

Malaysian conference on Eelam conflict

THE Malaysian Ceylonese Congress jointly with the Faculty of Strategic and Security Studies of the National University of Malaysia (NUM) is to host a workshop on the "Reconciliation and Nation Building in Sri Lanka," organisers said.

The venue for the event from July 13 to 15 this year is the 5-star Hotel Equatorial in Bangi, Malaysia.

"The proposed international workshop intends to look at the background of the ethnic imbroglio in Sri Lanka and to formulate possible proposals that might bring the reconciliation process forward," Dato' Dr. D.M.Thuraiappah, President, Malaysian Ceylonese Congress told Tamil Guardian.

The Organising Committee comprises Dr. Kamarulnizam Abdullah (Co-chairman from NUM) Dato' Dr. D.M.Thuraiappah (Co-chairman from Malaysian Ceylonese Congress), Ambassador (R) Dato' Salehuddin Abdullah, Ass.Prof. Dr. Dagmar Hellman-Rajanayagam, Prof. Dato' Dr. Sothi Rachagan, Ambassador (R) Dato' K.Nadarajah and Mr. Arjunan Narayanan.

The contact person for the event is Dr. Kamarulnizam Abdullah, head of the Department of Strategic and Security Studies (UPSK) at NUM. His contact details are: Tel: 603-89293646 Fax: 603-89293332; e-mail:

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Some of the speakers include Prof. Bjorn Hettne, Dr. Partha Ghosh, Dr. P. Saravanamuttu, Prof. Dr. P.Ramasamy, Prof. Dr. Peter Schalk, Prof. Dr. Anita Shastri, Dr. Frank Florian Seifert, Prof. Dato' Dr. Sothi Rachagan and others.

The topics to be discussed include, "Conceptualisation and definitions," the historical background to the crisis and its development up to date, the perception of the problem by the two parties to the conflict, the legal, constitutional, political, economic social and cultural problems and possible case scenarios to solve the problem considering these aspects.

"A solution must be tailored to the requirements of the individual case and cannot be some general formula where one size fits all. Nevertheless expertise and

experience from other cases and peace processes like N. Ireland, Hong Kong, South Africa, Czechoslovakia and others, might serve as models and examples from which to proceed," Dr. Thuraiappah said.

The format of the workshop will be that of the keynote and background papers, followed by concurrent panel discussions on the different aspects of the problem. Malaysia is a good venue for these efforts given its experience in managing ethnic relations since independence," Dr. Thuraiappah said.

The registration fee for the event is USD 450.00 (TT to Bendahari UPSK Account No: Bumiputra Commerce Bank, CA 0150-749693). Hotel accommodation at the Equatorial is USD 50.00 per night per room incl. breakfast. Taxi from the airport (20 minute ride) is about USD 20.00 one way.



Chencholai Kalaimaalai

SCHAFFHAUSEN in Switzerland was the stage to a Chencholai cultural evening on 20 May 2001.

Chencholai is a refuge for orphaned children in the Liberation Tiger controlled region of Mallavi in the Northeast of Sri Lanka. The evening got underway with the lighting of the traditional lamp by parents of a fighter deceased in the battle for Elephant Pass last year.

Children from Schaffhausen followed with speeches about the children of Chencholai, songs and a poem.

The Chencholai songs, sung to background music from the Arts & Cultural Group band, touched the audience's hearts. The Swiss coordinator then gave the main address of the evening.

The address was followed by more cultural

pieces, including a drama and a dance performed by students of the Zurich Thirukoneswara Dance School. Sangeetha Moorthy folk song group continued the entertainment with apiece titled 'Tamils of this earth! Do not be asleep!'

A raffle was drawn near the end in aid of the Chencholai fund.

The Swiss coordinator in his address explained how both Chench-olai and another home called the Kantharuban Arivuc-hchulai were functioning under the direct guidance of the National Leader and their importance service to Tamil children in the current ground situation.

The raffle draw helped raise 7630 Swiss Francs for the Chencholai fund. The proceedings were drawn to a close with a vote of thanks.

Protests over sexual attacks

A PROTEST to raise awareness to the rapes and murders being committed by Sinhala chauvinists against Tamil women was held in the forecourt of the 'Human Rights Square' in Paris on the 19th May 2001.

"This peaceful protest is being held to make the world aware of the horrors of sexual attacks being perpetrated by the Sinhala state terrorists against 'Tamil civilians' said an organiser. A statement released in French and Tamil appealed for women's rights groups and human rights organisations to keep highlighting these excesses. The protest went on until 6 in the evening.

Canada's Tamils celebrate their successes

TAMIL residents of the capital Ottawa hosted a dinner function for Canada's peoples' representatives on 31 May to mark the Tamil New Year.

The event, held at the Crown Plaza Hotel, was well attended by Canadian barristers, university professors, university student's union heads and representatives from other ethnic backgrounds. Ottawa City's mayor Mr Bob Sarally was also present in the capacity of chief guest.

This dinner was similar to the one held in Toronto last year, in which the Canadian Finance Minister Mr Paul Martin was the chief guest. Eelam Tamils from Toronto, Montreal and Cornwall were also present in number.

The evening's proceedings were initiated with a song in praise of the Tamil language. A bharithanaiyam performance followed to welcome the guests.

A short film portraying the advances made in various fields by the Tamil community as well as some community development projects was shown. According to the film, the Canadian Eelam Tamil community today boasts 4,500 software engineers and 40 medical experts.

The university Tamil student population in the coun-

try numbers over 5,500, of whom more than 200 are post-graduates. Four 24 hr radios and two television stations serve the community. Nine newspapers are also published amongst the Tamil community. This strong knowledge base will be of great help to the Tamil liberation struggle, said the filmmakers.

Special awards were presented during the evening to the late Mr Renganathan, for his services to the political development amongst the Eelam Tamils in Ottawa, and to Jeevithan Muthulingam, for his many educational achievements. Mrs Esther Renganathan (right in glasses) received the award to Mr Renganathan, who had worked tirelessly towards the Tamil cause all his life, from the chief guest the Mayor of Ottawa. The late Mr Renganathan's daughter Yamini Thuraiappah gave an address of thanks.

Mr Mark Leech, representative of the Carleton University Students Union, and Mr Rajarajan, president of the Carleton University Tamil Students Union, presented the award to Jeevithan Muthulingam jointly. This award is one aimed at encouraging educational excellence amongst the Eelam Tamils in Canada.

The formal dinner followed the award ceremony. A vote of thanks was delivered by one of the evening's



coordinators, Mr Ravi Ponnambalam.

The dinner function helped highlight to the Canadian people the trou-

bles in the Tamil homelands and the Diasporas' efforts to aid the development of their motherland.

It also showed that

Canada's Eelam Tamils have fully integrated them with the workings of their adopted country whilst still retaining their unique identity as Eelam Tamils.

On track for gold

Accidents, sometime, take you a long way. A really long way. Like it propelled S.Krishnamurthi forward, nearly two decades ago, writes Ramya Kannan for The Hindu newspaper.

IN 1984, Krishnamurthi had the accident that changed his life. He was injured when the lorry for which he was cleaner overturned and his left arm had to be amputated. Some might say, it was a misfortune, but ask him, he would tell you that it was really a blessing in disguise. Things were going to get better after that. However, he did not know it then.

He moved to Chennai to receive treatment, rehabilitation and an artificial limb at the Government Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine, K.K.Nagar. That is the beginning of phase two of his life. At K.K.Nagar, under the guidance of Dr. Shanmugam and Dr. Ravindranath, who encouraged him to take up sports. Taking his training at YMCA, Nandanam, Krishnamurthi went on to participate in local level events for disabled sportspersons, entering national level competition in 1989. Swimming, long jump, shot put, javelin throws, sprints are some of the areas he trained himself in and excelled.

It was much later, in



Krishnamurthi: gold

1998 that he entered the international arena of competition. His first trip outside the country was also his first international event. In 1998, he was selected to represent India at the International Sports Competition for the Disabled at New Zealand.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Krishnamurthi came back with a haul of three gold and three silver medals having participated in six different events. The next year, he made it to the special sports event at Sydney, Australia. This time the medal tally came up to one gold, one silver and two bronzes. More recently, Krishna-murthi was selected to participate in the Sydney Paralympics, but could not go, due to lack of funding. But that did not put him off and he relentlessly trained until he cleared the Indian contingent to Assen, Netherlands, for the Dutch Open Championships. If he makes it to Assen, he will participate in shot put, discus and javelin throws, long jump, 100 m and 200 m relays.

Krishnamurthi is hoping to make it to the Netherlands along with friend and physiotherapist Dr. Ananda Jyothi, if he manages to find the sponsorship to get there, that is. "I hope I am able to make it this time. Of course, this is not the end, but a stepping-stone to the ultimate destination of the Paralympics. There, I hope to make it to the victory stand and bring home gold", he says.



SOUTHERN song and dance: The night of May 27 was a star-studded musical evening indeed when the inaugural of the Ragam Cultural Acade-my and the 12th birthday of '7 Swarangal' drew film star Ramya Krishnan (above) to light the 'Kuthuvilaku.' The Hindu newspaper reported that the light music concert saw Chithra who sang 'Ededo Ennam Valarthen' from Pun-nagai Mannan, followed by Mano who sang a 'Kalakkal' note with 'Kalakalakkuthu Kalakalakkuthu Kolususatham Kalakalakkuthu'. Unni Menon delivered a popular tune from the film Badri. Swarnalatha was another star singer who sang 'Malaiyil Yaro Manathodu Pesa' and Poongatrie Unswasathai. Her rendition of 'Emulle Ennulle' brought out thundering applause from the audience for the Tabla, Drums and the background music. Mano's 'Yappa Yappa Aiyappa' was also received with enthusiastic response from listeners.

The British Tamil Association
hosts
Pongu Thamil
Venue: Wembley Arena
Date: Sunday 8 July 2001
Time: 17:00 to 21:00
For further details contact:
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Pongu Thamil to be held in German cities
16 June 2001
17:00
Herne
17 June 2001
16:00
Stuttgart
Anitha Kuppasamy & Pushparanjan Kuppasamy

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