Memorial Tribute to
Mamanithar Dharmaratnam Sivaram (Taraki)

United States Of America
Journalist and a leading Tamil intellectual Mr. Dharmaratnam Puvirajakeerthi Sivaram who was also known as Taraki was abducted and murdered in Sri Lanka on Thursday, April 28, 2005 in Colombo. He was abducted in front of Bampalapitiya police station and his body has been recovered behind the Sri Lankan parliament in the High Security Zone.

Mr. Sivaram was well respected around the world for his political and military analysis relating to Sri Lanka. Behind this dark and spectacled man was a wealth of information, insights and intellectual talents, the power of which was radiating a warmth and humanness which none of us could resist.

Tamil Americans condemn this cowardly act to silence a journalist who was purely carrying out his profession. We urge international organizations to pressure Sri Lankan government authorities to identify and bring to justice persons responsible for this murder.

Tamil Americans express their condolences to the members of Mr. Sivaram's family.
English Translation of Award Citation

Sivaram has been bestowed with the Most Eminent Person (Mamanithar) award by the Liberation Tigers' leadership.

"The Tamil people have lost today a highly principled man who deeply loved them and the Tamil Nation. A voice that echoed the freedom of the Tamil people and their homeland, Tamil Eelam had been silenced today. An eminent Tamil journalist had fallen victim to the enemy's act of cowardice.

Humble and honest, Mr. Dharmaratnam Sivaram is a unique person. He is knowledgeable and is an expert in the field of journalism. As an internationally renowned journalist, Sivaram does not need any introduction.

Through his writings, he brought out the Tamil National question in the international arena with clarity and cohesion. Diligently and cleverly, he exposed to the international and diplomatic community, the false propaganda undertaken by the Sinhala regime. Positioning him in the Sinhala stronghold, Sivaram forthrightly told the outer world the injustices and the atrocities perpetrated by the Sinhala ruling elite on the Tamil Nation. Although facing danger and threats, Sivaram fought against injustice fearlessly with courage. Above all, he relentlessly worked to keep the Tamil people politically vigilant. The yeoman service rendered by him is eternally praiseworthy.

Respecting his love of the Nation and his love for freedom, I am proud to confer posthumously on Mr. Dharmaratnam Sivaram, the noble National Award of “Great Man”. Death never destroys great men who have lived for lofty ideals. They have an everlasting place in the history of our Nation.

V. Pirapaharan,
Leader, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

30/04/2005.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was a separatist movement that sought political independence for the Tamil people in the northern and eastern regions of Sri Lanka. The group was known for its military operations, particularly during the Sri Lankan Civil War. The LTTE was involved in multiple conflicts and negotiations, aiming to achieve a Tamil Eelam state.

The LTTE was considered a terrorist organization by several countries, including the United States and the European Union. The group was designated as a terrorist by the United States Department of the Treasury and the European Union. Despite various attempts at peace talks, the conflict continued, and the LTTE's military activities resulted in numerous civilian casualties.

In 2009, following a military offensive by the Sri Lankan government, the LTTE's leadership was reportedly killed, leading to the effective end of the group's operations. The LTTE's legacy continues to be a subject of debate, with some arguing for reconciliation and others for accountability for human rights abuses.
World Tamil Coordinating Committee

A voice of truth has been brutally silenced. A profound geopolitical strategic thinker has been cruelly eliminated. The World Tamil Coordinating Committee is angry and desolate over the tragic sudden end to the great life of Mr. Dharmaratnam Sivaram, popularly known as “Taraki.”

As the Tamil National Leader Mr. Velupillai Pirabaharan stated, while conferring the title of “great man” to Mr. Sivaram posthumously, “Through his writings, he brought out the Tamil national question in the international arena with clarity and cohesion. Diligently and cleverly, he exposed to the international and diplomatic community the false propaganda undertaken by the Sinhala regime.”

Mr. Sivaram shone light in his writing on the structural, political and racial impediments inherent in the “Sri Lankan state” which inhibit the Tamil people from exercising their right to self-determination and sharing power in the island of Sri Lanka. Due to his deep understanding of geopolitical reality, he demonstrated in his writing how the national conflict in the island has been transformed into a subject of international politics and international relations. Comparing peace processes around the world, he cautioned the Tamil leadership to be vigilant of potential peace traps. Due to his proximity to the ground situation, his incredible access to the various stakeholders in the Tamil national conflict, his profound knowledge of the historic, geographic and strategic aspects of the Tamils’ campaign for self-determination and his thoughtful analyses, his writings were read and respected by policymakers concerned with South Asia around the world.

Mr. Sivaram, who was subject to several previous attempts on his life and to constant intimidation by the Sri Lankan armed forces, was aware of the dangers to his life. However, because of his dedication to seeking the truth and serving the cause, he refused to be pushed out of the island. His moral commitment and magnificent courage defies description.

The abduction of Mr. Sivaram in front of a police station in the capital of “Sri Lanka” and the dumping of his body in the “high security zone” near the parliament are telling testimonies of the state of the rule of law, democracy, and the peace process in the “Sri Lankan state.” The brutal killing of Mr. Sivaram is not an isolated incident. This is the most recent in a pattern and practice of eliminating journalists, intellectuals, and unarmed political leaders on the island. Some segments of the media and some high profile human rights organizations attempt to trivialize the killing of Mr. Sivaram by equating it with the killings of the paramilitary personnel and military intelligence agents. This is not only offensive but also a betrayal of the very human rights that they claim to protect. This trivialization also smokescreens the real situation in the island of Sri Lanka.

To put it at its most charitable, Mr. Sivaram’s death demonstrates the Government of Sri Lanka’s unwillingness and inability to protect the basic right to life of independent thinkers even during this period of ceasefire in the capital — “Sri Lanka” is now a failed state. The fact that the body of Mr. Sivaram was found in the “high security zone” to which only the Sri Lankan armed forces or persons authorized by Sri Lankan armed forces have access, points the finger in the direction of those very armed forces. The circumstances surrounding Mr. Sivaram’s death illustrate once again that “Sri Lanka” is rapidly becoming a “rough state.”

Even though Mr. Sivaram is physically no longer with us, he has left his soul: the Tamils’ quest for the realization of their right to self-determination. His writings are an inspiration for us. The best way to honor his memory is to realize his dream. Let us dedicate ourselves to his noble cause.
We, representing the Tamil Community in the US, condemn in the strongest possible terms the abduction and brutal murder of the respected journalist Dharmaratnam Sivaram in Colombo, Sri Lanka on Thursday.

We hold the Government of Sri Lanka accountable for Sivaram’s death based on the circumstances of his abduction, and a long pattern of extra-judicial, anti-democratic, and otherwise despicable actions. We urge the International Community to take measures to prevent the Government from further victimizing its unfortunate citizens.

Mr. Sivaram was the editor and principal force behind TamilNet.com, an online newspaper, and also a regular contributor to the Daily Mirror newspaper under the pseudonym “Taraki.” He also wrote for the Tamil newspaper Virakesari. He was considered an expert on the political and military aspects of the Sri Lankan civil conflict. He lectured on the subject to audiences in Sri Lanka and the West, including the US State Department and international "Think Tanks." On a personal level Mr. Sivaram had a good rapport with a wide cross-section of Sri Lankan civil society.

Sadly, the murder of Mr. Sivaram is not an aberration; it is consistent with a long history of state-sponsored murders of journalists and political opponents, the victimization and ethnic cleansing of minority ethnic Tamils and a general contempt for freedom, democracy and the rule of law which has become the norm for Sri-Lanka.

The exact identity of the perpetrators of this act are not known, yet we hold the Government of Sri Lanka accountable for this brutal murder based on the circumstances; he was abducted on a busy public street in the Capital next to a police station; his body was discovered in a high security area, only 500 meters from the country’s parliament; there have been several recent unsolved murders of ethnic Tamil journalists and political leaders; the government continues to sponsor and protect armed anti-Tamil paramilitary groups in violation of the cease-fire agreement and democratic norms; and continued military harassment of Tamil civilians.

We, the united Tamil community in the US, call upon the International Community to take all appropriate measures to protect the citizens of Sri Lanka and to hold its government accountable for its unlawful and anti-democratic actions.

Ilankai Tamil Sangam, New York
Federation of Tamil Associations of North America (FeTNA)
World Tamil Coordinating Committee – USA, New York
World Tamil Women Organization, Maryland
Midwest Tamil Sangam, Illinois
Sri Lanka Tamil Association of Ohio
Ilankai Tamil Sangam - Vancouver-Portland
North Carolinians For Peace, North Carolina
Ilankai Tamil Sangam – Houston
Tamil Welfare and Human Rights Committee, Washington D.C.
Ilankai Tamil Sangam – Washington
Ilankai Tamil Sangam – Dallas
NESOHR is Horrified and Appalled by the Murder of Well-known Journalist Sivaram

PRESS RELEASE

NESOHR is Horrified and Appalled by the Murder of Well-Known Journalist Sivaram

The abduction and murder of well known journalist Dhramaratnam Sivaram in the capital city Colombo on Thursday April 29th 2005 is yet another blow to the non-existing press freedom in Sri Lanka and yet another nail in the coffin of the dying democracy in Sri Lanka. It is a telling symbolism that Sivaram was abducted in front of a police station in Colombo and his body was found only 500 meters behind the parliamentary complex.

Sivaram joins the long list of outstanding journalists who are said to have been murdered by forces close to the ruling class of the Sri Lankan polity. NESOHR wants to point out that none of the cases of murders of journalists in Sri Lanka for the past two decades have been solved. This is an indictment of the government and the police force.

Sivaram’s analysis of the political situation in Sri Lanka is keenly read by all, including international readers who follow the Sri Lankan situation with interest. His absence will leave a vacuum for reports of this type.

In the past Sivaram has received many threats for his insightful analysis. Twice last year scores of Sri Lankan police raided his home on the pretext of searching for weapons. It is believed that these raids were intended as a warning to him to stop his writing. At that time Reporters without Borders (RSF), in their statement, said that they are worried about Sivaram’s safety. In 2001, Sivaram and another fellow journalist were attacked with clubs in Batticaloa and Sivaram was hospitalized. That attack was also blamed on persons connected with the security forces.

The murder of BBC journalist Mylvaganam Nimalrajan in 2000 in Jaffna and the well-known Tamil journalist G Nadesan in Batticaloa in 2004 have also been blamed on forces close to the government.

NESOHR joins the human rights community and those who value press freedom in condemning the abduction and murder of Sivaram.

Fr M X Karunaratnam, Chairperson
A Statement by the Asian Human Rights Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 3, 2005
AS-47-2005

Murder of Sri Lankan journalist exposes government inability to address assassinations aimed at causing instability

This April 28, 46-year-old Sivaram Dharmeratnam became the latest victim of abduction and murder in Sri Lanka. Sivaram, a highly-respected journalist for the Daily Mirror newspaper--where he was known by his pen name, Taraki--was abducted while coming out of a restaurant in front of the busy Bambalapitiya Police station. The perpetrators allegedly parked their vehicle at the station's boundary wall. They dumped his gagged and shot body within sight of the parliament complex, in the heart of the capital. His killing prompted the promise of a prompt and thorough inquiry by the government and many expressions of serious concern by journalists and others.

This is the latest in a series of killings that the Sri Lankan government has proven unable to address due to its historical ambivalence to such murders. Assassination became an express part of government policy in the early 1980s. The period of terror that followed ended only with the political defeat of the incumbent government. The explicit use of the police and armed forces as political killers ended, yet there were no attempts to address the effects of this time. In fact, the condoning of limited assassinations has continued from time to time. Coupled with the inability of the state to improve the law and order situation, this has contributed to an environment in which anyone can get away with murder.

Today, the security of no Sri Lankan citizen is reasonably guaranteed. As the victim of the latest attack was also sympathetic to the militant Tamil viewpoint, and on the editorial board of a prominent website espousing this position, his assassination will be attributed to retaliation against the backdrop of persistent violence in the north and east. However, assassination is carried out with ease against any target in the country, and the government has been incapable of doing anything about it. This was evidenced in November 2004 with the killing of a High Court judge, allegedly on the orders of a man he was trying in court. There was also the killing of a torture victim who was due to give evidence of his torture in court against a group of police officers who were allegedly behind the murder. Although the shock generated by these two events led to speedy investigations and arrests of suspects, nothing has been done since to address the deteriorating rule of law in Sri Lanka. As a result, the first months of 2005 have witnessed many killings of alleged criminals around the country, many allegedly while fleeing custody. These killings also speak to the tacit approval of murder as a means to deal with somehow undesirable persons in Sri Lanka. Even the U.N. Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions has in the last year expressed a wish to visit in order to investigate and report on the situation.

While it is convenient to attribute killings to the persistent bloodshed in the north and east of Sri Lanka, this will in no way help to pull the country back from its slide towards anarchy. Even the emissaries from Norway and others working on the peace process have given too little regard to the effect that several decades of violence have had on all of Sri Lanka. However, no lasting solution to the conflict in the north and east will be found without due consideration to the exceptional collapse of the rule of law across the country as a whole.

With local and international concern being expressed over Sivaram Dharmeratnam's death, it is time for sober and sane reflection on the collapsed rule of law in Sri Lanka. The Asian Human Rights Commission again warns that until this central issue receives the attention it deserves, talk about bringing stability to the country will mean little, and the assassinations will continue.
Dear Friends.

While Memorial Day is traditionally spent honoring soldiers who died in the defense of our country, it is fitting that we honor today a soldier of truth, Mr. Dharmeratnam Sivaran, known as “Taraki.” As we all know, Taraki was a journalist who spearheaded Tamilnet, writing with a keen sense of passion for the Tamil people and covering the long war to defend Tamil rights. Taraki was brutally murdered to silence his compelling voice -- a voice that spoke clearly of injustice and clearly of a future in which all peoples of Sri Lanka could thrive together.

To my Sinhala friends I ask you to reflect sincerely on what you gain by supporting policies and persons that seek to annihilate the Tamil people, their culture, their language and voices such as that of Taraki. Many of you work hard, out of love, to save threatened animals, fish and plants from extinction, yet you support policies based on sheer hate towards the humans who share with you the island of Ceylon. If you are unable to embrace the Tamil people as equals and to create a Sri Lanka that truly reflects, in all aspects, the full realization of human rights for both Sinhala and Tamil, then you must let the Tamil people separate themselves from you and go their own way apart. Domination of one people over another has never served anyone. You have lost so many of your children, sent to war to kill your brother and sister Tamils. Why would you do this, when all you receive is more misery. Imagine for a minute what your government could have provided for all of the people of Sri Lanka if it had not spend most of its money on its war machine against the Tamil people.

To the American public I ask that you educate yourselves about the situation in Sri Lanka, especially about the United States’ nefarious interests that have played a role in this long tragedy, of which the assassination of Taraki is an example. Your government has spent your tax dollars, ever expanding its military and seeking now military bases in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. Do you want your sons and daughters to die so that the Sinhala government can continue to oppress the Tamil people? Do you want thousands of Tamils to die so that you can have a military base in Tamil areas?

To my Tamil friends, I can only offer humble condolences knowing that one of your most powerful voices, Taraki, is silenced. So many of you have lost loved ones in your long struggle for peace with justice. It may be that the Sinhala people are not able to accept that they fully must share power and politics with you. If this is so, then, of course, you must go your separate way. No people are expected to give up their rights to another people. As an American, whose country was compelled to fight for its freedom, I can say that the cost is great. But the realization of freedom is worth whatever price. My country has long espoused this, so in this sense your will epitomize the best of America.

To all, I hope that this Memorial Day will be known as the Day when the war in Sri Lanka truly ended, when the American people refused to let their government carry out policies that serve to oppress others, and when there were no more assassinations of journalists whose only aim was to bring us all the truth. We can name this day “Taraki’s Day.” Please join me in wishing his family our sincere condolences as well as our promise that we will care for them as Taraki cared for us all.
When one is immersed in grief, one finds it hard to be articulate. And yet the force of one’s pain demands action, and sometimes the strongest acts are only words – not empty words of comfort and appeasement, but words of truth, forged in the hottest fire. It hurts to let such words take form in one’s heart and it hurts still more to force them out into the world. But sometimes one has no choice. Those burning words grow, and demand release.

So it has been with me these last few weeks, and so it must have been with Sivaram for years and years: his anger and pain at what had become of his country had grown so great that he had no choice but to force the words out, the burning shining, hard and sharp words of terrible truth, day after day, month after month, even though toward the end he knew that the very act of speaking the truth would almost certainly lead to his death.

To me, Sivaram was the best of Sri Lanka, and more than the best. Now he has been killed by the ghouls that rule that country, and all of us who valued him, through our weakness, our business with other things, made space for the ghouls to do their work. Now we are weeping and they are laughing.

Very few of those born human live up to the privilege bestowed upon them by the mere fact of being born human. Sivaram was one of those very few.

He will not go to Heaven as he did not believe in such things, and anyway he would be bored in Heaven. Somehow, perhaps, he may be reborn on the fraught island he called home, so that he can keep on fighting for the freedom and well-being of the place and the people he loved. But more likely, he is gone forever.

The LTTE did not protect Sivaram. Those ghouls who say that he was an “LTTE terrorist” wallow in their blindness. Sivaram was not a terrorist. The LTTE are not terrorists and Sivaram did not belong to the LTTE. He could not be a war-maker because he trusted everybody. He talked with everybody. He wore no armor and neither carried nor kept any weapons. And the head of the LTTE was right to confer upon Sivaram, posthumously, the title of Maamanithar. I only wish they had protected him better during his life. Because, despite what the ghouls may say, the LTTE in no way benefits from the death of Sivaram. He was their best international advocate. Alas that he could only be their most credible advocate by not being dependent on them for protection or anything else. The people of other countries believed what he said for two reasons: first because he was clearly not protected by, nor a “mouthpiece” for, the LTTE; and second, because he spoke with knowledge and intelligence. He spoke the truth. Anybody could see that except the ghouls. And now he is gone. Nobody can possibly replace him.

To say that Sivaram was a Maamanithar, “a Great Man”, or more precisely translating from Tamil, a “great human being (not specifying for gender)” – what does that mean?

Everybody knows that Sivaram was brilliant, and if they did not know it before, they know now that he was tremendously brave. He was great for these reasons. But there are additional reasons as well.

Some men are “great” at the cost of others. Their families may pay the price of their greatness in the public eye, or their employees, or their servants, or their private armies. But Sivaram had no employees, servants, or armies. He had only his wife and children and his friends, some of the
latter true, and others perhaps not so true. Sivaram tried his best to protect his family from the political horrors and turmoil surrounding him. He enabled his children to grow with freedom of mind and spirit. He did not try to tell them what to think, how to dress, how to behave. He gave them the best education he possibly could. He should have sent them abroad for their own protection. They would not have such a separation. Sivaram had to earn for them, for their meals, for their schooling. They lived in a humble house. They traveled back and forth between Batticaloa and Colombo by bus. Sivaram could only go abroad if others paid for his airplane ticket. He was able to take his daughters with him overseas, once, and show them the capital cities of Europe. His beautiful and courageous wife and his irrepressible young son are bodily frail, and long travel for them would be dangerous. If they were rich, they could fly first class. They could have medical insurance. But neither Sivaram nor any of his family or close friends are rich. He did not, could not sell out. Opportunities existed for him to sell his mind, make himself a propagandist for some wealthy interests, but it was not in him to do such a thing. Those who call him a “propagandist” are clueless at best.

Sivaram was funny and self-deprecating but he also challenged everybody. He did not let anyone be complacent with what they were or what they had already done. He laughed at us anthropologists with our “native informants,” which he would never let himself be one of. He even challenged Stanley Tambiah when he met him, saying of Tambiah’s celebrated book Buddhism Betrayed, “Professor, this is the worst book you’ve ever written.” Tambiah is also a great man, and he took Sivaram’s criticism gently.

Sivaram came to the view that Sinhala chauvinists can never be made to change their minds. He reached this conclusion after many years of trying, and still to the end he was trying. Intelligent people listen to criticism, evaluate it, take it on board if it makes sense, and act to make themselves stronger and better thereby. Sivaram made many people stronger and better through his pointed, right-on-the-mark criticisms. He made me stronger and better. He made the leadership of the LTTE stronger and better. He could even have made the JVP, and the Sinhala Buddhist clergy stronger and better, if they had really listened to him. But those of them who have ears to hear and eyes to read are ghouls, and their minds are different from ours. Sivaram advised us to learn to comprehend the Sinhala chauvinist mind if we are ever to make any headway in reasoning with them. Sorry but I do not have the stomach for this. Anyway, if Sivaram cannot do it, who can? And is there even a mind at all in any of those ghouls - a mind that human beings can comprehend? Is there a heart?
Let Us Resolve To Carry On Sivaram’s Unfinished Task!
By: V. Thangavelu, President TCWA
Source: TamilCanadian

On the day my friend and colleague Dharmaratnam Sivaram (Taraki) was murdered I was blissfully ignorant of the tragedy unfolding in Colombo city till very late in the evening. On that fateful day, I was attending the International Conference hosted by Caldwell Educational Conference Organizers Inc, Toronto, Vasantham and Carleton Thamil Graduates Union, Ottawa and held at Grand Hotel, Toronto. Tsunami Disaster in Sri Lanka: Opportunities and Obstacles for Rehabilitation and Resettlement was the theme of the conference. There were panel discussions in which prominent scholars and experts spoke on a diverse subjects related to tsunami. The morning session was chaired by Prof. Joseph Chandrakanthan of the U of T.

On reaching home, I noticed my answering machine blinking. So even before changing cloths I started retrieving the messages. Among several messages, there was a short message left by the editor of Muzhakkam weekly newspaper. It said that there are unconfirmed reports that Sivaram (Taraki) has been abducted by unidentified gunmen at Bambalapitiya at around 10.45 p.m. the same day.

Thereafter, I received several calls and then went and checked the TamilNet. It carried short news that confirmed the abduction story.

A little later other wire-news started carrying the bad news. Many bizarre scenes raced through my mind. I was trying to figure out the consequences. I resigned myself to the inevitable bad news sooner or later. It is a well known fact that abductors normally don’t release their victims for fear of betraying their identities. Past midnight news agencies reported the founding of Sivaram’s body with gun shot injuries behind the Sri Lankan parliamentary complex. The loss of Sivaram (Taraki) is irreparable. He wielded his mighty pen to seek justice for his people. He was not a mercenary writer like some others. There is no one to replace him or take his place. He was the only Thamil journalist who wrote regularly both in English and Thamil for a very wide international audience. His articles and interviews were published and re-published in several newspapers and web-sites abroad. His superb in-depth analysis on defence and politics earned him respect not only locally but also from foreign diplomats, bureaucrats, journalists and educationists. He was invited by the US State Department for briefings. He was also invited by the Indian Foreign Ministry for similar briefings.

Sivaram took to journalism after falling out with PLOTE chief Uma Maheswaran. He was then the General Secretary of Democratic Peoples Liberation Front (DPLF), the political wing of PLOTE. In the early days he was critical of LTTE’s policies and tactics.

When in 1991, LTTE mounted a frontal attack and laid siege to Elephant Pass military base, the then National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali and army top brasses were at wits end not knowing how to rescue the forces entrapped inside. The army broke the siege finally by landing its forces at Vettilaikerni and marching towards Elephant Pass. It took a whole month to do so and the army suffering heavy casualties. It was claimed that the idea for the naval landing at Vettilaikerni came from reading Taraki’s articles.

Over time Taraki dropped his anti-LTTE stance when he realized that Sri Lankan governments of whatever hues are incapable of offering any reasonable solution to end the festering ethnic conflict. His reading of the socio-political history of Ceylon taught him a few lessons. He concluded that Sinhala polity will never agree to share political power with the Thamil people.
Sivaram figured out two important historical factors. Firstly, he found the Sinhalese ethnic identity is all-inclusive ethno-religious identity, that is Sinhalese Buddhists. It is impossible to think of Sinhalese ethnic identity sans Buddhism. Secondly the myth, artificial but deliberate, linking Vijaya’s landing with the passing of Buddha into Nibbana (death and enlightenment). Buddha just before his death was supposed to have summoned Sakka (Indra) and instructed him “Vijaya, son of Sinhabahu, is coming to Lanka ....... together with 700 followers. In Lanka, O Lord of Gods, will my religion be established, therefore, carefully protect him with his followers and Lanka.” This myth has been systematically and continuously exploited by Sinhalese politicians and Buddhist monks to promote the chauvinistic theory that Sinhalese Buddhists are a chosen people entrusted with the task of safeguarding Buddhism in the whole island. In essence it meant the island belonged to Sinhalese Buddhists only.

Secondly the interpretation of war between Elara and Duttugemunu as one between Thamils and Sinhalese Buddhists. As an extension the victorious Duttgemunu a great Sinhalese Buddhist national hero. This fiction is portrayed to paint the Thamils as historical enemies, non-believers, aliens and usurpers by the Sinhalese. Sivaram called this the Mahavamsa mind-set! Sivaram in his writings used to quote passages from such well known Buddhist chronicles like the Deepavamsa, Mahavamsa, Chulavamsa and Rajawalia, in that order, to reinforce his argument. He even quoted the Kandyan Convention to prove Sinhalese historical animosity towards Thamils. The Kandyan Convention signed between the British and the Kandyan chiefs consisted of 12 clauses of which the following four are significant and give an insight in to the Sinhala psyche.

1. Sri Wickreme Rajasinha, the Malabari king to forfeit all claims to the throne of Kandy.
2. The king is declared fallen and deposed and the hereditary claim of his dynasty abolished and extinguished.
3. All his male relatives are banished from the island.
4. The religion of the Buddha is declared inviolable and its rights to be maintained and protected.

Sivaram gradually came to admire the superior fighting’s skills, military strategy and tactics in fighting the Sinhalese armed forces. Especially LTTE leader’s farsighted leadership by example. Sivaram, once an armed militant himself, was convinced that LTTE possessed the necessary military prowess to fight the occupying Sinhalese army and finally expelling it from Thamil homeland.

I met Sivaram for the first time in 1999 in Ottawa. He was one of many prominent scholars who spoke at the International Conference On Tamil Nationhood & Search for Peace in Sri Lanka. The Conference was hosted by the Academic Society of Tamil Students, Carleton University, Canada from 21-22 May, 1999. Sivaram presented a paper titled Media Bias and Censorship in Conflict Reporting in Sri Lanka. Among others who attended the conference were Ms Karen Parker, V. Rudra Kumaran, Dr.wickramabahu Karunaratne, Prof. C. Manogaran, Margaret Trawick just to name a few.

Incidentally, I have both the English and the Thamil versions of the paper he presented.

After 1999, Sivaram visited Canada a few times. His close relatives from his wife’s side live in Canada. Whenever he came he made it a point to see me, but scrupulously avoided public appearances.

Sivaram was planning to spend at least 2 weeks in Canada last December, 2004. He was invited as a guest speaker for a seminar in New Jersey organized by the World Thamil Organization Inc. So he planned to come to Canada before going to US. However, his plan came to naught when the Canadian High Commission in Colombo refused him a visa without even the courtesy of an interview. He was very disappointed since he had no difficulty
visiting Canada before. As for US he already had multiple entry visas. I met him in New Jersey on December 11 and spoke to him before and after the seminar. When asked to pose for photographs, he remarked whether they are meant for use after his death! None of us took his remarks seriously and no one that day had any premonition that death was lurking in the dark. This despite the fact he remained a target of the Sri Lankan army intelligence and pro-government para-military groups. Extreme Sinhalese elements, notably the JVP and Hela Urumaya, published his photos and branded him as a LTTE ‘terrorist.’

In 2001 Sivaram had a close shave with death. He was brutally attacked by a group of persons armed with clubs and batons inside Thinakathir newspaper office in Batticaloa town. Apparently this group had close connections with the security forces. Sivaram suffered extensive head injuries and was hospitalized. He required 5 stitches.

Attack and intimidation of Thamil media persons by security forces have become a routine affair for a considerable period of time. Freedom of the press and the independence of journalists in Sri Lanka is a huge joke. More so for Thamil journalists.

When ever his personal safety was broached Sivaram brushed it aside saying if anyone is determined to kill him nothing could stop it. He also brushed aside the suggestion that he stays abroad for some time till the security situation in Sri Lanka improved.

While he was in US, some of Sivaram’s close friends thought he should be provided with some monetary help as a show of affection rather than to ease his stay. But he did not like the idea. Typical of the man he told me over the phone in colloquial Thamil “Enakku kAsu thEvai Illai. Nan Mandayai POddAl enathu peNsathy pillaikku uthavi seyunKo!” (I don’t need money! If I die help my wife and children!)

After returning to Sri Lanka, Sivaram was in constant touch with me by phone and email. The last message he sent me was the tidings that Vanni has decided to create a separate department to promote rationalism and science on an institutional basis. Also publication of books on science and rationalism to educate the people. He told me he has read most of my articles I wrote in Muzhakkam and re-published in Thamil Natham web site. Especially the series that debunked belief in Astrology. He thought by writing on social and religious issues, I was doing a great service in weaning people from superstitious beliefs that have become the curse of the Thamil society.

I feel less sad and angrier that the killers stilled his voice so brazenly and in the most brutal fashion. The question before us is how long we have to put up with the loss of such versatile journalists like Nimalarajan, Nadesan and now Sivaram? How many more lives have to be sacrificed so that the rest could live in peace and dignity? 
**Eleven days have gone since the gruesome murder of Sivaram, yet the Police say there has been no break-through in apprehending the murderers. Even the vehicle used by the assassins has not been traced. Is this because the GOSL has set those behind Sivaram’s killing to catch the killers?**

Thamil people abhor the prospect of war resuming once again. They have suffered privation and deprivation well beyond human endurance for two decades. But then what is the alternative to war? Should we allow the destruction of a nation in installments by a shadow war waged by President Chandrika Kumaratunga and her armed forces? **It is time we re-think critically and act wisely.**

Sivaram’s senseless murder has been condemned by prominent people around the world. UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura condemned the murder describing it as a “shameful crime” and his death **“a great loss for Sri Lankan journalism and for UNESCO.”**
“Man who Knew Too Much Dead” wrote Prof. Prof. Tom Plate, Director of Asia Pacific Media Network, in an article published in Korean Times.

Director Ann Cooper of The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) condemned the murder saying “This audacious and brutal crime is an attack on free speech in Sri Lanka.”

The Foreign Correspondents' Association of Sri Lanka condemned the killing saying “To gun down an unarmed man is pure cowardice; to gun down a journalist is to attack freedom of speech.”

Reporters Sans Frontières (Reporters Without Borders) said “It was revolted at the brutal killing of well known journalist and the premeditated murder of one of the most renowned Tamil journalists is a huge loss for Sri Lanka’s press.”

Sivaram is not among the living any more. A powerful voice of an enslaved people has been silenced for ever. However, his ideas and ideals will survive his death and will live on. Let us then resolve to carry on his unfinished task as a lasting tribute to his loving memory.
For the last ten years, this young talented and outspoken man impressed me by his deep insights into political developments, expert analysis of military moves and the simple language with which he presented them at the international conferences. Above all he touched me by his simplicity and friendship. During the sessions and workshops he would take a clear and convinced stance for a noble cause and will hold the audiences spell bound with his deep insights and expert analysis. And in the evenings he will relax with all without any partisan attitude or preferences, mingling with all and narrating interesting incidents for laughter, better digestion and good sleep. Behind this dark and spectacled man was a wealth of information, insights and intellectual talents, the power of which was radiating a warmth and humanness which none of us could resist.

At the end of an all-day listening and discussions, it used to be a light laughing session around Sivaram, tease or pull one-another’s legs and laugh our differences out before the next working day. My memory is full of long hours spent with him in many capitals of the world. The last one was in Dec.2004 in New Jersey. He did a masterly analysis of the military strategies in the South East Asian Region, at a Seminar at Rutgers University, New Jersey. Traveling with him and Mr. Adaikalanathan the TNA-MP for Mannar, the following day from New Jersey to New York, I made a little compliment to Siva about his deep and quick insights of the previous day. His answer was a quick one of humility and simplicity. He laughed at me "Father -I am only a simple fellow clicking information out of a computer and putting them together" ( Even when his laptop full of information he collected and writings he had done, was stolen at the Zurich Railway Station, he remained calm ). He was unique in combining his highly intellectual talents with touching simplicity and humanness.

Being a man committed to the Truth and committed to a people and land, he showed a prophetic courage in calling a spade a spade and thereby warning his beloved people not to fall prey to the attractive proposals and promises of the Sinhala Regiment nor to the sinister moves of the international community. He warned us Tamils of the danger of getting caught in the International Security Net that all the Sinhala political parties were laying down to overpower the Tamil Struggle. Similarly he warned us of the high profile visits of western leaders to Wanni in embedding the LTTE leadership into their international diplomatic net and imposing a solution favourable to their interests. Even the euphoria attached to the Norwegian and Japanese visits must not lull us into complacency and inaction.

He saw the consequences of three non-events which have lulled the victimized people into a state of false peace and satisfaction. The prolonged Cease-Fire, the absence of Talks and non-delivery of aid for the Tsunami victims are non-events which have disappointed and lulled the majority of us into a political inactivity. Only a few are still awake and actively protesting against the mounting injustices and crimes of the government against the Tamil people.

He appeared in our midst at a critical and decisive period of our struggle. In spite of having truth and justice on our side, there were not enough defenders, communicators and journalists. The intellectuals and professionals most of whom have migrated into the western world for greener pastures were often playing for safety and hesitated to identify themselves with the non-traditional, young and Tamil-speaking leadership. They were most of the time behind the cadjan fences, rejoicing probably at some victories, but never dared to take up the cause of the Tamils or come out into the open in defence of those suffering injustice. Some of them distanced themselves to hide their lack of courage for truth and justice...
and carried deceptive labels like cosmopolitan, Sri Lankan, neutral, etc. But Sivaram, coming out of a wealthy and educated family, rubbed shoulders with the youthful leadership and stood courageously before the world in defence of us all.

While proclaiming to the world a pious intention of peace for the country and justice to the Tamils, the Government has now started to fight a shadow war against the Tamils. Not content with the open support of betrayers of the Tamil cause, it has stooped very low in the form of snake in grass, to cause unrests, murders, bomb attacks against the political presence of the LTTE using the Karuna faction and the Sinhala extremists.

It is at this juncture when we need a man of the caliber of Sivaram of the Eastern province to be our expert analyst and courageous prophet. Hence his disappearance from our midst, leaves an irreplaceable vacancy.

We Tamils proudly owned a Kumar, a Nimalrajjan and a Sivaram. All these have been snatched away by the evil forces. May the Gods hasten the triumph of Truth and Justice. Till then let us be courageous and stand for the values he stood for.
"The brave Sivaram, at the age of 46, is with us no more. The mean and mediocre remain; the outstanding are dealt death by evil. The internationally acclaimed journalist was murdered"

The famous journalist from South Asia sat there at the cafe table on the sun-splashed dock of the Ritz-Carleton Hotel in Marina Del Rey, California, some weeks ago with a look of hard anger in his eyes. It was the kind of anger that the pressures of life pound into a kind of fierce diamond of personality. The anger cannot be scoffed off with kindly thoughts or charm or witty banter.

Well, I am a journalist myself – have been for decades; but I have not in very long time met a journalist as quietly angry, as deeply weathered and as thoroughly philosophical in an almost religious way as this hardened but caring man. If I may be permitted this analogy, he reminded me of an Asian Albert Camus, the legendary literary figure who cared so passionately about his eternally messed up but transcendent France.

A prolific writer and keen observer of his beloved but deeply troubled Sri Lanka, Dharmeratnam Sivaram was uncompromising, prescient and sometimes easily irritated. I riled him a bit with my lame (he thought) proposals for ending the troubles of his country. Sri Lanka, for decades has been enmeshed in a bloody civil war and is now trying to get back on its feet after the devastating tsunami of last December.

Don’t you understand what’s happening (his eyes and signs seemed to be saying) as I blithely proposed my Canadian-like solution for the divided land of Sri Lanka – that is, a measure of self-governance for the minority Tamils in the island-nation’s northeast, not unlike the deal for the minority French-Canadians. Don’t you understand, he seemed to be saying: There are right-wing elements of the ruling government in Colombo that don’t want a settlement, they don’t want Tamils to have equality, they want some of us dead.

His last published commentary – fiery and in-your-face – reflected his Machiavellian abhorrence of _ but also fearsome respect for _ the evil political and anti-humanitarian spirits swirling over and through his otherwise beautiful land. “Don’t raise false hopes amongst our people,” he bluntly wrote, scoffing at the well-intentioned efforts of Norwegian Special Peace Envoy Eric Solheim to mediate between the country’s long-warring factions. He gently chastised the peace envoy for his naivete and fiercely lambasted the central government for its inherent and unrelenting bad faith.
Wrote this brave journalist: "People of the north and east remain without economic growth or jobs. Scars of the war remain. Thousands of people who have lost their homes, land and whole villages to the Sri Lanka armed forces still live in desperation….."

The brave Sivaram, at the age of 46, is with us no more. The mean and mediocre remain; the outstanding are dealt death by evil. The internationally acclaimed journalist was murdered.

Late last month, late at night, Sivaram was set upon by a quartet of assassins and shoved into a waiting vehicle. This did not happen in some remote mountain village. This happened in the heart of Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, the island nation of more than 20 million off the southern coast of India.

They did not find his body until morning. The martyr for peace, reconciliation and press freedom was found by the side of a marsh, not far from the country’s parliament. At the scene was a spent cartridge from the 9 mm pistol used to kill him and the napkin used to gag him.

The anguish felt worldwide perhaps surprised the morally suspect government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga. Her parliamentary coalition includes a right-wing party, some of whose prominent followers include types that might arguably be characterized as little more than thugs – and whose views on the minority Tamils are neither subtle nor secret.

Many organizations have filed their official condolences and lodged their heartfelt outrage. But no one has so far been more eloquent and more direct than the ordinarily self-effacing Akio Suda, the ambassador of the government of Japan, a country so frustrated that its sincere and long-standing efforts to help Sri Lanka escape its murderous past have achieved so relatively little.

“I was shocked and extremely disturbed by the news of the abduction and killing…..,” he said in a formal diplomatic and media statement. “Whatever be the background of the perpetrators, such a heinous act should not be tolerated. Freedom of speech is the very basic component of a democratic society and should be upheld and respected….This murder…must not be ignored by those who advocate peace and democracy. I vehemently condemn this dastardly act of the murder of Mr. Sivaram…..”

Then, the distinguished diplomat closed on a note of optimism. Suda said that “such despicable acts" will not hinder the efforts of promoting the peace process in Sri Lanka."

That's the noble hope, to be sure; and that's what diplomats are for – to offer a peaceful process and the hope of no more war. But it is not hard to imagine the look on the face of the ghost of Sivaram; the look would suggest that hindering peace and promoting war was indeed the very intent of his assassination; and that, more likely than not, this is what will ensue from it.
Unassuming greatness, unforgettable charm
Professor Karthigesu Sivathamby

Looking at the responses evoked by Sivaram’s death, I wonder whether I could indeed claim to be someone close to him in terms of journalistic experience. The fact that many journalists and writers of distinction have so courageously agreed to identify themselves with him personally, despite political differences, leaves me rather bewildered.

Sivaram was close to me and my family. He was so close that each member of my family deeply and sincerely feels his absence and genuinely mourns his death. I am afraid that it is the professional and human faces of Sivaram that are going to be missed by colleagues, acquaintances and fellow-professionals, which very rightly highlighted his commitment to Tamil nationalism and more than that, his expertise in communicating it to, very often, unreceptive readers.

Before dwelling on the personal side of his life, it is important to locate Sivaram and his contribution as a journalist who stood for and advocated Tamil nationalism. It was the late Mervyn de Silva who first assessed the importance of Sivaram’s contributions as a journalist. Taraki (the pen name of Sivaram), remarked de Silva, brought to Sri Lankan English journalism a new depth and vision in writing about Tamil militant youth.

Sivaram brought out in clear, unambiguous terms, what the Tamil militants demanded. He highlighted in his writings how they had organised themselves militarily, which led to the Sri Lankan security forces having to accept a number of strategic and battlefront reversals by 1990. His writing opened the door for the non-Tamil reader to get a glimpse of the single-minded devotion with which the militants were demanding a more just, equitable and dignified place for Sri Lankan Tamils, either within or outside the polity.

Sivaram’s presentations commanded attention in the manner in which they highlighted the Tamil struggle. He did not wish to contextualise it in terms of the ahimsa tradition of S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, the bellicose rhetoric of G. G. Ponnambalam, or Sir P. Ramanathan’s Hindu aristocracy. Sivaram traced the causes of militancy to the martial traditions of the Tamils, evidence for which exists in pre-colonial Tamil literature since the ‘Purananuru.’ He was especially interested in military castes and tribes, which British colonial governments dubbed as criminal tribes. His series of articles on Tamil militarism in the ‘Lanka Guardian’ opened more Tamil eyes than non-Tamils ones about the cultural roots of contemporary Tamil armed nationalism.

Equally important as his elucidation of the part played by militancy in taking forward the Tamil struggle, was his reading of Tamil politics, which present him as a writer with a Tamil worldview. Sivaram was rooted firmly in the Batticaloa tradition, of which he was very proud, but also saw Sri Lankan Tamil nationalism as something overarching and encompassing all Tamils whether from Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Amparai, Vanni, Jaffna or Mannar. The manner in which he presented the Tamil cause drew the attention not only of the Sri Lankan establishment but also of countries interested and involved in Sri Lanka’s politics. This made Sivaram a perambulating journalist than one confined to the armchair or well heeled beats in Colombo.

Perhaps Sivaram’s most enduring contribution to journalism was TamilNet, the website which he founded and ran very efficiently. With the Tamil diaspora ever keen to know minute-by-minute developments in Sri Lanka, TamilNet became an immediate success. Sivaram’s professional expertise automatically made the worldwide web an appropriate medium to report the Tamil nationalist struggle with the LTTE at its very forefront.
Sivaram was also a stickler for the appropriate word when composing his journalistic pieces and was known for his unusual combination of words and sentence structures, which provoked debate. He was a highly accomplished bilingual writer (Tamil and English).

The greatness of Sivaram as a journalist lay in the fact that he was able to be all these, while also being highly professional about them. He was so professional that every professional in the field loved him for the commitment, the expertise and, especially, the nicety with which he performed his tasks. Had it not been for this trait of professional brilliance coupled with human warmth, it would never have been possible for a Sri Lankan Tamil journalist to be a friend of Gamini Weerakoon and Rajpal Abeynayake; Dayan Jayatilleke and Ajith Samaranayake.

With all intellectual humility and genuineness it could be said that no other Tamil journalist, or a journalist who is a Tamil, could have achieved such heights in so many different fields. It is in this sense Sivaram becomes an exemplar Tamil journalist – the man who could be friend of both the Pentagon and South Block.

But to say he was this and this alone, even though such conquests appear more than what a single individual could achieve, is far, far from the truth. There was also a deeper Sivaram – Sivaram the keen student of Tamil history and culture incorporating fields as diverse as politics and anthropology, economics and cultural studies, linguistics and literary criticism. He was aware of the work the anthropologist Dennis McGilvray had undertaken in Sri Lanka’s east, and in touch with American scholars such as Margaret Trewick, who is interested in Tamil studies. But the same time he was also delving into Sri Lanka’s history and the interdependence between the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities. He was well read in Tamil Buddhism, especially on how Tamil Nadu played such an important role in shaping Sri Lankan Buddhist traditions.

It was Sivaram’s interest in the foregoing, which brought him to me. To me in the early 1990s, travelling to Colombo from Jaffna every month on relief and rehabilitation matters, acquaintance with Taraki was a great asset. It was something more than I could hope for. Through conversations with him I got to know what was happening – who was doing what, where and how. Sivaram always chided me for my ‘involvement’ in matters political. When he found that I was going beyond the intellectual need to study problems facing the Tamil people, becoming involved in Citizen Committee politics and rehabilitation matters, he urged me very firmly to get back to my research work, which, it is true, I had abandoned by 1984. It was Sivaram’s efforts that made me feel I should get back in a more committed way to academia.

Sivaram was a great interlocutor. He could find out everything that lay in a person. Answering his questions, one was prone to feel one’s own inadequacy rather than one’s authority. Above all, replying him meant being well versed in state of the art. It was in the course of these interactions that I found that Sivaram’s strength lay in his intimate acquaintance with Tamil history. This made him write and speak not only with dedication but also with authority.

These intellectual interactions also made us discover each other’s idiosyncrasies. In Sivaram’s case they were not idiosyncrasies either. They were the other side of a very busy person – a man who was a loving husband and a fond father; a man who would not only enjoy good wine, but also better poetry. Further, though he never betrayed such feelings to me personally, I found he treated me like his teacher by avoiding drinking, or smoking his favourite Manila cigars in my presence.

Speaking academic matters with an active journalist like Sivaram demanded an appropriate time. He openly confessed that his office hours were in the evenings when he had drinks with friends and colleagues. So it was usually in the morning or in the early noon that we sat down for a chat. He thus became a friend of the family. It was at these moments the
‘human’ side of Sivaram was opened to us. It was then I discovered he was a great connoisseur of good food. From discussing the finer points of Blue Stilton cheese and mellow wine, he could speak about the merits of puli chatham and thayir pachchadi with not only ease, but also evident relish. Sivaram’s wife said he would often speak about the meals he had under our roof. My wife would say it was a pleasure to feed him, while my daughters – especially the younger two – used to debate the relative merits of different recipes – both vegetarian and non-vegetarian.

To Sivaram, the one-time militant who had injured himself, the easy chair (hansie putoova) in our overcrowded drawing room was something in which he could rest his back with ease, arms folded behind his head. As he relaxed I came to know that Sivaram the great journalist and globetrotter, was also a very caring and fond father who wanted to take his children out for a good meal and spend more time with his growing son and daughters, as well as a devoted husband concerned about his wife’s health. One could also see other emotions running through him, those of self-pity and even self-indignation.

It was also in such moments of domesticity that he would reveal his familiarity with the gossip surrounding Tamil cinema and, even, his enjoyment of very average Tamil films. The songs, lyrics and shots – all attracted him. Very few people know that this busy journalist could steal a few hours to enjoy a popular film. To me it brought out the child in him – the simple son of the Tamil soil.

Sivaram was not a single person. It is true that the great ‘Taraki’ resided within him, but he was also the researcher who never published his very important findings, alongside which was the very cautious Sivaram who was keener to listen than to speak, and to measure the person in his company before making his own position clear. It was this complex combination that made him who he was.

In a way Sivaram achieved the impossible. His death made Tamil nationalism from east to west and the world over, a household word. How is it that he could invoke within his friends and acquaintances that sense of debt, which made his passing away such a tragic event? Surely, it is not possible for one man to provoke such a universal response?

In my 15 years of knowing him I was always the butt of his criticisms and subject of annoyance for not doing what I should be doing. Let me now at least confess that there were moments when I imagined he would say something nice about me – a word of praise or a gesture of appreciation. It never came – if at all he scolded me, cajoled me and urged my children to chastise me. But as he closed behind him the door of my flat, his criticism would seem the biggest compliment I could have. Today, my heart is full, but tears inevitably fall.
For quantitative evaluation, the creativity of individuals can be scaled under three categories. These are, (1) ample quantity without quality, (2) ample quality without quantity, and (3) ample quality and quantity.

In the field of journalism, where Dharmarettnam Sivaram [aka, Taraki by his nom de plume] made his reputation, individuals belonging to the first category – ample quantity without quality - form the majority and I need not mention names. In the fields of poetry and music, those belonging to the second category – ample quality without quantity - are also represented. Among those who enriched Tamil literature, one can cite singer S.G.Kittappa (1905? – 1933) and poet Pattukottai Kalyanasundaram (1930-1959) as belonging to this group. Premature death due to disease, accident, homicide or suicide are the contributing causes for this second category.

Those making their grade in the third category – ample quality and quantity - are the trend-setters who will be remembered by history.

Where does D.Sivaram - whose untimely, tragic death on April 29, 2005 saddened Sri Lankans - contributions fit in the three categories? In my evaluation, Sivaram's journalistic contributions to Tamil welfare in the print media for the past 15 years make him a sure nominee into the third category because he educated the average Tamils on the intricacy of military affairs by his lucid commentaries. However, his murder also places him in a slot in the second category - of ample quality without quantity -, if one thinks of how much Sivaram could have contributed to electronic journalism and the academic literature on Eelam Tamil history, politics and militancy of the 20th century.

One of Sivaram's predecessors among the Tamil literati who belongs to both the second and third categories of the creativity assessment scale was the great poet Subramanya Bharathi (1882-1921).

That Sivaram contributed lucid commentaries representing Eelam Tamil nationalism for the past 15 years is known to all. But, his only major study [to my knowledge, that is] on Tamil militarism appeared as a lengthy eleven part essay in the now defunct Lanka Guardian journal edited by Mervyn de Silva, from May to November, 1992. For some reason which I cannot fathom now I have long felt that even that lengthy series was terminated without a proper closure. Maybe Sivaram was distracted by his other professional commitments. Maybe, since 1992 was the year when coverage on the Rajiv Gandhi assassination trial was topical, the page space in the Lanka Guardian issues [a slim pages per issue] was at a premium then. Even if that series by Sivaram came to a premature closure, one should give credit that Mervyn de Silva thought it apt to print Sivaram’s studious analysis on the vibrancy of Tamil militarism. Here are the individual segments from Sivaram’s lengthy study, as it appeared in the Lanka Guardian issues at that time.

During its six month ‘run’, Sivaram’s analysis also received critical comments from five Lanka Guardian readers, including me. The correspondents and their critical notes appeared as follows:


In his foot-notes in the series, Sivaram answered two of his critics, namely Raja Joganathan and Diulweva. Though he did not directly answer to my criticism on the omission of M.G.Ramachandran’s
(MGR) contributions in the Tamil movies of late 1940s to whole of 1950s, as inspiration for martial talent among young Eelam Tamils in his first three segments of the series, it was evident that Sivaram had accepted and accommodated my criticism and incorporated references to MGR in the published 8th and 11th (and final) segments. This is a note-worthy skill of a sincere scholar. In the 11th segment, Sivaram referred to poet Kannadasan’s inspirational lyrics written for MGR in the movie Mannathi Mannan;

Achcham enpathu Madamaiyada – Anjaamai Dravidar Udamaiyada

Aarilum Saavu Noorilum Saavu – Thayakam kaapathu Kadamaiyada

In English translation,

"Cowardice is but foolishness – Courage is a trait of Dravidars

Whether death is at six or hundred – Protecting the motherland is a Duty"

Sivaram has proved in life and in his courageous death that he lived to emulate the words penned by poet Kannadasan. This is no mean achievement. To celebrate Sivaram’s worthy life, I’ll shortly prepare his lengthy essay of 1992 and the comments of the five correspondents on this essay, for the electronic record. He deserves it.
Memory of Sivaram

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I met Sivaram in 1993 in Colombo, on my first return visit to Sri Lanka after an interval of a decade. My research site, the town of Akkaraipattu on the east coast, was not far from Tirukkovil, where Sivaram’s family had owned coconut plantations and where he had childhood memories. Like most everyone who met Sivaram, I was immediately drawn to his intimate knowledge of the political and strategic situation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, a stream of information that was channeled through the most overworked cellphone in the island.

However, I was delighted to find that Sivaram’s interest in me was genuinely academic and scholarly. He read every anthropological article and chapter I wrote about the matrilineal clan (kudi) system of the Batticaloa Tamils and Muslims with more attention to detail than my own university colleagues. He was especially fascinated with my interpretations of the history of the Batticaloa region, based upon what he regarded as my politically naive reading of the Mattakkalappu Manmiyam, an 18th century collection of caste histories, temple honors, and dynastic chronicles that still influences popular Batticaloa Tamil awareness.

Every time I met Sivaram, our conversation would eventually turn to a detailed discussion about the pre-colonial and post-colonial configuration of Tamil castes and temple honors on the east coast. Most recently, he told me he had nearly finished editing a new critical edition of the Mattakkalappu Manmiyam, a scholarly project that I strongly hope can be carried through to publication in his memory. He had also promised to write a historical essay on the Dutch period of Batticaloa history for a historical sourcebook I am editing, and its absence from that volume will be an intellectual loss for all Sri Lanka scholars.

Over the years, Sivaram became a personal friend, visiting my family in Colorado several times, and lecturing to my university classes on one occasion. However, the dimension of Sivaram’s life that I would like to emphasize is his passion for history and his fascination with the distinctive cultural and historical traditions of the Batticaloa region. He had a natural aptitude for scholarship and intellectual debate, and I came to think of him as a fellow academic. His death represents not only the painful elimination of a good friend but also the senseless loss of a genuine colleague in the study of Sri Lankan Tamil society.
Taraki’s Assassination & Press Freedom

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The recent assassination of ‘Taraki’ raises serious questions about press freedom in Sri Lanka. Suppressing opponents of the government can take several forms; brutally killing them is the most unforgivable and unacceptable. The country has had a long and troubled history with press freedom. This incident heightens that reality.

Sinhalese governments have always inclined toward the refractive analyses of facts, bent to suit their readers. That is fine, so long as they can also tolerate and listen to such stern watchdogs as Taraki was of the plight of the Tamil community on the island. He looked into the center of government activity from the Tamil periphery; as we Tamils remained unceasingly pushed away into the corners by the Sinhalese centrists. The government seems to have resented the fact that he presented that perspective with steely conviction.

While the political atmosphere of the island remains unsettled, this incident can only amount to a damaging setback in Tamil - Sinhalese relations. Taraki's assassination can only be described as a terrible political blunder, which would sharply heighten the sense of grievance among the Tamils.

The President and her henchman may not care. They may even view this assassination with a sense of relief; but sharp and critical analyses of their misdeeds will not cease to go unnoticed. We only hope that more assassinations are not their answer.
Sivaram, an articulate intellect

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In the loss of Dharmaratnam Sivaram, we will greatly miss a person of deep commitment, articulate intellect, incisive political analysis, and firm loyalty to family, friends, and the place he loved. I last worked with Sivaram in the days immediately after the Tsunami in my office here in Boulder, Colorado. Calls came in on his cell phone throughout the nights -- with the twelve hour time difference -- as we pieced together the immensity of the tragedy and put the information out to the Tamil diaspora on the internet site Tamilnet. As we typed, he was also grieving for his nephew who was pulled into the water from a temple that had been engulfed by the waves.

Sivaram helped me understand the political dimensions of the conflict on the east coast of the island in the beginning of the 1990's, when I was engaged in PhD research in anthropology during those dark years of mass disappearances and village massacres. He relished scholarly discussion and cherished books. Over the years, I learned that his indefatigable intellect would start our meetings on a dozen research trips to Batticaloa with the question, "Did you bring any good books?" He delved into social theory, ethnographic texts, and historical records, and could remember the page numbers of key points he wished to recall. In Batticaloa District, people could not yet believe what was happening to them at the time when Sivaram's Mother suggested that we meet and talk about local political conditions and the various gun-carrying groups in the villages where families' were hosting me. Media censorship and government erasure of violent events on the east coast led Sivaram to establish Tamilnet in the coming years.

He loved the eastern coastal region, especially certain places like Tirukovil, which was connected to his family history. He knew every village and hamlet of Paduvankarai as well as the history of the people. His mother was stately and courageous in character. She also was a wonderful at telling stories. Sivaram remembered his father's sense of loyalty with admiration. Sivaram was committed to the well-being of his immediate and extended family members. He had a strong wish that the children would receive the best education possible.

He was constantly in demand for political discussions, though he had little time for those who were not sincerely engaged in making a difference in the lives of the Tamil people because he was completely devoted to this end. Sivaram evaluated and anticipated political shifts on local, national, and international levels by traveling into the scrub jungle of the Tamil Homelands and to political forums around the world. Death came very close to Sivaram many times, both in combat and over the years of providing perceptive political analysis for his wide readership. He did not deter from engaging an issue -- such as the impunity of pro-government paramilitaries -- because it endangered him.

I can remember his description of the beauty of the jungle when it blossoms, and the magic of the Batticaloa lagoon when his oar cut through the night water in the full moonlight, creating swirls of glowing phosphorescence. There was also a part of Sivaram that was a poet. He inspired many at home and abroad, living fully and working tirelessly in difficult circumstances for the future of his much loved country.
"I was shocked and extremely disturbed by the news of the abduction and killing of a senior journalist Mr. Dharmeratnam Sivaram. I express my heartfelt condolences and sympathy to his bereaved family and friends. Whatever be the background of the perpetrators, such a heinous act should not be tolerated. Freedom of speech is the very basic component of a democratic society and should be upheld and respected by one and all. This murder of Mr. Sivaram, a senior journalist is a blatant attack on democracy and the freedom of speech, and must not be ignored by those who advocate peace and democracy. I vehemently condemn this dastardly act of the murder of Mr. Sivaram and wish to state that such despicable acts will not hinder the efforts of promoting the peace process in Sri Lanka."
- Ambassador of Japan Mr. Akio Suda

“Sivaram, was a brilliant journalist” - Reporters Sans Frontières (Reporters Without Borders)

Mr Dharmeratnam Sivaram is a courageous writer who was able to fearlessly express his opinions and present news stories even in difficult circumstances. Forces that cannot stand up to his resoluteness, his firm conviction on issues, and depth and brilliance in broad range of skills, have abducted and murdered him to silence his voice. - Political Wing of the Liberation Tigers

“This audacious and brutal crime is an attack on free speech in Sri Lanka,” - Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) Executive Director Ann Cooper

“Yes, he was a Tamil patriot. [But] in a field laden with hyperbole and zeal, Taraki’s writing compelled prevailing understandings to be questioned rather than simply foist his own views on readers. His death will sadden those on all sides prepared to listen to rational, even if contrary, arguments.” - Tamil Guardian newspaper

“This shameful crime has led to a great loss for Sri Lankan journalism and for UNESCO. Mr Sivaram had worked with us on the creation of the Media Resource and Training Center, MRTC, in Jaffna in the North of Sri Lanka. It is tragic that I have to make this condemnation today, on World Press Freedom Day, which UNESCO is celebrating in Dakar this year,” - UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura

“inspiration to Tamil journalists with love for the nation and their people. Dharmaretnam Sivaram has demonstrated that a journalist can serve his people to the extent that he can be hailed their ‘Great Human Being’. Sivaram didn’t raise his voice for Tamil nationalism while living in the safety of a foreign country or away from government controlled areas of this island. He didn’t hide away, working secretly or hiding behind the anonymity of the Internet. Neither did he espouse his views only to the Tamil people, in their language; Sivaram also wrote of views in English with unrivalled clarity - Popular Jaffna Tamil daily, Uthayan
Sivaram was a powerful bi-lingual journalist. Sivaram, popularly known as Taraki, remained a committed democrat, using his voice to defend human rights, and using his pen to defend the rights of the Tamils to self respect and self determination.- **The International Federation of Tamils**

Using Taraki as his pen name, Sivaram contributed immensely to the contemporary political and military issues in the country. His thorough analytical reports were well received and read widely throughout Sri Lanka and abroad. - **Sri Lanka Tamil Media Alliance (SLTA)**

"I am so distressed by this. I knew Sivaram as one of the best political analysts in Sri Lanka, and someone who valued and defended his independence of thought and action. Sri Lanka and the Tamil community need people like him. His loss is a true tragedy, and whoever killed him has done great harm to the country and the community," - **Teresita Schaffer former Ambassador of the United States to Sri Lanka. She is currently Director for South Asia, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington DC, USA.**

Mr. Dhramaratnam Sivaram, the well known Tamil journalist whose bold and accurate portrayal of the Sri Lankan political establishment has embarrassed and damaged its reputation. - **Australian Federation of Tamil Associations**

“Vehemently condemns the killing of journalist, D.Sivaram. He was simply exercising his right to report freely on current affairs. To gun down an unarmed man is pure cowardice; to gun down a journalist is to attack freedom of speech” **Simon Gardner, Foreign Correspondents’ Association of Sri Lanka**

says that “This is a shocking, tragic and senseless killing of a prominent and distinguished commentator who was a leading voice of the Tamil minority” - **Aidan White, General Secretary of The International Federation of Journalists**
They Can Take Sivaram Away From Us... 
Can They Extinguish the Fire of Tamil Nationalism He Ignited in Our Hearts?

- Dr. Victor Rajakulendran, Sydney, Australia

For the last few days we all have been battling to come to terms with the fact that "Mamanithar" Sivaram Dharmeratnam is no more with us. But when we all read more and more details about the events leading to his murder, our resolve to expose those who try to silence the voice of freedom by threats and intimidation gets only stronger and stronger.

I have been reading Sivaram’s contributions to the media from the time he started writing under the pen name "Taraki" in "The Island" newspaper published out of Colombo, Sri Lanka. In those days when the Internet was not there, I used to wait impatiently for the Tuesday of the week to get the Sunday edition of "The Island" in Sydney to read his analysis.

In April 2002 Sivaram went to Jaffna with one of my friends along the A9 highway to go through Vanni. During this trip, unexpectedly, he had the unexpected opportunity to meet the Tamil National Leader Velupillai Prabakaran. When my friend returned to his home country, he introduced Sivaram to me for me to use him for my radio interviews. I interviewed Sivaram for the first time for "Thamil Muzhakkam," the Tamil radio in Sydney, Australia on Saturday, April 6, 2002 to share what he found during his trip north with our listeners. The same night I e-mailed him the web link of the interview for him to listen to the interview. The next day I received an acknowledgement from him with a special greeting. I would like to share the pride he showed to me through this "greetings from E. Pass" with as many Tamils around the globe as possible.

I still vividly remember what Sivaram wrote in an analysis in "The Island" paper soon after the LTTE’s first failed attempt to overrun the Elephant Pass garrison. To prove that he has visited the area before he wrote the analysis, he publicly challenged to the readers to go and check on the wall of a partly ruined Hindu temple in the vicinity, for which he gave the name, where the name "Taraki" is written. This shows the risk he has been taking in gathering information for his analysis.

Sivaram was one of those rare journalists who are intellectuals and well read. His knowledge ranged from Tamil literature to the technical details of military hardware. He was excellent in military as well as political analysis. Through his writings he stimulated political debate, raised a voice for human equality and justice and fearlessly criticised authorities in power whenever they misused the same. He took a lot of risk to bring out the truth about an oppressed people and to tell the world how the authorities in power were misusing their power to oppress these people.

We all knew very well that Sivaram’s life was under threat for the last few years. First, he was injured when his newspaper office in Batticaloa was attacked by a Tamil paramilitary group operating under the protection and guidance of the Sri Lankan security forces. Later, twice, the police searched his house in Colombo, allegedly for suspected hidden weapons. The first search was on World Press Freedom Day while he was away in Batticaloa and the second 3 months later. These could be taken only as warnings given by his enemies to silence him.

Sivaram has been exposing the Sri Lankan government’s duplicity in dealing with the peace process from its inception. He has exposed more specifically the JVP’s desire for capturing power and the way they have been deceiving the poor Singhalese masses. When Karuna
revolted against the LTTE, Karuna’s schoolmate and former friend Sivaram abandoned him and publicly condemned him for his traitorous adventure. More damage was done to Karuna’s reputation when Sivaram exposed the details of the businesses Karuna started in Colombo with the money Karuna collected from the public in the East. Therefore, it is clear that Sivaram had gathered at least 3 different enemies during his recent journalistic career, namely the Sri Lankan security forces, the JVP and the Karuna faction.

Considering the fact that he was abducted just in front of the Bamabalapitya police station in Colombo and within 2 hours Sivaram’s body was dumped behind the parliament house building which is guarded by the security forces as a "high security zone", there is no doubt that the abduction and murder of Sivaram could not have been done without the knowledge/sanction of the law enforcement arm of the Sri Lankan State.

Less than 24 hours before Sivaram was abducted, his last article appeared in the Colombo newspaper, the "Daily Mirror," in which he criticised the JVP’s craftiness. When I was reading this article I felt that Sivaram has breached the safety zone the enemies have assigned to him the same way Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam did by publishing his last open letter to President Chandrika Kumarathunga. Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam was a veteran Tamil politician, who used his pen to a limited extent like Sivaram did to declare the truth. Kumar’s assassination is alleged to have been masterminded by the Presidential Security Division, another arm of the law enforcement authority of the State.

Sivaram’s assassination has been condemned by an array of people ranging from the common, down-to-earth Singhalese journalists to the UNESCO chief. This shows the respect and credibility Sivaram earned through his genuine and high-calibre journalism. The only people who failed to condemn Sivaram’s murder are those who belong to the ultra-Singhalese nationalistic parties, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) and the Sihala Urumaya. Some of these people have even implied that Sivaram should have been locked up a long time back for supporting the LTTE. Others have even called him a terrorist. Some bankrupt journalists have tried to fool themselves by interpreting Sivaram’s assassination as a result of the internecine fight among the Tamils themselves. Some have even gone to the extent to interpret it as a warning given by the Tamils to the Tamil National Leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran. They are only trying to hide the truth from the public and cover up the misdemeanours of the State security forces. They are trying to equate the killing of an unarmed journalist on a Colombo street to that of a militant Tamil fighter in the troubled east of the country.

Many times when I contacted Sivaram for interviews, I have caught him travelling in areas in the east, which are hot beds of internecine killings. Whenever I raised my concern for his safety in these areas, he did not seem to consider it as a big issue. He was very confident that he knew what he was doing.

Although Sivaram had strong feelings about the lack of development in the east of the country, he was not prepared to embrace regionalism at the expense of Tamil nationalism. He spent a lot of time and energy to explain this to the eastern Tamils when Karuna tried to mislead the eastern Tamils with his newly invented regionalism slogan.

Sivaram took up arms to establish Tamil nationalism and continued his campaign through his pen after he gave up the violent path. He has contributed much more through his pen to this noble cause than he contributed through arms. As a result, he has captured a permanent place in the hearts and minds of the Tamil people living all over the globe. Sivaram, who used the worldwide web for disseminating his ideologies efficiently, will never disappear from the face of
this earth, as his killers would have hoped for. Sivaram had a fine mind and, as people often say, his fine mind can never really die. His fine mind can only be reborn. Sivaram’s assassination will inspire more Sivarams to appear among those who use the worldwide web for expressing their views. This only could deter the cowardly acts of killers like Sivaram’s assassins.

We all will miss Siva when we need explanations for the complex phenomena in Sri Lankan politics in the future. However, we only cannot pick up the telephone and talk to him. We all can, instead, hope a google search would help to find those answers buried in what Siva has already left for us.

Let his soul rest in peace!
நாபிரின் புள்ளியுடன் ஒன்றுக்கொண்டு முடியும் புத்தக (பிரிவு)

தி காந்தி ராம் புனித இத்திரையம் திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார். இத்திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டிட்டால், அது எளிதான காலத்தில் ஒரு புத்தக திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளது 90 கி.மீ. நூறும் தொடக்கத்தில் தட்டுப்பட்டுள்ளது. The Island பணிக்கான புத்தகம் தோன்றும் நிலையில் பள்ளியுடன் முடியும் புத்தக திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளது அளிப்படும். அது "திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டிட்டால் பெரும்பாலான தவறுச் செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளது, அது காலத்தில் பிரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது நாட்களை அமையும் வருமானங்களின் தொடர்ந்துச் செய்கின்றது. இது காலத்தில் இருந்த வருமானங்களின் தொடர்ச்சியானது அமையும் புத்தகங்களை முடியும் புத்தகங்களை தொடர்ந்துச் செய்கின்றது. இந்த புத்தகங்கள் அடுத்து புத்தகங்களை தொடர்ந்துச் செய்கின்றது..."

இந்தியாவில் கூட்டத்தக்கான குர்சும் புத்தகம் நேர்கோளுக்கு பின்னர் வருமானங்கள் காலத்தில் வருமானங்களின் தொடர்ந்துச் செய்கின்றது.

நாயக்கா புனித இத்திரையம் திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார் - அதை சிந்தனை வாழ்கூற்றுகளை அடிப்படையில் அளிப்படும் வனந்தரங்கள் தமிழ்நாட்டில் தொடக்கமிக்கின்றன. யார் வெளியிலும் நூற்றுக்கணக்காண்மை என்று கூறுகின்றன. நாயக்கா புனித இத்திரையம் திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார் அடுத்து வருமானங்களின் தொடர்ந்துச் செய்கின்றது. இந்த புத்தகங்கள் அடுத்து புத்தகங்களை தொடர்ந்துச் செய்கின்றது.

அவர் புனித இத்திரையம் திரையக்குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார் மக்களிடம் நேர்கோளும் உத்தரங்களும் அளிக்கின்றது, அதிகமான வனந்தரங்களே புத்தகத்தில் வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது. புத்தகம் வருமானத்திற்கான வணங்கம் வருமானச் செய்கின்றது அவர் அமைக்கின்ற வருமானச் செய்யல் வருமானக் காலத்தில் அடுத்துச் செய்கின்றது. அவர் புனித இத்திரையானது அவர் அமைக்கின்ற வருமானச் செய்யல் வருமானக் காலத்தில் அடுத்துச் செய்கின்றது.

நாயக்கா புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது. இத்திரையானது அவர் அமைக்கின்ற வருமானச் செய்யல் வருமானக் காலத்தில் அடுத்துச் செய்கின்றது. அவர் புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது. அவர் புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது.

புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது. புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது. அவர் புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது. அவர் புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது. அவர் புனித இத்திரையானது உத்தரங்களிற்கான வணங்கத்திற்கான வருமானம் நிறுவிக்கிறது.
Mr Dharmaratnam Sivaram’s murder is tragic; but it was not unexpected - certainly not by him. He joins the list of heroic Tamil activists who stood up against the moribund Sinhala State in Sri Lanka always ready to pay the highest price. Tamil politician Mr Kumar Ponnambalam was killed in Colombo in 2000; and Tamil journalists Mr Mylvaganam Nimalrajan and Mr G Nadesan were executed in Jaffna (2000) and in Batticaloa (2004).

Mr Sivaram is the most recent victim of the pathological death-squad politics of Sinhala chauvinists. He championed Tamil nationalism. He rose magnificently to that most hazardous task of defending the national rights of Tamils.

What antagonised Sinhala chauvinism most is that Mr Sivaram employed Lenin’s dictum to devastating effect. He confined himself to describing what is actually happening; he did not engage in impotent speculations about possibilities.

In this way his writings systematically exposed the hidden agenda of the rabidly anti-Tamil Sinhala State in Sri Lanka.

As before, almost all Tamil observers and analysts are accusing the Sinhala security forces and their vassals, the Tamil paramilitary mercenaries. By extension, they are holding Sinhala President Chandrika Kumaratunga directly responsible for the murder.

To accuse the President and her government is appropriate but it misses the point. The murder was done in a way that would leave no doubt at all as to who carried it out.

Mr Sivaram’s body was dumped in the high security zone surrounding the national Parliament. The reason is obvious. If his body were found elsewhere in a location that could not be clearly linked to the security forces then there would be doubts about who perpetrated the crime.

It is precisely to wipe out any doubt whatsoever that his corpse was deliberately placed in the high security zone. The Sinhala State sent a chilling message to all Tamils, that its own Sinhala security forces murdered Mr Sivaram.

The State was not so brazen when it had Ponnambalam, Nimalrajan and Nadesan executed. The modus operandi did not directly point to the Sinhala security forces.

Mr Sivaram’s case is different. Here the Sinhala State has delivered a brutal warning to Tamils activists. It is a pure act of State terrorism - to terrorise the Tamil people, to silence critical Tamil opinion.
சியாருமல் (குழந்தை) நூற்றாண்டு

நூற்றாண்டுகளும் (அவுருந்தீர்வு)

புதிய அகல்கள் - 3 பத்து ஆண்டுகள் ஆனால் சியாருமல் எண்ணற்றுக்குட்கு பூந்து நூற்றாண்டுகள் காண்க. அது நந்தூர் சியாருமல் நூற்றாண்டுகளும் குழந்தைகள் பாதுகாப்புக்கு காண்க.

பாலா போன்று நூற்றாண்டுகள் காண்க. அது எண்ணற்றுக்குட்கு அவுருந்தீர்வு சியாருமல் நூற்றாண்டுகள் காண்க. அது சியாருமல் நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு ஆகும் குழந்தை எண்ணற்றுக்கு நூற்றாண்டுகள் காண்க.

நூற்றாண்டுகள் விழாவணங்கள், தத்துவால் எண்ணற்றுக்கு நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க. அது எண்ணற்றுக்கு நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க.

புதிய அகல்களும் பாலா போன்று நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க.

"சியாருமல் நூற்றாண்டு நூற்றாண்டு நூற்றாண்டு பாலா பாலா பாலா நூற்றாண்டு நூற்றாண்டு நூற்றாண்டு........" கூறு பாலா ஆகும்.

சியாருமல் நூற்றாண்டு புதிய அருங்கள் எண்ணற்று நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க. எண்ணற்று நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க. எண்ணற்று நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க.

புதிய அருங்கள், புதிய அருங்கள் காண்க. எண்ணற்று அருங்கள் எண்ணற்று அருங்கள் நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க. எண்ணற்று நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க. எண்ணற்று நூற்றாண்டுகள் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க.

வருவிய சியாருமல், வருவிய சியாருமல் பாதுகாப்பு காண்க. எண்ணற்று பாதுகாப்பு காண்க. எண்ணற்று பாதுகாப்பு காண்க.

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I shall mourn for him, my lost best friend, for the rest of my life. I ask all of you who knew him well, friend and foe—for he would talk with anyone—to raise a glass and toast him. And may those that killed him look on in shame.
Sivaram’s Murder Never Took Place!

Harinda Ranura Vidanage

“The Hostage has taken the place of the warrior. He has become the principle actor, the simulacral protagonist, or rather in his pure inaction, the protagonist of non war” Jean Badurillard

Dharmaratnam Sivaram was physically laid to rest yesterday, but as a man who pioneered the internet to build an online community linking a transnational Diaspora; his assassins should realize that Sivaram’s death never took place. In a society where media technologies have destroyed the living other of all humans, where simulation have become the engine of life, Siva lives in his own world beyond the physical contours in the virtual galaxy.

What the killers have only silenced are the physical movements of a being who lived in two worlds. Physical home, family, secret meetings, political gatherings, restaurants and pubs was his first world. Siva lived in a broader world rather a universe where he surfed the waves of the information galaxy transforming it into a powerful symbolic existence of a virtual life.

This is the power of the virtual Siva he was the icon for Tamils globally of a cyborg diaspora, thus a bullet is a harmless projectile in this fluid world that the net has built. When one enters the realm of studying the configuration and architecture of the world beyond ours we enter the rewired parallel universe of our own existence.

What Siva built online was not his tomb but his life through eternity; these made him fearless and live a courageous life among all hostilities never taking refuge in physical bunkers as he had discovered the power of the force which he had harnessed. As a researcher on cyber culture, communities and strategic cyber engagement this is my initial impression of reports of his physical transcendence to the virtual life or the so called death of Taraki.

I only new Siva (Dharmeratnam Sivaram) for less than two years and may have met him less than five times. Does this gives me the right to comment about a man who is no more and with multitudes of articles written by people whom he knew, associated and led his political life for years. This is an alternative view of a man who revolutionized the web based media solutions sector in Sri Lanka from serious researcher on the cyber frontier and its impact on the Sri Lankan polity.

I first met Siva at a local pub, my meeting with him was mediated by a fellow journalist and a good friend of Siva but whose ideology was total opposite to what Siva wrote and stood for but who always accepted the democratic space for journalism can not be colonized by one single entity. This was the time when I was freelancing for a leading national weekly. As a student completing his research thesis in cyber conflicts and cyber communities for my undergraduate research thesis I sought Siva’s help. In this first meeting I perceived it as primary data collection excursion, what was build on from that meeting was a humble respect to a man whose intellectual capacity and the sublime temperament exceeded that of the so called academics of this state. This engagement led to the build up of a discussion with Siva which spanned to the date of this tragic murder. The core contents of it were the intensive discussions debates on the life on net and the amazing dynamics cyber space created within the Sri Lankan context of ethnic conflict, peace process and reconstruction of the nation.
Siva understood trends of cyber culture remarkably he used to discuss in length the growth of this phenomenon and what potential we can harness from it. His operationability on the net displayed the strategic use of web based news services. His expertise was sought in many states both by the civil society and state on success of www.Tamilnet.com . Siva more than anybody else understood the emergence of a transnational Tamil Diaspora and the vacuum that was created with lack of a solid network. The LTTE already had a huge network going from the eighties but I would identify Tamilnet as an alternative network which gave voice to the voiceless while always standing up for the Tamil cause.

All the Tigers may have had access to the Tamilnet but all tamilnet surfers are not Tigers, thus in this context Siva exploited the ICT revolution to the maximum. This made him a very valuable asset to the Tamil interests and this took him closer to the LTTE. While Sinhala extremists perceived him to be a tiger claw in the Lions den, Tigers wanted his strategic insight and mastery of web-editing to benefit their own agenda. This man I felt sometimes may have been under huge stress because of this matter but later on the dysfunctional politics of the nation took a greater toll on him - his eastern origin, breaking away with Karuna, soft spot to the Wanni, vociferous and hurting attacks on the Sinhala chauvinists.

The writer’s whole argument is that Siva may have transcended physical life and will definitely live through in the virtual frontier. As mentioned earlier he always existed in two worlds, the assassins only took away his existence in one but may have ensured his deification in the other. The bullet may have silenced citizen Siva but may have woken up a Charismatic cyber Siva. As in virtual reality it becomes difficult to define where the boundary of the body is. We all have witnessed a simulation of a murder, the spirit, voice and passion of Siva lives safely on the NET.
சி விளையாட்டு பலியில் தீர்மானம்

2. என் காரம் பக்தர்களுக்கு அருகிலுள்ள தோற்றம் பக்தர்களின் வேலைப் பக்தர்களுக்கு அருகிலுள்ள தோற்றம் பக்தர்களின் வேலைப்

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- சிவாஜி
Sivaram

- Ananda Kumar

A flame burnt bright and clear
A brilliance that none can come near
Your life and work had no speck of fear
We mourn for you, while some fools cheer

Your thoughts and sights brought reality
So near to those of us-- lost in evil’s cruelty
We saw clear in your light of veracity
Then dawned this sad day of your trip to eternity

Rabid dogs left you by the river of death
That runs past the palace of myth
You groaned and breathed your last for truth
That your folk may have steadier pith

We mourn for you, our dear brother ‘Taraki’
The World knows your life of uncompromised bravery
A man of honor; a life of simplicity
Lived for others; may live for eternity.