

# Britain embarrassed by LTTE violence. (1999, September 19). *The Island.*

## Britain embarrassed by LTTE violence

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Comments by the British High Commission officials in Colombo and British Foreign Office officials in London confirm that they are embarrassed by the latest round of LTTE violence in London. But in public they are continuing to maintain that the violence is of a criminal nature and not terrorist, despite the direct LTTE connections. The sports event was organised by the LTTE using the UTO (United Tamils Organisation) as a front and the man shot was a LTTE/UTO security guard. Southall police have recovered a firearm, swords, machetes and baseball bats from the scene which resulted in the arrest of two Tamils for the shooting incident and between 10 and 20 Tamils for various public order offences related to the gang war that took place at Warren Farm School Sports Centre on 30th August. The LTTE sports festival was to have gone on till 9.00 pm to climax with a fireworks display. But this did not take place as planned. The police shut the event down before the prize giving ceremony or fireworks display and evacuated the grounds and searched it. CID Northolt are also investigating a kidnapping incident and the vandalising of a motor vehicle related to the Tamil gang violence in the Southall LTTE sports festival. New Scotland Yard also mentioned a fire-bombing incident in the early hours of 31st August in Eastham/Manor Park area. Eastham/Manor Park area is the home town of the gunman Bignathan Velaiutha who is presently held by the police and the fire bombing incident, looked like a revenge attack. I traced the address of the fire bombing incident as 35 Thorpe Road, Eastham, London E6, visited the terraced house located off the Eastham High Street and knocked on the door. On the window ledge of the bay window outside, were faint black traces left behind by the firebomb attack. The door was opened by several young Tamils who were teenagers or in their early twenties. They seemed very frightened and asked me lots of questions before finally inviting me in. One of them wore a distinct LTTE camouflage military cap and was married (?) to a very young English girl and they had a little baby. She seemed too young to be a mother and was the only female in this house, full of young Tamil boys. There were at least 10 young Tamils in the house which was in very poor decorative order and I suspected that many of them lived in it. They wore earrings, thick gold chains and all of them had mobile phones and spoke English, dressed and behaved like young black criminal gangs you see on TV. They represented a Tamil underclass, who are increasing in number in Britain, France and Canada, who have lost their way and are living off the taxpayer and getting into trouble with the law. As I sat among them and thought I could not help thinking that, if they were in Sri Lanka, they would be LTTE can-

non fodder in the front lines, courtesy of the "Thecia talavar" (national leader), Prabhakaran.

They were very tight-lipped and were playing down the whole incident trying to convince me that I must not write anything about it. The one in the LTTE cap seemed to be convinced that I had some connection to the British police. However, during the conversation one of them admitted that he was an eyewitness to the shooting at Warren Farm and described the shooting as an accident. According to him, there was a gang fight and the gunmen was thrown to the ground and when he was trying to pull out his gun, it had gone off by accident, injuring the LTTE/UTO security guard who was also involved in the fight. The Southall Police suspect that there is a connection between the fire-bombing and the shooting, but I felt that they may not be aware that there is an eye witness to the shooting at the address because the Tamil youngsters were keen to play it all down. They seem very nervous of A. C. Shanthan, the LTTE supremo in London and asked me several times what Shanthan had told me, presuming that I had spoken to Shanthan. They were like school kids, frightened that the LTTE school master Shanthan may be about to punish them for bad behaviour. Even in Canada, Switzerland, Germany and France the LTTE has been controlling gang activity and crime with an eye on getting its share of profits. A Tamil community leader in the area told me about the culture of violence and what they are trying to do in order to show these young Tamils an alternative to violence. He informed me that a majority of the Tamils in the area are of ten victims of violence on were engaged in violence. Themselves back home in Sri Lanka he also told me that several French Tamils, wanted by the French police are hiding in London till it cools down in France and that these French Tamils have brought their own brand of violence into the Tamil community in the area. The Southall Police are aware that there were large numbers of French, German and even Canadian Tamils at the sports event.

The community leader also informed me that the word in the street is that A. C. Shanthan has now been demoted after the arrival of "Iavar" Balasingham in London. Balasingham now heads political activity and A. C. Shanthan is responsible for "events" such as the sports festival and other fund raising activities. The rivalry between

Balasingham and Shanthan goes back to the years of Sathasivam Krishnakumar alias Kittu. Shanthan was Kittu's "boy" and Anton Ramachandran alias Ramasa alias Anton Rajah was Balasingham's "boy". Kittu committed suicide on board a LTTE ship full of arms, when it was surrounded by the Indian navy and went down with the ship. Since then Shanthan has been alone, working uncomfortably with Anton Rajah in London. When Lawrence Thilagar (who together with Rev Emmanuel participated in the opening ceremony of Eelam House in August 1996) was recalled to the

The gunman, Bignathan Velaiutha 27, was produced in court number 2 at 10.30 am at Ealing Magistrates Court on the 9th of September. He has been charged with the possession of a firearm, causing grievous bodily harm and for the theft of two credit cards. He was brought into court by Securicor, a private British security company. Britain has privatised parts of its prison system and now the transport of prisoners is handled by private security firms.

The case number was 40. He was represented by Robert Livingski who had been instructed by Mr. S. Sathanandan of Satha & Co. (a firm of solicitors) of High Street North, Manor Park, London E12. This address is in Velaiutha's home town and close to where the firebombing had taken place. The case was postponed till 7th of October with a bail hearing in 16th September, but because of the serious nature of the allegations, bail is being strongly opposed by the Crown.

CID Southall and Northolt in West London investigating the case have confiscated the LTTE video tape of the event. The LTTE maintains a video record of all its activity in the battlefields of Vanni and all its fund raising and other activities all over the world. At the Warren farm LTTE, sports festival, the LTTE had constructed a special tower with steel scaffolding and they were video recording the event. The police officers investigating the shooting incident have now interviewed A. C. Shanthan, the LTTE supremo in London several times and he is fully co-operating with the police. At least, this is what Shanthan expects the CID officers to think. During all these interviews it appears that A. C. Shanthan has neither mentioned the LTTE nor disclosed his position in the LTTE

**Britain's actions against international terrorism is dependent on domestic and international pressure. Internationally, pressure is continuing to build, in the form of action by the US and the UN and US style tough action planned by the Canadians and the French. Within Britain, domestic pressure is also building up in the form of the attempted deportation of a Muslim cleric, the arrest of several British Muslims in Yemen on terrorist charges, the arrest of several British Moslems in the UK in relation to the bombing of US installations in Kenya and the ever present bogey of the IRA, the "real IRA" and many others who are waiting for the right moment to express their political frustrations by slaughtering innocents.**

Vanni by the "talavar" (Prabhakaran) and replaced with Manoharan who has a drugs conviction in France. Manoharan was appointed as overall head. Manoharan, like Thilagar, operates from Paris.

The arrival of Anton Balasingham in London has rekindled old rivalries and with Anton Rajah spreading rumours discrediting Shanthan has not helped. The inability of Shanthan's own thugs/security men in the UTO/LTTE to control their own minions at the sports festival has also reflected on him badly. The official LTTE internet site "eelam.com" is also registered in A. C. Shanthan's name with the address at Eelam House, 202 Long Lane in South East London. Eelam House is the main office of the LTTE in London from which A. C. Shanthan and their "official spokesman" Anton Rajah operate. The UTO shares the same address. In order to deceive the ignorant, they use the "211 Catherine Road" address in Eastham as their "LTTE international secretariat". There is nothing at "211 Katherine Road", other than a few Tamil lodgers. The LTTE moved all their equipment and staff into Eelam House several years ago. Interestingly public records show Peniya Shanthan (A. C. Shanthan) having given the "211 Katherine Road" address as his personal address some years back.

### UN peace-keep

did not attend this meeting. The United Nations soon prepared to send international peace-keepers into East Timor. A UN peacekeeping force would have taken months to recruit and deploy but an international force could be deployed as soon as the Security Council gave the authorisation. A tentative calm prevailed in Dili, East Timor's capital, in the hours that followed a Security Council vote after 2 a.m. on 15 September approving the deployment of a force of up to 8,000 soldiers and equipment offered by more than a dozen countries. The peacekeeping force would probably include

and is hiding behind their front organisation, the UTO.

A. C. Shanthan is withholding information from the British police. He is yet to disclose to the British police that the UTO is a front organisation of the LTTE, that the "sports festival" where the shooting occurred was a fund-raising event for the LTTE, a terrorist organisation banded by the US state Department and he is yet to disclose his position in the LTTE and the relevance of "Eelam House".

If these were to be disclosed, I wonder what effect it will have with regards to recent anti-terrorist laws introduced by Britain relating to the raising of funds to fund terrorism abroad?

Britain's actions against international terrorism is dependent on domestic and international pressure. Internationally, pressure is continuing to build, in the form of action by the US and the UN and US style tough action planned by the Canadians and the French. These together with terrorist incidents this week in Russia, which has left over 300 dead is building up pressure for tough action internationally to deal with international terrorism. The US has already taken the initiative in putting forward positive steps to deal with the terrorist crisis in Russia.

Within Britain, domestic pressure is also building up in the form of the attempted deportation of a Muslim cleric, the arrest of several British Muslims in Yemen on terrorist charges, the arrest of several British Moslems in the UK in relation to the bombing of US installations in Kenya and the ever present bogey of the IRA, the "real IRA" and many others who are waiting for the right moment to express their political frustrations by slaughtering innocents.

As the next century dawns, international terrorism is emerging rapidly as the greatest threat to peace and law and order. In the US we are increasingly witnessing a new home grown form of terrorism in which innocents in schools and churches are slaughtered without mercy. It is time that British policy makers realise that with increasingly porous international borders, and the advent of sophisticated technology the distinction between international terrorism and domestic terrorism gets more and more blurred by the day.

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ity treaty with Australia. Prime minister John Howard warned Australians to expect casualties among the thousands of troops heading for East Timor.

Also on the horizon is the possibility of war crimes investigations. Speaking in Darwin, Australia, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, accused the Indonesian government of complicity in atrocities. She said: "We have to secure the people of East Timor and then we will pursue those who are named and known to be responsible."

An uncertain future There is unrest in other parts of Indonesia. Irian Jaya, whose population is largely