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Balasingham was disappointed with Prabhakaran - Vithyatharan

One time Editor-in-Chief of Uthayan and Sudar Oli newspapers, Nadesapillai Vithyatharan, is known as a person who has comprehensive knowledge about the inner workings of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). He also acted as a go-between at one time, taking messages between South and North. As the sixth anniversary of the end of the war will be commemorated in just two days, Ceylon Today spoke to Vithyatharan about the final days of Sri Lanka's bloody war

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Balasingham was disappointed with Prabhakaran - Vithyatharan

By Hasitha Kuruppu

One time Editor-in-Chief of Uthayan and Sudar Oli newspapers, Nadesapillai Vithyatharan, is known as a person who has comprehensive knowledge about the inner workings of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). He also acted as a go-between at one time, taking messages between South and North. As the sixth anniversary of the end of the war will be commemorated in just two days, Ceylon Today spoke to Vithyatharan about the final days of Sri Lanka's bloody war.

Following are excerpts:

?

Anton Balasingham was one of your close friends. Can you describe your friendship with him

A: I had known him for 20 years. He liked my writing style. He encouraged me when he was working at the Veerakesari newspaper. Since 2006, Balasingham was not in good terms with the LTTE. He was ill and had been keeping his distance from the LTTE.

?

Were you with him in London during his last days

A: He suffered from a cancer in the stomach, which was caused due to the drugs that he had taken after a renal transplant. I visited him several times in London. He asked me to stay with him during his last days. He said there were a lot of secrets in his head and that he thought I was the best person to share them with.

?

What are they

A: I can't reveal them to you.

?

Did he tell you secrets about Prabhakaran too

A: Yes. During those last days Balasingham was disappointed with Prabhakaran.

?

What was the reason for his disappointment

A: Balasingham had a clear vision that the Tamils could win a separate State within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. Prabhakaran did not agree with that and he did not listen to Balasingham's reasoning. Prabhakaran did not want a negotiated settlement.

Balasingham was worried about the repeated defeats of the LTTE. He was aware of the fate of the LTTE. He said, 'Mullaitivu Sigaram; Kilinochchi Thagaram' (Mullaitivu was the sky and Kilinochchi was the roofing sheets). If the sky collapsed, the roofing sheets would also collapse.

In Mullaitivu, the LTTE had to face the military on nine fronts. Balasingham said that all the leaders would be annihilated in the war.

?

Did you tell this to your LTTE associates after you returned to Sri Lanka

A: I told it to a friend in the LTTE, but he did not want to believe it. Even the senior LTTE leaders did not want to take what Balasingham said seriously. They all thought they could win the war.

?

What were Balasingham's last words to you

A: He asked me to just wait and not get involved in anything. His wife, Adele also said the same thing to me after his death.

?

What was Balasingham's role within the LTTE

A: It was Balasingham who cultivated the relationship between Prabhakaran and India's film star-turned-politician, M.G. Ramachandran (MGR). He used me too for this purpose. I was highly instrumental in planning the meeting between Balasingham and MGR. I often wrote articles about the friendship between MGR and Prabhakaran. I published them with photos of MGR, Prabhakaran and Balasingham. I wanted to show that I was part of those discussions.

?

Wasn't it the failure to agree to a federal solution to the ethnic problem that led to Balasingham and Adele to step away from the LTTE

A: Balasingham thought that he could compel Prabhakaran to agree to a federal solution. I met Bala at the hotel in Norway where discussions between the Sri Lanka Government and LTTE were being held. When I asked what was happening, he said that the man who was living in a jungle (Prabhakaran) did not understand the ways to deal with the modern world. He pointed out that international negotiations could not be done in the way that Prabhakaran wanted. He said the discussions could not be dragged on and that they had to engage in political deals.

Balasingham spoke of a federal solution but I did not understand what he meant. I thought he was talking about the Federal Party. When I questioned again, Balasingham started berating me and said I too was hung up on a separate State and that he did not want to go anywhere with me. I asked why he was going. Bala said if Prabhakaran found out about it, he would send Soosai to Norway. He said to me during lunch that he would sign a document agreeing to a federal solution. I published this news and that was how Prabhakaran found out about it. He was furious.

?

Have you met Prabhakaran

A: Yes, many times.

?

Is it true that Prabhakaran served you food that he cooked himself

A: Yes. Prabhakaran liked to cook and eat Chinese food. He could cook very well.

?

When did you meet Prabhakaran first

A: I met him in June 1989 as a reporter of an Indian magazine. I wanted to know about the news that Mahaththaya had killed Prabhakaran. I published the interview with Prabhakaran under the headline, 'Praba is Alive.' A photograph of the two of us was published alongside the article.

?

Did you meet Prabhakaran after the final phase of the war started

A: I met Prabhakaran after the Mavil Aru incident. He was quite confident. He was ready to sacrifice his life and said there would be miracles. He recalled how the LTTE overcame Operation Jayasikurui. He believed in miracles.

?

Did you meet Pottu Amman

A: One of Pottu Amman's brothers was my classmate. Pottu Amman was in a lower class. I met him at a literary association. He would not sit on a chair in front of me. Thileepan too was like that. I was a good sportsman back then. That could be the reason for gaining their respect. I met Pottu at secret locations. When the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was in Jaffna, Pottu was the LTTE commander there. I met him then.

?

What kind of a person was Pottu

A: I cannot say whether he was good or bad. The cadres who were with him may know it. He respected us. He was very loyal to Prabhakaran.

?

Was Pottu the adviser to Prabhakaran during the latter's last days

A: I cannot say exactly. I was away from the war zone by that time.

?

Have you met Prabhakaran's son, Charles Anthony

A: Yes. But I did not have much association with him.

?

Were there problems in the organization due to appointing Charles Anthony as the commander of the battalion which had a name similar to his

A: I don't see anything wrong in that appointment if he was a dedicated soldier. He fought and died in action.

?

Were you aware of Karuna's problem

A: Bala asked Prabha to keep an eye on Karuna as he was feeling discontent. But, when the issue came to a head, Bala was not in the Vanni. He could have settled the conflict if he was there.

?

What was your impression of the LTTE leaders

A: Balasingham was a god given asset to the LTTE. Pottu Amman was a dedicated fighter. Thamilselvan was a shrewd politician. Nadesan was different and I saw him as a personality with many contradictions. He married a Sinhala woman and fought for a Tamil movement.

?

Do you think Prabhakaran would be still alive if he did things differently

A: He could have listened to Balasingham's advice and agreed to a federal solution. It was a strategy. They would not have been defeated if they had acted according to the pact signed in Oslo.

?

Was the LTTE defeated due to the lack of military strength

A: Prabhakaran failed to secure essential supplies from the international arms dealers. Sri Lanka

Navy was able to travel for three days and three nights in deep sea and target LTTE ships in the international waters. By that time, there were about 1000 ships in international waters and India and other countries were backing Sri Lanka then.

Ceylon FT (22-0-news-list-business.html)

US\$ 1.5 b sovereign bond issue postponed NO INTERNATIONAL (22-94007-news-detail-us-15-b-sovereign-bond-issue-postponed-no-international-bond-issues-in-2015.html)

Ceylon Finance Today: The Central bank of Sri Lanka has decided not to proceed with any international Bond Issues this year, unless the market conditions were extremely

- CF Debenture oversubscribed (22-94002-news-detail-cf-debenture-oversubscribed.html)
- ER down Rs 1.30-1.45 in two days (22-94003-news-detail-er-down-rs-130-145-in-two-days.html)
- Money printing, 41% of liquidity (22-94004-news-detail-money-printing-41-of-liquidity.html)

CF Debenture oversubscribed (22-94002-news-detail-cf-debenture-oversubscribed.html)

The Central Finance Co PLC says that the issue of 30,000,000 Rated Secured Redeemable Debentures for the value of Rs 3,000,000,000 has been oversubscribed.

- Sunshine Holdings in ambitious US \$ 970 investm... (22-93915-news-detail-sunshine-holdings-in-ambitious-us-970-investment-strategy.html)
- JKH in 22 % PAT increase for 2015 (22-93906-news-detail-jkh-in-22-pat-increase-for-2015.html)
- CCC to review 'Customs 24x7 operation' (22-93907-news-detail-ccc-to-review-customs-24x7-operation.html)

ER down Rs 1.30-1.45 in two days (22-94003-news-detail-er-down-rs-130-145-in-two-days.html)

Ceylon Finance Today: The exchange rate (ER) continued with its rapid descent for the second day running yesterday, falling by between 60 and 80 Sri Lanka cents

- CF Debenture oversubscribed (22-94002-news-detail-cf-debenture-oversubscribed.html)
- Sunshine Holdings in ambitious US \$ 970 investm... (22-93915-news-detail-sunshine-holdings-in-ambitious-us-970-investment-strategy.html)
- JKH in 22 % PAT increase for 2015 (22-93906-news-detail-jkh-in-22-pat-increase-for-2015.html)

Money printing, 41% of liquidity (22-94004-news-detail-money-printing-41-of-liquidity.html)

Ceylon Finance Today: With money printing comprising 41.47% of excess liquidity, the weighted average rate (WAR) of overnight market repo transactions increased

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-

Focus (90-0-news-list-focus.html)

the most gruesome rape... (90-93837-news-detail-the-most-gruesome-rape.html)

"She was a sprightly young girl, bubbly and buoyant and she had an uncompromising love for all animals. She could never harm a fly even if she was forced to. To

- Body on earth no mercy mild (90-93727-news-detail-body-on-earth-no-mercy-mild.html)
- Good Samaritan turns villain - Wetlands in Mund... (90-93653-news-detail-good-samaritan-turns-villain-wetlands-in-mundalama.html)
- Reconciliation Is it on the right path? (90-93662-news-detail-reconciliation-is-it-on-the-right-path.html)

Body on earth no mercy mild (90-93727-news-detail-body-on-earth-no-mercy-mild.html)

Travelling along Kynsey Road, Colombo, the story of the surrounding is an opportunity often missed. The road lined by shady trees is also home to Carey College

- Good Samaritan turns villain - Wetlands in Mund... (90-93653-news-detail-good-samaritan-turns-villain-wetlands-in-mundalama.html)
- Reconciliation Is it on the right path? (90-93662-news-detail-reconciliation-is-it-on-the-right-path.html)
- The most brutal northern murder - Vithya breath... (90-93663-news-detail-the-most-brutal-northern-murder-vithya-breathed-her-last-in-the-shadows-of-the-temple-of-goddess-kannagi.html)

Good Samaritan turns villain - Wetlands in Mundalama (90-93653-news-detail-good-samaritan-turns-villain-wetlands-in-mundalama.html)

Residents of Pulichchankulama – a wetland area in the Mundalama Divisional Secretariat Division in Puttalam – thought that they are being blessed when

- F C I D opens can of worms - Sajin Misappropria... (90-93549-news-detail-f-c-i-d-opens-can-of-worms-sajin-misappropriated-20-presidential-vehicles.html)
- Fathima's fate (90-93393-news-detail-fathimas-fate.html)
- Murder on Vesak Poya (90-93394-news-detail-murder-on-vesak-poya.html)

Reconciliation Is it on the right path? (90-93662-news-detail-reconciliation-is-it-on-the-right-path.html)

The government of Sri Lanka is gearing up to face the UNHRC during the 2015 September Review in Geneva. It's quite like being caught on the horns of a dilemma,

- Good Samaritan turns villain - Wetlands in Mund... (90-93653-news-detail-good-samaritan-turns-villain-wetlands-in-mundalama.html)
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