

By Sugeeswara Senadhira

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The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in France received a fatal blow when the French court sentences the LTTE leader Nadarajah mathithiran alias Parithi to a seven year prison term and his deputy a six year sentence. Furthermore the French tribunal passed prison sentences to 20 other top ranking LTTEers of France and ordered immediate closure of their front organization the Coordination Center of Tamils in France (CCTF).

ist organization by the European Union.

The Defence list of witnesses included Mrs Karen Parker of USA, Mr Jean Marie Julia (France) and some of the municipal councillors of Tamil origin who were elected in the local elections of March 2008.

The Presiding Judge's summing up of the case before the questioning of the accused, stated that the case was initiated in 2006 when police officers took interest in LTTE organization, an organization which would have set up a network of money extortion involving Tamils.



tration. However they all deny any knowledge of the purpose for which the money was used, stating that the LTTE ran a separate administrative structure with schools, hospitals, etc and they didn't question the purpose for which the money was used.

However, the prosecutors have submitted many documents and transcripts of telephone conversations to prove their

## French court sentences LTTE leaders and close down Tiger proxy CCTF in Paris

The French prosecutors have demanded 7-year prison terms for the 22 defendants accused on charges of extortion, ransom collection under duress and threat, money laundering and funding a terrorist organization. The top Tiger leaders including Nadarajah mathithiran alias Parithi, Sinnathambi Suthakaran alias Sutha, Starlin Sarvarimuthu alias Ranjan and Jesudasan Paul Newman alias Kadeer.

*The case, which was filed after two years of investigations concluded last month. The first 14 LTTE cadres were arrested on April 01, 2007 and others were apprehended nearly six months later.*

"They collected funds for the LTTE during the period 2001 to 2005 during which there was an agreement between the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and the then Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe," most eminent French lawyers hired by the LTTE told the 3-Member Judiciary Bench. "Hence, they cannot be guilty of terrorism charges," they argued. However the court rejected their arguments.

The case, which was filed after two years of investigations concluded last month. The first 14 LTTE cadres were arrested on April 01, 2007 and others were apprehended nearly six months later. The charges against most of the accused include "participation in a formed group or established agreement set up for the preparation of terrorist acts as stated in Article 421-1 of the French Penal code (the Article 421-1 is attached as the annex 'A'). Financing a terrorist enterprise by supplying, gathering, collecting funds, assets and goods or giving advice intended to be used in all or in part for terrorist actions. Raising of funds for the benefit of a terrorist organization and obtaining funds through violence, under duress and threat.

The French police have also charged that the group which was under the direct orders of the head of the French branch of the LTTE (CCTF), Nadarajah Mathithiran alias Parithi for acts of violence against those opposed to the LTTE.

Leading French lawyers who represented the LTTE cadres tried to have the case thrown out at the beginning on the basis that the LTTE was not illegal in Sri Lanka when the accused were arrested, stating that Sri Lanka banned the LTTE only in January 2009, and that therefore the 'terrorist' charge is null and void. Their main point of argument was that the Sri Lankan Government headed by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe had granted legal status to the LTTE by signing the pact in February 2007.

However, the Prosecutor pointed out that that there were numerous instances where the terrorist nature of the LTTE was evident. Those included crimes against international law, suicide attacks against civilians and political personalities and coercion, intimidation and violence for fund collection during the period in which the SLG-LTTE Agreement was in force, and "therefore the terrorist charge was absolutely appropriate". It was also reminded that when the accused were arrested the LTTE was a banned terror-

They operated under cover of the CCTF, association located at Rue de Pyrénées, 75020 Paris. This association was established in 1987, as an organization purported to "preserve and spread cultural, sociological links and preservation of Tamil customs and beliefs in France, welcoming and support of Tamils living in France, promotion through cultural and sports clubs."

According to declarations for registration given on 20/02/2006 at Paris Police (Prefecture), the CCTF organization has 1 President - "Sivaramalingam" - 1 vice-President, 1 treasurer, 1 deputy treasurer and 2 secretaries. However, investigations proved the president was only a collector on the city of Chelles. Directors changed often. Some of the defendants present in this Court were themselves president or member of the committee. The association holds two bank accounts.

Nadaraja Mathithiran alias Parithi was identified as an LTTE cadre, using the alias Regan, and had also lived in India according to intelligence. Since November 2003 he was the leader of the French wing of the LTTE and manager of CCTF. He has worked with Manivannan alias Castro the international secretary of the LTTE.

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Former Minister Counsellor Sri Lankan Embassy in France. Former Counsellor in Oslo and New Delhi.

In December 2003 Mathithiran introduced himself as an accountant of the CCTF when a search was organized by the police on complaints received against the CCTF. Another accused, Thuraisami Jeyamoorthy alias Sinna Yeya was identified as the financial manager of the French wing of the LTTE. He was in charge of coordinating money collection and funds transfer as well as coordination of sports activities, during which new cadres were recruited and sent to the combat zones, in close liaison with international Secretary of the LTTE.

Presiding judge summarized that judicial inquiry opened in July 2006 on alleged criminal acts including financing of terrorist enterprise and money extortion with the aim of disturbing public order through intimidation and terror. Investigations showed Tamil diaspora was subject to imposed money collection. Subsequently most of the defendants were arrested on 01st and 02nd April 2007. Immediately police action was taken against the directors of the organization, who were then in charge of departmental collections, owner of the LTTE-controlled shop, 'Makkal Kada' which was the main centre for money collection and Sathiaruban's alias Sathia who headed the 'Team of Intimidators' which was in charge of physical violence against persons not paying.

The defendants, while accepting the role they played with in the CCTF which they describe as a sports and cultural association, have denied their membership of the LTTE. However, they did not deny that they supported the LTTE cause as 'all Tamil people did'. They also admitted that money was collected 'to help the Tamil people' and acknowledged that funds were sent to the LTTE adminis-

links with LTTE and sufficient evidence to prove that the defendants were directly involved in fund raising for a banned terrorist organization and they had resorted to violence against the Tamil civilians who had refused to pay.

## G.K. (IN MEMORIAM.)

Child of unconventionality  
Of the Peradeniya fifties,  
When burgeoning creativity,  
Made avant-garde waves,  
With the path breaking Maname  
And Sophocles' Theban plays,  
Under such renowned Gurus nonpareil,  
Of the ilk of Sarathchandran and Ludowyke.

What a wonderfully esoteric world it was!  
With idyllic evenings  
Spent languorously, dreamily,  
Watching the human tragedies  
As they unfolded, on the stage,  
To the accompaniment of the wailing flute,  
The muffled drum note and the sad choral voices,  
In the grassy amphitheater  
Which juxtaposed symmetrically,  
With the sharply curving 'ocular bend',  
Of the familiar Galahad road.

You crested the tumbling adventitious rollers,  
With your casual grace and ease,  
And then got lost in academe,  
Teaching eager undergraduates,  
Shakespeare, Brecht, Pushkin, Dostoevsky,  
Along with comparative studies  
Of Guttala Kavya and Salehithini Sandesaya.  
What rare versatility!

When alone,  
You were so alone,  
Receding deep, into your mind's  
Own dark world,  
Coming alive only in the company  
Of loved friends  
And the street theatre folk.

That's when you immersed yourself  
In a new passion for street plays,  
Where ordinary folk, acted their own lives  
And parodied the lives of the high and mighty,  
The bloated and the empty,  
So earthily and so funnily!

And your beloved students  
And street theatre friends,  
Overwhelmed with grief,  
Carried your mortal remains, shoulder high,  
Singing fittingly, snatches of song  
From your own street plays,  
Ending so poignantly,  
With the touching valedictory refrain,  
"Nil ahasa kapagiya pilihuduwa,  
Paavee yanna .....pavee yanna."

Colourful Bird!  
Soar high and free,  
In the vast realms of Eternity!

Chandra Wickramasinghe.

From Horizon 4

the letter scene when she is revealing the details of life without a mother her acting and diction was absolutely first rate. This was the only heart rending moment in the film and showed Vithanage at his best. The title music of Joseph de Saram - somewhat reminiscent of Ira Mediyama too was good.

Vithanage typically depends on the intelligence of the viewer to come out with a powerful ending. Ira Mediyama was a good example where it worked superbly. That technique surely had not worked for this film because there were so many inadequately dealt issues at stake including a firm statement by the daughter refusing to reconcile and

a potential HIV infected baby- fatherless. With three female characters Sandya Rani, Shalika (now out of wedlock) and Mallika (Rani's sister) being presented with the baby to gaze at- the film ends in the most unconvincing manner with the talk that the baby would forgive the grandmother some day.

Akasa Kusum had one or two powerful heart rending moments- but essentially it is a weak movie which never reached the sublime heights of his previous film the quintessential "Ira Mediyama". It looked as if Vithanage was back pedalling his journey as a cinema artist.