) morning, gunmen travelling in a van shot dead Satkunarajah Suganthan, 22, of Nallur Kovil Road, Thirunelvely, while the victim was shopping at Thalankavil Pillayar Kovil Road within the Jaffna Municipal limits. An old woman, who was also buying things at the shop, was injured and admitted to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital in a serious condition for treatment. Around 9 a.m., 300 meters away from the above scene, another youth, Sivarasa Sivasekaran, 22, a video shop owner was shot by the same gunmen while he was opening his shop for the day. Having seen him struggling with injuries, the attackers reversed their vehicle and sprayed him with bullets to make sure that he was alive no more. A civilian, S. Puvanenthiran, 55, from Meesalai-Urumparai area, who was cycling to the market, was shot by unidentified persons and later admitted to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital for treatment.

**Two policemen injured in gunfire:** Sept 7 - Two policemen including an officer were injured when unidentified men fired at them on Wednesday (6) evening at Uppukulam in Mannar town. The injured police officer was identified as Upali Bandara, a member of the Police Intelligence Unit. A Tamil civilian, 29 year old Gabriel Charles of Siruthoppu was injured when additional troops rushed to the site opened fire. The injured police officer was taken to Anuradhapura hospital by an ambulance. The injured Tamil youth and the other policeman were admitted to the Mannar general hospital. Meanwhile the Mannar Police took the Tamil youth into custody in connection with the shooting and has deployed police guard for the ward where the Tamil civilian has been warded.

**Gunmen force Uthayan to carry their statement:** Sept 8 - Gunmen forced their way into the Jaffna offices of the Uthayan newspaper on Thursday (7) evening, threatened the staff and handed over a statement to be published in the newspaper. The armed group had come in motorbikes. This incident took place during the curfew hours in heavily militarised Jaffna, the Free Media Movement (FMM) quoting details from the Managing Director of the newspaper group, Mr. E. Saravanapavan. The gunmen warned the editorial staff of dire consequences if the statement was not published immediately. The editorial staff was fear stricken after the incident, Mr. Saravanapavan said. The Chief editor of Uthayan, Mr. M. V. Kamylnathan, told FMM that he was forced to carry the statement in the next edition of

Uthayan. "This incident marks another assault of freedom of expression in the war-torn Jaffna peninsula. Uthayan newspaper has been under various acts of intimidation and disruption in the recent past," the FMM said.

**Bomb hidden in dead body explodes:** Sept 8 - Four students and a policeman were injured when a bomb hidden in the three-wheeler exploded on Friday (8) morning around 6.55 a.m. at Kulumaattu junction in Vavuniya. The explosion took place when policemen were recovering the body of a homeguard from a hijacked three-wheeler. The bomb had been hidden inside the dead body of the homeguard, according to the police who blamed the Tamil Tigers for the explosion.

The attackers had abducted two homeguards on Thursday (7) at Pandarikulam in Vavuniya. One of the two homeguards was killed and his body was lying inside the three-wheeler, belonging to a Sinhala resident of Mamaduva, that had reportedly been hijacked earlier on Wednesday (6) by some unidentified men, police sources said. The other homeguard, who escaped with injuries, sought refuge in the nearby police check point and tipped the police of the three-wheeler incident. He was admitted to the Vavuniya hospital. On receipt of information the police rushed to the site where a three-wheeler was parked. On inspection the police found a parcel and the dead body. The explosion triggered off while the policemen were inspecting the vehicle.

**Two brothers abducted shot dead:** Sept 8 - Two brothers from Eravur, who left for fishing on Wednesday (6) afternoon, were found shot dead along the Savukkady coast by Eravur police on Thursday and their bodies were recovered the following morning. The dead Parthipan Ananthan, 28 father of two and his brother Parthian Thavaseelan, 16 had gun shot injuries on their bodies. The two brother had left their residence as usual on Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. They were out in the sea in their boat when unidentified men in another boat had reportedly abducted the two brothers. The victims had 7.62 mm gun shot injuries on the head and chest. Savukkady is located 15 km northeast of Batticaloa.

**Five killed in Jaffna in a single day:** Sept 8 - Five persons were killed in a single day on Thursday (7) in Jaffna. An 18-year-old student, a woman and a photographer were among the victims. One of the five victims was abducted by gunmen riding in a white van, shot and killed during the curfew hours at midnight, civilian sources said. Balasubramaniam Thuvaraman, 18, a school student, was shot dead in Alvai East in Vadamarachy area, in the evening. The woman, Anjaly Maikkal Jeyachithra, 32, who worked in an Arab country and returned home recently, was shot dead in Thikkam in Vadamarachy at noon. Her body was found lying by the roadside. In another incident, unidentified gunmen called the victim by name, Suriyakumar Arumairaj, 22, of Karanavai West in Vadamarachy, a photographer, and shot him in front of his house in the morning. He was admitted to the Manthihai Rural hospital, and succumbed to his wounds while he was being taken to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital for further treatment. Two unidentified motorbike riders shot Visvalingam Satguneswaran, 32, a jewelry owner, in front of his jewelry shop, along the KKS road in Kokkuvil- Arasadi area in the Jaffna Municipal Limits, around 4:00 p.m. He was admitted to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital and succumbed to the injuries Friday morning. Another youth, Nagendran Mahendran, 28, was kidnapped by gunmen and later shot dead near the Pidary Amman Kovil in Anaikkottai-Arukaalmadam area at midnight.

**Civilians killed and injured mine attack on army:** Sept 8 - A claymore mine attack by suspected Tamil Tigers that targeted a

Sri Lankan Army SLA road patrol in Chenkalady, 13 km north-west of Batticaloa on Friday (8) killed a soldier and a civilian a video shop owner and injured a soldier and four other civilians. The Claymore mine was fixed to a roadside wall, between the Chenkalady branch of the Bank of Ceylon and Sellam Cinemas. One of SLA soldiers, Pomodi Kapilaratne Bandara, 29, succumbed to his injuries as he was being transferred to the Polonnaruwa Hospital. The other soldier, admitted to Polonnaruwa hospital was identified as M.Samantha, 28. The civilian, the video shop owner, Sivalingam Santhirasegaran, 36, from Rameshpuram, Chenkalady, died at the Batticaloa Teaching hospital after being transferred from Eravur district hospital for further treatment. The four civilians injured in the blast, Kumar Sinthujan, 14, from Chenkalady, Thilakaratnam Alagasunthary, 38, from Eravur, and M.Kandasamy, 67 from Rameshpuram, Chenkalady were admitted to the Batticaloa Teaching hospital.

**Claymore blast kills 3 SLA soldiers:** Sep 10 - Three Sri Lanka Army (SLA) soldiers were killed and two injured in a claymore attack at Aasikulam in Vavuniya, on Sunday (10). The attack targetted a SLA patrol along Mylankulam road. The injured soldiers were taken to Vavuniya military hospital and later transferred to Anuradhapura.

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**The killing spree in Jaffna continues:** Sep 10 - Six civilians were killed by unidentified persons in Jaffna peninsula in separate incidents during the 24 hours ending at 6 pm Saturday (9), according to hospital sources in the peninsula. 1. The body of Yogarajah Gajan, 25, was recovered at Chelvanayagapuram in Atchuvely, Saturday morning. 2. Rajendram Rajamail, 29, of Suthumalai, was shot dead at Pandianthaalvu in Columbuturai, on Saturday morning. Two other passers-by, Sebastian Vincentine, 44, and S. Ratnamoorthy, 40 were injured in the shooting. Both were admitted to Jaffna Teaching Hospital. 3. Nadarajah Jegatheeswaran, 55, was shot dead near the office of the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission at 4th Cross Street in Jaffna, around noon, on Saturday. 4. The body of an unidentified man was found at Vakavaththai area in Valikamam East in Putur North on Saturday morning. 5. Another unidentified body of a young man with gunshot injuries in Mannankuruchi area, Mirusuvi, in Thenmaradchi sector, around noon, on Saturday. 6. Sathasivam Sathiseelan, 35, who was abducted from his home at Temple road was shot dead at Anaipanthu Junction in the Jaffna Municipality area, around 7:30 pm on Friday (8). Meanwhile, the body of Sivalingam Suthaharan, 23, who was abducted on Saturday (9) from his home in Sankaanai, was found on Sunday morning at Vaddukodai.

**Tamil civilian shot dead in Mannar:** Sep 10 - Unidentified men shot dead a Tamil civilian on Sunday early morning around 2 a.m. along Nanattan-Vankalai road in Mannar when he was going for work. The dead man has been identified as 38 year old Thiruchelvam Sebastian, father of two children and a resident of Naruvalikulam in the Murunkan Police division.

**Two Tigers killed in police ambush:** Sep 10 - Sri Lankan police personnel lying in ambush shot and killed 2 members of the LTTE at Karuwakkerny Vikneswara Vidyalayam in Valaichenai, about 30 km. north of Batticaloa, around 8 pm on Saturday (9). The Police said they had recovered 2 pistols, 2 hand grenades and 2 cyanide capsules. The LTTE members were identified as Sutha and Viji. The police handed over the bodies to Valaichenai hospital. P.Thayamohan, the Political Head of the LTTE for Batticaloa District said their organization will contact ICRC to receive the bodies.

**Fishermen reported "missing":** Sep 10 - Two fishermen have been reported "missing" in Vadamaradchi, according to complaints made with the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission (HRC) in Jaffna. The missing fishermen have been identified as Anton Selvaratnam, 24, and Sebaratnam Anthony Arulthas, 24, both of Munai Light house area in Point Pedro. Meanwhile, the body of a young man found in Vakavaththai area in Valikamam East in Putur North, has been identified as of Ariyaratnam Sylvester, 33, of Aathisoody road, Kantharmadam in Jaffna. His body was later identified at the mortuary of Jaffna Teaching hospital, with stab wounds and gun-shot injuries.

**Two claymore mines recovered in time:** Sep 11 - Pesalai Police with the assistance of Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) on Monday (11) afternoon around 3 pm recovered two live claymore mines along Talaimannar road. Each claymore mine weighed about 20 kg. A tip-off led to the discovery of the mines. The mines, suspected to have been planted by the Tigers, were hidden on the roadside were about to be detonated with remote control mechanism when they were located. The mines were later deactivated by the bomb disposal squad of the security forces.

**Abductions soar in Jaffna:** Sep 11 - Eight civilians, including 2

young women were abducted in Jaffna by unidentified armed persons in five separate incidents during the last 24 hours, ending at 6 pm on Monday. Meanwhile, Suseenthiraraja, the coordinator of Human Rights Commission said Monday that 67 persons were reported "disappeared" in August alone. Mr. Suseenthirarajah has also informed that his office has received 74 complaints against SLA Personnel regarding arrests, intimidation and threat. He further added only 17 of these complaints have been resolved, 14 being released while three others are being detained by SLA troops in Kankasanturai.

According to complaints made with the Human Rights Commission in Jaffna, 2 women were abducted from their home in Anaikottai on Sunday (10). At Kokuvil, two youths were dragged out of their homes at gun point, in the presence of their parents. Two more youths were taken at gun point in Manipay, while a youth from Kumaraswamy road near Jaffna University and another from Kantharmadam have also been abducted, according to the complaints.

The parents of those abducted have lodged complaint at the Jaffna office of Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission. The parents have, however, said that they do not wish to reveal the names of the abducted persons to the media, fearing reprisals. Meanwhile many others are feared to have been abducted from Vadamardachy, Kopay, Chulipuram and Alaveddy and only the body of one youth has been recovered in Chulipuram while mystery surrounds the fate of others.

While the LTTE is accusing the Karuna Group and the SLA for the spate of abductions, the SLA accuses the LTTE of carrying out them in an effort to bolster its numbers to be able to fight the security forces.

**Four killed in Jaffna in separate incidents:** Sep 11 - A bullet-ridden body of young man with face mutilated beyond recognition was found at Theater Lane in Inuvil in Jaffna, Monday (11) morning. The youth is believed to have been abducted from his home by unidentified men in white van, with out carrying registration number, according to neighbours. The victim is believed to be around 30 years and had been severely beaten before he was shot dead, sources said. It is thought the victim youth might be one of those reported to have 'disappeared' in the Peninsula in recently. Separately, Mylvaganam Sasitharan, 24, of Thunnalai South was shot dead by unidentified men at Mareesan junction on Jaffna-Point Pedro Road near Nelliday in Vadamardachy, around 9:30 am, on Monday (11). In another incident at the same location Kiddinar Uthayakumar, 24, was shot and seriously injured.

Both incidents occurred near a Sri Lanka Army camp and two unidentified persons on a motorcycle were responsible for these incidents, sources said. Meanwhile, Sivasingam Sasiharan, 24, traveling in a bicycle from home was shot dead by unidentified gunmen near Manthuvil tempel in Thenmarachchi area, at 6.30 pm on Sunday (10).

**Tamil civilian shot dead in Vantharumoolai:** Sep 12 - Unidentified persons shot and killed a 35 year-old farmer, father of two children on Monday (11) night around 8.30 pm in his residence located along Moonkilady Road in Vantharumoolai village in Eravur police division in Batticaloa district. The victim who had been also working as a tractor-driver was identified as Nagappan Sathyan. Unidentified men had forcibly entered the victim's house and fired at him when the latter did not open the front doors when called out.

**Policemen and civilians injured in mine attack:** Sep 12 - Three policemen and three civilians were injured when a claymore mine planted by suspected Tigers near the market in Trincomalee town exploded on Tuesday (12) morning. The claymore mine had been detonated targeting a police jeep travelling along the Central Road at that time. Tension prevailed in the area and all business establishments were closed. Additional Sri Lankan troopers and police rushed to the site and stopped all traffic and civilian movement through the road. Cordon and search operation was carried out.

**Two policemen shot dead in Batticaloa:** Sep 12 - Two policemen attached to the Kaluwanchchikkudy Police Station were shot dead by unidentified gunmen while they were travelling with two other colloquies, in a passenger bus bound to Batticaloa, around 10.30 am at Cheddipalayam south of Batticaloa town., Police sources said. The injured Constables W M. Vijayarathna, 35 and M. Ramanathan, 38 were rushed to the Batticaloa Teaching Hospital and succumbed to their injuries. Police alleged that LTTE pistol group had waylaid the bus and fired at the Policemen who were on a private visit to Batticaloa.

**Haul of weapons found in Mutur:** Sep 12 - Acting on information given by civilians the Navy troops recovered a haul of ammunition in Mutur - Naindanagar on Sunday (10) around 4.30 pm. They included 1360 rounds of T56, 7110 rounds of 7.62x54, 400 rounds of MPMG with links, 04 magazine, 02 T56 weapons, 04 hand grenades, 02 military pouches and one binocular. The recovered ammunition and weapons are believed to have been left by the Tamil areas before the fleeing.

**Abducted and killed:** Sep 13 - Over ten persons including relatives have been questioned in connection with the abduction and

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death of W.M.Suriya Kumar (26) a communication centre operative of Dehiwela whose body was found in a paddy field at Kelaniya on Friday (8). OIC Dehiwela police Ranjit Kotachchi said that Suriya Kumara had been abducted by seven persons who had claimed to be from the CID. Earlier he had lived in Canada and had reportedly collected monies for the LTTE. Kelaniya police said they had found six empty 3.8 pistol bullets at the scene of the crime. A joint Kelaniya and Dehiwela police operation has been launched.

**'World Concern' field worker shot dead:** Sep 13 - A field worker of the US based 'World Concern' was shot dead on Monday (11) at Nilaveli in the Trincomalee District. The World Concern, an international humanitarian relief and development organization said in a statement that Ragunathan "Ragu" Ramalingam, 31, was returning to the office on a World Concern motorcycle, after lunch at home with his family, when he was shot and killed around 1:30 pm on Monday at the 8th mile post on Nilaveli Road. He leaves his wife and five young children, including a newborn son, just five days old. "There is no known motive for the killing and there are no suspects at this time. The case is under investigation," it said. The World Concern family is shocked and saddened by such a tragic loss," the statement said. Ragu was one of the first employees of World Concern in Sri Lanka, joining the organization in early 2005. Because of his work, hundreds of families received effective and rapid assistance

- with adequate shelter restored, new access to water, restored livelihoods and emotional support, it added.

**Father, 2 year-old child shot dead in Jaffna:** Sep 13 - A young man and his 2-year old child were shot dead reportedly by men in a white van while they were standing outside their house in Aathikkovilady in Valvettithurai, in the Vadamaradchi sector of the Jaffna peninsula. The incident occurred around 5 pm on Tuesday (13). The victim, Sivapirakasam Thayaparan, 28, died on the spot and his 2-year old daughter, Thayaparan Thayajothi succumbed to her injuries while being taken to Jaffna Teaching Hospital

**Dry rations for 10,000 displaced families:** Sep 13 - More than 10 000 families in Jaffna peninsula, around 7000 from Thenmaradchi and the rest from the islet villages of Allaipiddy, Mandaitivu and Naranthanai, and the coastal areas within the Jaffna Municipality, have been displaced because of the recent battles between the Tamil Tigers and government forces. This was revealed at a conference held at the Jaffna District Secretariat on Tuesday (12). The conference summoned to work out a scheme to provide relief to the displaced people, K.Ganesh, Government Agent of Jaffna district presided. All Divisional Secretaries of the peninsula and the General Managers of the Multi Purpose Co-operatives Societies participated in this conference where a decision was taken to issue the refugees dry rations from the month of August, according to instructions of the Government. A family with more than 5 persons will get dry rations worth of Rupees 1260, 4-member family gets Rs 840 and a single person gets Rs 168.

**Seventeen wounded in grenade attack on meat shop:** Sep 13 - Seventeen civilians, including a woman, were wounded when an attacker lobbed a grenade into a chicken meat shop in Vavuniya town on Wednesday (13) around 10:50 am, Vavuniya Police said blaming the Tigers for the attack. The police speculated that the meat shop and its owner might have been the intended target though innocent people got caught in it.

**One man shot dead, 2 reported 'missing':** Sep 14 - A young man was shot dead in Uduppiddy in Vadamaradchi, around 12 noon, on Wednesday (13). Meanwhile, Human Rights Commission in Jaffna said two men had been reported "missing" in Uduppiddy since Monday (11) evening. Ilankovan Kandeepan, 26, owner of a welding shop along the Uduppiddy-Vathiri Road, was shot dead while he was on his way to his home at Kombu. According to eyewitnesses, Kandeepan was chased by 4 armed men ridding in two motorbikes, along Uduppiddy-Vathiri road. He was later shot dead as he attempted to run in to house to escape from the attackers. According to HRC office in Jaffna, Vinayagamoorthy Anantharajah, 32, and Sampasivam Vimalasangari, 24, had been reported "missing" in Uduppiddy since Monday evening:

**Youth dies after swallowing cyanide:** Sep 14 - Sri Lankan Army (SLA) soldiers on a foot patrol shot a suspected Tamil Tiger attacker who allegedly attempted to run away having thrown a hand grenade on them in Vinayagapuram in the Valaichchenai Police area in Batticaloa district, around 1.30 pm on Wednesday (13). The injured attacker, Vinayagamoorthy Kunarathnamoorthy, 21, of Kalmadu Road, Vinayagapuram, reportedly had swallowed a cyanide capsule and died to avoid being arrested by soldiers, SLA sources said. His body was handed over to the Valaichchenai District Hospital for post-mortem.

**Abducted youths found shot dead in Vavuniya:** Sept 14 -

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Three persons were abducted and killed by unidentified persons in Vavuniya, on Thursday (14) morning. The bodies of two of the abducted youths were found with their hands tied together and faces covered with clothes, at Thavasikulam, the police said. Separately, another youth was found dead with gun shot injuries at the same spot. was shot dead at Kurumankadu, a suburb of Vavuniya, on Wednesday (13). He is yet to be identified. Also on Wednesday (13), two others were shot dead at Semankulam, by unidentified persons.

**Two EPDP members shot in Vavuniya:** Sep 14 - Two members of the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) were shot and injured at Kurumankadu area in Vavuniya by suspected Tamil Tiger gunmen. The injured cadres were first admitted to the Vavuniya general hospital and later transferred to Anuradhapura hospital. The shooting took place close to the EPDP office in Kurumankadu. The injured EPDP cadres were shot when they were standing in the rear part of the EPDP office. Vavuniya district EPDP organizer Ragu accused that the LTTE pistol gang had shot these EPDP members who were identified as Francis Jeganathan and Velumyulm Sritharan.

**Govt employee shot dead:** Sep 14 - Unidentified armed men on Thursday (14) morning around 11.30 a.m. shot dead a Tamil government servant working in the Trincomalee district secretariat when he was going to his office crossing the Trincomalee playground in a motorbike. The incident took place behind the Mc Heyzer Stadium located in the playground. The victim was identified as Arunasalam Satkunarajah aged 31 and working as rehabilitation assistant in the Trincomalee district secretariat.

**Young man shot dead, 2 bodies recovered:** Sep 14 A young man was shot dead by unidentified persons near Malu junction in Nelliyadi in Vadamardachi, around 8:30am on Thursday (14). Satchithanatham Sasitharan, 25, of Alvai South, was working in a fuel station. Meanwhile, two bodies in highly decomposed stage were found under a bridge in Velanai, islet off Jaffna town, police in Kaytes said. They are believed to be of young men who were previously reported "missing".

**Three youths reported missing in Jaffna:** Sep 15 - Three young men from Kondavil East, Jaffna have been missing since Thursday (14) morning, said relatives of the missing men in a complaint filed at the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission (HRC) office in Jaffna. Kondavil is located about 8 km north of Jaffna town. Thangarupam Jeeva, 23, and Thevarajah Nitharsan, 17, masons by profession were on their way to work, after curfew was relaxed, when they were abducted. Separately, a 17-year old boy was abducted when he went out Thursday morning to buy provisions. All three were abducted from Sebastian Church road, according to complaints made with the HRC.

**Three men shot dead in Jaffna:** Sep 15 - Three men have been shot dead by unidentified persons in Jaffna town and its suburbs, on Thursday (14) night, according to hospital and police sources in the northern town. In one incident, two employees of a liquor shop at Manipay road in Jaffna town were shot dead and one wounded while they were sleeping. Separately, armed men driving a white van, without registration number, dumped a body in Aavrankaal in Valikamam east, Thursday night, villagers said. The victim, a young man was blind folded and shot on his dead, villagers who saw the body said. The victims have not been identified yet.

**Karuna group member shot dead:** Sep 15 - A suspected Tiger

gunman on Friday (15) morning around 7:00 am shot dead a member of Karuna group at Chenkalady in Eravur police division in Batticaloa district. The victim has been identified as Samithambi Thirumal, 28. The victim succumbed to injuries at the Batticaloa Teaching Hospital. Chenkalady is located about 14 km north of Batticaloa town.

**Tamil civilian shot dead in Valaichchenai:** Sep 15 - Unidentified gunmen shot dead a Tamil civilian on Thursday (14) night around 10:35 pm at Karuwakerni in Valaichchenai police division in Batticaloa district. The victim has been identified as Niranjan Vasantharajah, 28, and a father of two children, police sources said. It is said that the gunmen had called out the victim from his house located along Anna Road and shot him when he came to the main gate of the compound. The victim had been working in the Valaichchenai office of the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) for about 10 years on a contract basis. His body was handed over to the Valaichchenai hospital for post-mortem examination. Karuwakerni is located about 30 km off north of Batticaloa town.

**Six civilians killed in 24-hours:** Sep 15 - Ms. Anishtan Raymond Antida, 19-year-old, whose body was recovered in Uduvil on Friday (15), is suspected to have been abducted by persons in a white van and beaten to death and hung, said sources from Inuvil and added that she was the fiancée of P. Rajkumar 23, a bakery staff, who was abducted by persons in a white van and shot into his eyes to death and dumped at Theatre Lane in Inuvil.

Thayanantahn Kesavan, 20, and Parameswaran Thushyanthan, 18, both from Pungudutivu islet, were gunned down in execution style allegedly by SLA troopers who entered the bar on Manipay Road in Jaffna where they were employed on Thursday (14) night. The attackers forced into the liquor shop where they were sleeping and ordered them to the first floor and shot at them. The bodies of the youths are being kept in the Jaffna Teaching Hospital morgue. Thurairasa Suthahar, 30, of Kokuvil, seriously injured in the shooting incident, is admitted to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital, medical sources said.

The dead body of another youth, Mylvaganam Satkunarathinam, 28, a resident of Kokuvil, abducted and shot into the eyes, was dumped by persons in a white van, at Aarukalmadam in Anaikoddi on Friday (15) morning.

Ratnasingam Prasanth, 26, an employee at the fuel station in Kalviankadu junction on the Jaffna Point Pedro road was shot dead on Friday (15) morning in execution style.

In Vadamardachy, Kanmani Jeyatheeswaran, 25, from Punitha Nagar, Katkoyalam, a fisherman who displaced from Nagarkovil, was gunned down on Friday (15) at 10:30 am while he was cycling towards Point Pedro on Thumpalai Point-Pedro Road. Another dead body, recently found lying unattended in Valigamam East, was identified as that of Thilakarasa Siluvaithasan, 31, of Kondavil, a father of three.

**Two more shot dead in Jaffna:** Sep 16 - Two young men riding a motorbike were shot dead by unidentified persons riding another motorbike in Urumparai, around 3:30 pm on Friday (15), bringing the total number of killings in Jaffna to eight, during the 24 hours, ending 6 pm, Friday. The killings took place at 'Moonru Kinathady' in Urumparai in Valikamam East. The victims have not been identified yet. The bodies were lying at the scene till late Friday evening, sources said.

**Family man shot dead in Eravur:** Sep 16 - Gunmen shot a vehicle driver in front of his house in Morakkoddanchenai, on Friday (15) around 6:45 pm, Eravur Police said. The victim,

(continued on page41)

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residence

The funeral service was  
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matorium on 30th August  
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**IN MEMORIAM**

In Ever Loving Memory of Our Dearly Beloved Daddy  
**Mr. T.J. Rajaratnam**  
Retired High Court Judge



Called to Rest: 15.09.81

*In God's care you rest above  
While in our hearts you Dwell in Love  
Unseen, unheard, yet very Near  
Still loved, still missed and Very Dear.*

Fondly remembered. and sadly missed by your ever lov-  
ing wife Arul; children Rohini, Renuka, Rajiv; sons-in-law  
Vijayan, Sriharan; grand-children Vasi, Ravi, Prathi,  
Jayanthi and Ajit.

**Second Year Remembrance**

In ever loving memory of  
**Mrs Vimala Nadarajah**  
of Kokuvil, Jaffna on the second anniversary  
of her passing away on 17th September 2004.

Remembered with love and affection by her beloved hus-  
band Nadarajah; loving children Harindran (UK), Darshidaran  
(Dubai), Nihaldaran (UK), Sharmina (New Zealand) and  
Jamuna (UK); daughters-in-law Rahini, Subathira and  
Lingeswary; sons-in-law Sivashanmu-ganathan and  
Jeyakumar; grandchildren Sanjiv, Anee-sha, Theevia,  
Satheesan, Abarna, Shinani, Shivagar, Darshan and Keeran;  
brother Thirugnanaselvam; sisters Rajeswary,  
Parameswary and Vigneswary and sister-in-law  
Thangamuttu.

- 65 Beaminster Gardens, Ilford,  
Essex IG6 2BW.  
Tel: 020 8550 9972

## ANNAIYUM PITHAVUM MUNNARI DEIVAM.



**A special tribute for a special couple!**

Much loved and fondly remembered parents, grandparents and parents-in-law;

*Appa, you would say 'Make obeisance only to a Deity; to man, grant him respect and give him love. Make exceptions of your Mother who gave you love and life, and your Father who made you what you are. They are your first known Deities. All other Gods, you know them only afterwards'.*

*As we have done our life review*

*We reflect on those two people who saw us through  
Unconditional love they gave, not like any other  
God truly blessed us with a wonderful Father and Mother*

*Their road was not easy or their burdens light  
We'd listen attentively and do things right  
Mentors above reproach, helped us along the way  
Now in their debt, did we have the chance to repay?*

*Always hope and encouragement was given back then  
Sometimes today when we need to hear it again  
Their words come back to us in moments of strife  
The same words we had heard for most of our life*

*Our mind drifts off to the happier days in the past  
Time never stood still and only memories last  
How we wish that we had more time with them  
How our hearts yearn to bring them back again*

*Although we know they're in Heaven above  
We look all around us and still feel their love  
Our parents always said, "Don't ever feel sorrow"  
Still missing them, we will honour their wishes all Tomorrow.*

Adapted from Nancy Stephens 2001

**Mr PONNUDURAI NARENDRANATHAN and Mrs GNANAMBAL GNANANAYAKI**

*NARENDRANATHAN, most dearly beloved, adoring and proud Parents to your children, Thrinayani Jegathambal, Sowmya Wijayambal, Sobhana Meenambal, Priyadarsani Brahathambal, Adhithya Thrilochanan, Vasutharini Girijambal, Agasthya Ponnambalam and Ambika Dhakshayani; parents-in-law of P Arulampalam, T Ilangoan and R Srikanthan, Meera Narendranathan and Malini Narendranathan; darling dearest Thatthha/Paattaa and Payeeya to your grandchildren, Abhirami Janani Raveendran, Amarnath Thirumadhavan Raveendran, Nirmala Arulampalam, Janaki Saruhasini Srikanthan, Janarathan Ragavan Ilangoan, Dhivya Saraswathy Ilangoan, and Divani Kruthika Narendranathan.*

*Dear Amma and Appa, your physical presence may not be here with us anymore, but the legacy you left behind is, and will be there forever guiding us through this life. Always remembered with love and pride, you are greatly missed but never forgotten; always in the thoughts of your family and friends. God Bless.*

(Address: 6 Shaw Close, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 9JD).

### The Fifth Year Remembrance 30th September 2006

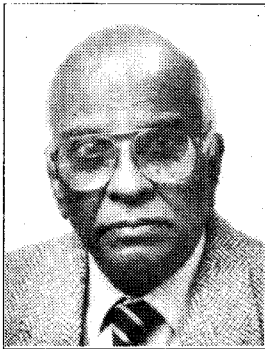
In ever loving and treasured memory of  
Gratien Nirmalanandan Sivagnanam



**A heart that is in love never loses hope  
No matter how many years pass.  
The lord gives his Angels charge of those that sleep  
But he himself keeps watch with those that weep.**

Sadly missed and lovingly remembered by his wife  
Chandra, beloved Mamma, family and friends.

### Fifth Anniversary Remembrance



versary of his passing away  
on 5th September 2001.  
Remembered with love and  
affection by his children  
Manoharan and Savithri;  
daughter-in-law Rebecca;  
son-in-law Varathan; gran-  
dchildren Holly, Daniel and  
Luxmmi and brother Yoge-  
shwaran (Sri Lanka)

-N. Varathan,  
Flat 15, Girtin House,  
44 Brighton Road, Sutton,  
Surrey SM2 5JQ.  
Tel: 020 8404 6541.

In ever loving memory of  
**Mr. Kanapathypillai Sit-  
sabesan** on the fifth anni-

### Sixth Anniversary Remembrance



**Born: 12.08.1916 Died: 24.09.2000**  
**Mrs Pathmavathy Selvanayagam**  
of Jaffna - Tamil Eelam

Forever remembered with Love and Pride especially on  
this SIXTH ANNIVERSARY of your passing away on the  
24th September 2000. Sadly missed by your Loving chil-  
dren, in-laws, grandchildren, great grand children and all  
relatives and friends.

Lala, Soundrie- Redhill, Surrey, UK.

## Forthcoming Events

01. Saraswathi Pooja;  
Feast of St. Theresa
02. Vijayathasami; Mana-  
mpoo and 'Kanni Vaalai  
Vettuthal'; Feast of  
Guardian Angels
03. Eekathasi
04. Pirathosam; Feast of  
St. of Assisi
06. Full Moon
07. Puradasi Sani (3);  
Feast of Our Lady of  
the Rosary
09. Sankadakara  
Chathurthi; Karthigai
14. Puradasi Sani (4);  
Feast of St. Callistus
15. Feast of St. Theresa  
of Avila
17. Eekathasi; Feast of St.  
Ignatius of Antioch
18. Feast of St. Luhe
19. Pirathosam
20. Deepavali
21. Amavasai; Keethara  
Gowry Viratham
22. Skandasasti Viratham  
starts
25. Chathurthi; Feast of  
Forty Martyrs of  
England & Wales.
27. Shashti; Skandasasti  
Viratham ends; Soora  
Sankaram
28. Thirukkalyanam;  
Feasts of Sts. Simon &  
Jude

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**Oct. 1 st : 6 p.m. Violet Duet  
by Lalitha & Nandini**

**Oct. 7th : 6.30 p.m. Navras  
presents Hindustani Vocal  
Concert by Ustad Rashid  
Khan**

**Oct. 8th : 6 p.m. Vani Fine  
Arts presents Vina Recital  
by Prabhavati Ganeshan**

**Oct. 13th : 7.30 p.m. Nav-  
ras presents Hindustani  
Vocal Concert by Aswini  
Bhide**

**Oct. 14th : 6.30 p.m. Per-  
cussion Duo Power Plant  
by M.Balachandar & Raj-  
kumar Misra**

**Oct. 15th : 6.30 p.m. Vani  
Fine Arts presents Karn-  
atic Vocal Concert by San-  
jay Subramaniam**

**Oct. 29th : 6 p.m. Vina &  
Violin Duet by Subathra  
Raguraman (Vina) & Balu  
Raguraman (Violin)**

## Australian Newsletter

Melbourne, one of the most habitable cities in the world  
celebrated its birthday recently. It was 171 years ago, on Au-  
gust 30, 1835 that the Enterprize, carrying Melbourne's first  
settlers, landed on the north bank of the Yarra river, near the  
junction of William and Flinders Streets and that area is now  
known as Enterprize Park. Town crier Neville Stonehouse en-  
sured a loud and clear start when MELBOURNE kicked up its  
heels for the birthday and families were treated to free or cut-  
price entry to some of Melbourne's most popular destinations  
as a way of celebrating the day.

**Professor C J Eliezer**  
(12th June 1918 - 10th  
March 2001)

An academic at Melbou-  
rne's Monash University Dr  
David Wright-Neville deliv-  
ered Professor C. J. Elie-  
zer's fourth memorial lec-  
ture on "Western attitudes  
and policy towards freedom  
struggles" under the auspicious of Eelam Tamil Association  
in Victoria during the last week of June.

Aavani Chathurthi was celebrated with customary religious  
rituals in most temples across Australia. Melbourne's Siva  
Vishnu temple commemorated ten-day annual Vishnu festival  
during August. The cultural scene witnessed during the past



few weeks Classical Music recitals by artistes TN Seshagopalan, Dr N Ramani and light music singer Hariharan and it was without doubt a great bonanza for the community. Justice Anand Satyanand who is of Indo-Fijian background and of Tamil speaking paternal ancestry with roots in Chennai became New Zealand's first ethnic Governor General in August. Although the appointment of Justice Satyanand to the highest office in the land is a tremendous boost to the multiculturalism of the Kiwi nation, it nevertheless didn't stop rays of disappointment amongst ordinary New Zealanders who mumbled that New Zealand now had a Governor General whose name could not be pronounced.

Australian and New Zealand Tamils during the past few weeks joined the Tamil diaspora around the globe in protesting against the massacre in Chencholai and other parts of North East Sri Lanka. Melbourne and Sydney witnessed major demonstrations, while Auckland geared up its activity with a 61 hour hunger strike in City's Aotea Square. Australian and New

Zealand Tamils lodged representations to their respective governments to take measures to avert humanitarian crisis, while emphasizing the need for a just solution to the prolonged ethnic conflict.

- Sivasupramaniam Sitsabesan

## Wedding Bells

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding.

**Premal Bhupendra Bhatt**, son of Mr. & Mrs Bhatt of Birmingham and **Beradine Pathmapriya Chelvanayagam**, daughter of Mr. & Mrs Chelvanayagam of Redhill, Surrey on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

**Atchuthah**, son of Mr. S. & Mrs. R. Ganeshalingam of 36, Rodney Close, New Malden, Surrey KT3 5AA and **Shyamala**, daughter of Dr. S. & Dr. Siva Srirangalingam of 3, Bernard Place, Springfield Road, East Ewell, Surrey KT17 3DX on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2006 at **The Oshwal Centre**, Coopers Lane Road, Potters Bar, Herts KT17 3DX.

## Vettivelu Rajeswaran DCH MRCP MRCGP - a true gentleman

Thiruvalluvar begins his chapter on humility and self-control, with the words "adakkam amararul uikkum...."- Humility leadeth unto heaven. The unfading memory one has of Rajes is his humility. Rajes was always a self-effacing soft-spoken man. He was a first rate medical practitioner, a gifted sportsman and had a number of achievements he could justifiably be proud of. Yet, he hardly ever spoke about himself. What gave him immense pleasure was to hear of the achievements of others, family or friends, and rejoice with them.

Born in Jaffna on the 18th of October 1936 to Dr and Mrs. S.A.Vettivelu, Rajes had his primary education at St John's before moving to Ananda in Colombo for his secondary education. It was here that his prowess in football began to show. He returned briefly to St John's from where he entered Medical School in 1957. Rajes was already collecting a group of friends who remained steadfast to the day of his death. His days at St.John's was "not all work and no play", for it was here that he first set his heart on, as legend would have it, the girl from Chundikuli, Chandra. They married soon after qualifying as doctors and Chandra was his devoted life-long companion, for over forty years. Their daughter Nira qualified as a Dental Surgeon, and married Pradeep, a solicitor. Rajes adored his two grandsons Kishan and Prashant. Their son Suren has a doctorate in medical physics.

Rajes had only recently retired after a long and distinguished career as a General Practitioner (GP) having served a multi-ethnic community in South-east London for over 30 continuous years. Many of his patients came from severely socially disadvantaged backgrounds, but it was their illness



and distress that concerned him most not their colour, caste or creed. Rajes had a way with children; his gentle affectionate approach would soothe any howling child while the parents witnessed this with utter amazement and immense gratitude. Indeed many of these parents themselves were babies he had attended to. At one time Rajes was a senior paediatric registrar, and no doubt this influenced his special interest and expertise in child health. The numbers of grateful patients of different generations who gathered to pay their respects both in the parlour and during the funeral rites is testimony to the high esteem in which Rajes was held.

As a successful GP, he was interested not only in the welfare of his patients but was also a much sought after trainer, and many a budding practitioner was fortunate to be initiated into the art by him. He was responsible for several young doctors securing appointments in family health and many who owe a lot to him have since established themselves as successful independent practitioners.

Some of the qualities in his work must surely have come from his father Dr. Vettivelu, a renowned family doctor in Jaffna. It is no surprise therefore that many of the senior expatriates in the UK considered it a privilege to be treated by the son of their revered "Vettiar", or have their children looked after by him.

Rajes's contribution to the wider community too was done without any pomp or fanfare. He was a member of the very first executive committee of the Standing Committee of Tamil Speaking People (SCOT), one of the first subscribers and an ardent supporter of this journal, and offered his patronage to many welfare organisations.

The hallmarks of his character, generosity towards others and humility about his own achievements are etched indelibly in our minds.

Dr. Kandiah Sivakumar

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Mr. Sivasamboo Thanapalan was associated with St. John's College's College, Jaffna for a continuous period of 52 years starting in 1954. He was a Student, Teacher and Vice Principal. In 1990 he was Acting Principal and was installed as Principal in 1993 and retired in August, 2006.

He entered the Peradeniya University from St. Johns and after completing his Bachelors Degree came back as a teacher and resided in the College compound. He held other important positions till he was appointed Acting Principal. Over the years he became saturated with the multi-facet activities of this great citadel of learning. Throughout the long years of intimate association with St. John's he will be fondly remembered with gratitude by tens of thousands of his students, colleagues and parents both here and in all parts of the globe for the dedicated and loyal services he rendered.

As a teacher for nearly 28 years I have watched him grow into maturity especially after he became a teacher. After leaving St. John's, I continued to have close contact with him to date, even when I was living outside Sri Lanka. The trail of legacy left by Thanapalan as Principal will be remembered for generations to come. He had the longest period of captaining the ship of St. John's as Acting Principal and Principal for a period of 16 years, when the college was tossing in very turbulent ethnic political waters, never abandoning his crew of dedicated staff members and loyal disciplined students.

At the height of fierce ethnic combat when it was impossible to run the school at Chundikuli, Thanapalan gallantly moved his loyal staff and students across the Jaffna Lagoon to Kilinochi, putting up makeshift classrooms and returning to Chundikuli when tensions eased. On another similar occasion he closed school and shifted to Vaddukoddai where Jaffna College graciously opened her doors to accommodate St. John's. The exodus to Pt. Pedro is another example.

## MR. SIVASAMBOO THANAPALAN, PRINCIPAL, ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, JAFFNA: A TRIBUTE



The dark clouds of grief, sorrow and anxiety that hovered over the entire global community of St. John's College, Jaffna for the last three months are seen no more. The demise of the Principal on 15 August had probably a unique triple feature. His retirement at the end of July, his 63rd birthday on the 9th and his passing into glory – all happened within a fortnight.

With courage, conviction, confidence and commitment he captained the ship of St. John's in very turbulent ethnic waters for 16 continuous years. This is the longest period in the 183 years of the history of the college where a principal never abandoned his crew of dedicated and loyal staff and students in an ocean of such violently tossed ethnic waters. Rev Henry Peto and Rev J T Arulanantham served for a slightly longer period as principals when there was ethnic calm in the North, both of them contributing high academic excellence to the college.

**Discipline** has been the watchword throughout the long history and it has never stalled during Mr Thanapalan's period. The largest number of buildings were put up or renovated during Mr Thanapalan's time always maintaining the original architectural design. He mastered the spoken usage of Tamil and English. His technique of administrative insights geared to suit an ethically disturbed environment is worthy of emulation by even experienced politicians.

Mr Thanapalan leaves his loving wife Prema, daughter Sutharshini and family and son Sutharshan who were all there during his time of illness. He also leaves a trail of legacy for generations to come. His illness and death also leaves us with unanswered questions that cannot be answered by our limited human understanding.

**- V.R. Amarasingham**  
Retired Vice Principal

St. John's College, Jaffna, 5th September 2006

### BOOK REVIEW

## SAIVAVINAVIDAI- QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN SAIVAISM AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY SAHATHEVAN AND THIAGAMOORTHY

I have great pleasure in reviewing the above book which was originally composed in Tamil by the Great Srilasri Arumuga Naaval of Nallur, Jaffha, in 1873. Saivaism suffered severe onslaughts by the successive foreign conquests of the Portugese, Dutch and the British. The Tamils were on the verge of losing their Language, Religion and Culture during this dark Period. Arumuga Naaval awoke the consciousness among the Saivaites and publication of books on Saivaism to educate them was one of his main courses of action. Naavlar authored twenty nine books of which Saivavinaavidai is one which had the aim of providing the basic fundamentals of Saivaism to the beginners. This book received utmost recognition from all the learned in Srilanka and South India. Unfortunately many Saivaites today do not

posses the knowledge in the Tamil language to study and understand the valuable contents of the book. Hence there is the need for its translation into other languages as in the case of Thirukural, Thiruvaasagam etc.. Mr. Muttucumaru Sahathevan, a Telecommunications Engineer and Mr. Kandiah Thiagamoorthy, a Civil Engineer have laboured hard to fulfil this need and we are very fortunate to have the translation of this valuable book in English. A wonderful effort and Saivaites are now having a book with which they can explain to their children and others, who are proficient in English, the fundamentals of their Religion. Translating a work of this nature is a difficult task and the Authors had cleared the hurdles with flying colours. Congratulations. I thank the Authors on behalf of the Savaites all over the World for producing this Translation. Many more books like these have to be produced. This book of thirty two pages of A5 dimensions has a thick soft cover and has the pictures of Srilasri Arumuga Naaval and the Statues of the four Saiva Samaya Savants and is worthy of possession.

These books are available from Mr. Sahathevan, + 44 208 644 4494 and Mr. Thiagamoorthy, + 44 208 395 2025.

**Thambirajah Kirupanathan**  
T & K Associates, Accountants. 27th August 2006.

## Bharatha Natya Arangetram of Priya and Kavita

I am glad that I did not miss this absolutely wonderful performance by the sisters at the Beck Theatre on 27th August 2006. Priya and Kavita were stunningly beautiful, their fair complexion, slim shapely figures are all absolute essential requirements for classical dancing.

This 'ascending on the stage' programme started promptly which makes a pleasant change from the usual late starts. The stage was elegantly and tastefully decorated. When the stage is over decorated it detracts the focus from the audience. The plain black back drop contrasted the dancers' costumes so well.

The two sisters excelled in perfect co-ordination and synchronization. It was obvious how much practice had been put into this. Though Priya and Kavita did the identical movements keeping perfect time and rhythm, their individuality was revealed in the expression on their faces and their Guru had given them the opportunity to perform individually.

After the traditional Ganesha Vandanam, the dancers performed the Alarippu in which the dancers prayed to the Gods, their Guru and the audience. Being Indians, the sisters had to understand Tamil to master the meaning of the songs. They were under expert guidance of their Guru Smt. Gunawathy Shakespeare who has a reputation of making sure that her pupils are only introduced on the stage, when they have perfected the art. The dancers were under the guidance of their



Guru for 10 years.

The next dance was the Varnam which is the most elaborate item of the repertoire. The girls performed this with great confidence, expressing the changing moods of love for their hero, the deity. At times I felt that they could have smiled a little more to enhance their already beautiful faces. Keerthanam and Padam gave the dancers the freedom of expression with a combination of rigour and grace. The sisters very cleverly communicated to the audience their feelings and emotions when they performed the Padam.

I was anxiously awaiting my favourite the Thillana as the dancers were showing a great talent with fast and quick movements. They brought real happiness to the onlookers by displaying their charms with their intricate, quick movements.

The costumes were just appropriate, and very tastefully selected again focussing on subtle variations between the two sisters.

The performers are lucky to have as their Guru Smt. Gunawathy Shakespeare who guidance and training from their young age has resulted in the excellent performance. Smt. Shakespeare's dedication and love for the art should be gratefully appreciated. May she continue with this wonderful service to our children and to help to maintain this oldest classical form of art and hopefully some of the dedicated students will follow her footsteps in the future.

May I congratulate all the accompanying artistes. Vocalist Sri V. A. Aravindakshan complemented the dancing with his very powerful voice. We as the audience were mesmerised by his superb performance. The Mridangam by Sri M. Balachandar, one of the versatile artistes; his incisive beats captivated the audience and clearly enhanced the rhythmic movement of the dancers. Tremendous support given by the Violinist, Sri K. T. Sivaganesh, excellent Flute artist Sri Pitchaiappa Gnanavarathan and extremely talented young Abyrami Gnanasampathan on the Veena contributed to the great success of the performance. Congratulations to the parents of Priya and Kavita, Mr and Mrs Datar for the encouragement and support they have given to their daughters.

**Mrs. Mano Ananthanathan**

B.A. (Cey) Dip.in.Ed (Lon) M.A. (Lon)

(continued from page 35)

Thavarajah Thavesarajah, 25, a father of two, succumbed to his wounds in Batticaloa hospital. He was an employed driver at an American Mission training facility located in Urany near Batticaloa town. The victim was talking to his wife outside his house in Thevapuram village in Morakkoddanchenai, 21 km northwest of Batticaloa, when the gunmen with T-56 automatic rifle appeared in front of the house, villagers said.

**Bodies of two slain aid workers exhumed:** Sep 16 - Investigators began exhumation of bodies of seventeen aid workers of the Action Contre La Faim (ACF-Action against Hunger) who were killed in execution-style in Muttur on 4 August. Two bodies were exhumed on the first day in the Trincomalee Hindu Cemetery in the presence of the Anuradhapura Additional Magistrate, ACF officials and relatives of those killed. The remains of M.Ketheeswaran and M.Narmathan were transported to Colombo general hospital for further forensic examination, sources said. Earlier on Friday (15) the Anuradhapura Additional Magistrate Mr.Jinasena allowed the application of the Criminal Department of Investigation (CID) of the Police with the consent of parents to exhume the bodies of M.Ketheeswaran and M.Narmathan, sources said.

**CEB vehicle attacked, one killed, 2 injured:** Sep 17 - An employee of the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) was killed and two others were injured when armed men fired at the vehicle in which they were travelling, at Alukkai in Allaveddi, 11 km north of Jaffna town, around 8 pm on Saturday (16). They were traveling in a vehicle that belonged to CEB, along Chunnakam - Mallakam road towards Allaveddy to do maintenance work, when they were attacked. An official at the Chunnakam power station said the CEB staffs had special curfew pass issued by SLA authorities. The attack occurred while Sri Lanka Army (SLA) announced curfew was in force. Linganathan, 54, of Erlalai and was killed in the shooting. He is father of three. His body is kept at Thellipalai hospital. The driver of the vehicle, Lawrence, 50, of Mallakam and Kengatharan, 45, were injured in the incident. Kengatharan is father of three and is from Alaveddi.

**Father of four in Valaichenai shot dead:** Sep 17 - Sri Lanka Army troopers reportedly shot dead a family man, father of four, on Saturday (16) at Nasivanthivu in Valaichenai police division. The victim was identified as Muresu Sivarasa, 30. Police in Valaichenai claimed that the victim was an attacker who had launched an ambush on SLA patrol with a T-56 automatic rifle and a hand grenade. Nasivanthivu is located 28 km northwest of Batticaloa town. □

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