

# CHRONOLOGY OF LTTE TERROR - Part 3

From the **Daily News Archives**

When the euphoria of victory dies down, and together with it the media hype ceases, when the guns do not rattle and boom anymore, and the sea become calm and serene, when tranquillity reigns through it is natural to live in the present moment and forget the past. But one cannot live in the present without a past. Nor can one envision the future discarding the experience of the preceding events. Hence the *Daily News* is serialising the Chronicle of LTTE Terror taken from our own archives which would remind our readers how it all began. An awareness of the chronology of terror would help us prevent the recurrence of such terror and frustrate any attempts by misguided elements to repeat history to suit their evil designs. It was not simple terror. Nor was terror sporadic. It was all pre-planned, pre-determined, well-calculated terror. The victims were innocent people. Though it is too many innumerate we would like to recall the major episodes in the Chronology of Terror.



Lt. Vass Gunawardena



Sergeant S. I. Thilakarathne



Corporal R. Perera



Lance Corporal G. D. Perera



Private A. D. Manapittha



Private H.B. Sunil



Private A.J. Wijesiri



Private K.G. Karunaratne



Private G. G. Rajathilake



Private S. S. Amarasinghe



Private G. Robert



Private J.R. Fernando



Private A. S. Wanatunga

**CHAMINDA PERERA**

The sordid eruption of communal riots throughout Sri Lanka following the killing of 13 soldiers at Tinnevely on July 23 is a slur on our proud heritage dating back to early civilization. Seeds of discontent and were sown in Colombo and Jaffna killing thousands of innocent Sinhalese and Tamil civilians. It was as abominable way of retaliation which resulted in carnage and arson throughout the country and Tamil militancy gathered its momentum with the outbreak of communal riots. It was reported that the LTTE launched a massive recruitment drive after the July pogrom.

The genesis of restraint which were spread with the Buddhist way of life has had a history in which people of all minority communities were treated with love and compassion.

The agents of violence in the North and South were backed by chauvinistic political elements who were reluctant to bring the situation control. The Communal riots destroyed the social stability, discipline and moral well-being of the country. The Tamil minority parties were sailing too close to the wind to gain political mileage from the incidents. Some leading Tamil political parties condoned the atrocities carried out by the terrorists in the Jaffna Peninsula.

Then Opposition Leader A. Amirthalingam did not try to douse the situation.

In fact he aggravated the communal feelings of the people by rushing to India and apprise Sri Lanka's development to Indian authorities.

The mobs instigated by the elements in the then Government went on rampaging the business establishment, dwellings of Tamil people while Tamil chauvinistic elements began ethnic cleansing by evicting Sinhalese and Muslims from Tamil dominated areas in the North. Thousands of Tamils refugees were accommodated in the leading schools in Colombo while same amount of Sinhalese who were living in Jaffna, Murakkan and Kokilai were given shelter in Pilgrims Rests in Anuradhapura.

The Cabinet Minister of the then government decided to provide all welfare facilities to the displaced Sinhalese who were



Indian Foreign Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao, who arrived here on Thursday called on President J. R. Jayewardene at President's House, yesterday. He visited the office of the Deputy High Commissioner for India in Kandy. Here Mr. Narasimha Rao holds talks with President Jayewardene. Also in the picture are Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed (extreme left) and Secretary of the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs K. S. Bajpai (extreme right).

provided temporary accommodation at the Ramnali Pilgrims' Rest and Bastian Pilgrims' Rest. A Cabinet Minister of the J R Jayewardene Government Cyril Mathew was alleged to have been involved in inciting the Sinhalese community to attack the residences and business establishment of Tamil community in

Colombo and outskirts. Fifty three prisoners sentenced to jail term under the Prevention of Terrorism Act were clubbed to death by over 300 prisoners at the Welikada remand prison on July 26 and 26 of 1983. A verdict of homicide was returned by the Magistrate who inquired into the death of these prisoners.

## Midnight attack at Tinnevely Terrorists kill 13 soldiers

Thirteen soldiers including an officer were killed and two were seriously injured in an attack by the Northern terrorists at Tinnevely on Saturday night, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday.

The soldiers who were travelling in a jeep and a heavy vehicle were leaving the Palaly camp on a patrol following information received about certain terrorist activities.

They were killed when the jeep was blown-up by an explosive device followed by a hail of fire from automatic rifles and shot-guns, the Ministry said.

The dead are 2/Lt. Vaas Gunawardena, Sgt. Thilakarathne, Pte. K. D. Karunaratne, Pte. D. Robert, Pte. S. S. Amarasinghe, Lt. Cpl. G. D. Perera, Pte. D. M. A. D. Manapittha, Pte. M. B. Sunila, Pte. A. G. Wijesiri, Pte. S. G. Rajathilake, Pte. A. J. R. Fernando, Cpl. G. P. Perera and Pte. Manatunge.

The injured are Cpl. R. A. E. Perera and Lt. Cpl. I. H. Sumathipala.

The Ministry release said the jeep was hit by a heavy explosion near Tinnevely. This explosion was activated from about 50 yards away by an exploder, presumed to have been one robbed from Kanke-santurani cement factory recently.

The explosion wrecked

the jeep instantly killing two of its occupants.

"As the soldiers were alighting from the vehicle to take counter-action, they were hit from three sides by a hail of fire from automatic rifles and shot-guns. At the same time 15 to 20 handbombs were thrown into the vehicle," the Ministry said.

The soldiers had fired back and

several bloodstains seen behind a parapet wall suggested that some of the terrorists may have been injured or killed.

The terrorists were reported to have been wearing army uniforms, the Ministry said.

The bodies of the officer and men were flown to Colombo.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said, the funerals will take place today in Colombo with full military honours.

The Ministry said that security forces are intensively patrolling the peninsula in an effort to track down those responsible for the attack.

"Any information from the public that would help us to get at them is most welcome," the Ministry said.



## Violence begets violence

# Infamous July 1983 pogrom

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It was later disclosed that Prison officials helped the prisoners to break the cell in which the victims were accommodated.

The then Government appointed former DIG Sylene Soya to assist the CID investigating the three prominent political parties who were accused of inciting communal disharmony. Three more teams were appointed by the Government to investigate the root cause of the communal riots. Then IGP Tyrell Gunatilleke headed one such team.

Former President J. R. Jayewardene addressing the nation after the riots were over charged the JVP, N SSP and CP of having instigated communal strife in the country.

But the Communist Party in a statement stressed that the party had no hand in the July disturbances and the working class professed by the CP has no such tie as race, language or religion.

Then Commissioner General of Essential Services Bradman Weerakoon was also ordered to make

necessary recommendations on how to resolve the plight of the displaced due to the July disturbances as the Indian Government sent its External Affairs Minister Narasingha Rao to Colombo to assess the situation.

The Indian Government was concerned in Sri Lanka's situation and maintained constant dialogue over the plight of displaced citizens particularly of Tamils of Indian origin.

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's special envoy on Sri Lanka G. Parthasarthy flew to Sri Lanka several times and held talks with the government on how this humanitarian situation should be solved.

The Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka looked into the welfare of displaced families who were accommodated at the Hindu College and Thurstan College in Colombo. The Sri Lanka's issue was also taken up before the United Nations Sub Commission on Protection of Minorities too.

Then President has sent his brother A.H.W. Jayewardene as a special envoy to several countries in Asia to brief the Sri Lanka's situation in the aftermath of the July disturbances. The foreign media were spreading various misleading news which tarnished the image of Sri Lanka.

No thinking Sri Lankan, even those who have been deeply shaken by the events in the aftermath of July disturbances does not like the image of the country to be needlessly tarnished.

The JRU Government set up an authority to ensure the reconstruction of properties which were devastat-

ed by the mobs as the international pressure over the humanitarian situation was mounting.

This Authority under the Chairmanship of Retired Admiral AWH Perera divested many companies that were affected as a result of communal violence. Among the major companies that were divested were St. Anthony's Industries, KG and Maharajah industries.

The painful agony, the feeling of helplessness, shock of life and constructive achievements through hard work were shattered by senseless violence levelled at innocent civil-minded people. The 1983 communal riots left an indelible black mark in the country's social and political landscape and gave a tremendous impetus to militants groups fighting for separate State in Sri Lanka.

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### Yesterday A murderer at large

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Pictures show property and buildings being burnt by rioters. Pix courtesy ANCL Library