

**Eighteen year old accused gets five years RI. (1993, November 19).  
The Island.**

## **Ranjan Wijeratne assassination case**

# **Eighteen year old accused gets five years RI**

Thillampalam Thayaparan, the accused in the assassination of the former State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne, who pleaded guilty to all the charges indicted against him, when hearing was proceeding, was sentenced to five years rigor-

ous imprisonment by the Colombo High Court Judge Mrs. Shirani Tilakawardhana yesterday.

He was sentenced to five years rigorous imprisonment on the second and third counts. The sentences would run concurrently the High Court ordered.

In this case Thillampalam Thayaparan eighteen year old student from Kili-nochchi was indicted with failure to give information to authorities of his knowledge of conspiracy by LTTE members Pottu Amman, Varathan, Justin and Prem to kill former Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne between February 1, 1991 and March 31, 1991.

He was also indicted with failure to give information of his knowledge of the conspiracy by the same persons to cause a bomb explosion at the Joint Operations Command Headquarters be-

tween May 1, 1991 and June 30, 1991.

He was further indicted with having received training in the use of weapons between December 1, 1988 and January 1, 1991.

Crime Detective Bureau Assistant Superintendent of Police Nandana Wijayarathne, Inspector of Police M. M. Nilabdeen, and Inspector of Police S. Alwis who conducted investigations gave evidence at the trial.

Earlier High Court at the conclusion of a voir dire inquiry held that the confessionary statement made by the accused was voluntary and admissible in law.

Senior State Counsel Kolitha Dharmawardane submitted that the accused faced three charges under the law. The first was that being a member of the LTTE he underwent training in the use of weapons and was preparing for violence.

The second and the third

charges were that he had failed to inform the authorities of his knowledge of the murder of former Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne and of the bomb explosion that occurred at the JOC Headquarters.

Mr. Dharmawardane stated that he would not make submissions of the sentence as he had never done all his life except when called upon to do so by Court.

Defence Counsel A. Vinayagamoorthy pleading in mitigation of the sentence submitted that the accused was lured into the episode by deceit and threat. He was not a voluntary participant. The teenage accused deserved mercy from Court.  
**High Court Judge:** Court is always merciful!

High Court Judge Shiranie Tilakawardana addressing the accused, observed: "If you had pleaded guilty at the commencement of the trial you would have got only half the sentence. If you plead guilty at the end of the trial you will get double the quantum of sentence.

"Court has taken cogni-

sance of the facts that you had told lies under oath in this Court and that you had served two years and four months on detention.

"The period of your detention will be reduced when you serve the term of your rigorous imprisonment", the Judge said.

Senior State Counsel Kolitha Dharmawardane prosecuted.

A. Vinayagamoorthy appeared for the accused.