

TAMIL PERSON
AND STATE

PICTORIAL

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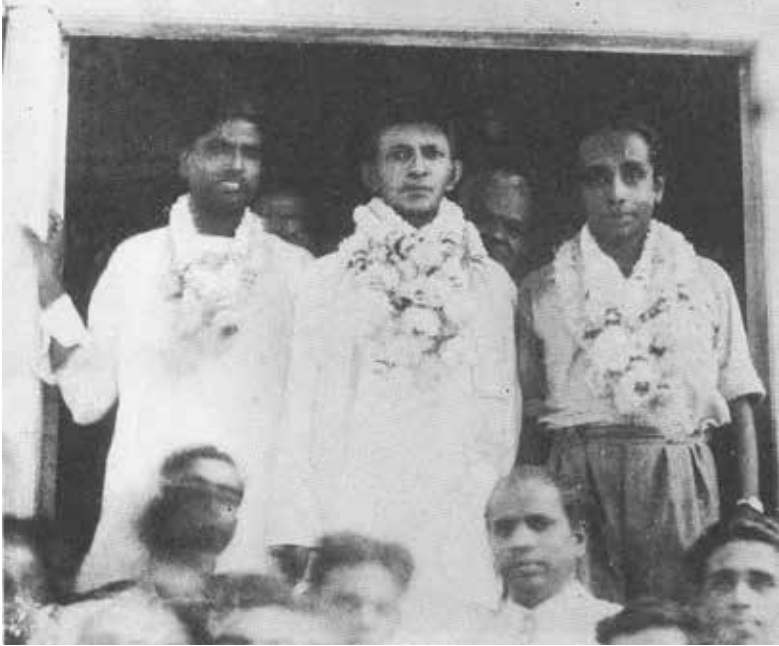
Michael Roberts



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1. GG Ponnambalam, SJV Chelvanayakam and C Vanniasingham, the triumvirate of the Tamil Congress, just after the General Election results were announced on 1st September 1947.

Source and date uncertain



Primed by RS Perinbanayagam the semiotics within the embellishments can be marked: GG has more garlands than SJV, while Vanniasingham has only one. Seniority is thereby embodied. GG Ponnambalam was the leader of the Tamil Congress in the 1940s, seeking to reduce the implications of Sinhala demographic weight through a communalist pitch that he had launched from the 1930s. However he was seduced by office into an alliance with the UNP under DS Senanayake. When the UNP government of 1947 moved to prevent the enfranchisement of the Indian Tamil plantation labour force, SJV Chelvanayakam and several Tamil activists broke away and formed the *Illankai Thāmil Arasu Kachchi* in 1948/49. In correct translation this label reads as the “Tamil State Party.” However, in what seems to be an act of dissimulation the term “Federal Party” was deployed in English and secured a firm foothold in the media world.

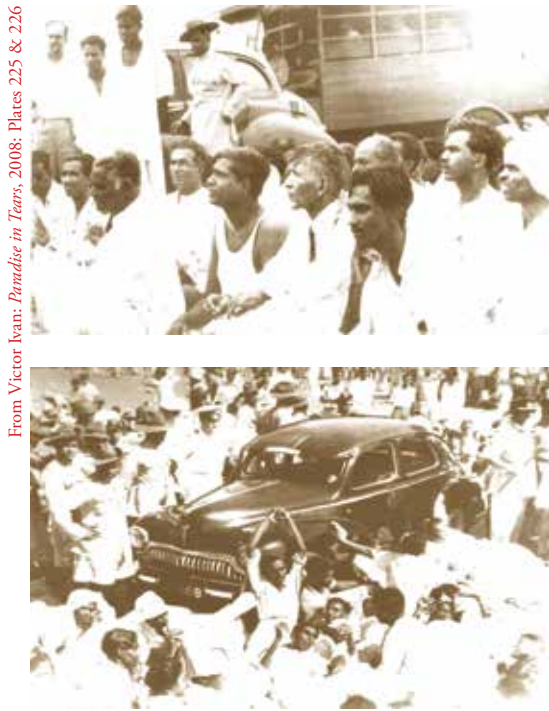
2a. Sir John Kotelawala
with Tamil supporters



2b. SJV Chelvanayakam addresses
a crowd at Valvettithurai.

In this picture from circa 1953 Sir John is flanked on his right by Senator K. Kanaganāyagam, Jaffna's leading civil lawyer and the first Tamil Senator appointed by DS Senanāyake. Kanaganāyagam's son is K. Kanag-Isvaran, a leading barrister in Colombo today who often represents TNA interests in court. On his left is a businessman who was Chairman of the Traders Association. Standing behind is his brother Justin Kotelawala. Sinhala leaders tended to say one thing in the north and another in the south; while the slants given in the vernacular and English-media newspapers on both sides of the ethnic fence were not always consistent. Populist appeals in the 1950s and 1960s were probably not confined to the Sinhala politicians, but the rhetoric deployed in Tamil by the Tamil activists of that era has not been deciphered by relatively clinical scholars in the manner in which the Sinhala Only agitation has been disclosed by such students as Wriggins, Kearney, Mervyn de Silva, Jupp and KM de Silva.

3a, b. Tamil *satyagraha* protests on Galle Face Green and violent Sinhala reactions by word and fist



Galle Face Green in Colombo was one of the hubs of political agitation in the 1950s. As soon as the Sinhala Only language bill was presented in parliament, the confrontations between Sinhala and Tamil political activists heated up. The top picture shows the Federal Party leaders conducting *satyagrāha* at Galle Face Green on 5 June 1956; while the second photograph shows them being attacked and abused by “Sinhala language enthusiasts” as Victor Ivan terms them in his presentation. Figs. 218-32 in *Paradise in Tears* are vital ingredients towards understanding this critical moment in the emergence of the Sinhala-Tamil divide. It was preceded by a massive election victory for the MEP coalition headed by Bandaranaike’s SLFP. In effect, one sees how a democratic structure based on a first-past-the-post Westminster model of elections generated populist politics of a type that undermines democratic principles.

4. Bandaranaike and Chelvanāyakam seal the BC Pact with a handshake,
26 July 1957

From the Times Collection, Dept. of National Archives



Chelvanāyakam is flanked by C. Vanniasingham and V. Navaratnam. The body language of most of the activists depicted in the photographs (also see Roberts, *Narrating*, Pic page 23) participating in this agreement indicate satisfaction. However, an internal revolt within the SLFP became the principal catalyst for Bandaranaike's unilateral abrogation of the agreement (see Figs 13-15 in Roberts, *Confrontations*, 2009). This was not the first, nor last occasion, when Sinhala leaders broke their promises. However, this moment was probably the most critical in deepening Tamil distrust. V. Navaratnam was among those who responded with virulent words in the 1960s in ways that inspired Tamil youth such as John Chrysostom, Ponnuthurai Sivakumāran, V. Pirapāharan and Varadharāja Perumal to seek militant paths of resistance.

5a. A *bhikkhu* castigates Prime Minister Bandaranaike at Rosmead Place

From Times Collection, Dept. of National Archives, Colombo



Bhikkhus organised under the umbrella of the Eksat Bhikkhu Peramuna were one of the central forces in bringing the coalition known as the Mahajana Eksat Peramuna (Peoples' United Front) into power at the General Elections of 1956. They were one pillar in what was called the *pancha maha balavēgaya* (five forces, namely *sangha-veda-guru-govi-kamkaru* or monk, native physician, teacher, cultivator, worker) who embodied the ideology of Sinhala linguistic nationalism as well as particular economic or status interests. Appeasement of the Sri Lanka Tamils through the devolutionary implications of the BC Pact was seen as a threat to these interests. The monks ventured forth once again to serve as the vanguard of denunciation.

5b. Another *bhikkhu* rouses people against the BC Pact



6. Mrs Wijewardene and *bhikkhus* in protest outside PM's residence



Mrs Wimala Wijewardene was Minister of Health in Bandaranaike's cabinet but also a paramour of the wheeler-dealer *bhikkhu*, Māpitagama Buddharakkhita Thera. She joined the *bhikkhus* who participated in a sit down protest against the BC Pact outside the urban family residence of the Bandaranaike family at Rosmead Place. Following cultural etiquette even in heat of struggle, she has been provided with a 'compartmentalised space' that distances her from the *bhikkhus*; while the Prime Minister's respectful stance (see Fig. 5) also adheres to indigenous protocol.

7. Sinhalese people assaulting and ridiculing a Tamil person in Colombo during the mini-pogrom of mid-1958

From Victor Ivan, Paradise in Tears, 2008: Plate 247



It is not uncommon for some middle-class personnel to contend that the “riots” of 1958, 1977 and 1983 was the work of “hooligans” and “lumpen” elements of the population. This particular image provides a clear example of the invalidity of this generalisation (supported as it is by anecdotal testimonies from numerous quarters) for the incidents that constituted the mini-pogrom of mid-1958. In contrast with the pogroms of 1977 and 1983, elements among the security forces were NOT involved in instigating or participating in the attacks on Tamils. On the contrary the action taken against those indulging in violence was quite severe – in part because the NCOs in the forces of that day included several Burghers and Malays, while the officers were usually no-nonsense types of the old school; and in part because the Governor-General, Sir OE Goonetilleke, had stepped in and taken command of the situation. The setting for this outbreak was provided by stirrings among the Sinhala people in reaction against Tamil agitation against the Sinhala Only Bill and the unilateral abrogation of the BC Pact. Rumours and fabrications that alluded to killings of Sinhala persons in the east were a critical factor in instigating the assaults on Tamil persons and property in the south western lowlands, the Sabaragamuwa and North Central Provinces and the Gal Oya locality. See Vittachi 1958 and Manor 2008.

8a, b. Riot and arson scenes, 1958

Courtesy of Victor Ivan



Some scenes of burning, destruction and looting in 1958 as Tamil residents in Colombo are forced to seek refuge in hastily organised spaces of refuge. Tamil residents became refugees in their own city. Some of those with kin in the north were sent by ship to the Jaffna Peninsula. Also see Groundviews, “Black Memories,” <http://groundviews.org/2013/07/18/30-years-ago-an-unprecedented-look-at-black-july/>.

8c. A government official listens to a cluster of Tamil refugees

From Victor Ivan, *Paradise in Tears*, 2008, Plate 250



9a, b. Tamil *satyagrāhi* increase pressure in north & east and face police violence, 1960-61

From Victor Ivan, *Paradise in Tears*, No. 260 & Extracted from S. Ponniah, *Satyagraha*, 1963, by Rāsaratnam Krishnakumar



The Federal Party and its supporters ratcheted up its peaceful *satyagrāhi* protests in 1960-61. The first picture shows police clearing the entrances to the Jaffna *kachcheri* after the *satyagrāhis* had blocked it bodily. In the second image circa 14 April 1961 S. T. Arasu is being threatened in front of the *kachcheri* buildings. Such strong police action directed against this agitation only inflamed Tamil sentiments and the liberation ideology at its extreme end. At the same time security measures against smuggling and illicit immigration from India on the northern coasts tended to strengthen the interweaving of political sentiment and criminality among the Karaiyar people around Velvettithurai, Myliddy and Point Pedro in ways that eventually spawned the emergence of Thangadurai, Kuttimani, Prabhākaran and Shankar as militant Tamil fighters. Significantly, ST Arasu was subsequently “honoured” with the title of “Maamanithar” by Prabhākaran. Arasu still (2013) resides in Jaffna.

10. Ponnuthurai Sivakumāran of Urimpurai: liberation hero

A copy of artwork poster was kindly given to me by the Tamil Information Centre in London; while the photograph was taken by Raghibir-Singh and inserted in the National Geographic, 1979, p. 139.



Sivakumāran was one of the early militants and committed suicide by cyanide when cornered by a police unit in 1974. A hartāl marked his funeral at Urimpurai and a prophetic plaque indicating that there was an impending “changing of the guard” in Tamil leadership circulated in some circles. An enormous crowd attended his funeral at Urimpurai and leading Tamil politicians were humiliated with assaults by slipper when they visited his home (Roberts 1996). A statue was erected in his memory and became the focus of symbolic struggles as armed forces surreptitiously knocked it down. The political significance of such statements was realised and depicted in an article in the *National Geographic* in 1979.

11a, b. Onfield Tamil protests at Kennington Oval, London, 11 June 1975

Though the centre of Tamil militancy and fervour in the 1970s was in the Jaffna Peninsula, the ferment among Tamils in UK was considerable. London was home to other militant groups from all over the world and

Courtesy of Fazals Photostream in <http://www.flickr.com/photos/>



some Tamils were inspired by their dialogue with such people. They were drawn to Left radicalism, albeit without ever acquiring a deep understanding of Marxism as political philosophy. Eliyathamby Ratnasabāpathy, however, understood Marxist ideology and established the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS). EROS is said to have organised this public demonstration of Tamil dissatisfaction in 1975. In the long view, however, it was the clandestine links with Palestinian revolutionary groups

which enabled a few radicals to gain the skills required for violent resistance. One of the better-read Tamil militants in these London networks, one Anton Balasingham, was introduced to the LTTE leadership at some point in the late '70s and eventually gravitated into their ranks in ways that bolstered their presentation of self as a radical socialist body during the 1980s. This propaganda line was embellished by Pirapāharan's adoption of a Che Guevera beret (see Fig 13 below). Some observers were fooled by this veneer, but events proved that the Tiger leadership was neither Marxist nor socialist. See Narayan Swamy 2003 and Roberts, "Hero Figures," 2012a.

Four early Tiger leaders of commanding capacity

Sources: varied pro-LTTE sites



Shankar, Seelan, Rāghavan and Kittu are presented here from left to right in clockwise direction. Shankar nom de guerre for Sathiyathan (from the village of Kambarmalai) died in Madurai on 27 November 1982 and Seelan (nom de guerre for Charles Anthony) died on 15 July 1983. The LTTE was selective in its recruitment and there were only about 29-35 trained fighters in mid-1983 before the July 1983 pogrom sparked the swelling of its ranks as well as its wherewithal. Its early history was not without factionalism and splits. Rāghavan left the LTTE circa 1984 and has since linked up in UK with Nirmalā Rājasingham. The image of Rāghavan is from recent times and is courtesy of the *Colombo Telegraph*. One can start with the writings of Ganēshan Iyer (2012a) and Rāghavan (2009) in pursuit of this facet of early LTTE history before 1983. Also see Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, chap. 1

13. Young Pirapāharan and his fascination with weaponry



Various Tamil sources



Once he had consolidated his position as supremo of the LTTE, the pictures of Pirapāharan with guns and other weaponry were displayed far and wide. Such imagery supports the motifs explored by M. R Narayan Swamy in “Prabhakaran: from Catapult Killer to Ruthless Insurgent,” in IANS, 18 May 2009 – <http://twocircles.net/node/148596> or his *Tiger Vanquished* (2009). However, also note his assiduous absorption of literature on warfare and generalship (e. g. Clausewitz).

14a. Enjoying their assaults: riotous mob at Borella reveal exhilaration, night of 24/25th July 1983

The assaults, destruction and terror inflicted upon the person and property of Tamils living in Colombo began on that fateful night of 24th July



*Picture by Chandragupta Amarasisinghe,
a brave cameraman*

1983 in the immediate aftermath of the burial of some soldiers (who had been ambushed by the LTTE) at Kanatta cemetery nearby. While there is solid evidence of instigation and participation by some state functionaries in the pogrom that lasted for

about a week from that night onwards, there was also considerable popular participation in these acts of victimisation in Colombo and elsewhere. This particular picture suggests that the line between bystanders and assailants was pretty thin. It is more than likely that some of the people depicted in this scene had killed and maimed besides burning and destroying property. See Roberts, "Agony," 2003 and Groundviews, "Black Memories," <http://groundviews.org/2013/07/18/30-years-ago-an-unprecedented-look-at-black-july/>.

14b. A scene from Borella



Courtesy of Victor Ivan

The sweep of attacks sometimes embraced – that is engulfed -- premises owned by Indians or small minority communities such as Borahs, Sindhis, Gujaratis and Memons.

15a. The other militant forces, 1980s



15a. TELO calendar poster



15b. A clutch of EPDP guerrillas

There were numerous militant organisations in the mid-1980s. Besides the LTTE, the most important were TELO, EPRLF, PLOTE and EROS. All these groups received support and training in India (see below Fig. 17)

16. Uneasy cooperation under Indian pressure, 1985: four fighting Tamil leaders

From http://kanakesan-nayakan.blogspot.com/2009/11/blog-post_778.html



From left to right one see Sri Sabāratnam (TELO), Velupillai Pirapāharan (LTTE) A Padmanabhā (EPRLF) and Bālakumāran (EROS). This photograph was probably taken at some point in 1985 when pressures from the Indian central government induced some degree of cooperation among these competing groups of liberation fighters. In July–August 1985 the Indian government organised peace talks at Thimpu, Bhutan aimed at bringing an end to the Sri Lankan civil war between militant groups and the government of Sri Lanka. The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was also invited to this gathering, while the leading delegate for GSL was Hector Jayewardene (President Junius Jayewardene's brother). The cooperation between the Tamil militant organisations did not last long. The LTTE, inspired by Kittu, attacked and decimated the TELO camps in the Jaffna Peninsula in April–May 1986; and gradually squeezed out the PLOTE segments in this central arena. Most of the EROS personnel became LTTE proxies and soon merged with the latter. Later, on 19th June 1990 a Tiger commando squad led by David and Sivārāsan attacked a building in Chennai where the Padmanabhā and his whole Central Committee was meeting and killed every single one. They also got clean way and back to Sri Lanka.

17. Tiger commanders at Sirimalai camp in north India, 1984

Courtesy of Rohan Gunaratna's book



From left to right one sees Lingam (a bodyguard for the *talaivar*), Aruna (Commander, Batticaloa district), Pirapāharan (*talaivar*), Pulendran (Commander, Trinco District) Victor, (Commander, Mannar District) and Pottu Ammān (Intelligence Chief). The range of automatic weapons reveals their fascination with guns. This is illustrated further in the many photographs of Pirapāharan circulated among Tamil networks which show him with some weaponry (Fig. 13). However, Pirapāharan was also an avid student of military treatises translated into Tamil (or summarised for him by those proficient in English). He also absorbed and adopted the shock tactics of the German Wehrmacht of the 1930s and 1940s and admired Hitler because he believed (wrongly as we know) that the Fuhrer was responsible for these capacities – See Iyer 2012 and Roberts 2012a reproduced as Chap. 3 in *Tamil Person and State: Essays*.

18a. Pirapāharan in conversation with MGR, February 1985



Between late 1983 and 1987 Pirapāharan was mostly located in southern India and was in touch with leading Tamilnadu politicians. His relationship with MGR is believed to have been especially cordial.

18b. Pirapāharan as Che Guevara



At some point in the early 1980s the Tiger spin doctors presented Pirapāharan as an admirer and follower of Che Guevara. While Pirapāharan had certainly read some works on Che and was attentive to guerrilla tactics, we know now that he was not captivated by Marxist philosophy or ideology. This presentation of self seems to have been deployed to sway the Indian intelligentsia and supporters in the West. Anton Balasingham may have had a hand in this tactic. Note Tekwani 2009 & Ross 2010.

19a. The northern shoreline as lifeline



The northern coastal shores of the Jaffna Peninsula as well as the islands to its west supported a fishing population that also contained many smugglers who traded with the Indian mainland and sustained working networks with elements of the coastal population across the Palk Strait. These links enabled several young militants (for e.g. Rāgavan) to slip across to India in the 1970s when the security services were on their heels. Pirapāharan himself spent the years 1983 to 1987 in India. Following the pogrom of July 1983 a large number of Tamil men streamed across to southern India on any available boat in order to seek training under the aegis of one of the militant Tamil groups working in alliance with Indian authorities, regional or central. The pogrom had rendered Sri Lanka into a pariah state in the eyes of the world, while the Indian central government took the opportunity of pursuing the de-stabilisation of Sri Lanka. It proceeded to train and arm most of the insurgent groups, who already had support in Tamilnadu.

Pic by Shyam Tekwani



19b. Tiger “boys” on guard, late 1980s

20. The Vadamarachchi Operation launched by the Sri Lankan Army on 26 May 1987 and its commanders

From the Ministry of Defence site



The image shows Lt. Col. Vipul Boteju, Lt. Col. Sarath Jayawardane, Col. Wijaya Wimalaratne, Brig. Denzil Kobbekaduwa and Major Gotābaya Rajapaksa in relaxed mood during the Vadamarachchi Operation. By early 1987 the LTTE had decimated or frozen out the TELO, PLOTE and EPRLF capacities within the Jaffna Peninsula and was a de facto government in some areas. The Vadamarachchi Operation was the government's effort to re-assert its power (Wickremesekera 2010 & Wijayapala 2007). The campaign was progressing reasonably well when India intervened in the months of June and July through strong diplomatic pressure and some symbolic incursions into Sri Lankan sovereignty. See Plates 350-53 in Victor Ivan, *Paradise in Tears*, for a glimpse of some Indian actions.

21a, b. Indian interventions: virulent protest from legal fraternity and other groups in Lanka, mid-1987



From Lake House



The agitation against the strong arm tactics of India cut across class and drew individuals from all walks of life unto the streets of Colombo. Also see Fig. 21 in Roberts, *Confrontations in Sri Lanka*, 2009. Protests were even raised on the streets of London. One of the point-men in the Indian exercise was their ambassador in Sri Lanka, JN Dixit. Cultural form directed some of the messages of protest: with the phonetic form of Dixit's name giving rise to a play of sound and meaning that sought to denigrate the 'body' of what was, in fact, a powerful and huge opponent, namely, the Republic of India. See Figures 358-60 & 363-64 in Victor Ivan, *Paradise in Tears*, for a glimpse of the agitation and violence that was unleashed (partly engineered by JVP activity).

22. Rajiv Gandhi and JR Jayewardene sign the Indo-Lanka Accord, 29 July 1987



Gamini Dissanayake used Chandra Schaffter's good offices to reach out behind the scenes to the Indian government through N. Ram of *The Hindu* and Indian cricketing officials. These measures led to a rapprochement of sorts whereby Sri Lanka bowed to Indian pressure and accepted constitutional amendments on the understanding that India would send its army to restore state authority in the north and east. While some journalists considered this a clever move wherein India was committed to the heavy task of policing, many Sri Lankans considered this step an impingement of the country's sovereignty and honour. A naval rating in the guard of honour for Gandhi in Colombo even went so far as to try and teach Gandhi a lesson by braining him with his rifle butt (see Fig. 1 in Roberts, *Fire and Storm*, 2010).

23. Kumārappa (LTTE Commander, Vavuniya District) shaking hands with General Harikat Singh of the IPKF with Mahattayā (Tiger second in command) looking on.

Plate 380 in Victor Ivan, Paradise in Tears



Though this indicates an amicable relationship, there were underlying currents of dissatisfaction in LTTE minds. It is now known that Pirapāharan had his arms twisted into accepting this intervention, an act of hegemony if ever there was one. One can surmise that the personal style adopted by Rajiv Gandhi at the talks in Delhi planted one seed that led Pirapāharan to the act of retributive assassination in 1991 which was meant to prevent the

return to power of Gandhi and his party at the forthcoming Indian elections. It is my surmise that the demeaning manner in which Rajiv Gandhi treated Pirapāharan during personal exchanges served as one ingredient in the latter's decision. Dishonour animates revenge.

24. The LTTE directorate on the platform at Sudumalai

Plate 374 in Victor Ivan, Paradise in Tears



Thilipan is standing on the extreme right, Mahattayā and Kittu are to Pirapāharan's right and Kumārappa is speaking (with a bodyguard to his side).

25. Tamils assembled en masse at Sudumalai Ammān Kovil grounds to hear Pirapāharan speak, 4 August 1987

Courtesy of Lake House



Also see the image of people on rooftops in Fig. 375 in Victor Ivan, *Paradise in Tears*. Testimonies from Jaffna people of that era indicate that the IPKF forces were greeted rapturously by the population when they arrived in late July-early August. However, observers who attended carefully to Pirapāharan's speech perceived reservations, which, as we know, crystallised into resistance (see below). Significantly, Prof K. Sivathamby indicated to me that this was Pirapāharan's greatest peroration. This reading from a Leftist intellectual is significant. To what extent this view was informed by Sivathamby's own lineage roots as a Karaiyar from Valvettithurai and/or his Tamil patriotism are questions I cannot answer.

26a, b. Thilipan fasts unto death in protest against the IPKF policy and presence, 15-26 September 1987

Plate 378 in Victor Ivan, Paradise in Tears



Taken from Niromi de Soysa, Tamil Tigers.



Thilipan aka Rāsaiah Parthipan was a chess champion at Jaffna Hindu College and one of the thinkers in the LTTE hierarchy in the mid-1980s, being in charge of their political wing. An internal injury and his own commitment to the Tamil cause may have directed the LTTE's decision to deploy him in an act of protest suicide in line with a hallowed tradition within Indian cultural history (see Roberts 2005a, b). Beginning on 15 September 1987 his fast lasted till he died on 26 September. As the Tamil Sangam web-site states, "a few weeks later, the LTTE went to war against the Indian government, which was now viewed as collaborating with the Sinhalese regime in Colombo" -- http://www.sangam.org/ANALYSIS/Thileepan_5_12_03htm. -- A fresh stage of war was now round the corner.

27a. Indian troops on guard during their war, 1987-89



The immediate cause for the IPKF-LTTE war was the apprehension by the SL Navy of a Tiger boat on its way to India with several senior commanders, including Kumārappa and Pulendran. The Indian failure to persuade the SL government to release the men into Indian hands prompted the LTTE leaders to engineer the suicide of most of these men after cyanide capsules were smuggled into their hands by Anton Balasingham. This act stirred the Tamil population and served as justification for the LTTE's presentation of the central Indian government as enemy.

27b. Indian troops in waiting



Though the IPKF gained control of the Jaffna Peninsula, the LTTE shifted its headquarters to the Mullaitivu area and showed considerable resilience in keeping the IPKF at bay for two years; while killing as many as 1200 Indian personnel according to unsubstantiated claims. Anecdotal statements from one or two Jaffna women (personal communications) indicate that the atrocities and rapes inflicted on the Tamil people by the IPKF exceeded those of the SL security forces before (1977-83) or after (1990-2009). This opinion needs verification.

28. Embedded with the 'enemy'-- Shyam Tekwani's striking camerawork



28a. Tigers on guard along shoreline



28b. Tigers covering internal movement of Tamil refugees



Shyam Tekwani is a Sindhi who had some of his education in Chennai. As a photo journalist he secured admission to LTTE areas even when the Tigers were fighting the IPKF. Embedded within Tiger ranks and strafed on occasion by Indian helicopters, his experiences and photo-record of the LTTE must be a goldmine (see Tekwani 2009 and Ross 2010).

28c. A young Tiger lad heads for duty with *vipoothi* and *kuppi* as protection

29. *Uyirāyutham*: life gifted for cause. Tiger fighters relaxing in camp display their *kuppi*, the cyanide capsules they were committed to bite when facing threat of capture

Pic by Shyam Tekuani.



The keeping of a *kuppi*, or cyanide vial, by Pirapāharan himself was a defensive measure to protect his organisation. From early on it was rendered *de riguer* for all trained LTTE fighters to carry a *kuppi*, usually worn like a necklace around the neck (cf. the *thāli*). around one's neck. It was a badge of honour and proclaimed their commitment to the LTTE cause. As such, it attracted admiration in Tamil circles and testified to their quality of *arppaNippu* –“dedication of self to a deity” (Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, 2013: 54) It was not till mid-1987 that the LTTE turned such commitment into an attacking weapon by fashioning suicide attacks. Because of the disfavour with which such effective low-precision weaponry was evaluated in the West, especially after 9/11, scholars (e.g. Robert Pape 2003) have lost sight of the defensive origin of this tool in LTTE circles as well as its use as a weapon of protest in the time-honoured mode rooted in Indian history.

30. Adele & Anton Bālasingham in the LTTE command area



The Bālasinghams feature prominently in the BBC documentary “Suicide Killers” made in 1991. Since Adele Bālasingham nee Wilby was part of the LTTE hierarchy and was pictured in military uniform in the past, it is noteworthy that the human rights activists in Britain today have studiously avoided her indictment for war crimes even though she resides quiescent in their midst, while yet participating in the ongoing propoganda work directed at Sri Lanka (if grapevine tales can be relied on). Also see “A Documentary: Story of Adele Balasingham,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded &v=wr8JP5-4IVA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=wr8JP5-4IVA).

31. Six martyrs from the early decades of the Tamil liberation struggle

Backcover of pocket notebook in author's possession – purchased in Kilinochchi November 2004



From top left anti-clockwise we see Sivakumāran, Shankar, Annai Pupathi, Mālathi, Miller and Thilīpan. Sivakumāran was not of the LTTE; but has been adopted into their ranks because of his “exemplary death.” Malathi, from a Catholic Karaiyar family, was the first female fighter to commit defensive suicide. Because they served the LTTE and Tamil cause through their protest fasts-unto-death, Thilīpan and Annai Pupathi are sometimes referred to as “*tiyaki*” rather than “*māvīrar*.” For Pupathi, also see Figs. 12a & b in Roberts, *Fire and Storm*, 2010, including her encasement in a lotus symbol – thus in effect indicative of an *ārati*, a ritual act which encompasses participants and protects them through a field of power/energy.

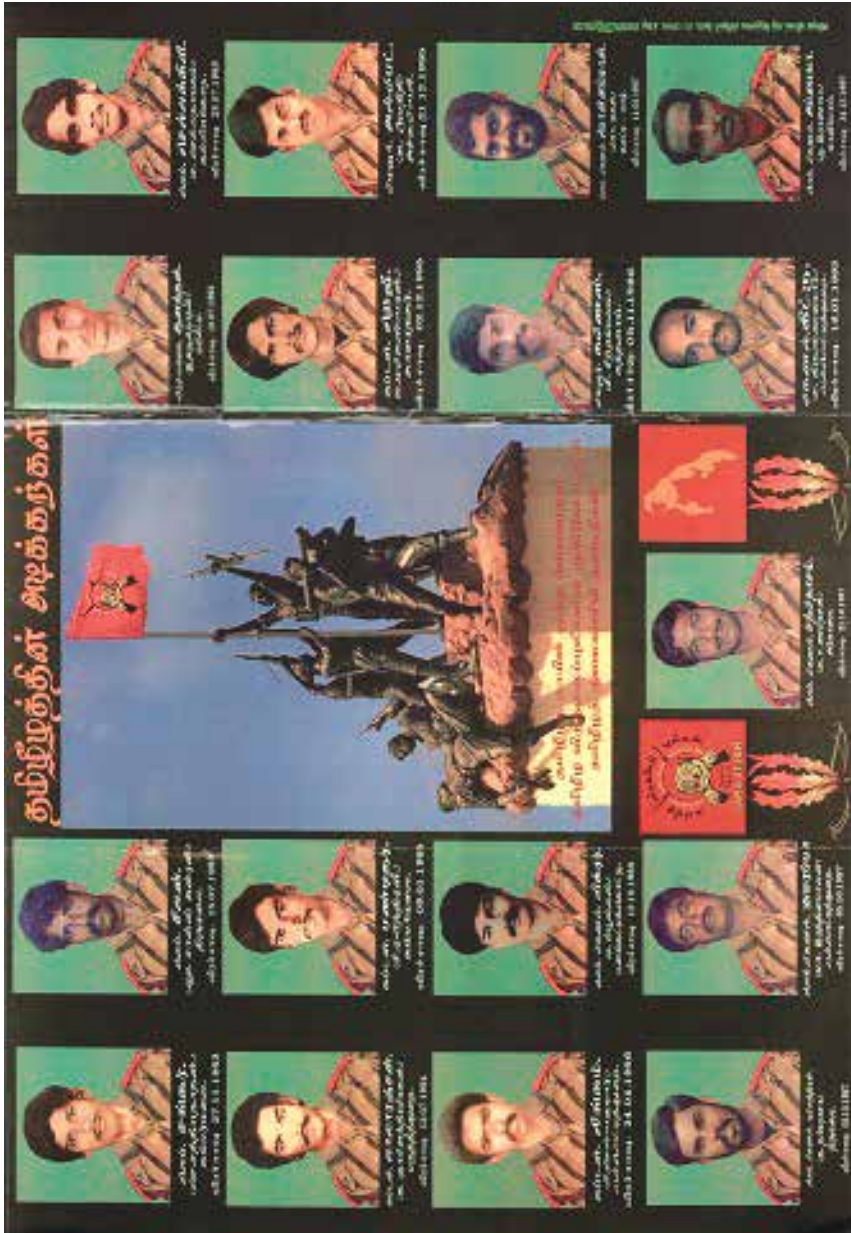
32. Pirapāharan pays homage to the Black Tigers, 5 July 2005



The picture on the wall is that of Miller (Vallipuram Vasanthan), who drove a truck laden with explosives into an army camp at Nelliyadi on 5 July 1987, the first LTTE suicide attack. Note the symbolism of flames and Miller's encirclement by flowers in keeping with a whole genre of "circling rituals" (*ārati* in Sanskritic Tamil) that are intended to remove unwanted negatives from a person or place. Other practices during *Māvīrar Nāl* in November indicate that the *māvīrar* (heroes) are symbolically encircled and protected by cosmic forces marked by the jasmine flower or glory lily. This is a Tantric principle that has been incorporated within Hindu orthodoxies without necessarily being recognised as Tantric (see Roberts, "Self Annihilation for Political Cause," 2010d and "Encompassing Empowerment," 2014).

33. Calendar poster from 2004 depicting the pre-1983 Tiger māvīrār

From authors' collection.



This poster was gifted to the author by Ramesh, head of the LTTE's propaganda wing, on 28 November 2004. He indicated that the personnel were his choice. A significant omission is the image of Mahattaayā, an early leader who was deemed "traitor" and executed by the LTTE in 1994. In chart order the *māvīrar* are

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1-Shankar | 2-Seelan | 3-Ānandan | 4-Sellakili |
| 5 Lāla Ranjan | 6-Panditha | 7-Reggie | 8-Alfred |
| 9-Lingam | 10-Victor | 11-Ganesh | 12-Ponnammān |
| 13-Pulendran | 14-Kumarappu | 15-Santhosum | 16-Kittu |
| 17- Appiah | | | |

Shankar = Selvasinthiran Sathiyānāthan (died 27-11-1982). Seelan= Charles Anthony (15 July 1983). Ananthan= E Arulanthan of Myliddy (15 July 1983). Sellakili= S Selvanayagam from Kalriayankadu (23 July 1983). 5 Lala Ranjan= Gnanendra Mohan of Pt Pedro (13 July 1984). 6 Panditha= V Ravindran of Pt. Pedro (Jan. 1985). 7 Reggie= S Maheswaran from Karainagar (2 Dec. 1985) 8. Alfred= K Rabanidi from Atchiveli. 9 Lingam=C Selvakumar of Valvettithurai (24 April 1986) 10 Victor = Marcelin Fusless (12 October 1986) 11 Ganesh= C Sittampalam of Kandalay (5 Nov 1986) 12 Ponnammān= Y. Kuhan (14 Feb 1987) 13 Pulendran= KO Dharmarāsa of Trinco (5 Oct 1987) 14 Kumārappa= V Ratnapālan from VVT (5 Oct. 1987) 15 Santhosum= Umainsan from Ariyalai (21 Oct 1987) 16 Kittu= K Sathāsivam(16 Jan 1993) 17 Appiah= I Rāsiah of Manipay (24 Dec 1997).

34a. Black Tigers marching, date uncertain



The location is definitely on the A9 at Kilinochchi. The Black Tigers were elite commando troops and did not always function as units, though it was from their ranks that the suicide attackers and assassins were selected. However, it would seem that the Sea Tigers contained such units – often women. Within the clouds of distaste directed against suicide attacks in most media channels it is sometimes forgotten that a substantial proportion of the LTTE’s suicide attacks took place at sea.

34b. Black Tigers pay homage to their fallen at Sampur in Muttur East, 5 July 2003



This ceremony reveals a territorial localisation of rituals in ways that would have deepened connectivity and increased legitimacy, while also assisting mobilisation of soldiers. See Roberts, “Pragmatic Action,” 2006a. Note that the photographs of the *māvīrar* on the ‘altar-table’ bear garlands.

35a. Pirapāharan has a meal with Black Tigers prior to their suicide mission



From the outset approving rumours in the Tamil circuit claimed that the *talaivar* honoured Tiger suicide cadres by having a meal with them prior to their mission. This snap is one 'confirmation' of this firm belief. Whether this was case of photo-shop manipulation has to be considered because of the insertion of Pirapāharan into the grouping in Fig. 35b below. On a priori grounds of logistics one suspects that it would have been impossible for Pirapāharan to sustain this practice for every planned suicide mission.

35b. Pirapāharan presented with the Tiger squad before their suicidal commando mission at Anuradhapura airbase, 22 October 2007



Of the team of 21, twenty died. They are believed to have destroyed 8 aircraft and killed 10 military personnel, including two air force officers. Even a simple test reveals the fact that Pirapāharan's image has been superimposed within the group.

36a. Induction ceremony after training: a Tiger commander ‘anoints’ a new recruit with a *kuppi*

*From the BBC documentary “Suicide Killers” in their
Inside Series, 1991*



Adele Bālasingham and other key LTTE personnel were among those who feature prominently in this film documentary of late 1991. Speaking to the BBC team in 1991 Adele quietly remarked that “the cyanide capsule has come to symbolise a sense of self-sacrifice by cadres of the movement, their determination, their commitment to the cause, and, ultimately, of course, their courage.” Note that the induction chant repeated by all recruits bound them to the “purified aim [of] Tamil Eelam” and to “sacrifice [in support of] our organisation’s leader, our brother, Mr. Prabhākaran.”

36b. A squad of Tamil Tigresses at rest, n. d.



37a. A female platoon of the LTTE in parade formation

From Rohan Gunaratna 1997: 68



Manpower requirements were such that the LTTE moved quickly to recruit women into their fighting ranks. This picture is significant because of the claim (Gunaratna 1997) that the woman leader with flag is Thenmozhi Rajaratnam better known by her code name of Dhanu. Dhanu is said to have possessed another code name “Anbu”; while her original *nom de guerre* when she was trained at an LTTE camp at Dindugal was Akino. Also see Figures 1, 2 and 3 in Roberts, *Tamil Person and State: Essays*, 2013.

37b. Tamil Tigresses



It has been suggested that women made up one-third of the active fighting forces of the LTTE by the early 2000s (Krishnan 2012: 1 referring to Bouta 2005).

38a. Sea Tigers load a fast attacking craft

Rohan Gunaratna, 1998:284.



The LTTE have been the only insurgency in the world to muster a navy, a coastal brown water striking force. Female Sea Tiger units were an important branch of this service. One who secured indelible fame for her feats in the early 1990s was Angayakanna alias Pushpakal Thuraisingham of Manumbaan, Jaffna (died in action on 16 August 1994).

38b. Sea Tiger fast attack craft with shallow draft ferries people

TamilNet



The LTTE used swarm attacks by numerous high-speed attack craft to severely debilitate the SL Navy in the 1990s and 2000s till the latter developed their small boat squadrons. For LTTE capacities and successes in this arena, see Jane's Naval Intelligence 2009 and de Silva-Ranasinghe 2009f, 2009g & 2010b. Also see Figs. 68-70 below.

39. Pirapāharan, Anton, Shankar and KP in the Vanni, n. d.



Shankar and Sorani were the two code names borne by a Tamil Canadian named Sornalingam Vaithiyalingam who was on holiday in Sri Lanka when the July 1983 pogrom prompted him to join the LTTE. He features in the BBC documentary “Suicide Killers” (1991). He was subsequently in charge of the LTTE’s air wing; but was killed in a deep penetration ambush on 26 October 2001. Both Shankar and KP were/are from Karaiyar lineages; whereas Bālasingham’s father was from the Eastern Province and his mother was a Vellalar lady from Karaveddy. KP, namely, Selvarāsa Pathmanathan, was the best man at Pirapāharan’s wedding in Tamilnadu. He became the LTTE’s arms procurer and was placed in charge of their overseas wing. An organisational genius, his activities were central to the success of the LTTE. Pirapāharan’s decision circa 2002 to replace him with Castro was a contributory factor in the decline of the LTTE in the 2000s.

40. The LTTE's massacre of Muslims at Kattankudy Mosque in the Eastern Province is marked by this poignant image of fellow Muslims bearing their dead away



Despite their commonality of Tamil language, the history of relations between the Tamils and the Muslims of the Eastern Province had always contained a simmering tension. For background see Dennis B. McGilvray 2001 and 2008. This fracture came to the surface during the struggles for ascendancy between (a) different Tamil militant groups in the late 1980s-early 1990s and (b) the battle between the LTTE and GSL (and its allies) in 1990-01. This division promoted the decision by the LTTE command to evict all Muslim residents from the Northern Province in late 1990. The alienation of the Muslim peoples was then compounded by the massacre of 103 persons as they prayed at Kattankudy Mosque on 3 August 2006. Rumour has it that the greatest celebrations following the LTTE's defeat on 19 May 2009 occurred at Kaththankudy. Whether this tale is true or not, the rumour *qua* rumour itself is significant.

41a. Civilians in Welikanda area massacred by the LTTE during Eelam War IV, 29 May 2006

The history of the conflict between the LTTE and GSL and its allies is littered with reprisals and massacres. In the 1980s and 1990s the security forces often attacked civilian homesteads in the vicinity of ambushes; besides indulging in indiscriminate aerial and naval shelling during Eelam Wars I, II and III (Bavinck 2010). On specific occasions the LTTE targeted what were clearly civilian Sinhala peoples: for instance during the raid on Anuradhapura sacred area on 14 May 1985 and the Aranthalāwa massacre of *bhikkhus* on 2 June 1987.



<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=LTTE+massacre&id=C90D8C1C2670FD6442F300841EED1F0ABF8E3718&FORM=IQFRBA#view=detail&id=C90D8C1C2670FD6442F300841EED1F0ABF8E3718&selectedIndex=0>

This picture depicts a scene in the Welikanda area of the Eastern Province on 29 May after “15 armed cadres of LTTE -- some in striped uniforms and some in civilian dress tied the some construction workers together and fired at them point blank range killing 12 instantaneously” according to a government source. Also see <http://www.nation.lk/2006/06/04/news2.htm>; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_attacks_attributed_to_the_LTTE and [Anti-LTTE] n. d.

41b. Kin folk grieve their dead after an LTTE assault on civilians in the frontier zone, n. d.



same as above

42a, b. LTTE attack on Central Bank in the heart of Colombo, 31 January 1996



From BBC web site and Spur website



This moment was Sri Lanka's version of 9/11. A truck-bomb containing about 440 pounds of high explosives was detonated by a Tiger suicide bomber in front of the Central Bank in the Fort Colombo, causing 91 deaths

and injuring around 1400. The attack was deliberately timed a few days before the Independence Day celebrations scheduled for 4th February. Apart from its symbolic implications, it was designed to (a) threaten the country's gold reserves and economy; and (b) send a chill down the spine of the island's elites by displaying the LTTE's capacity to reach their inner sanctum in devastating force. Also see Fig. 13 and its details in Roberts, *Fire and Storm* 2010.

43. Maheswari School in Batticaloa decked out with photographs of 250 *māvīrar* enveloped in a blaze of light and colour evocative of *ārati*, November 2004



From late 1989 the LTTE laid a primary claim on all personnel who died for their cause and had a ceremony in their honour. In subsequent years it proceeded to mark their dead heroes at burial sites referred to as *tuyilam illam* which can be translated as “resting place” or “sleeping house” (Natali 2008). Insofar as this meant a burial (often symbolic and not necessarily involving a corpse), this was a radical step for those of Saivite faith since cremation was the time-honoured method of ensuring good rebirths for a person (see Roberts 2005 and 2006a). This change was justified by importing the Indian traditions surrounding the planting of *natukal* (*nadugal*) for those who committed honour suicides or protest suicides. It also established a propaganda device that the LTTE exploited to laud their sacrificial devotion and advocate their cause, thereby encouraging the mobilisation of support among the Tamil peoples. Once 27th November, the day the first fighter Shankar, died was fixed for this ritual act of homage, a further suite of devices augmented the stirring of emotion through homage and praise of the brave dead, the “great heroes” or *māvīrar*. This hall at the school which Pirapāharan attended as a child has been decked out in an overwhelming ‘tapestry’ of lights and the equally overwhelming colour scheme of red and gold. This arrangement envelops the *māvīrar* as well those entering its portals in a religious ambience. The setting can be read as an innovative adaptation of the Saivite rituals of *ārati*. Since the LTTE presented itself as a secular state, this thread within its principal state ritual brings that claim into question.

44a. *Tuyilam illam* at Kopay, Jaffna Peninsula readied for *Māvīrar* Day 27 November 2004

Pic by Roberts, 25 November 2004



From a Tamil web site courtesy of Vanaaharajan



44b. A kinsman pays homage to a *māvīrar* at Kopay, n. d.

The original *tuyilam illam* (resting place) at this site was bulldozed by the Sri Lankan Army when it captured the western part of the peninsula in mid-1995; so what we see in these

snapshots is the rebuilt ‘temple’. Arguably, each *māvīrar* was now a seed or portion of ash with a regenerative capacity in other realms (Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, 2013: 92-94) All *tuyilam illam* were kept in immaculate condition. Prior to *Māvīrar* Nal on 27th November stands with oil lamps were placed in front of each gravestone so that kinfolk could light them simultaneously at the appointed time.

45a. Flagpole encompassed by jasmine flowers at the *tuyilam illam* at Vavuniya



Taken from a Tamil web site and kindly supplied by Varatharajan

While the care and aesthetics bestowed on the *tuyilam illam* is evident in this image as well, it is the encircling of the flagpole with jasmine that is significant. The type of jasmine is probably *nitya kalyāni* (i.e., periwinkle) because that species is more profuse than other related ones. In my observations during my meanderings in the town of Kilinochchi on 25/26 November 2004 flowers also encircled every single flagpole in front of various LTTE offices. The act of encirclement is as pervasive as meaningful in Tamil cultural practices. It ranges from the use of garlands in all types of ritual ceremonies to the binding ‘force’ of the *thāli* placed around a woman’s neck by the husband-to-be. See

Roberts, “Encompassing Empowerment,” in Farrer (ed.) *War Magic*, in process, 2014.

From an unspecified Tamil web site



45b. Gravestones encompassed as kin folk grieve and pay homage to their *māvirar* at a *tuyilam illam*

46a, b. *Māvīrar* commemoration shed at Tirunelvely campus, Jaffna University, November 2004

Photos by Roberts, 24 Nov. 2004



Honouring the fallen during the days leading up to the climax at 6.06 pm on 27th November involved a riot of colour and sound. The work of commemoration was a multi-media operation, a virtual ‘assault’ on the senses. One’s ears and eyes were constantly subject to a varied array of messages within an overarching theme that stressed the sacrifice of the *māvīrar* and thus the worthiness of the LTTE cause. Music was pervasive, with loudspeakers conveying lament songs as well as martial renderings and other popular lyrics that spoke of the sacrifices of past *māvīrar*. This picture depicts a typical example of the commemoration sheds which displayed photographs of the fallen, the *māvīrar*, from the locality in which each shed was placed. **The shed had been placed alongside a statue of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, who fought for constitutional rights for the Ceylonese in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.**

47. Female *māvīrar* surrounded by tropes of abundance at Valvettithurai commemoration shed, 2004

Photo by Roberts, 25 Nov. 2004



The corpulent lady in the backdrop is not only dressed in traditional style, but bears a pot, thereby symbolising generative overflowing. She is complemented by vessels bearing goods, a scene appropriate for the seafaring little town of VVT. It was K. Sivathamby who pointed me towards the message of “abundance” in this backdrop-scene. This interpretation overrides my initial surmise that it conveyed messages of fertility and auspiciousness, and thus the notion of *sakti* (divine energy and potency). Sanjay Srivastava has since told me that the image of a woman with a pot was widely used in India during the era of socialist state planning to “represent the idea of plenitude though the planning process.” He further noted that this image has always been common in Indian calendar art where it is “associated with the ideas of a fecund nation state and the fertile woman” (email, 30 March 2008). My uninformed thoughts about fertility do not, therefore, seem misplaced: abundance, plenitude, fertility and auspiciousness can be inter-related and overlapping ideas.

48. Bodies that fight on: the implicit message inscribed through the cenotaph at Kilinochchi



As inscribed up front in English, this “memorial tomb” was a specific act of “veneration” for the 398 Tiger fighters who “attained martyrdom” during a three-day operation directed by Pirapāharan himself, an exercise known as “Unceasing Waves” and one that “liberated the territory of Kilinochchi from the Sri Lankan military that occupied the Tamil homeland.” This cenotaph was located along the A9 road to Jaffna at Kilinochchi, administrative capital of the LTTE and was unveiled on 27 November 2004. Note the embellishment provided by flame-like stalks of the *karthigai* (glory lily) cradling the fallen *māvīrar* in the manner of a lotus base (cf. Fig. 58 below). This artefact, therefore, replicates the notions embodied in the jasmine flowers around the base of all LTTE flagpoles (Fig. 45a above).

49a. Balraj, an exemplary fighter & commander



Brigadier Balraj, nom de guerre for Kandiah Bālasēgaran, was born on 27 November 1965 at Kokkuthoduvaay in Mullaitivu District and joined the LTTE in 1983/84. He rose to high office and preferred to lead his troops from the front. Part of the core group that master-minded several key battles for the LTTE, he is perhaps best known for penetrating into Army occupied land in the Jaffna Peninsula and establishing the “Vaththirayan box” at Ithaavil on the A-9 Highway, an action that interdicted transport between the Elephant Pass garrison and Jaffna. The large base at Elephant Pass eventually fell on 22 April 2000. Balraj died from a heart attack in 2008 (Jeyaraj 2011; TamilNet 2008).

49b. Balraj at work

All pics from TamilNet



49c. Balraj and his troops celebrate the capture of a battle tank at Ithaavil



50. Senior LTTE commanders line up, c. 2004 (?)

Source unknown



Standing left to right (as you face picture) are Papa (aka Krishnarajah Vellagan), Nagulan (Kanapathpillai Sivamoorthi), Prabha (Krishnan Prabhakaran), Thamilamban (Sachchithananthamuthali), Charles or Arulvandan (Shanmuganada Ravishankar), Soosai aka Siera Osca (Thiliyambalam Sivaneson), Ramesh aka Romeo (Thambiraj Thuraijasingham), Ruban aka Regaa and Ravi of the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation. It is probable that this image was snapped at a Pongu Tamil gathering in the period 2003-05.

51. LTTE ingenuity and its conventional military strength

From <http://www.scribd.com/doc/102984735/>
Dossier-on-LTTE-Weapons



Just occasionally the LTTE has been cast as a guerrilla insurgency. Beginning as a guerilla outfit, by 1990 if not earlier they had developed conventional army capacities. These were honed further during Eelam Wars II, III and IV. They not only had infantry, mortar, artillery and mechanised units supplied by arms and guns procured from the world arms market or seized from the SL Army, but also developed their own weaponry in innovative ways. These images display some instances of this capacity – including the *babar* mortar and the *pandithar* in the photographs on top. Developing submersible vehicles for underwater attacks and the establishment of a propeller driven air strike capacity were other examples. The use of shallow-water fast attack naval craft and the use of swarm tactics at sea were a third instance of innovativeness. In sum, the LTTE became the most outstanding insurgency force the world has seen thus far. This was an extension of the ingenuity revealed in the 1980s in fashioning IEDs and landmines. One could say that it was also the fruition of an educational system fostered by a combination of Tamil culture within the backdrop of educational institutions maintained by the British colonial and post-independence states. Also see the Ministry of Defence site for a display of the “massive stocks of explosives and lethal weapons” recovered on 3rd March 2009. It would seem that the LTTE had stockpiled their war material so that the severe disruption of their supply lines by naval action in 2007-09 and the closure of the conduits from India in the first half of 2008 did not wholly disable them.

52. *Māvīrar Nāl* in Chicago, 2004... and the “Tamil homelands”

The outlined figure of a person carrying a dead comrade was among the standard emblems deployed by the LTTE in its iconography – especially during the week or so devoted to *Māvīrar Nāl*. Here the icon is placed within a map of the island depicting the area that the Tamil parties asserted to be their “traditional homelands.” The message is clear: “the *māvīrar* sacrifice their lives for the cause of a Tamil homeland.” Notice the manner in which the territorial claims extended beyond the boundaries of the Northern Province to encompass the coastal areas of Puttalam in the North-Western Province because of the presence of long-standing Tamil speakers in that area. This expanded cartographical claim was typical of the maximisation imprinted within LTTE politics as well as that of its predecessors, the TULF and the Federal Party (ITAK). For the false basis of this extended claim, see Peiris 1991 and Roberts 2004.

53a, b. *Pongu Thāmil* pageant in Geneva, summer 2003

From TamilNet.com



From TamilNet.com



Once the ceasefire came into being in 2002 the LTTE mobilised its peoples in Sri Lanka as well as its supporters abroad through celebratory pageantry working under the umbrella of the concept *Pongu Thāmil*, namely, “Resurgent Tamil.” One advantage was that it enabled them to organise such pageants in such places as Vavuniya and Trincomalee and thus to effectively propagate its cause among the Tamils under government control. Here we see this line of participatory celebration in Geneva.

54. Pirapāharan as regenerative force for the Tamil people



Pongu (*ponku*) refers to a ceremonial pot of rice gruel. It evokes notions of “rising, boiling over, swelling, emergent,” et cetera. Raw substances are used in the cooking process and thus, “ponkal cooking is an evocative metonym for reproduction and increase in general and for [festivals] in particular,” while “symbolizing the human capacity to convert death into life-sustaining growth with the help of gods and the ancestors” (Mines, *Fierce Gods*, 2005: 151-52). At *kotai* (festivals) it signals auspiciousness and abundance of fruits. Metaphorically, it can refer to rising anger. This orientation is entirely in keeping with a religion that has cosmogonic myths where “the creative seed is carried in a pot” – itself a symbol of a womb (Shulman, *Tamil Temple Myths*, 1980: 45-46, 64-65). The translation of the term as “resurgent” by the LTTE captured the themes of renewal and rejuvenation coursing through these pageants. Since such motifs evoked the idea of potency and *sakti*, viz. divine energy or cosmic power, it was meaningful to both Saivite and Christian Tamils. As corollary, therefore the *talaivar* Pirapāharan was construed as a godlike figure (also see Figs. 53a, 57b).

55. Tiger salute by TNA politicians at *Pongu Tamil* gathering at Trincomalee, March 2002



Despite the assassination of several of their leaders in the 1980s the Tamil parliamentarians and other political figures of the old TULF fell into line with LTTE goals and politics from the late 1990s. In brief, their memories were short and Tamil patriotism overrode all other considerations. Their 'surrender' became even more pronounced when they adopted the salute devised by Pirapāharan for the LTTE from its early days (see Iyer 2012 and Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, 2013: 80ff). The gathering at Trincomalee is said to have drawn 25,000 people. Among the speakers were Father Joseph Mary, the Vice-Chancellor of the Eastern University and a student leader. As significantly, an effigy of Lakshman Kadirgamar was set on fire by students at the conclusion of the rally. By saluting in Tiger fashion, therefore, these erstwhile Tamil 'leaders' were unlike Kadirgamar and were not 'traitors' in Tamil eyes.

56a, b. Mass support for *Thamililam* at Pongu Tamil rally at Trincomalee, 19 March 2002



Several “Pongu Tamil” or “Tamil upsurge” rallies were organised in quick succession by the LTTE at Batticaloa, Vavuniya and Trincomalee circa March 2002. The *Sunday Times* saw them as

“combin[ing] the militarism of rallies in pre-war Germany with a display of the personality cult witnessed in rallies in Tamilnadu.... Cut-outs of the LTTE leader Prabhakaran in his striped Tiger military uniform dominated the skyline. The crowds raised their right arm 45 degrees in a “Heil Hitler” type of salute as they full throatedly endorsed pre-determined resolutions calling for self-determination for the Tamils and the recognition of the LTTE as

their sole representative. Huge cut-outs of the putative Tamil Eelam, stretching in an arch from Puttalam in the West coast to Pottuvil in the east coast through Jaffna in the north, representing the Tigers’ demand for a larger “lebensraum” for the Tamils, stood at



From *Sunday Times* & Ministry of Defence

key junctions” (*Sunday Times*, 2002). Also see <http://www.tamilnet.com/reports/2002/03/1901.html>).

57a, b. Performative pageantry evoking LTTE claims among the Tamil diaspora at *Pongu Thāmil* events



The LTTE's mobilisation of support both at home and abroad did not rest purely on messages from the centre. It drew its clientele into its message-making through literary and performative modes that have been a long-standing feature of Tamil culture. This was participatory politics at its most effective. There is ground to conclude that the impact was as profound as far-reaching. One result seems to have been the consolidation of a personality cult around the figure of Pirapāharan that amounted to his deification in some minds.

58. The LTTE emblem of *karthigai* embodied in a stage pageant in Germany



The four pictures of the *gloriosa superba* or glory lily have been taken from an internet source. The image on top is from an LTTE pageant held in some city in Germany during the commemoration of Māvīrar Day one November in the early 21st century. The glory lily is called *karthigai* or *kāntal* in Tamil and *niyangala* in Sinhala. It is one of the flowers highlighted in Cankam poetry (see. Thaninayagam *Landscape*, 1966: 30, 57 & 104). Also see [www. Tamilnet.com](http://www.Tamilnet.com), 14 April 2004, for the reasons guiding the choice of this flower as the national emblem of the LTTE. An artistic form of this emblem was incorporated as the logo for the TV network launched by the LTTE in early 2005.

59. Pirapāharan signs the ceasefire agreement, 21 February 2002

From AFP but widely circulated



Here, too, one sees the emphasis on Pirapāharan's status as a leader of a state (see Memorandum of Understanding 2002). To the Tamil people in Tiger territory – and to quite few of them beyond -- he was now an international figure widely recognised as a head of state. LTTE delegations were sponsored for 'educational' trips abroad; while the peace talks at Oslo and Sattahip consolidated this transformation of an organisation that had been earlier deemed "terrorist" by the government of Sri Lanka and the Western states. That is why this book deploys the concept: "the state of *Thāmilīlam*." It was the ceasefire agreement that made it feasible for the LTTE to carry out propaganda (for example Figs. 55 & 56) in the regions controlled by the government of Sri Lanka. This advantage should be balanced by attentiveness to the weakening of the Vanni Tamil peoples' resolve encouraged by consumerism and opportunities that had been denied them in the ascetic era of LTTE control 1996-2002.

60a. Pirapāharan's father's house in Valvettithurai



The ascent of Pirapāharan to Presidential status in 2002 should not erase the fact that from the 1990s onwards many Tamils at home and abroad treated him as a deity. Evidence of this phenomenon is provided by Revd. Chandrakanthan, who moved from the Jaffna Peninsula to Montreal in the 1990s and wrote a chapter for AJ Wilson's book on Tamil nationalism. Chandrakanthan tells us that the living rooms of Tamils of the diaspora THEN were replete with LTTE icons (2000: 170). But, as significantly, speaking in the present tense he states that Pirapāharan is like a king of the same "mythic proportions [as the] ancient Tamil kings and heroes" (2000: 169, 161) – thereby celebrating his own devotion to man and cause. This empirical fact therefore complements the evidence of Figs. 53-54; and links



up with that of Fig. 156a which suggests that he may be still a living deity in some minds.

60b. Pirapāharan, Adele and Anton mount the podium for the LTTE media event at Kilinochchi, 10 April 2002

61a, b, c. *Thāmililam* as nation state: LTTE media event, 10 April 2002

edammuzicu.com



s-walypola in the Hindu

This occasion was a huge triumph for the LTTE and marked their assumption of statehood in the eyes of the world. Pirapāharan was effectively President of *Thāmililam*. A large international troupe of reporters was present. All visitors were subject to security checks in ways that underlined LTTE power. These reporters found that they too were being video-taped: in brief, the *paparazzi* were now at the target end of the camera.

62a, b. *Mākkal Padai*: the LTTE's mobilisation of the Tamil people as militia from late 2004



The peoples' militia known as *mākkal padai* was initiated by the LTTE in late 2004 (info from M. Sarvananthan). A whole range of photographs circulated by pro-Tiger sources indicate that the LTTE set about training the civilian population to be auxiliary troops. The older women in Fig. 62b may not seem military material, but the photo displays the LTTE's continuing disciplining of the population; while suggesting that 'conscription' of this type was not resented -- indeed, quite the opposite to judge from a number of snapshots.



63 Peoples' militia in and for *Thamililam*

From Tamil web sites



This type of evidence directs serious questions at the human rights activists who have been agitating about the death toll during the end phase of Eelam War IV in January-May 2009 without attending to the slippage and confusion between combatant or auxiliary-belligerent personnel and those truly civilian. From the UN panel appointed by Ban Ki-Moon to the reviews by Gordon Weiss to Frances Harrison one finds brief allusions to the confusion of categories which are then elided or conveniently forgotten in their conclusions. A study of Article 1 of the 1938 ILC Draft Convention for the Protection of Civilian Populations against New Engines would show that a “civilian” undertaking any activity that /advanced military objectives – like building bunkers/trenches or transporting military material --- could not enjoy the protection that this category (civilian) is afforded under international law in a conflict situation. In brief, participating in the construction of a “belligerent establishment” renders a person into a legitimate target. The amateurish lens adopted by so many reputed journalists during the ongoing propaganda war after the defeat of the LTTE remains amazing. Whether the blind spots are due to armchair positions and weak analytical capacities or the pursuit of convenient political agendas is an issue that one cannot answer easily without inside knowledge.

64a, b, c. Weapons training for the militia

From Tamil web sites



65a, b. Sri Lankan Army closes in on the last LTTE stronghold in the east at Thoppigala



The LTTE were preparing for war in late 2004 (personal observations), but the tsunami's impact delayed their steps towards this end. Their move began eventually with the closing of the sluice gates of the Mavil Aru circa July 2006 as a preliminary step in a battle plan to suffocate the major naval base at



Trincomalee. The LTTE's confidence at this stage in their ability to "teach the government a lesson" (Thamil Chelvam's words communicated to Harsha Navaratne & Lalith Wiratunga according to info from the former) proved misplaced and indicates a failure to assess the implications arising from the defection of Karuna and many Tamil personnel from the eastern regions in March 2004. Also see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Thoppigala

66. Capture of Thoppigala circa 14 August 2007 marks LTTE's loss of power in the Eastern Province

Courtesy of Major General Latin Fernando



The commandoes display their flag beside the Lion Flag at the top of the mountain stronghold. The main battleground at the outset in Eelam War IV in July/August 2006 was in the Eastern Province. The LTTE attempted to use the resident peoples (including Muslims) in the Vakarai area south of Trincomalee as a human shield; but failed. Their forces in the eastern theatre were eventually whittled down and cornered. The capture of their stronghold in the area of “Baron’s Gap,” also known as Thoppigala, in early July 2007 marked the defeat and total decline of LTTE power in the eastern regions south of the Mahaweli Ganga. Commandoes and other special forces were a central element in the success of the Sri Lankan Army. See de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Good Education,” 2009e and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8YCwGbgOQ> and <http://archives.dailymirror.lk/2007/07/12/front/1.asp> for more information on the LTTE’s loss of the east.

67. Map of *Thamililam* and forward defence lines: late 2007 stalemate

From Ministry of Defence site



This map displays the de facto state of *Thamililam* as it existed since 1995/96 without its patches of territory in the Eastern Province (which the LTTE lost during the course of 2006/07). Note the control of the north-western coast which enabled its well-organised networks in India to provide a lifeline of war materials to the LTTE across the shallow Palk Straits. The LTTE ruled this region and its people with a strong hand, but there is little doubt that the Pirapāharan and the LTTE enjoyed the support of the vast majority of the people within this area (Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, pp. 146-55). *Thamililam* embodied a peculiar state of affairs: its currency was the SL rupee and banks in the region transmitted currency and business across the boundaries, while receiving remittances and pensioner monies from their Colombo central offices. Moreover, Colombo employed, and thus paid, officials in the various state departments in *Thamililam*, but the latter took their orders from the LTTE. Indeed, government salaries and pensions were one pillar of *Thamililam's* economy.

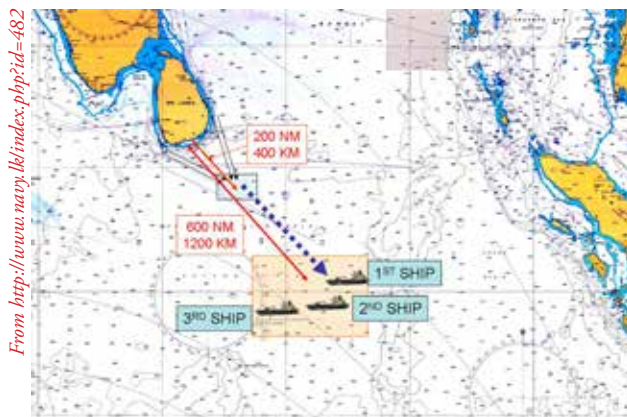
68. Sinking of the *Seishin*, a LTTE arms-carrying cargo ship, 10 September 2007

From <http://www.navy.lk/index.php?id=410>



The LTTE's ability to resist the superior weight of resources on the side of their opponent was further debilitated by several successful operations by the SL Navy which ranged innovatively far into the Indian Ocean to locate and knock out several warehouse ships in the LTTE's transnational fleet which had brought supplies in clandestine fashion for many years. This image depicts the sinking of the *Seishin* on 10 September 2007, one of three destroyed that week, This naval achievement was assisted by satellite information provided by USA (Gotābhaya Rajapaksa quoted in Sheridan 2013) and the information delivered by South East Asian intelligence agencies as well as US satellite information secured after a deal was struck following 9/11. Contrary to popular gossip, the Indian military network proved of no assistance whatsoever to the SL Navy (inside naval source). It was the innovative operational and tactical knowledge of the SLN commanders that broke the LTTE pattern of dispersion and movement of the rouge ships in the Indian Ocean. As with the army, the presence of experienced officers in command positions was central to these achievements.

69a. Map showing how Sri Lankan Navy ranged far & wide into Indian Ocean to destroy LTTE supply ships, September 2007



“The SLN vessels initially sailed 200 nautical miles in the exclusive economic zone southeast of Sri Lanka to detect the LTTE ships. They moved further 200 nautical miles in the high seas to sight the vessels which were sailing without a flag and displaying neither a name nor a port of registration” (Perera 2007). The ships destroyed on this occasion on 10/11 September 2007 were the “Manyoshi,” “Seishin” and “Koshia.” Earlier in the year 2007 the “Kyoï” (28 February) and “Seiyoo” (18 March) had been sunk. These operations were partly enabled by the information gathered when the Maldivian Navy sequestered a trawler “Sri Krishna” a year previously (Perera 2007). Also see de Silva-Ranasinghe 2009f and 2009g and Jane’s Naval Intelligence 2009.

69b. “Matsushima” incapacitated, 7 October 2007



70. Waveriders and Arrow boats of SL Navy's Special Boat Squadron

The SLN had also learnt from the LTTE and set up a Special Boat Squadron in 1993 and then a Rapid Action Boat Squadron (equipped with Arrow Boats and inshore patrol craft) in 2008; while setting up its own shipyards to produce some of these boats. These boats circumvented the frailties of the Israeli-built Dvora craft which had limited manoeuvrability in shallow waters and presented a large beam as target, especially when in range of the LTTE shore batteries – so much so that 20 Dvoras were sunk by the LTTE in the course of the war (Chandradasa 2010 and interview with Travis Sinniah, 12 December 2011). Also see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arrow_boat and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQF8LZt1dA> and Jane's Naval Intelligence 2009.



71a, b. Sri Lankan Army makes inroads into *Thamililam* territory in the Northern Vanni from c. April 2008

Pics from Defence Ministry site



While the LTTE had been re-arming itself during the ceasefire period of 2002-06, the SL Army had also increased its manpower of volunteer soldiers by deploying the clever *api wenuwen Api* advertising campaign devised by Udaya Tennekoon of TRIAD, a professional advertising agency. The SL Army recruited as many as 36,021 and 33,457 personnel in 2007 and 2008 respectively. As vitally, General Fonseka and others revolutionised the training of infantry regiments via a bottom-up process of planning and initiation (Tammita-Delgoda 2009; de Silva-Ranasinghe 2009c). Moreover, officers with 15-20 years of battle experience were now in key command positions at the middle-senior level. “Now there is a proper leadership, we have confidence,” a lance-corporal told Tammita-Delgoda (2009; 5). This position contrasted with that of the LTTE since some senior officers had got married during the ceasefire or lost the will to fight – one being Karuna who defected in March 2004 for a variety of reasons.

72a, b. Sri Lankan Army advances, 2008



Once Eelam War IV began, deep-penetration units used infiltration of the guerilla type to kill some key LTTE commanders, thereby restricting their movement. The SLA also had greater firepower and manpower than the LTTE, besides the support of the SL Air Force. Despite all these advantages the LTTE held out for quite some time. General Fonseka's major assaults in the Jaffna Peninsula came to grief in 2007. Eventually, however, the weight of resources began to swing the struggle in favour of the Sri Lankan forces. Fighting a war on three fronts drained the LTTE's capacities. See de Silva-Ranasinghe "Good Education," 2009e and Tammita-Delgoda 2009.

73a, b. Bund, ditch & water defence system perfected by the LTTE to thwart the SL Army

Ministry of Defence web site



While this defensive system may seem medieval, it proved effective in holding back a force with superior numbers and more mechanized weaponry, including tanks. The bunds were mined and booby trapped so that there were “death traps” at every turn (Tammita-Delgoda 2009: 8). Thus, the 55th Division of the SL army advancing southwards towards Mullativu “confronted 14 earth bunds, sometimes with large tank trap ditches or water filled moats in front” (de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b). For further details on the defence system, see de Silva-Ranasinghe “Good Education,” 2009e and Tammita-Delgoda 2009.

74. Embankment and ditch defence system: more illustrations

Ministry of Defence web site



Where the LTTE's defensive frontage on the Jaffna Peninsula had been constructed over time, the development of this system on the western front -- after the LTTE lost control of the north-western coast -- involved rapid work in which the heavy machinery of the international NGOs within *Thamililam* was widely used (willy-nilly or, in all probability, with the complicity of local staff). Once the LTTE were forced into retreat from circa March-April 2008, this called for the heavy conscription of civilian labour: "civilians were used extensively as military labour to lay minefields, act as frontline porters, and construct defensive fortifications" (de Silva-Ranasinghe 2010). In effect a good segment of the civilian population became "belligerents" within the terms of Article 1 of the 1938 ILA Draft Convention for the Protection of Civilian Populations.

75a, b, c. LTTE bases topple as SL Army advances northwards on the western coast and then eastwards



These illustrations show Malikkikattidal, Eruvilkulam and Michael Base immediately after they were captured.

From Ministry of Defence web site



76. The LTTE loses ground through 2008 and retreats eastwards



This image shows an LTTE high-tech facility captured by the SL Army. Images of Parappakandal, 6 March 2008; Malikkikaittidal, 24 March 2008; Kattankulam 26 April 2008; Pikkulam 30 April 2008; ... Adampan 9 May 2008; ... Mannar Rice Bowl, 29 June 2008; Eruvilkulam, 2 July 2008; Michael Base, 4 July 2008; Vidattativu, 16 July 2008, et cetera, et cetera feature in the government's web site and mark the stages in the LTTE's rapid retreat.

77. Map of the war fronts, 23 December 2008



The SL Army's main successes in 2008 were on the western front and the advance occurred from circa April 2008, the point where Madhu was captured. The SLA threatened the crucial A9 arterial road from November 2008 and, in fact, once Paranthan fell in December, the LTTE had perforce to abandon its administrative capital at Kilinochchi. The 55th Division in the meanwhile began its advance southwards along the north-eastern coast. They faced a "bleached and burning landscape of sand and water" and had to pursue what was at times an amphibious war demanding improvisation (Tammita-Delgoda 2009: 1-3, 8-10). From the south the 59th Division pressed forward from Oddu Sudan towards Mullaitivu, which remained the LTTE's bunker fortress where the high command was located. The three lakhs or so of people who were citizens of *Thamililam* had been ready to adhere to the LTTE's enforced movement eastwards because they had little faith in the government of Sri Lanka (see Figs. 80-82).

78. Situation map, 6 January 2009



The dwindling space held by the LTTE is self-evident. Despite this dire situation the LTTE did not respond to the GSL's demand for an unconditional surrender. Seeking international kudos in mid-January 2009 the government also delimited a "No-Fire Zone" (NFZ) where the people were asked to assemble for their own safety. The degree to which it remained a safe area is controversial (see Weiss 2011 and IDAG 2013) Be that as it may, the NFZ had (and still has) no legal standing because it was not formally accepted by the other party in the conflict, namely, the LTTE. Also note Jayantha Dhanapala's comments on the inadequacy of present international laws in situations where a *de jure* government is engaged in war with an insurgency [or, in my addition, a *de facto* state] that is not subject to such laws (LLRC 2011 – see <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0Bxbk4wYolp hwZWRhOTg0YmYtMTE0YS00YWU3LTkwY2ItNDZnZWVhOTVmN DFh/edit?authkey=CJCU1YUO&chl=en>). The most desperate and heaviest fighting occurred “in the months of February, March and April in a steadily shrinking area known as the Vanni Pocket. During this period the LTTE launched four major counterattacks, [seeking to] breakthrough the Army's frontline and force it to retreat. In one such attack, the LTTE pushed back the 59th Division's 593 Brigade more than 4 km from its original positions, and forced the 59th Division to fall back several kilometres on its flanks” (de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b).

79. Situation map, 22 January 2009



The LTTE had successfully implanted misinformation indicating that “the Army would kill, torture and rape civilians who fled to government-controlled territory.” Thus, in a type of tale provided by several Tamil civilians who eventually escaped from the Vanni Pocket early in 2009 one old man told a Reuters reporter; ““There were radio messages by the LTTE saying that once we got into government-controlled areas, females would be raped and males would be tortured, but nothing has happened” (de Silva-Ranasinghe 2010b: 40). It was from January 2009 that LTTE rule became draconian and some of the citizens of *Thamililam* began to resent the demands of the Tiger state (personal info from Muralidhar Reddy and also from an ex-Tiger fighter). The LTTE then used this development to their advantage: on occasions it used the cover of fleeing civilians and “infiltrated dozens of small guerrilla groups” into the army’s rear areas to cause disruptions that were sometimes of “a serious nature” (de Silva-Ranasinghe “Downfall,” 2010b).

80a, b. Multiple displacements for the Tamil citizens of *Thāmīlīlam* in the Vanni, mid-2008-February 2009



Since the Tamil people of *Thāmīlīlam* were encouraged to retreat ahead of the battles, this meant that those who evacuated their homesteads and moved to safer LTTE territory were subject to multiple displacements throughout 2008 and 2009. “More than a hundred thousand people ... [have] been mercilessly driven like

cattle into Kilinochchi by the LTTE from the areas under their control in the neighbouring districts of Mannar, Vavuniya and Mullaitheevu....they are [now] squeezed into small villages already overcrowded with the locally

displaced persons from the Kilinochchi district itself. The LTTE holds these people to ransom for no fault of theirs, but only for the sole purpose of using them as human shield for their own protection” (said Veerasingham Anandasangaree – quoted in de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b: 3).

From Tamil web sites



81. Displaced discomfort in the Vanni Pocket imposed by the LTTE

TamilNet



Pooneryn in the north-west was captured by the SL Army on 15th November 2008, while Mankulam on the southern front was secured on the 17th November. Once Paranthan at a critical junction was threatened in December the LTTE knew it had to abandon their administrative capital of Kilinochchi (see Figs. 77, 78). Thereafter the fighting was confined to the enclave in the northeast corner of Sri Lanka east of the A9 arterial road which can be identified as “the Vanni Pocket” (see Figs. 83a & 89). From early 2009 the Tamil populace found themselves in a cramped space and in increasing danger from shellfire and aerial bombardment (Reddy 2009a, 2009b and UTHR *Let Them Speak*, 2009, sec. 2/2-2/6). Rasamalar, a lady aged 48, remarked that “the organization said we were going to die anyway if we crossed to the army-controlled area and told us to die with them” (de Silva-Ranasinghe 2010b: 4).

82. On the move again and again – the fate of the corralled Tamil citizens of *Thāmililam*, 2009

From a Tamil web site



As the LTTE was forced into strategic retreat, mostly from west to east, their directorate encouraged the people in the Vanni to move into the remaining portions of *Thāmililam*. The LTTE's central objective in this cynical exercise was to deploy the people as a prospective “humanitarian disaster” and to blackmail powerful forces beyond the borders to provide the LTTE with an escape hatch (Roberts, “Blackmail,” 2012d). For the most part this was readily acquiesced in by the majority because they perceived the SL state forces as a demonic enemy. But the increase in discomfort and the increased scale of LTTE conscription began to alienate some segments of the displaced population (see [UTHR nos. 31, 32 & 34](#) & de-Silva-Ranasinghe 2010b). When precisely this disenchantment with the LTTE's iron fist began is difficult to determine, though Muralidhar Reddy and a Tamil activist who was part of the trapped population till late April both suggest (personal communications to author) that it was by January 2009. However, even in April-May 2009 there was a hardcore of popular faith/support for the LTTE among those remaining (see Reddy 2009a and Figs. 104-15). How many of the roughly 135-146,000 people left at that point were still hard core faithful? Yet another tough question.

83a, b. Maps of the war front within the “Vanni Pocket” on 22 February 2009



During the last stages of Eelam War IV in late January 2009 when the LTTE had its back to the wall the SL government responded to international pressure by declaring an area to be a “No Fire Zone” just north of the A35. Note the reaction from Jeyaraj,” Fraudulent concept,” 2009 and the comments in Fig. 78.



84a, b. Bursting shells among civilian dwellings



While I cannot provide specific dates for these images and they are part of the propaganda machinery of pro-LTTE elements, they are deployed here to evoke the fact that shellfire from government forces descended on the corralled civilian population. The issue remains: to what

extent? Was there “bombardment siege” (Weiss’s words, 2011: 9) indicative of deliberate intent? The testimonies and commentary in “Let Them Speak,”

by the UTHR (2009) are unequivocal: “intensity of shelling;” “repeated shell attacks;” “shelled mercilessly leaving masses of corpses and damaged vehicles” et cetera (quotations from sections 2/4 in 2009 pertaining to late January early

From TamilNet sources



February). However, there is a degree of cloistered pedantry in the UTHR perspectives (see Appendix V); while their computation of the population in the Vanni Pocket has been shown up as flawed. The best study of the death toll thus far is IDAG, “Numbers Game” 2013, which critically revises the exaggerated and/or careless propaganda claims constantly reiterated by pro-LTTE and anti-GSL voices from many quarters. Any assessment is complicated by evidence that (a) the LTTE occasionally shelled its own people in order to encourage international interventions to “avert a humanitarian disaster” and (b) that the LTTE deliberately placed its mobile artillery near hospitals or among the civilian people (UTHR 2009; IDAG 2013 and sec. 4/50 and 4/61 in LLRC 2011: 50, 59)

85a, b, c. Wounded people and medical responses

Tamilnet*Tamilnet and a Sydney Tamil flickr site*

As one could anticipate, in the war theatre set up by the LTTE's strategic policy, civilian casualties began to mount. Together with the doctors paid by GSL and those on the LTTE payroll, the phalanx of medical orderlies and nurses trained by the LTTE performed tremendous relief work in difficult circumstances. Any student of war knows that experienced battlefield medics are as useful as doctors. Several *TamilNet* photographs incidentally depict the ubiquitous presence of these personnel, male and female. Subsequently, they were of great service in the detention centres as well as the rehab-camps for ex-Tigers -- as both Myrna Setunga (2009a-d) and Dr. Susiri Weerasekera (2012) of FINS have testified publicly in their reports.

86a, b. Outpourings of grief as people die or are injured



The *TamilNet* account of 19 February presenting Fig. 85b alleged that the SLAF had fired 32 bombs and “the SLA more than 200 artillery shells [which] wip[ed] out more than 30 families along the Iranaippalai Aananthapuram Road where humanitarian institutions including orphanages were located... Meanwhile 24 civilians were killed in Puthukkuyiruppu in SLA artillery barrage in the early hours of Thursday.” How reliable such reports are, and what degree of dissimulation or fabrication occurred, has to be addressed case by case. However, there is no doubt that aerial and SL Army shelling caused civilian casualties (UTHR, *Let Them Speak*, 2009, *passim*; LLRC 2011a: 65, IDAG 2013).

87a. Puthumaathalaan makeshift hospital, 13 February 2009



The Puthumaathalaan makeshift hospital was set up in a school with five buildings (email from Dr. T. Sathiyamoorthy, 25 July 2013). Several of the hospitals set up in the last five months of the war were buildings commandeered for the purpose. Foreign readers should note that it is not uncommon for Sri Lankans to sleep on mats on a floor and that some hospital patients also have to sleep on the floor when overflows occur.

87b. Civilian dead at an LTTE mortuary, 1 January 2009



The image in Fig. 87b shows relatively early deaths in the crunch circumstances that the Tamil peoples were subject to (see maps in Figs. 77-78). There certainly were significant numbers of casualties among civilians in January and February (UTHR *Let Them Speak*, 2009; and IDAG 2013).

88a. Wounded are brought for treatment

TamilNet, 3 March 2009



Note the medical orderlies in attendance. I do not have dates for the photographs below, but they illustrate the strands of suffering faced by the corralled populace and the fact that such scenes plucked at the heart strings of such organisations as Human Rights Watch and the UN

– as, indeed, they were meant to. That such deaths and injuries occurred is undoubted and the images are not likely to be concoctions. There are more than enough testimonies on this point collected by the UTHR group, the LLRC, Rajasingham Narendran and others.

88b, c. Lamentations for dead kin

*From the UN Darusman Panel
– TamilNet, 10 May 2009*

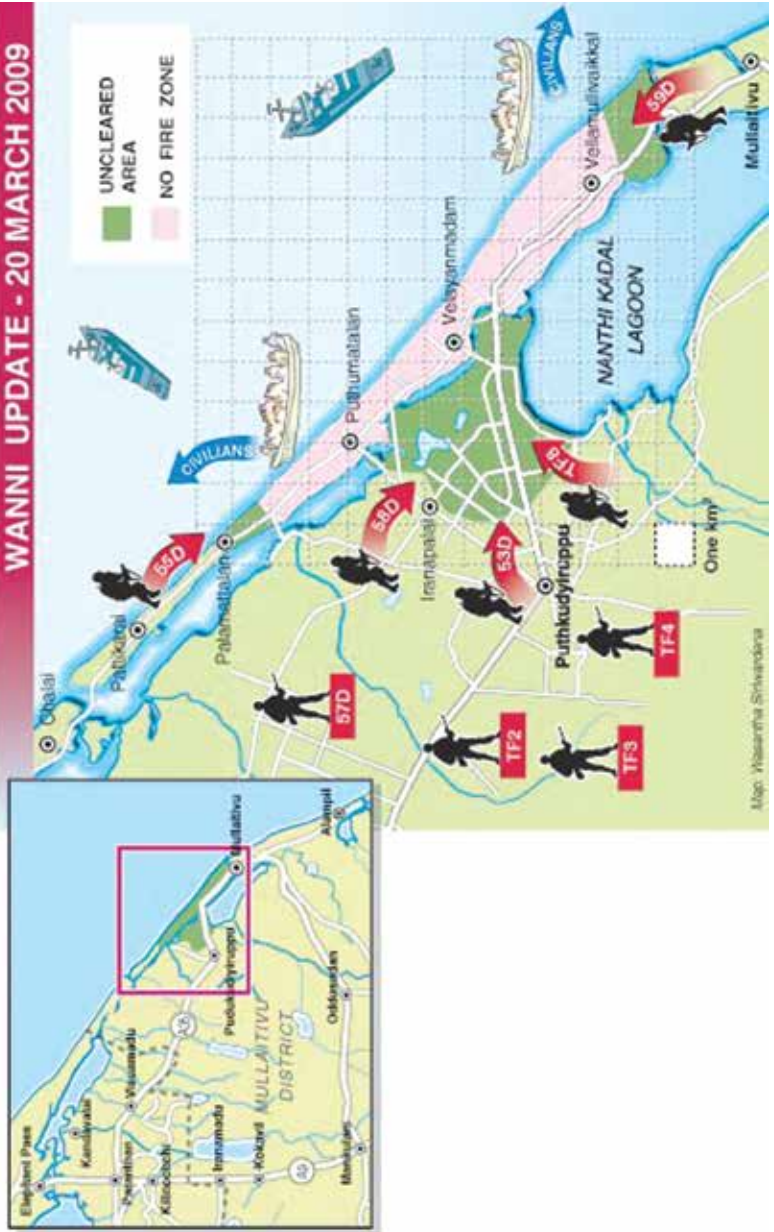


from Human Rights Watch

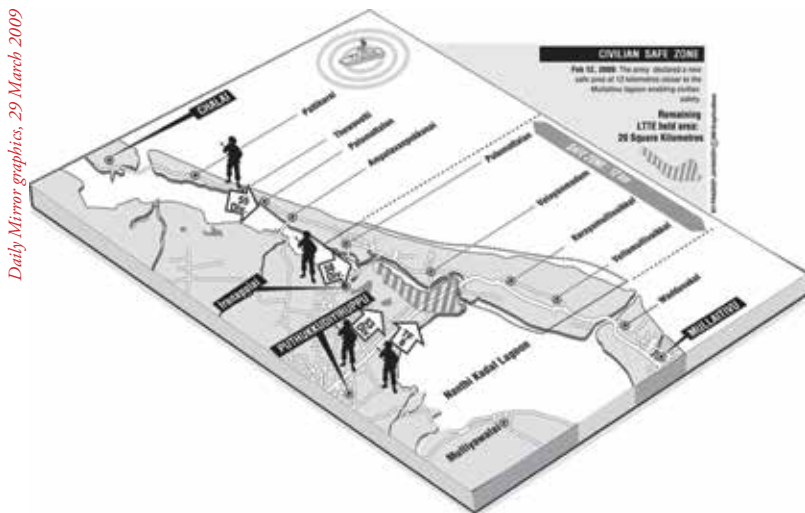


90a. Map of the war front within the “Vanni Pocket,” 20 March 2009

TamilNet, 3 March 2009



90b. Graphic Map of the warfront, 2 March 2009



This arena and, indeed, the geographical/demographic parameters of war from circa April 2008 onwards were a CREATION of the LTTE with the use of its own Tamil people (1) as a labour and conscript pool; (2) as so many protective sandbags and (3) as a political bargaining chip. The last objective was the defining feature of this strategy. The last objective was the defining feature of this strategy. IT WAS, to repeat, A STRATEGY (Roberts, “Blackmail,” 2012 d). It was a strategy that depended on the support of human rights agencies and activists abroad. IT WAS A STRATEGY. It was a strategy that depended on the support of human rights agencies and activists abroad. As such, the furnace of war that descended upon the Tamil peoples trapped in the retreat in 2009 was a LTTE product. In an interesting sidelight, a Tamil who lived through the pressures described the Last Redoubt as “the world’s largest latrine” because of the permanent pungency of smells arising from open defecation (personal communication, Nov. 2012). Citizen Silva’s fine-grained estimates reckon that there were around 268-273,500 people in this restricted space on 31 March 2009; and that by 17 April the numbers were around 246,000 (IDAG 2013 & email note, 29 Jan. 2013).

91. A tent city in the Last Redoubt

From the UN Darusman Report



It appears that the LTTE encouraged its people to move into the coastal strip that became its Last Redoubt from early February if not even earlier. This was a strategic move designed to prevent GSL's forces from capturing that area through a thrust southwards by the 55th Division backed up by amphibious landings. The "tent cities" and the congestion (see Figs. 92, 106, 107) were an outcome of this strategy. The demographic estimates on the numbers in the area, inclusive of Tiger personnel, involve some guesswork, but constitute a crucial aspect for evaluations of the likely death toll. Some shoddy work by journalists posing as "neutral" has enabled the Tamil propaganda lobby to perpetuate fantastic claims of "genocide." A think tank in India recently remarked that there was a "vicious, motivated and one-sided campaign of disinformation on the question of human rights violations during the terminal phases of the conflict with the LTTE" (SATP 2013).

92a, b. Congestion along the main road Ampalavanpokkanai in the northern sector of the Last Redoubt, 29 March and 16 April 2009

TamilNet, 29 March 2009



TamilNet, 16 April 2009



These scenes are as striking as significant. The Tamil populace was jam-packed in certain localities. If extensive shelling of such areas had taken place, the death toll would have been enormous. Citizen Siva reckons that 246,000 was the approximate figure for those remaining within the LTTE corral on 17 April 2009 – just before the SL Army penetrated the Last Redoubt on the 19th April night and split it into two, leaving roughly one-third of the strip at its southern end in LTTE hands.

93a. Queues for food and water as daily routine in the Last Redoubt

From DBSjyandj.com or transcarriants



93b. Children queue for essentials



I am not able to specify dates for these images. One incidental aspect of Fig. 93b is the seemingly healthy condition of the children deputed to secure a spot in the line-up for their families.

94a, b. Medivac operations from ICRC & SL Navy rescue some of the injured, plus others, from the Last Redoubt, February- 9 May 2009

TamilNet, 5 April 2009



From early February the ICRC utilised chartered vessels, usually the “MV Green Ocean” but also “MV Dublin,” manned by the SL Navy to (a) send essential medical and food supplies to the Last Redoubt (or second NFZ) and

(b) to evacuate sick, wounded and elderly people. This involved LTTE cooperation. The ships went to Pulmoddai (where the Indian field hospital was located) or Trincomalee One presumes that Tiger officials supervised the selection of evacuees.

The photo on the top left shows Julian, an ICRC “delegate,” in conversation with Dr. Sathiyamoorthy on 5th April 2009.

The other snap is from *TamilNet* on 9th May. This was the last evacuation. An ICRC official indicated that there had been 40-45

TamilNet, 9 May 2009



journeys of this kind with the SL Red Cross also in attendance and that the ICRC also provided funds, sheds and materials for the hospitals at Padaviya and Mannar to which some patients were eventually transferred (interview with Sarasi Wijeratne, 15 June 2013).

95. Tamil people evacuated by sea: ICRC and SL Navy

TamilNet, 9 May 2009



Citizen Silva's meticulous archival store filled in the bare details provided in the ICRC summaries and showed that 31 voyages were undertaken between February and mid-May. A total of 13,794 people were evacuated. For eight trips at the start there are no details for those evacuated beyond a total figure. From the breakdown for the other 23 voyages totaling 10,103, we discover that there were 1,789 injured/sick males and 1,537 injured/sick females. There was a large component of children: 3,471. This means that there were also adults who were deemed "accompanying caregivers" (or "bystanders") by the ICRC in its public documents. These bystanders numbered 3,783 in the partial total for which details are provided and amounted to 37.4% of the adult medivac cluster. Thus an interesting issue arises: what happened to these "bystanders" once the sick and wounded were accepted by the Ministry of Health and military and lodged in the hospitals at Pulmoddai, Trinco, Padaviya, Vavuniya and Mannar over the weeks that followed? If they were not eventually sent to the detention centres at Mänik Farm but found their way to kinsmen, the death toll estimates that work backwards from a total figure (e. g. IDAG 2013) would have to be scaled down a trifle.

96a, b, c. The SL Navy to the rescue



As with the images circulated in *TamilNet* designed to depict the GSL in a bad light, these pictorial tales are a propaganda statement displaying the benign side of the government's armed operations. In both spheres there is no reason to dismiss the processes that are depicted. The SLN web site provides details of the landings seen in Figs. 95b and 95c in a report entitled "8th Batch of Patients and Civilians trapped in Mullaithivu evacuated with the Naval Assistance." This event occurred on 4th March 2009. There are two



List of Achievements in <http://www.navy.lk/>

other reports describing medivac evacuations on 10th and 12th February 2009. They stress that the patients were "provided with emergency medical treatment by naval doctors and then rushed to hospitals." Each report adds: "[t]he evacuees had been languishing in pain and fear due to the LTTE's adamant stance to hold all civilians captive in the un-cleared areas as human shields despite the repeated appeals by the International Community to free all civilians to arrive in safe areas immediately."

97. Medical disaster management: forward planning by Tamil doctors & Ministry of Health

The recent affidavit presented by Dr. V. Shanmugarajah with the guidance of a British lawyer on 15 March 2012 depicts a remarkable tale of forward

TamilNet



planning toward s disaster management involving the Tamil medical establishment and the Ministry of Health (see Engage Sri Lanka 2013: 204-14). Medical supplies and drugs were stockpiled in the *Thamililam*

areas from 2008. They had 30 fridges [generator-driven] for drugs and 14 during the alst stages. The medical staff moved with the population and had transport to move their supplies. They continued surgical operations till the 13th May 2009. On this issue the allegations of the British Tiger operative, Vany Kumar, in the Channel Four documentaries are explicitly denied. Supplies in were augmented by the ICRC. The last ICRC land convoy was on 29 January when 13 trucks bore 170 metric tonnes (interview with Wijeratne, 15 June 2013). Thereafter supplies were sent by sea, presumably in conjunction with the medivac trips. The photo here shows milk food supplies landed on

the beach by the SL Navy on 2nd April 2009. Note this statement on the Navy web site: “Navy assists in the Transportation of Essential Food and Medicine to Mullaithivu on Board MV City of Dublin.” Dr. Shanmugarajah’s testimony decimates some of the claims in the Channel Four’s *Killing Fields*, as well as assertions that malnutrition was widespread among the people in the Vanni Pocket. This body of evidence in o combination also undermines the claim that the SL government “wanted to keep civilians hungry enough [so that they would] abandon the rebels” and the associated contention that it “was a war crime to cause starvation” (Harrison 2012: 79).

98a, b, c. Tamils who fled by sea and the SL Navy



from List of Achievements in <http://www.navy.lk>

Amidst the world-wide focus on the large numbers of Tamil people who struggled out of their trapped situation over the course of February to May 2009, the batches that trickled out by boat are sometimes lost sight of. One report dated 21st April 2009 stated that up to that point the SLN had “rescued 2167 fleeing in 103 boats. A total of 1,965 persons in 92 boats has been escorted into Point Pedro while another 202 persons in 11 boats have been safely brought ashore at Pulmudai” (see <http://www.marinebuzz.com/2009/04/21/sri-lanka-navy-rescues-2167-tamils-fleeing-in-103-boats/>). However, the images presented above mislead in one way: these escapees mostly fled at night in all manner of boats at a stage when the Sea Tigers were still operating and when the SL Navy was intent on preventing the flight of key Tigers. On occasions the small boats bearing escapees were shot at and fatalities occurred. See Tammita-Delgoda’s account for the manner in which both the SL Navy and the SL Army on the shoreline north of the NFZ coped with this problem (2009: 12, 14)

99a, b, c. SL Army successes in the last stages of the war & its terrain



From <http://defence.lk/picturegallery/picturegallery.asp>



As Tammita-Delgoda has illustrated, the theatre of war saw numerous improvisations in battlefield tactics on both sides. The SL Army used trenches dug at night in a zig-zag path towards a chosen point of attack as a means of approaching the fortified bunds (2009: 13). This web site is a medium for government propaganda and is presumably slanted, but basic impressions can be derived. Fig. 98b displays Tiger corpses after Sinna Paranthan was captured on 22 December 2008. Note that between January and late April 2009 “over 3000 LTTE fighters [including child conscripts] surrendered to the Army” (de Silva-Ranasinghe “Downfall,” 2010b). It is estimated that in the five months of fighting in 2009 the SL Army lost 3,000 killed in action (email from de Silva-Ranasinghe, 2 Aug. 2013). Army sources claimed that the Tiger death toll in this period was 8,000, though a more recent study suggests that it was as high as 10,000 (IDAG 2013). Also see “Tiger Dead and Vestments” in <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thuppahi/sets/72157626922473698/>.

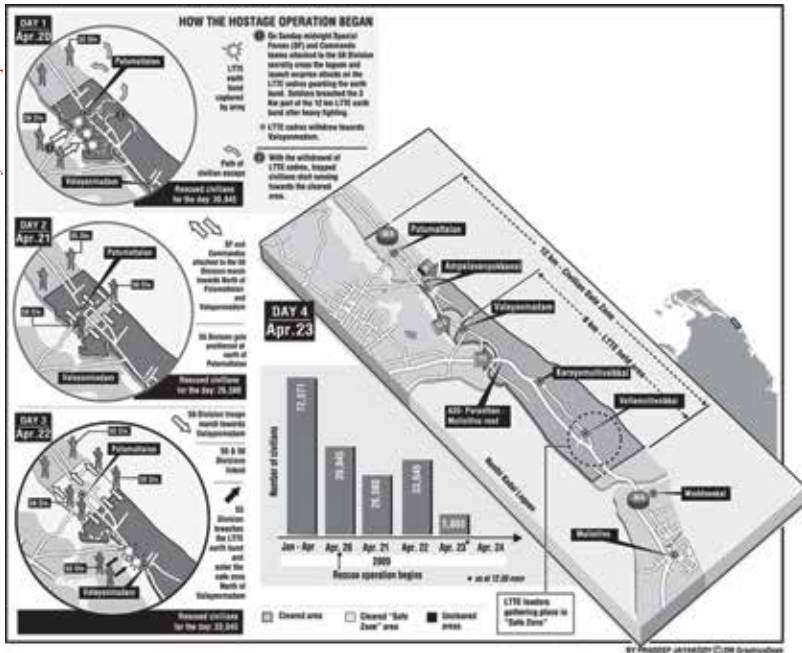
100a, b. Tiger dead after Puthukkudiyirippu was captured



This photo shows Tiger corpses collected after the capture of the small urban centre of Puthukkudiyirippu, inclusive of its high-tech centre (Fig. 76). A few weeks afterwards a “pivotal battle” developed at Aanandapuram 6km west of the newly demarcated civilian safe zone. Commencing in late April and culminating around 6 April one saw the SL Army “enveloping nearly 1000 LTTE veteran fighters in a 3 sq km area” -- with some 623 Tiger fighters being killed and another 127 fighters captured. The dead included Commanders Theepan, Durga and Vidusha (de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b and Jeyaraj, “Anatomy,” 2009a). Note that some anti-government agencies have used some of these images to contend that there was “genocide.” To those not hidebound within such reasoning, the images from the Defence Ministry web site establish a significant point: several Tiger combatants were not wearing uniforms. Clear evidence on this point can be found in testimonies from LTTE officers who survived (e. g. sec. 4:72 in LLRC 2011a: 63).

101. Analytic graphic map revealing how SL Army brigades penetrated the Last Redoubt, 19-22 April 2009

From Daily Mirror, 24 April 2009



This is a critical tool that illustrates an intricate operation that should enter the annals of international military history (see Tammita-Delgoda 2009). “The defences around and within the LTTE pocket consisted of a series of earth bunds, which were reinforced by bunkers every 30-50 metres and linked to a series of subsidiary trench systems and strong points. The bunds were mined and booby-trapped.... The Army launched its final offensive at 2am on April 19 and after hours of heavy fighting penetrated and bisected the northern LTTE defences. rescue points were established and loud speakers used to direct the movement of civilians towards Army lines” (de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b). Also see sec. 4:45 & 4:65 in LLRC 2011a: 54, 65. The LTTE shot at civilians and even deployed suicide bombers to deter escape: on 20th April, for instance, three “suicide bombers merged with fleeing civilians and detonated their suicide jackets killing 17 and injuring 200” (de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b).

102. “Wretched of the earth break free of bondage” – Jeyaraj



The caption is taken from the article by DBS Jeyaraj in the *Daily Mirror*, 24 April 2009. When I reached Sri Lanka in mid-April 2009 I feared a bloodbath would occur in the Last Redoubt. However, in a remarkable operation on the 19-22nd April the SL Army breached the defences on its western boundary (Tammaita-Delgoda 2009). Referring to the escape process of January to May 2009 Rajan Hoole has said that the “overwhelming reports from IDPs indicate that more people attempting to flee have been killed by the LTTE than by army snipers” (quoted in de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Information Warfare,” 2010a: 37). Be that as it may, thousands of those trapped were pictured struggling across lagoon or sand dune to safety those few days. Such a result was a miracle – a miracle in part rendered possible by the extent to which some Tiger combatants ditched their weapons and joined the flight. Among this mass were such important personages as Dayā Master and George Master as well as the hard-core *TamilNet* journalist, Lokeesan, whose fanciful tales are swallowed hook, line and sinker by Frances Harrison (Harrison 2012: 33-52). However, also see notes for Fig. 103.

103a, b. Abandoning the LTTE



A total of 103,143 Tamil civilians and deserting Tiger personnel escaped from the LTTE corral on the three days 20, 21 and 22 April; while an additional 17,000 struggled out in batches between 23rd April and 4th May (email from Citizen Silva, 28 Jan.

2013 & IDAG 2013). Inevitably there were civilian fatalities, including some shot by the LTTE and others who drowned. Independent estimates suggest that around 1500 Tamil fighters and civilians may have died during the three



days 20/22 April (email from Citizen Silva 2013) – a slim figure when placed beside the 120,000 released from their bonded sandbag role. This numerical comparison provides proportionality –

precisely the holistic approach avoided by ideologues and propagandists who deploy numbers in highly biased ways. Fig. 103a is evidently part of the video stream incorporated within the GSL propaganda film, “The Last Phase,” brought out recently in 2013 (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngNeF5WY64s>). There is no photo-shop hand here and that segment of the film is essential viewing for any study of the final stages of the war – though obviously not the whole story.

104a, b. Other Tamils move south into Vellamullaivaikkal in the Last Redoubt

TamilNet, 1 May 2009



In late April a mass of Tamil civilians in the Puthumaattalaan, Pokkanai and Valaymadam areas of the Last Redoubt chose to stick with the LTTE and moved south to Karayaamullivaikkal and Vella-mullivaikkal. Needless to say the congestion in these areas increased. Citizen Silva (email communication) estimates that in early May the number of people, inclusive of LTTE personnel, located in this remnant segment of *Thamililam* amounted to 135,00-146,000— an appraisal which should rectify the Tamilnet claim of 165,000 people.

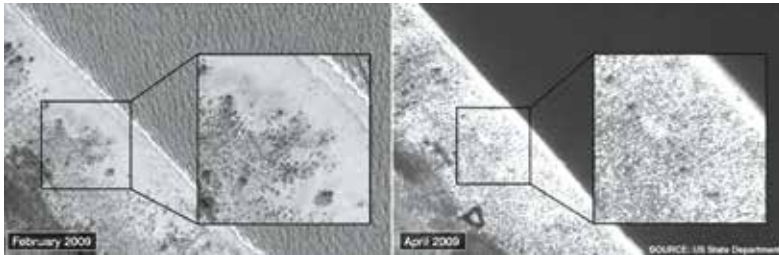
105a, b. Congestion in the southern reaches of the Last Redoubt

TamilNer 28 April 2009



Also see Figs. 6, 7a, 7b and 8 in Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, 2014. Given the LTTE's propaganda capacities the failure to present a multitude of pictures showing a heap of bodies after a shell impact remains a puzzle (but see Figs. 87b, 88b, c & 108).

106. BBC's twist on this shift in settlement pattern: a slant reiterated in 2013



At some point in 2009 the BBC presented a news item for the world circuit which presented two satellite pictures from the US State Department: “the satellite image on the left shows an almost empty beach in February 2009. The April 2009 image shows the same site where an estimated 100,000 refugees were camped after fleeing the fighting. The US State Department said about 25,000 tents were packed into a coastal strip about eight square miles large. Thousands of civilians have fled the area over the last few days” – see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/southasia/8016965.stm>. The import seems to be that (a) the Tamil people were under severe threat then and (b) under a sword wielded by the Sri Lankan government. What the news report omits is as significant. Firstly: the Last Redoubt as it existed from January 2009 was engineered by the LTTE as part of a strategy to induce international intervention (Roberts, “Blackmail,” *TPS: Essays*, chap. 7). Secondly: the movement of most of the populace to the second NFZ actually occurred in the course of February – being engineered by the LTTE. Third: Figs. 103-04 as well as Figs. 106a & 106b indicate, moreover, that, there was a further shift in settlement pattern in late April involving increased congestion in the southern parts of the Last Redoubt. As vitally, the BBC’s slanted report neglects the outstanding fact that between 20th and 31st April some 120,000 Tamil civilians and Tiger personnel had been released from their imprisonment in a hopeless situation. It is by silences and by deliberate inattention to context and proportionality that prejudiced political argument has been spread not only by the arms of the LTTE, but also by organisations that are ostensibly neutral.

As significantly, this set of satellite images and accompanying memo surfaced in media circles in mid-2013. The propaganda war continues.

107. A congealed mass of dwellings, people & traffic around the main road

both, TamilNet dated 1 May 2009



This image is described as a “Close-up view of congested road in Mu’li-vaaykkal” by the LTTE propaganda voice of *TamilNet*, where other pictures of the same import are presented. Observe the number of red-tiled roofs in the background of Fig. 8 in Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, 2014 and also the trees and tents remaining intact in both this image and others. These scenes raise doubts about the “shelling every day around the clock” and the “relentless onslaught” depicted by Frances Harrison (2012: 118, 106) on the basis of information conveyed by her Tamil informants – at least up to this point of time. This does not preclude the possibility that heavier shelling may have occurred during the last stage of the war in mid-May -- see Figs. 118 and 119. Also see “Tent City in the Last Redoubt” at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thuppahi/sets/72157626797805167/>

108a, b, c. Shelling impact captured by LTTE sources

TamilNet 8 May 2009



Here, we see evidence of some shelling. Also see UTHR, *Let Them Speak*, 2009. A corpse lies in the central area of the second image. Testimonies from those trapped in the area provide a better understanding of the circumstances – where they are not motivated by revenge and ongoing LTTE sentiments that have generated exaggeration or fabrication.



109a, b, c. Protective foxholes & make-do sandbags among civilian 'dwellings'... Mullivaikkal area

Tamilnet 5 May 2009



Tamilnet 1 May 2009



TamilNet 1 May 2009



110a, b. Bunkers in Last Redoubt camouflaged by shack and truck



These photos were taken after sections of the Last Redoubt were captured by the SL Army and were presented by Tammita-Delgoda who was embedded with the 55th Division advancing from north-to-south along the coastline from Chalai. They have been deployed in these quarters to serve as illustrations of clever LTTE work. Also see the images in Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, 2014. The “LTTE also used mines, booby traps and IEDs extensively, which killed and maimed many soldiers and civilians alike, the latter often when fleeing across the combat zone towards Army lines” (de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b).

111a, b. Making do: basic shelter & life under tarpaulin



The first photo is dated 25th April and the second 9th May, both from *TamilNet*.

112a, b. Queues ... and more queues

TamilNet,



The first picture is dated 27th April and the second 28th April. The associated news item reported the delivery of 30 metric tonnes of rice, oil and sugar to the LTTE domain by an “ICRC ship,” while stressing that the division of these supplies among “the remaining 165,000 people” would result in the distribution of “500 grams of rice, 20 grams of sugar per person.” It added that injuries caused by “cluster munitions, MBR and artillery fire” had resulted in many injuries; while “dead bodies were still lying on the roads north of Mu’lli-vaaaykkaal.” Note that the issue of malnutrition and starvation within the populace ‘imprisoned’ within the Last Redoubt is a complex one, requiring a specialist study of a clinical kind (also see Fig. 157). As for the death toll, see IDAG 2013.

113a, b. LTTE paradox: sustaining life while endangering life



TamilNet 9th May 2009



Even in late April-May 2009 the LTTE state machinery remained intact and able to serve its citizens despite the pressures it had brought upon itself and citizenry. The second photo shows the distribution of *kanchi* and carried this headline:

“malnutrition in mothers triggers jaundice, hepatitis in newborns.” It claimed that the 120-165,000 civilians were “struggling to stay alive” and accused the SL Navy of removing 5 metric tonnes of “nutritious food stock” from the last Red Cross ship to reach their area. Dr. V. Shanmugarajah has recently revealed that he came across “very few cases of malnutrition” during his whole period of work in remnant *Thamiliilam* (Engage Sri Lanka 2013: 208)

114a. An Out Patients Department at medical work

TamilNer 27 April

114b, c. LTTE organisational capacities: keeping administrative track

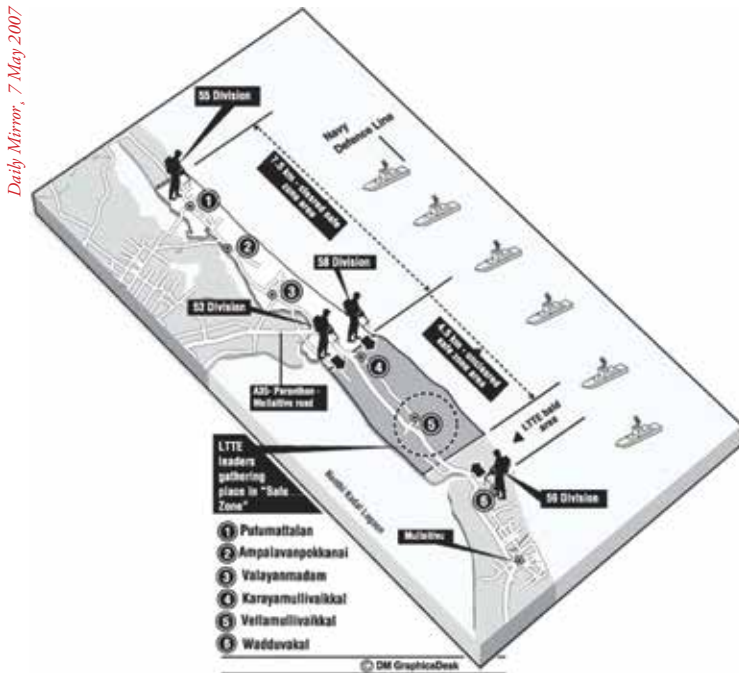
TamilNer 9 May, 2009

115a, b. Making do: catch fish, sell goods



The image of the fishing 'haul,' such as it is, comes from an account on 25 April and the mobile trading store from *TamilNet* on 9th May.

116. Graphic Map of the shrunken “Last Redoubt” of the LTTE, 7 May 2009



Both in late April and in May the Army infantrymen had to inch forward and engage “in heavy fighting, 24 hours a day, [in order] to capture the final LTTE pockets segment by segment.” Thus, “much of the fighting was characterized by intense close quarter combat which in several instances saw the LTTE fire their remaining 122mm guns over open sights.... The LTTE cleverly used tents, make-shift shelters and bunkers to conceal snipers, machine gun nests and artillery/mortar emplacements, which were often merged with the presence of civilians who were dispersed over a wide area. Given this factor, assault troops were compelled to systematically clear literally thousands of tents and countless bunkers and trenches, which made them prone to LTTE ambushes laid inside tents or bunkers, sometimes using suicide bombers posing as civilians” (de Silva-Ranasinghe “Downfall,” 2010b). While infantry mortars were used, this type of close quarter battle precluded the use of artillery in any sustained manner.

117a. Mortar pits trailer and bulldozer identified amidst the debris in the Last Redoubt



Citizen Silva's technical work has located signs of LTTE weaponry amidst the debris in the Last Redoubt pictured by a cameraman who was in the helicopter carrying Ban Ki-Moon over that area on 23 May 2009: (1) several mortar pits, (2) a trailer of the type that would render the mortars mobile and (4) a bulldozer hidden under a tree. 116b presents a heavy mortar of the type that would have been deployed in these pits – the image being from a large stock of pictures of LTTE weaponry in Citizen Silva's archive. Thus, the Last Redoubt was NOT a No-Fire-Zone for the LTTE and could not, therefore, conceivably be one for the SL armed forces. Also see Jeyaraj 2009b on this issue. See Citizen Silva 2013 for detailed deciphering work.

117b. Heavy mortar, LTTE



118a, b. The LTTE's last stand in May 2009 & desperate propaganda

TamilNet, 12 & 10 May 2009 respectively



Throughout the last phase of the conflict *TamilNet* and other pro-LTTE web sites underlined the incidence of casualties among the Tamil people trapped in the area [glossing over the fact that this was part of LTTE design]. This line of emphasis became strident in May. The second of these snaps had the following report: “Rescue workers within the Mullaitheevu Safety zone counted more than 1200 bodies after the large scale slaughter Saturday night and Sunday morning by the SL army with the use of cluster ammunition, multi-barrel rocket launchers and cannons.” That deaths did occur is certain. The issue is (a) the scale and whether in fact MBR and artillery were utilised much in this phase of the war and (b) whether the death toll was exaggerated in the Tamil news circuit.

119a, b. Mullivaikkal hospital said to be under attack, 12 May 2009

TamilNet, 12 May 2009



“Mu’ll-vaaykkaal hospital staff said ... the number of bodies brought to the hospital was 378, injured totalled 1122. The staffers added that 106 of the dead and 251 of the injured were children” (TamilNet report from above). As one aspect of its

strategy of activating a foreign interventon to extricate themselves the LTTE circuits continuously highlighted casualties. Particular stress was placed on alleged attacks on hospitals with the charge that they were deliberately targeted. Thus within hours of this report the *Daily Telegraph* in UK had a headline item which accused Sri Lanka of a war cime and said: “Photographs taken after the explosion showed bodies strewn in the dirt and medical personnel struggling to help the wounded. Dr Thurairaja Varatharajah, the senior government health official in the war zone, said that about 50 people were wounded in the attack and the death toll could rise” (Blair 2009). This type of reportage was

Reuters via Daily Telegraph



backed by claims from the Human Rights Watch which alleged in early May that there had been 30 attacks on hospitals during the year – citing “aid agencies and witnesses” as authority (HRW 2009a).

120. Alleged hospital attacks as incendiary propaganda

Reuters as deployed by Daily Telegraph



Whether this photo was snapped at the Mullivaikkal makeshift hospital (as alleged) is a question that one must address. The broader issue is whether those in the liberal radical camp in the West had been taken in by Tamil activists and their moral fervour. Pertinent to this issue is the average citizen's unfamiliarity with war. Artillery strikes on a selected target entail barrages directed at the chosen spot. Citizen Silva's studies suggest that several claims about hits on hospitals refer to the odd shell or two in the vicinity (note the details in HRW summaries). Moreover, any review of this particular scenario must attend to the fact that on occasions, for e. g. at Puthukudurippu in early February, the LTTE deliberately moved mobile artillery alongside the hospital in order to attract a counter-barrage that would endanger the sick and injured [citation]. This was in step with their overall strategy of seducing foreign intervention "to avoid a humanitarian disaster." HRW and Amnesty International, among others, seem to have become catspaws in this cynical game.

121a, b. Mullivaikkal hospital mostly intact: a lie revealed in mid-May 2009



Two Indian journalists, Kanchan Prasad and Muralidhar Reddy, were given the privilege by the 58th Division of visiting the recaptured segments of the Last Redoubt every day from the 14th to 18th May 2009 inclusive. One location they honed in on was that identified by the map-coordinates for one of the hospitals which the Tamil media had said was severely damaged. These are some of the images captured by Prasad with Reddy featured in one, a bunker ward. For the whole collection of images by Prasad, see <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thuppahi/sets/72157626797848747/> and <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thuppahi/sets/72157626797805167/> Also see Engage Sri Lanka 2013: 208-09.

122. Mortar crater and trickery: LTTE 'evidence' of shelling impact



Fig. 121 was one of two pictures in *TamilNet* in an item entitled “Shell attack in front of the hospital admission ward,” both part of series within the item “SLA attacks hospital, 47 massacred” (see Fig. 122 for other). While the body in the foreground and others midway seem to provide evidence in support of this caption, the individuals in the background are lounging casually and there are no obvious blast effects on the tents. So the issue is whether this is stage-managed or edited with Photo Shop. Gerald Peiris informs me that “counterfeiting pictures with implants or adjustments to the original [are] not easy to detect when done by those with the required skill. The procedure is quite simple, its first step being the enlargement of the original picture and the image to be implanted. When the enlargement is by about 1:800, it is possible to alter even minute details such as a wrinkle or an individual hair on a person’s face or the colour of a grain of sand to suit whatever purpose the final product is being done for.... Why it was possible for us to detect the manipulations in some of the LTTE pictures and films (including those published by Channel 4) was because those had been so clumsily done” (email note, Jan. 2013). The last comment prompts my remark: “may be clumsy, but many well-intentioned people believe in Channel Four.” It would seem that propaganda perpetuated by powerful machines and repeated *ad nauseam* carries weight and implants itself indelibly, especially when conveyed by emotionally-suffused ‘true believers’ to those emotionally suffused by Tamilness or liberal ideological sympathies.

123. Deciphering LTTE subterfuge: a re-working that identifies a mortar crater



The snap was the second of the two visual illustrations in *TamilNet* for the news item “Shell attack in front of the hospital admission ward.” There is now a man standing in the middle background. One likely explanation is that the impact crater was from a different date, not May 12 (a reasoning which then suggests that Fig. 121 is partly concocted). The red-tiled roof in the background indicates that what we see in the foreground are probably extensions of the makeshift hospital with tents serving as wards. Also see Dr Shanmugarah’s affidavit testimony in *Engage Sri Lanka 2013*: 204-14. But the image is reproduced here as one facet of Citizen Silva’s technical deciphering of the craters in the Last Redoubt which mark the fact that most were from mortar shells rather than heavy artillery.

124. Satellite imagery analysed



In an email note (Jan. 2009) Citizen Silva noted that “the mortar shell impact craters are clearly distinguishable from heavy artillery and MBR craters on satellite imagery... Analysis of Last Redoubt shows a handful of heavy artillery and MBR craters from May 1 to May 18.... [whereas] several dozen mortar craters are visible.... [This], plus the fact that from the sat imagery a vast majority of permanent structures are still standing, suggests against heavy artillery usage. This is independently corroborated by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in their analysis” (<http://srhrl.aaas.org/geotech/srilanka/srilanka.shtml>)”

125. Re-analysis: MBR shell impact in aerial picture identified by Citizen Silva

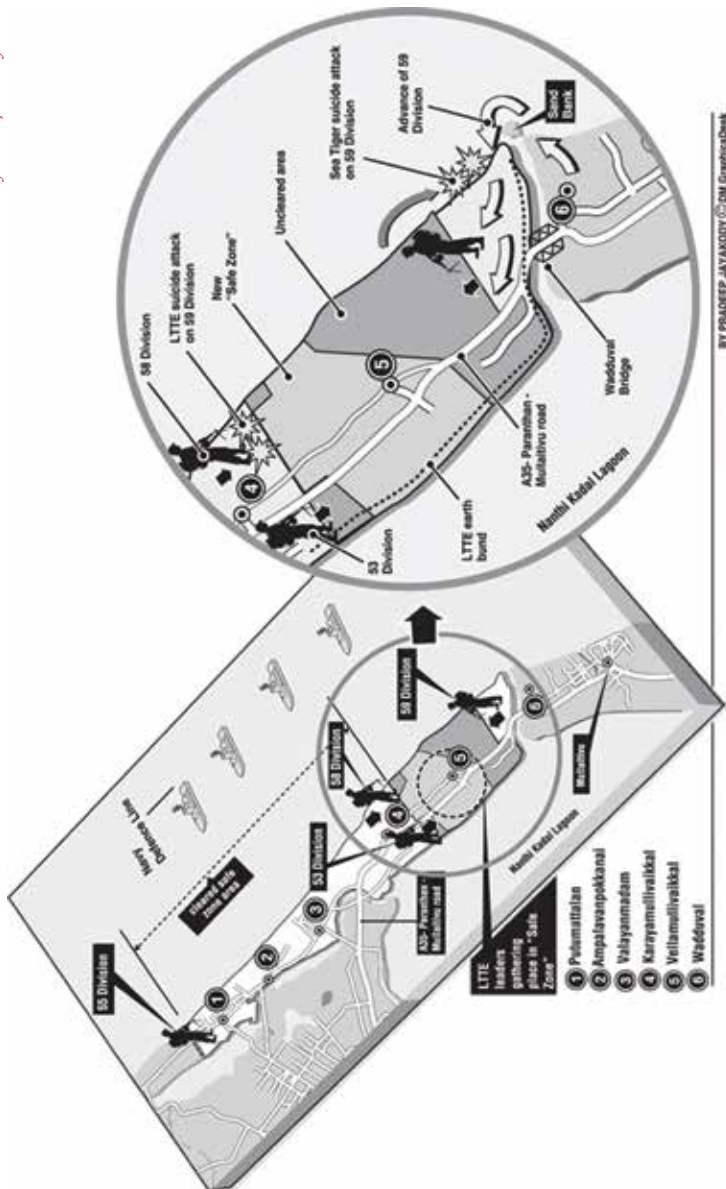


The aerial snapshot was taken on the 23rd May by an unidentified cameraperson who was part of Ban Ki-Moon's entourage on an SLAF helicopter. This picture and satellite imagery highlight the discolouration of the soil and burnt trees caused by the shell and differentiate that spot from the surrounding area. It is through such close technical reading by those with some expertise that one must evaluate the aerial photographic evidence. MBR appears to have been rarely deployed against the Last Redoubt. Given the massed populace (Figs. 91.92,a/b, and 107) the impact would have been severe. This measure of restraint suggests some proportionality in the SL Army's operations at this stage of the war. The Tamil propaganda circuits, including individuals who survived the last phase, have consistently hinted at phosphorous attacks and cluster bombs (for e. g. Harrison 2012: 106-07, 39). When Groundviews (GV) presented a review of satellite imagery that purported to demonstrate the use of cluster bombs, Citizen Silva sent GV an article on the topic which was ignored. After he blogged a comment summarising his piece, "GV posted it and then took it down couple of hours later....bizarre!!" (email from Citizen Silva). So he had recourse to a web presentation which can now be found at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/92760423/The-Use-of-Cluster-Bombs-in-Sri-Lanka-Fact-or-Fiction>.



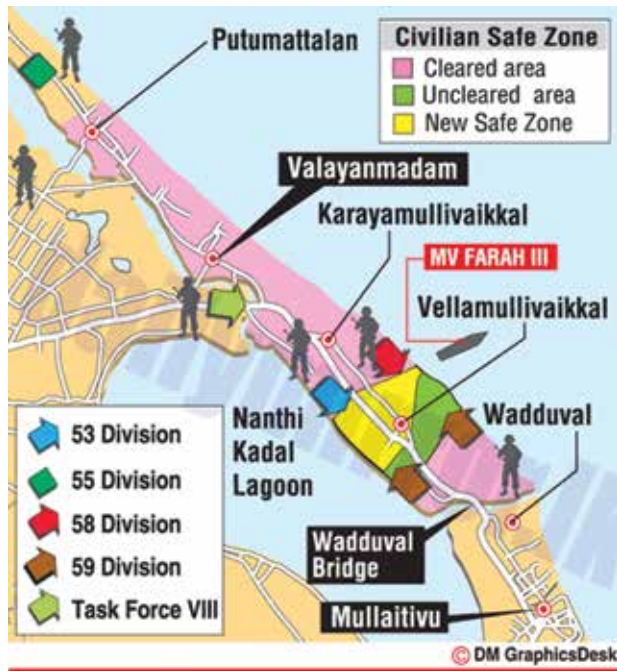
126a. The final squeeze: map of Thamililam and its death throes, 15 May 2009

Daily Mirror, 15 May 2007



BY PRADEEP JAYAKODY © DM GraphicsDesk

126b. The final squeeze



Both in late April and May the advancing Army troops “confronted desperate LTTE suicide attacks, which also saw the use of Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs), namely trucks, buses, crew-cabs and even motorcycles. In one example from April 28-29, the LTTE carried out seven suicide attacks before dawn.... [Again, the] Sea Tigers operated extensively along the coastline and the Navy claimed that it destroyed 17 Sea Tiger boats and killed over 100 Sea Tigers in the last four weeks of the conflict.” Eventually, the 59th Division launched an amphibious assault from the south on the 14th May and established a bridgehead within the last remnant of *Thamililam*. These troops had to beat off several counter-attacks. They eventually linked up with the 59th Division on the 16th May. “On the night of May 17, the LTTE attempted to breakthrough Army lines in a desperate attack with over 400 fighters, which reportedly saw over 30 suicide attacks.” By the 18th May, however, this resistance had been mostly overcome (de Silva-Ranasinghe, “Downfall,” 2010b).

127a. LTTE blow their munitions, 15 May 2009

The LTTE's strategy of utilising its populace and the danger of large-scale deaths to entice international intervention was underlined by a fervent media announcement by its leader abroad, KP Pathmanathan, which urged the "international community to shed its cloak of indifference and save the hapless Tamil civilians on the brink of extinction at the



hands of the barbaric [Sri Lankan forces]" – *TamilNet*, 15 May 2009. While this note evidences the original LTTE strategy, KP was now behind the times. The Tiger leaders in the Last Redoubt had lost hope by the 14th/15th. They started to blow up their stock of guns, vehicles and munitions. When the SL Army presented propaganda pictures such as Fig. 126a or Tamil civilians walking out of an area blackened by smoke, the background was NOT the product of SLA shelling, but the result of the LTTE's destruction of its stock. A couple of years later a minor cyclone revealed that the Tigers had also buried some of their artillery in the NFZ arena.

127b, c. Buried LTTE artillery within Last Redoubt unearthed by cyclone, c. 2013 (?)



128a, b, c, d. The trapped Tamil people stream out as IDPs

both from Ministry of Defence



The last ICRC-SLN medivac evacuation was on 9th May. The SL Army launched its final assault a few days later. As the story related in Fig. 126a unfolded, the civilian populace were released from their entrapment and/or fled on foot or, in a few instances, by sea (I have met three individuals who used the sea route) in the days 10-18 May. These scenes depict facets of this process, but can hardly capture their condition of body and mind in comprehensive manner. Also note Vidura “The Great Escapes,” *Sunday Leader*, 17 May 2009.

from Island



*From Sunday Observer, 17 May, 2009
in Yatawana 2009*



129a, b. The second exodus: Yatawara's pictorial 'strikes'

Pics by Tilak Perera in Yatawara 2009



The *Sunday Observer* of 17 May carried two illustrated stories of the Tamil peoples' escape and plight in hyperbolic style that used the terminology pressed by the government vis a vis the LTTE. They were authored by Dhaneshi Yatawara and Shanika Sriyananda. The images were snapped on 15th or 16h May (tele-chat with Yatawara, 25 Nov. 2013). They are as revealing as striking. They indicate that some people fleeing the Last Redoubt may have drowned and Yatawara tells me that she heard testimony to that effect from some of the individuals who reached safety. The Lake House personnel, it seems, viewed the events from the shelter of bunkers as bullets whizzed around them at times.



Traumatic tales abound. "The LTTE block them from crossing the lagoon at its narrowest position. Hence, the people either wade or swim for more than one kilometre clinging on to some floating material to reach the cleared areas seeking the protection of

the Sri Lanka Army. Troops cannot repulse the terrorists as the probability of hitting the civilians is high. Taking the risk of death troops who wait under cover receive these unfortunate people and take them to safety" (Yatawara 2009). The last sentence is not concoction. The UTHR provides testimonies from escapees that note that on occasions Army troops died from gunfire in the course of aiding escapees. Also note 4:67 in LLRC 2011a: 61.

130. Escape, Death and Killing in the Last Week, mid-May 2009

Ministry of Defence Pic circulated and claimed by a number of agencies



The location and date were identified for me by Dhaneshi Yatawara (email, December 2013). For accounts of the difficulties faced by these people and the fighting in their midst relayed by some Tamils, see UTHR No.32 (2009). It was during the days that followed, from the 17th to 19th May, it seems, that the controversial

130a. Tamil survivors stream across temporary bridge at Wadduvakkal on 15/16th May 2009

‘white flag surrender’ incident occurred. Several credible tales of leading Tiger personnel who were seen surrendering but then seen no more have surfaced (Social Architects n. d.). These include testimonies from spouses of LTTE leaders and refer to the following: Babu, Baby Subramaniam, Elamparthy, Ruben, P. Rathinathurai, Lawrence Thilagar, Velavan, Yogi and Fr. Francis Joseph (sec. 4: 247-48 7 4:253 in LLRC 2011a: 111-12).

Pic from Colombo Telegraph



A fuller list is provided now in Thangavelu 2013. The most convincing case of extra-judicial execution has been provided by Gordon Weiss, the victim being colonel Ramesh alias T. Thuraijasingham (Weiss 2102). Note however that the pictorial evidence provided by Weiss in other articles showing a Tamil tied to the tree prior to torture (implied) and death (pictured) is questionable. In the original picture one of the feet around the tree is clad in slippers. (atypical for the SL Army). In any event this revealing sign-cum-question mark has been cropped out in the image presented in *The Cage*. See Roberts, “Torture Scene,” 2012.



130b, c. Ramesh and the Sri Lanka Army, May 2009

131a, b. Pirapāharan's last refuge



Mahindapala, 2009

Though the battle events of mid-May described under Fig. 125 suggest that all fighting ceased by 18th May the details uncovered by Mahindapala (2009) indicate that a remnant cluster of Tigers were discovered on the 18/19th night in swamp terrain of the type displayed by Fig. 129a. It was after the fire fight that ensued that Pirapāharan's corpse was discovered. For debates on the manner of his death, see Roberts, "Veera Maranam," 2012 and Jeyaraj 2009. Jeyaraj's article is essential reading for all students of Lankan politics, while the 291 comments it attracted are also revealing fare.



132a. Pirapaharan identified



Former Tiger commander Karuna Ammān (centre) and political chief Dayā Master (on right as one faces) were brought to the shores of Nandi Kadal to confirm the identity of Pirapāharan's corpse. Major-General Shavendra de Silva is on Karuna's right. The SL government would have been certain about the identity of this corpse without the verdict of the two former LTTE leaders, but this image was good publicity and a means of telling the world that they had got their man (however see Fig. 158a). On the different cultural groundings that bear of the display of corpses in public in the light of President Obama's decision not to show Osama Bin Laden's body to the American public, see Roberts, "Death and Eternal Life," 2011b and 2011c.

132b. Pirapāharan's LTTE identity card recovered and displayed



News report indicated that a DNA test had also been used to positively identify the corpse. In the meantime Tamil bloggers from every which where and some Tamil web sites went into denial and insisted that he was alive and would emerge to regenerate the struggle for Eelam.

133a. The key architects of victory shake hands in balmy mood



Pirapāharan's death and the defeat of the LTTE were greeted with joy in the greater part of Sri Lanka. Petty bourgeois elements, such as auto-rickshaw drivers, are said to have been at the forefront of such displays. Critics at home and abroad have denounced the reactions in Lanka as a form of "triumphalism." Recalling the celebrations in UK on VE Day at the end of World War Two as relayed in snaps and Movietone News, I cannot agree with the pious moralism and secular fundamentalism that combine to drive such criticism.

133b. Sri Lankans celebrate



134a. Tamil demonstrations at University Avenue, Toronto. late April 2009 onwards



134b. Rallies in London

As defeat loomed from late 2008, LTTE networks orchestrated demonstrations in many Western countries. For instance, see http://transcurrents.com/tc/2009/04/post_356.html



re Toronto and note that 100,000 protestors are said to have marched through central London protesting against the Sri Lankan government's offensive against the LTTE on one occasion in 2009, while in mid-April thousands blocked Parliament Square calling for a ceasefire. Among them

Parameswaran Subramaniyan (28) began a hunger strike. Suren Surendiran (British Tamils Forum) said the demonstration was "spontaneous" and coincided with the reopening of parliament (Weaver & Sparrow 2009). Readers should also trawl through *Tamilnet* and other such sites for the months January to June 2009 to acquire a sense of the power and efficiency of the LTTE networks worldwide. The insularity of Western media circuits and/or their ideological leanings towards the underdog tended to occlude the significance of this fact in their evaluation, such as it was, of the total context.

135. Tamil agitation at fever pitch, April-May 2009



From late 2008 as they saw the writing on the wall the emotional turmoil of LTTE supporters and other Tamil nationalists grew exponentially. The inner turmoil was profound. The expressions of anger at public demonstrations were virulent at times and even frightening (as in this scene from Toronto). What is particularly significant in this development was the entry of several second and third generation Tamil migrants. Tamil nationalism received a major boost and the continuing agitation about the “war crimes” of the Sri Lankan government since then is one outcome, as well as one engine, of this phenomenon. Thus, “protests [were] an almost daily occurrence across Sydney in the past fortnight” said Dr Sam Pari in late April while standing in front of the PM’s Sydney residence. It was immediately after one such demo in Sydney on 16/17th May that a handful of young Tamils invaded the home of two Sinhalese young men in Westmead and assaulted them with sticks and acid (Roberts, “Lone Cell Assaults,” 2013).

136. SL Army struggles to cope with Tamil survivors at the rear of the battlefield

Lake House



Well before the two major moments of rescue in late April and mid-May, some 57,524 Tamil civilians had reached state territory by the end of March and been sent to detention centres. A Tiger suicide bomber mingled with one batch and blew herself up together with those around her at a check point on February 9th 2009 -- killing 29 and wounding 64. Thus the SL Army maintained a rigorous system of body checks that could entail stripping. With the influx of thousands over a short space of time in late April and, then, again in mid-May the organisational problem of differentiation, control and feeding the mass of people would have been monumental. The UTHR Report No. 34 and accounts from observers at the immediate rear of the battlefield in April, namely, Rajasingham Narendran and Muralidhar Reddy, indicate that these war-weary people were treated with considerable care within the constraints of the circumstances. However also see the note accompanying Figure 137.

137a, b. Aid and care extended to most survivors

Yatanawa in Sunday Observer, 10 May 2009



The first image (taken by Tilak Perera) records a scene associated with the medivac evacuees landed down the coast at Pulmoddai on 9th May 2009. The second shows another specific act of aid, but incidentally gives one a glimpse of the battlefield landscape. Other images that follow below depict processes at

Ministry of Defence



the rear of the battlefield in the latter stages as the Army struggled to sort out the people and separate those deemed Tiger belligerents, while yet sustaining and minimally repairing a mass of people who included a few “walking dead.” Note this story: “*Aiyo ennandaya Mahan*

Seththupochchuthu” (Oh... my son was killed) she could murmur only those few words. Dehydrated and suffering from fever and with bleeding wounds she fell unconscious. The little girl was given first aid by the Army medical team” (Sriyananda 2009). However, note that some close-up photographs indicate that some IDPs remained sturdy and resilient despite their ordeal. See Kanchan Prasad’s photographs displayed in <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thuppahi/sets/72157626797805167/>

138a, b. Water at a premium



Many survivors were not only exhausted and hungry, but severely dehydrated. Water was their most urgent need. Pictures circulated by pro-government media circles, of course, highlight moments of considerable kindness. There is no ground to dismiss such images as isolated. There was a broad band of sympathy for the plight of the Tamil people in the Vanni Pocket throughout Sri Lanka. However, there also are testimonies that state that some leading

Ministry of Defence



Tiger personnel who survived and fell into Army hands have simply disappeared (“Social Architects Story 4,” n. d.). There are several specific testimonies from spouses of “former LTTE cadre” claiming that their

husbands had surrendered at Wattuval and Mullaitivu on the 17th or 18th May, but have not surfaced since. Among those named incidentally in these testimonies are Babu, Elamparthy, Baby Subramaniam, Kutty, Lawrence Thilagar, P. Rathinathurai, Velavan, Yogi and Fr. Francis Joseph (LLRC 2011: 109-14). Also see UTHR, *Let Them Speak*, 2009 and Thangavelu 2013.

139a, b. Relief and logistical problems at the battlefront-rear

Ministry of Defence



Pic by Thilak Perera, from Sunday Observer, 26 April 2009



“A woman injured in the leg in the LTTE shoot-out while escaping from the ‘No Fire Zone’ is carried by her husband to a medical centre. The woman soldier who spotted them in the crowd hurriedly guides them for treatment” runs the blurb in Perera’s *Sunday Observer* presentation of government in a good light. However, it is the background scene that is significant: as with Fig. 134, we see that a mass of IDPs were assembled at the rear of the battleground in April/May for sorting out.

140. Transporting a mass of IDPs



The logistics involved on transporting the large number of IDPs to the Vavuniya area was itself a massive operation, especially in April and May. A fleet of buses with civilian drivers was contracted by the SL Army and used to drive groups of those deemed “IDP” rather than LTTE to the so-called “humanitarian centres” that were being established in the Mänik Farm area or to school camps used as temporary centres. Given the condition of the roads this meant a journey of some 5-7 hours. There is some suggestion that one or two died on the way. This is hardly surprising: those chronically ill and on medical prescriptions in short supply would have been severely affected during the course of their enforced sojourn in the Vanni Pocket. Significantly, when this detail (about deaths en route and at the initial medical queues at Mänik Farm – see Figs. 149 & 150 below) were presented by me at an ICES seminar in 2011, Mirak Raheem of CPA waxed strong from the floor about the failures of the government. At one level this marked the opposition in liberal circles in Lanka to the whole concept of detention centres for the Tamil IDPs. But, at another level, this type of criticism demonstrates one of the shortcomings of the chattering classes (including journalists): namely, people with limited experience of the problems of delivery faced by those in the helping professions (including some NGOs) who work, so to speak, at the coalface. This is a problem of cloistered perception rooted in the life ways of salon and air-conditioned office as distinct from hospital ward or social service centre. Speaking as a person from within the same cloistered world, my seminar was an ode to the helping professions who laboured tirelessly at the detention centres.

141a, b. The Sewalanka feeding operation, Omanthai, mid-May 2009



Omanthai is about 50 minutes north of Vavuniya and maybe 5-6 hours driving distance from the Nandhikadal area in the road conditions prevailing then. It served as a staging post for the large numbers of IDPs transported to the Vavuniya area where there were facilities that could support them and

Sewalanka



care for those sick and ailing. When the second mass of Tamil IDPs was gathered up in May after the last phase of the war, the Sewalanka office in Vavuniya (almost entirely Tamil in its personnel) was entrusted by the government and World Food Programme with the task of setting up kitchens and providing cooked meals for the IDPs. WFP provided five essential items. Working 24 hours on a roster system from the 17th May for 7-8 days 530,857 meals were prepared over a period of 7-8 days by teams of cooks and assistants. See Roberts, "Omanthai," 2010c & Abeysekera 2012.

142. Zones 1 and 2 in Mānik Farm being prepared on the run in late April 2009

Pic by Donnie Woodyard, Country Director for Medical Teams International (Sri Lanka and Haiti)



From 14 October 2006 the government established a Consultative Committee on Humanitarian Assistance chaired by Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe which met at the Ministry of Defence and included the leading ambassadors, the Chairman of the NGOs Committee, the Commissioner General of Essential Services and the Director, World Food Programme among others. It is this body which began planning for the care of those people who escaped from the hold of the LTTE in late 2008. Mānik Farm was allocated as a suitable area for this purpose. The preparation of what became known as Zone Zero (Kadirgamar Camp) and Zone Three (Arunachalam) commenced in late 2008. The trickle of IDPs, as they were called, increased in small bundles during January and March 2009, till they amounted to 33,662 on 16 February, 57,524 on 31 March and 69,099 on 20 April (figures from UNOCHA).

143. A field hospital being set up at Mānik Farm, late April 2009

Pic. by Donnie Woodyard.



In April 2009 only Zones Zero (Kadargamar) and Three (Arunachalam) at Mānik Farm were partially operational; while some IDPs were still housed in various school buildings in Vavuniya District. The sudden influx of some 103-120,000 IDPs in late April therefore caught the combined authorities napping. The response involved frenetic, but determined activity, aided by the absence of rain in this period. Fig. 142 shows UN and government officials in a planning discussion, while Fig. 143 shows one of the excellent field-hospitals being set up. The coordination of this massive enterprise was demanding and a wide variety of government departments, UN agencies and local NGOs and INGOs cooperated in setting up a workable set of detention centres with a welfare orientation. Major-General Chandrasiri chaired the Coordination Committee meetings which assembled every other day more or less. This group included the Vavuniya GA (Mrs Charles, a Tamil) and various INGO and NGO representatives. Peter Zoegli, head of the World Food Programme, sat in on a few and told me that he had no issues with their efficiency at meetings (interview at Nelli Star Hotel, Vavuniya, 2 June 2010).

144. NGOs at the heart of the welfare effort



Here we see some Department of Health officials and some INGO representatives at the heart of Mänik Farm on 22 April 2009 working on implementation plans. “Tents were being put up by NGOs and [there were] meetings that day with NGOs, govt bodies etc on the healthcare, sanitation, nutrition and even infrastructure.”(Unambuwe email, 12 August 2013). After its experience with confusions and turf wars among the NGOs/INGOs during the tsunami relief operations, GSL was selective in its choice of assistance from non-government bodies and kept some out (in part, too, from security concerns and political distrust). A total of 52 agencies were involved in a central way in delivering aid and/or running the camps. These included (a) UN agencies such as UNHCR, IOM, Red Cross, ICRC and WFP; (b) INGOs such as Welthungerhilfe, ZOA, Oxfam, SOLIDAR, etc; and (c) local NGOs, such as CARITAS, LEADS, CHA, Sarvodaya etc (see Appendix I at end). Quite a few Sri Lankan individuals injected their labour, their ideas and their supply networks into the camps through individual initiative. Unambuwe and Setunga are prime examples who stand for a whole tribe whose activities have not been recorded. Indeed, both in Colombo and in the world media circuit it was widely believed that the detention centres were military run and that no NGOs were permitted to enter. The degree to which such misinformation took root serves as a standing indictment of Colombo society on the one hand and Sri Lanka’s news media on the other.

145a, b, c. Scenes from Mānik Farm in April-May 2009

Reuters, 8 May 2009 source unknown



From Manori Unambauce



The type of shelters in the Mānik Farm camps were varied and depended on the organisations that stepped in to cope with the emergency situation. The igloo tents provided by UNHCR were probably the worst; whereas the local wattle and tin combination of shacks developed in Kadirgamar Camp (Fig. 155b below) were the most habitable, albeit not conducive to quick establishment. Needless to say, the camps were crowded and there was some confusion at the start. Water was bowsered in at the start and shortages resulted. Toilet facilities were a major problem and inadequate at the outset. But the *grāma niladhāris* from Vavuniya District (usually Tamil) set up offices in each Zone and their notice boards served as a guide to many (Setunga 2012). Western media commentary on the sanitation, however, was directed by cultural myopia and unfamiliarity with local conditions (or even the slums and shanties of Colombo). Also cf. the scenes in Figs. 91-93, 109, 111-12.

146a, b, c. Hostile reportage re detention centres: barbed wire & “razor wire” imagery deployed widely

from *The Hindu*



Richard Dixon 2009



Western reportage was also hostile to the idea of detention. Buying into the misinformation that was retailed in emotional tone by many Tamils in the migrant world, several Western commentators depicted the IDP centres as “death camps” (e. g. Dixon 2009) and “concentration camps” (Kingsbury 2009). Thus Dixon’s pictorial illustration above stressed that the inmates had to “queue for hours in the boiling sun.” The main Western media outlets invariably featured images of IDPs beside barbed wire fences in order to stir the heart strings of compassionate readers. Pointed emphasis was placed on “razor wire” (e. g. by Tony Jones in Australia) as part of this strategy, even though some of the pictures showed people holding on to the wire -- as in Figs. 145a and 145b. The fact is that each camp covered an extensive area and slipping out, especially at night time, would have been no problem (see STIT 2009 and Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, chap. 6).

147. Stark images deployed



When Ban Ki Moon made a flying visit to Sri Lanka circa 23/24 May and visited one of the detention centres at Mānik Farm, he was accompanied by a foreign media contingent. Associated Press promptly filed the photograph above and Daylife presented it with the note: “Tamil civilians lie on a cardboard box on the ground in the Manik Farm refugee camp U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon humanitarian access to the camps which have become overcrowded since the government declared victory over the Tamil Tiger rebels in a 25-year war.” Through this image the suggestion is that conditions generally were stark. In fact, this was not so for the vast majority, though, invariably, new arrivals had to rough it for a while and it took a few days for conditions at new centres to be smoothed out. As any war veteran will tell you, when one is exhausted one can kip anywhere. That some of the IDPs transported from the former war front would do so was only to be expected. The Western audience at whom this picture is aimed also would not know that some villagers in Lanka usually sleep on mats on the floor. Clever fashioning of the mind through one sided part-truths devoid of contextualization is the name of sensational news reportage the world over.

148a, b. Food packets distributed to IDPs as they arrived in the zonal camps, May 2009

from Dilshy Banu



These striking images taken by a volunteer (a Muslim as it happens) working for ZOA show the IDPs assembling – in typical Lankan manner – to receive food parcels. Let Banu clarify: “once they were cleared from war zones, they were checked once again in Omanthai check point and then put into a bus and dropped at Manik Farm camps. No soon they reached Manik Farm, many vehicles [and] Army jeeps distributed cooked meal in parcels” (email, 12 August 2013). So these civilians were among the last big conglomeration which walked out of the Last Redoubt in mid-May (Figs. 128-29) and would also have been among those fed by Sewalanka at Omanthai (Fig. 140).

149. Communal kitchens run by inmates & aid workers

Pic from Dalby Banu



Setting up and running the detention centres involved an intricate division of labour between the military and civil authorities on the one hand and a conglomeration of NGO organisations on the other. While the SL Army set up some kitchens initially, for the most part the wherewithal for the kitchens and the provision of basic food supplies were delegated to different INGOs or NGOs; who also linked up with the camp inmates to set up communal kitchens where the latter participated in the preparation of food. This snap taken in June 2009 shows one of the communal kitchens in Zone 3 which was run by ZOA (who also provided the utensils) with WFP providing the rations. Inmate volunteers did the cooking. After a while many families took the step of organising individual cooking because of dietary preferences. “So, in order to help to assist the comforts of the people, ZOA distributed pittu pot and roti pan to entire Zones” (email note from Banu, 12 August 2013). Also see Banu 2012 and Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, chap. 6.

150a, b. Medical clinics in open-air and on the run: April-May, 2009

Pic by Donnie Woodyard.



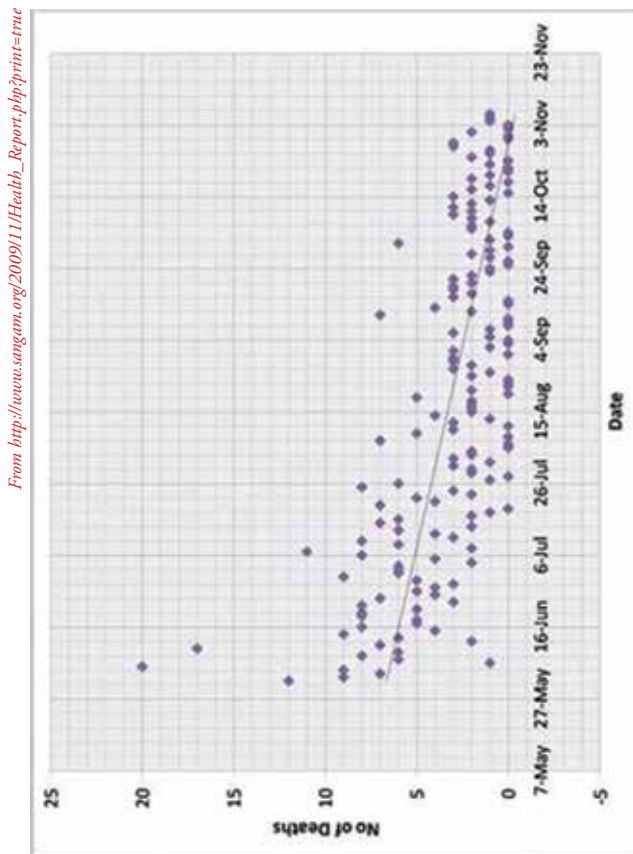
The Ministry of Health, driven by the energies of Dr. Kahandaliyanage (Secy. to Minister of Health), provided the medical services to the IDP camps. The District Medical Officers in Vavuniya District, usually Tamil, were involved in this work as well, but additional doctors were rostered in; while Dr Woodyard of Medical Teams International was ‘commandeered’ voluntarily by Basil Rajapaksa and located at a house in the vicinity. These images reveal that the doctors initially worked in the open-air and with limited facilities at the outset. About 5000 patients were treated each day during that initial period. A few in the line-up collapsed dead or dehydrated every day; but this situation soon improved (interview with Woodyard, 13 Nov. 2011). Indeed, Woodyard’s overall verdict insists that the Sri Lankan welfare effort at Mānik Farm was both “remarkable” and “unprecedented.” See Figs. 150, 151 & 157. Note that the IDPs brought a whole range of infectious diseases with them, viz., diarrhoea, dysentery, chicken pox and hepatitis; and that some security personnel as well as workers at the detention centres also contracted these illnesses. Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, chap. 6 provides fuller details.

151a, b. Medical clinics on the run: April-May, 2009



From late April the tsunami disaster team in the Ministry took charge of operations within Mānik Farm. 35 young doctors were assigned permanently for this work from late April, with others brought in on short term assignments so that about 70 medical personnel serviced the IDPs at any one moment. Serious cases of illness were transferred to the Cheddikulam, Vavuniya or Mannar hospitals. These were supplemented by a Medicine Sans Frontiers field hospital and eventually by the Indian-run field hospital which moved from Pulmoddai to Mānik Farm and was functional by mid-June. Medical personnel within the IDP populace, many LTTE trained, were of considerable assistance to the doctors in providing case histories as well as translation. See Roberts, *TPS: Essays*, pp. 161-62.

152. Daily deaths chartered as spot graph, late May 2009-November 2009



Since the IDPs were placed initially in a number of school camps and serious cases were sent to a whole range of hospitals no systematic records of deaths were collected at a central point (though all cases must have been recorded by coroners, coroners who were invariably Tamil in the localities concerned). It was not till the 17th May that Dr Hemantha Herath instructed the ASP/ Chettikulam to record and report all cases of deaths among the IDPs. This accounting embraced the second large influx of IDPs and it is noticeable that on two days in late May there were 18 and 20 deaths each day. But the general pattern was less than ten per day and the graph running from 1 June to early November shows a steep decline at a 45 degree angle.

153a, b. Schooling facilities set up at Mānik Farm

From Sunday Observer, 10 May 2009



From Ministry of Education, probably July 2009



The IDP population included teachers who had been part of the government services within *Thāmilīlam*. These personnel came forward to participate in the schooling within the camps with the aid of the Ministry of Education and many NGOs/INGOs who supplied the requisite material and supplies. Fig. 152a is a remarkable early instance, albeit as open-air school. Also see Banu 2012. Note that the university students within the population were privileged: they were released to the care of the Vice-Chancellor, Jaffna University in July 2009.

154a, b. Street drama and a dance performance as recreation at the IDP camps, July 2009



The Tamil peoples in southern India and Sri Lanka have sustained a lively tradition of *kuthu* (plays) and dance performances of various types. Indeed, *kuthu* and street theatre were incorporated into LTTE propaganda work (see illustrations in Trawick 2007). Here, however, we see these mediums of expression serving as recreational activity within the restraints of the detention centres. Among those enjoying the street theatre in Fig. 152b is Dr. Hemantha Herath, Head of the Medical Disaster Team for Mānik Farm. Also see Herath 2011.

155a. A ward at one of the medical centres within a field hospital at Mānik Farm, July 2009



At the Zones making up Mānik Farm there were 5 Referral Hospitals and 18 Primary Health Care Centres, set up more or less at the inception of each Zone. These were supplemented by the initiation of psycho-social centres devoted to the mental

recovery and recreational pleasure of children and teenagers. The Vavuniya hospital was around 50 minutes away.

155b. Children painting and drawing at a psycho-social centre, Mānik Farm, July 2009



This image too is from Zone 4 and was snapped in August 2009 at a session organized by Manori Unambuwe with aid from Dr Safras and others and funding from N-Kar Travels. “Over 200 kids attended [this first art camp] and we let them just draw as they pleased and most of the drawings were

those of houses -- their longing for a house of their own came thru strongly. Surprisingly, the number of drawings which showed trauma & memories of the war were much less than expected” (email from Unambuwe, 20 August 2013).

156a. A street scene, probably at Kadirgamar Camp, July 2009



156b. Vegetable plots, Kadirgamar Camp, July 2009



Kadirgamar Camp (Zone Zero) had commenced in late 2008 and its shelters were more local and habitable because built over time and containing what Unambuwe calls “semi-permanent structures with galvanized structures.” Likewise the Jaffna and Vanni peoples’ farming skill and green fingers are on display here in Fig. 155b. The street scene shows neatly dressed school children – a common sight throughout Lanka even in the poorest rural areas.

157a. A shop within the precincts of one camp at Mānik Farm, 2009



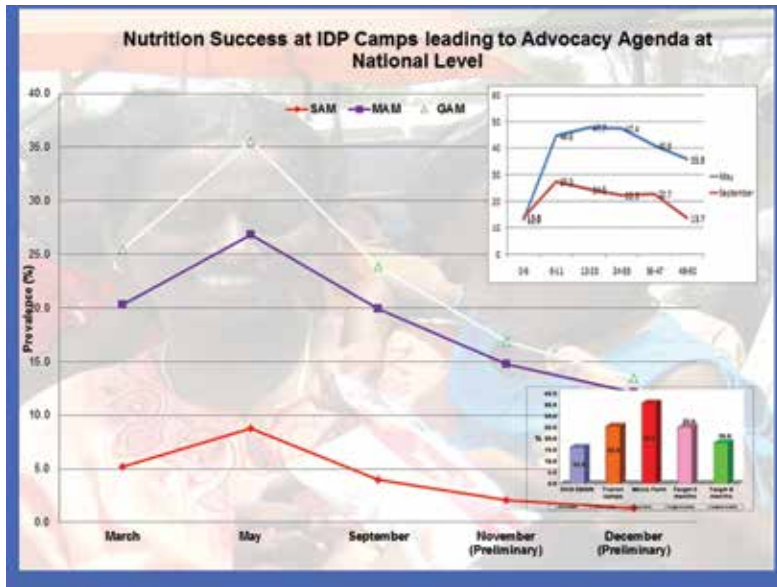
Once the initial organisational tasks of setting up shelters, toilets, kitchens (communal at outset) and other basic facilities were in place, other amenities were introduced relatively quickly in all the zonal camps. These included post offices and banks. The shops established by the government agency, Sathosa, were quickly augmented by little shops created by enterprising IDPs. Churches and *kovils* were also established, one *kovil* being financed through the endeavours of Dr. Chaminda. Alas, I have not gained access to any time-chart which outlines this process in detail.

157b. Telephone facility in use, Mānik Farm, 2009



It is known that the mobile bank offices were literally swamped with deposits and it is said that 30 million rupees was collected on the first day (info from Dr. ASA Safras, 10 Nov. 2012). During his two-day survey of the Camps on 29/30 September 2009, Professor Aluwihare observed that Zone 4, which housed the last lot of those who remained at the Last Redoubt, was “probably the richest camp. Banks have had a lot to do, but several still have their gold and cash in bags” (2012). He surmised that this was because it contained “more high up LTTE cadres’ relatives.” This conjecture can be endorsed. The last body of 80,000 or so IDPs certainly included important personages such as the Pirapāharan parents, Jegan Jegatheeswaran and Damilvāny. The latter was released (a major governmental error); while Jegatheeswaran slipped out of the camp like many Tigers. In further embellishment one can surmise that a good proportion of this last cluster was from families who had left the Jaffna Peninsula in 1995/96 to cast their lot with the LTTE. In short, they were diehard Tiger in sentiment. This also became evident in the Q and A interview with a body of foreign journalists which one Aryanāthan gave on behalf of a representative group from among this assemblage of IDPs (Reddy 2009b). If not for Reddy we would have no access to this session. The Western media personnel simply did not see the material as newsworthy or decided to obliterate the information.

158. UNICEF charts the improvement in nutritional levels at the IDP camps



This chart was kindly supplied by Reza Hosseini of UNICEF Colombo in November 2012. See Roberts, “Longitudinal UNICEF Survey of Nutrition in the IDP Camps in 2009,” 2012b.

159a. Birthday cake & sweet essences offered in homage to *talaivar* Pirapāharan on 26 November 2012



The writing on the cake indicates that this is an offering to Pirapāharan on his 58th birthday on 26 November 2012, suggesting that he is alive or, at the very least, quite vibrant in the minds of those composing this ceremonial offering. A cake is non-vegetarian so the notion that this presentation is a *prasādam* to a deified figure – a notion I was inclined to adopt – is negated (thanks to Arun Ambalavanar). The coke bottles suggest that this composition is in some Western country. It is likely that the individuals composing this propitiation and circulating the image were migrant Tamils indulging in self-aggrandisement and/or members of the LTTE network seeking to legitimise their ongoing fund-collecting activities. Also see Roberts 2012 “Veera Maranam.” This comment does not nullify the argument, with evidence presented, that the *talaivar* Pirapāharan was treated as a deity in many homes in the Tamil diaspora as well as Lanka (Figs. 38 & 39); and could still repose as one in some hearts and minds. As such he could receive *prasādam*.

159b. A Tamil rally in London, 19 May 2011



The day on which Pirapāharan died and the war was deemed to end is a day of grieving for Sri Lankan Tamil nationalists worldwide. As such, it is a day which legitimises their struggle for Eelam and reiterates their continuing commitment to the cause. 19th May, therefore, has joined the 27th November, Māvīrar Day, in serving as moments of remembrance which resuscitate commitment. The struggle for Eelam still continues.