

THE MIND OF MR. PRABHAKARAN

"It was an election campaign in India that brought Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to Madras. But the assassination in all its meticulous detail had been planned and a suicide-bomber selected and trained by Pottu Amman who had spotted what the Americans call a 'window of opportunity'. Every political party, campaign manager and candidate must place 'security' as Item No. 1 in the party electoral agenda". (MEN AND MATTERS July 3)

If the Commander-in-Chief Prabhakaran himself has no time to spare for what he would regard as "night reading" - meaning the daily press and the journals published in Colombo - I am certain that Dr. Anton Balasingham or some other trusted aide would offer the Supreme the sort of "press summary" which some Heads of Missions and Big foreign firms in Colombo receive as part of the daily or weekly routine. Apart from the local press (Tamil, Sinhala and English) the LTTE leader would be most interested in Tamilnadu press coverage too; certainly the Tamil language publications.

SEE BOX

Reading the mind of Mr. Prabhakaran has been a compulsory exercise for any serious analyst, local or foreign, Sinhalese or Tamil, of the Sri Lankan crisis. Prabhakaran is undoubtedly concerned, perhaps even perturbed by the steady expansion of the Sri Lankan armed forces, its modernisation, its rising fire-power and the new professionalism. But he doesn't have sleepless nights on that score. India, the Indian decision makers, the Indian armed forces and the Indian covert agencies do represent a serious threat.

Logically, any Sri Lankan leader who has intimate links with the Raj or the Delhi establishment is an enemy that cannot be ignored. Mr. Ganiini Dissanayake not only had such connections but made no effort to conceal those links. He was Rajiv's pal, a personal relationship. Apart from that he persisted in defending

the Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Accord, acknowledged his own supportive, strategic role in the run-up to Rajiv's visit to sign the pact, and argue publicly (at semipras, for example) that the pact should remain the basis for any future settlement.

Apart from his position as a front-rank Sri Lankan politician a future premier or president, his office as President of the Board of Control for Cricket, gave him access to high place, and VIP's in the Commonwealth; India most of all. Cricketer, Indo-Sri Lankan politics and some members of the influential Madras family that owns the HINDU, together explain the close relationship between Ganiini and N. Ram, editor of the Madras-based Frontline, a top journalist who played a key role in pre-Accord politics and the Indo-Sri Lankan diplomacy. Mr. Ram was here for Ganiini's funeral. Whenever he is here, he stays with friends never in a hotel.

When Ganiini Dissanayake crossed the Palk Straits in September he crossed the Rubicon. He was interviewed by N. Ram's journal. He was asked about "any role for India in the peace process". This was his answer: "We need India's goodwill, India's psychological and moral support and India's experience in approaching multi-ethnic and multi-religious issues."

He was then asked: "The LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran is the Number 1 accused in

the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case. The LTTE's intelligence chief is also a major accused. What is the implication of this trial for the peace process as India can demand that Prabhakaran be handed over if he negotiates with Colombo directly? Prabhakaran has written to Chandrika Kumaratunga who has replied to him. This means the Sri Lanka government is conferring legitimacy on him.

"The question of the future of societies is not resolved in a court of law" replies Dissanayake, striking a philosophical note. On Prabhakaran him-

self he states: "However powerful Mr. Prabhakaran is, he is but an individual and when I say we will have an honourable agreement with the Tamil people, it is with the Tamil people. However abstract that statement may be, it is the reality Mr. Dissanayake concludes.

The SAARC Kathmandu Declaration and organise a commando force from the 275 Indians trained in Israel last year, to apprehend the LTTE leader. A loose cannon is what I called him right?"

Protocol matters. The media is the message. We watched it all on Rupavahini. The Sri Lanka Air Force plane makes a soft landing. Nice work. The four-member delegation

from Colombo then hop a helicopter which takes them to the Jaffna university campus. They are met by an LTTE delegation. Next according to the Daily News front page lead story, the "government team is accorded an official LTTE Guard-Of-Honour". One report the Daily News added, had said "this was akin to a salute given by a country to a visiting head-of-State".

The scene we watched next on TV was the conference room. The four member Sri Lanka government delegation matched by an LTTE quartet opposite, with the Sri Lankan "Lion Flag" and the official "Tiger" flag, between the two teams. Hand off to the LTTE foreign office. It knows the DPL drill.

The neatest touch of all was the large photograph of Prabhakaran, the Commander-in-Chief, hanging high up on the wall... Supreme Commander, and... Head of State? Smart, scene-setting that by some LTTE adviser (a former diplomat) who has a clear idea of conferencemanship, and protocol. Which prompts me to ask... Who is the Chief of Protocol of Tamil EELAM?

PROTOCOL MATTERS

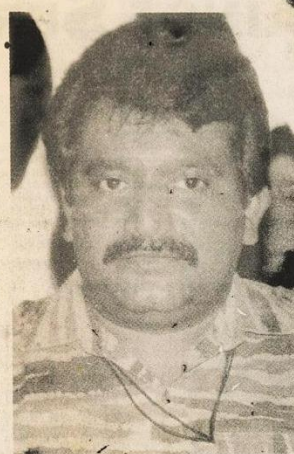
N.B. For Kautilya, another little clipping for his files on "The Mind of the Master" of pure unbridled terror. Eelam is more than a state of mind. It behaves like a State. Hey, Velu, how you doing man?



Men and Matters by Kautilya

SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY

I first met Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, MP part-time Harvard lecturer, China-specialist and Israel-



A bit senior to me

its true, but Shelton Kodikara and I were fellow-travellers. No, not ideologically. Both took the K. V. Ling from Udahamulla/Nugegoda to Maradana or Fort. But I got off first to take a bus to Reid Avenue and Royal, while Shelton's destination was the Thurstan campus. Later we teamed up though - both campus-bound, Shelton to Mendis/Labrooy and History, and Kautilya to Ludovik-Doric and Eng. Lit.

Our paths crossed again. He had moved from history to International Relations, and I had started writing and broadcasting on world affairs. Shelton was the first - and in my book remains

the last - serious international relations scholar. So we met again when Mrs. Bandaranaike decided to implement our project proposal - a Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies. (BCIS).

Off-campus and academia, we were Orientalists too. No, not the heavy Edward Said line of work but the ORIENT Club, (Patron Junius Richard), a place where most research work was centred on the Derby and all the Queen's horses.

Shelton's final venture was a Regional Centre for Strategic Studies. I sincerely hope that his colleagues will keep it going. Meanwhile, I hope the editor of this paper, will join me in launching a Shelton

KODIKARA FELLOWSHIP

GANDHI TRIAL
Early last month Mr. S. Doraiswamy, senior defence counsel in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination trial, rejected Mr. S. B. Chavan's allegation that the defence was adopting "delaying tactics". The Union Home Minister had made that charge in the course of his speech on Oct. 7 at Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting in New Delhi.

In a rejoinder published by the press in Madras, Mr. Doraiswamy dismissed the allegation as quite ridiculous "in the given circumstances". The circumstances he had in mind was the time the C.B.I. took to "file the charge sheet" having taken charge of the case soon after the murder. The CBI took almost a year though it could have filed "the charge sheet in less than 90 days".

The CBI made matters more ridiculous, claims Mr. Doraiswamy, by taking another year to file authorised Tamil translations of all the relevant documents. So, two years have passed.

Mr. Doraiswamy is defence counsel for 14 of the 26 accused "including the prime accused Nalini and her family. He also said the Central Government had "cleverly dragged on" the JAIN Commission of inquiry, appointed to "identify agencies behind the assassination", taking "enormous time" to nominate public prosecutors. The charges were filed in January 1992 but the case opened as late as

April 1993, he said. Since he had recently entered hospital for bypass surgery, he too could have had the trial postponed but he nominated two colleagues. It was clear, he argued that both the Government and the Congress Party wanted "to gain sympathy" for political reasons.

Double standards

When a bomb went off in a bus in Hebron more than 30 passengers, nearly all Israelis, died. The US, UK, Germany and France condemned this outrage and accused Hamas of wanton blood-letting. There were no prominent Israelis among the victims.

When at least 53 Sri Lankans and the Island's Leader of the Opposition - cum - Presidential candidate were killed by an LTTE suicide-bomber, our resident community of conscience-keepers were collectively seized by what the late Lalith Athulathmudali, a victim himself, called a "deafening silence". How come? Is it that the first incident offered the Big Four yet another opportunity to hammer a pet-hate, the militant Islamic (pro-Iranian) Hamas, and in the other instance, the victims were only Sinhalese Buddhists, some poor Tamils and Muslims who don't really qualify for human rights, such as the right to life. Even our own heavily-funded, well-healed Human Rights NGO's - and we know who they are, don't we? - kept mum