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## 'MANTHAN' Monthly

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## Dear Reader :

Namaskar !

Apart from a round-up of the more basic world news, you will find only three articles in this issue. But each of them is very special in its own way.

First of all comes the illustrated report on the DRI Shivir in Beed. Here more than a thousand college students laboured for a whole month to de-silt a tank. It was a unique effort in people's participation in rural reconstruction.

And then there is the report on the Sinhala-Tamil problem in Lanka. The Press inevitably reports mostly day-to-day happenings. It rarely goes into the why and how of a problem. But this report goes deep into the matter. It throws light on the 'racial', religious, cultural and political factors that divide the two societies. A problem cannot be properly tackled unless it is first understood in all its dimensions. And this article does just that, briefly but comprehensively.

And then there is "A Page from history". This one deals with the Arab invasion of India, in the Sindh region. It is wholly based on Arab sources. And it makes proud reading for any Indian.

Next month we will give you another 'page from history'—India at the time of Mahmud Ghazni's invasion—and a brilliant piece on the power and importance of Poetry.

Brotherly yours,  
'M'

## Sharam Sadhana Shivir, Sondara

**EVEN  
MARATHWADA  
CAN  
BECOME  
A LAND  
OF  
PLENTY**



*Nanaji surveying the field*

PRACTICALLY every year Marathwada suffers famine conditions. This big area consisting of seven districts, with a population of ninety-seven lakhs, is part and parcel of Maharashtra, which is one of the more industrialised, educated and efficiently run states. According to a recent government survey, 73 lakh people are victims of famine this year. Absolute scarcity of water is the main problem of this area. Beed district in Marathwada is the worst sufferer of this water famine during this age of computerisation and air travel. There is not even one mile of railway line in this district, and so thousands of people here have not seen even a railway train !

The land here is rocky, and the terrain, hilly. Here and there one can

find spots of greenery. But total annual rainfall ranges between seven and twelve inches. And ground-water level is going down all the time. Wells in this region are able to provide drinking water only during July, August, September and October. For the rest of the year, government has to provide drinking water to almost all villages by tankers. Although it is not a permanent solution of the problem, crores of rupees have to be spent every year on this single item alone. As the ground-water level is continuously going down, all methods adopted for utilising the ground-water, go waste after a year or two. So the only permanent remedy is to raise the ground-water level. For this purpose, percolation tanks have to be created to store the rain water. This remedy is not the invention of the



Young College

on Sondara tank

Deendayal Research Institute; it has always been known to this area. Therefore, the Government of Maharashtra has built hundreds of such percolation tanks, and more of them are under construction. But that will not suffice. It is very necessary to plant thousands of trees in the catchment area of each of these tanks; otherwise the rain water will come rushing from the bare hills, eroding the soil and filling up the tank with silt. Unfortunately this aspect has been totally neglected. The tanks which were constructed only 15 to 20 years ago, do not have a single tree in their catchment areas, and all these tanks are now full of silt. Their water storage capacity is going down every year and the very purpose of these tanks has been defeated.

The sediment accumulated in these tanks is very good soil, but Government has no plans to utilise it; otherwise the Government could have encouraged the farmers in the vicinity of these tanks to take out the silt and spread it over their land to improve its soil quality. Such an effort would not only have increased the fertility of the farms around the tanks,

but maintained the depth of tanks and so stored more water. And that in turn would have percolated all round, to raise the ground-water level in the whole area.

Unfortunately the government machinery does not involve the people in developmental activities. If Government had utilised the energies of the people in general, and of the youth in particular, the expenditure on development would have been less, and actual development would have been manifold.

Our country has become free after a long time. It cannot be developed only on the basis of money-power and bureaucratic control. Until and unless the youth of the country picks up the challenge and takes initiative in the restructuring of society and the re-ordering of national economy, no development plans can be effective. The administration can assist in this effort with financial resources and expert advice. But they cannot be the main instrument in the growth of the economy. During the last 40 years of Independence, this vital reservoir of People's Power has been totally neglected. Before Independence the leadership did

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Sondara tank

not bank on money power; but after independence, money has become the sole instrument. Even for the service of the people, one expects a handsome remuneration. Our legislators not only draw a salary and sundry allowances, they have even given themselves a life-long pension. In this situation, it is very difficult for the people in general, and the youth in particular, to think in terms of selfless service. This new type of leadership in Independent India cannot inspire anybody to serve the masses.

But the Deendayal Research Institute is convinced that *sanskars* (wholesome influences) of thousands of years, fostering selfless service, cannot be cancelled out by the last 40 years of self-aggrandisement. The need of the hour is to rouse the spirit of patriotism and translate it into day-to-day life. For this purpose a new and youthful leadership will have to be developed. With this very object in mind, the Deendayal Research Institute took a people's project directly to the people.

All Beed is dry, but the Patoda and

Ashti talukas are worst affected by the drought situation. That is why the Deendayal Research Institute made a remote obscure village, Domri, in Patoda taluk, the centre of its experimentation. Two kilometres from Domri, there is the Sondara percolation tank. This tank was developed by the government during the famine of 1972. Surprisingly enough, during the last 15 years, not a single tree was planted in its catchment area. Every year the silt got accumulated in the tank. The whole tank is a model of negligence. The Deendayal Research Institute studied the situation thoroughly during the last two years. There are half a dozen villages in the vicinity of this tank. But children of school-going age take no interest in education. They are so poor, they drop out of school at a tender age, to go and graze cattle, sheep and goats. A worker of the Deendayal Research Institute, a graduate of Domri village, Shri Sudam Bhondwe, collected these boys and started a Gurukul, on the banks of the Sondara percolation tank in July last. Twenty-two boys are now regularly studying in this residential school. Their progress in studies is praise-worthy. Even during the

## When the People, the Government and Businessmen joined hands

festivals, they do not go home; they find life in the Gurukul more interesting and purposeful. The parents of these boys are happy and now the gurukul has become the nucleus for this new project.

In March 1987, the Deendayal Research Institute decided to restore the Sondara tank as a model percolation tank. For this purpose the Institute based its programme on a combination of three resources :

1. Youth Power of the district;
2. Administrative machinery of the Government; and
3. Monetary help from the urban rich.

We decided to invite the youth in the age group of 15-40 years to join the Dhanyata Abhiyan and come to Sondara and work on this project from May 1 to May 31, 1987. The work to be done by these youths was :

1. Digging up the silt in the tank ;
2. Taking out the silt to neighbouring farms ;
3. Spreading of silt in these farms and levelling it;
4. Raising of stonewalls, to prevent the silt from flowing back to the tank during the rains;
5. Digging of pits on the ranges around the tank ; and
6. Planting trees in the catchment area in the coming rainy season.

It was also made clear that no wages or remuneration of any kind or prizes or certificates will be given to participants.

Service is its own reward, and they have to come and work on this project with the feeling that "this is my own society. Their problems are my own problems; solving these problems is my own duty." The camp was named "Shram Sadhana Shivir."

The tasks left to the administration were :

- They should repair the damaged walls of the tank before May 1 ;
- Prepare a kutchra road 2 km. long from Domri village to Sondara percolation tank site ;
- Provide water for drinking, washing and other purposes for this camp for the whole month of May ;
- Provide the implements for digging up the silt, carrying it to the farms and spreading it out there ;
- Provide a temporary primary health centre for the campers.

The Institute is happy that the government machinery did this job in time and with great efficiency. Our grateful thanks to the District Administration.

Resources were required to bring in boys and girls to the Sondara tank site from different centres in the district and send them back at the end of the month:

- Arrange residential facilities for boys and girls, separately ;
- Provide lighting arrangements and loud-speaker facilities ;
- provide tea, breakfast and two meals a day;
- Prepare material for publicity.



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*Villagers bringing chapatis for campers*

The Institute did collect some foodgrains from the local villagers, but since the number of our workers was limited, they had to concentrate on mobilising the youth of the district to participate in the camp. They could not, therefore, collect the foodgrains in required quantities. We, therefore, decided to request some industrialists of Bombay to finance this project. It is heartening to note that the Rallis India Company, led by Shri Darbari Seth, appreciated the project and donated Rs. 4 lakhs. In the same way the chairman of Bombay Dyeing, Mr. Nusli Wadia, came forward to help finance the camp. Many other industrialists also took interest and helped us financially. The secretary of the Bombay unit of DRI, Shri Jayanarayan Rathi, Shri Vithalbhaji Thakkar and Shri Kantibhai Shroff worked hard to collect financial help from various parties.

More important help came from the chairman of Telco, Shri Somant Mulgaonkar. He on his own realised the importance of the project and provided an excavator with two tips, with their operators. Without this help, it would have been very difficult for the young collegians to complete the job.

The Institute notes with satisfaction that all these—the Government, the Public and the Business Community—worked together very smoothly and efficiently and the results achieved are the joint product of this combined effort.

The workers of the Institute, led by the chairman of the Institute, Shri Nana Deshmukh, approached the local youth by visiting several villages in the district. The Institute instructed the

## *Here hundreds of youngsters lived and worked together as one family*

boys and girls in the economic situation in the district and the purpose of Sondara project. It is a matter of joy that the youth of the district responded positively to social work. They seemed to have been waiting for just such a task. Not many would have thought it possible that college boys and girls would come forward for the hard work, and that too in the hot month of May.

The month of May is marked by many marriage ceremonies. In many cases these marriages were taking place in the families of the campers. There were also many competitive examinations for bank jobs etc, in this very month. In spite of all these difficulties, boys and girls were keen to join the Shivar and as many as 1817 of them worked on this project for anything from ten to thirty-one days. The ratio of boys to girls was two-thirds boys and one-third girls. 360 boys and girls remained in the camp for the whole month.

It is heartening to note that boys and girls from all sections participated in this campaign. They all lived together as one family. They participated in every activity with all their heart. These boys and girls have had no previous training or experience in social work by any institution or organisation. Many boys and girls had never left home to participate in any community programme. In spite of that, all of them thoroughly enjoyed living and labouring together with new friends. There was not a single unpleasant incident.

Only living arrangements at night and bath and toilet were separate for boys

and girls; otherwise all the programmes were conducted together by boys and girls. Keeping young boys and girls together for a month is not desirable: that was the advice of many experienced social workers. But the Deendayal Research Institute was, and is, of the considered opinion that if boys and girls come together to work for some noble cause, nothing untoward will happen. It was therefore decided to allow these boys and girls to live and work together for a whole month. The Institute is proud of the exemplary behaviour of these boys and girls. Though they were together in big numbers, no incident took place in the camp. All of them worked enthusiastically and remained together as members of a family. Everybody used to finish the allotted task in time. Not only that, living and working together gave them an opportunity to discuss amongst themselves social and national problems.

During this period of one month, difficulties did arise. On the evening of May 13, we had to face a big storm followed by a heavy downpour. The residential arrangements made with hessian and tarpaulin, gave way. Electricity went off. But even then nobody was perturbed. There were some mothers with small children. The Institute had to take them and some girls to Deeni village, to protect them from any heavy showers in the night. All the rest of us faced the inclement weather for the whole night, because it stopped raining only in the morning, at 2-30 a.m. Though the

*(Continued on page 32)*

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## The Inside story of Sinhala-Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka

NOT A DAY PASSES but there are serious cases of violence in Lanka. Colombo blames Tamilians—and India; and Tamils blame Colombo—and the Sinhalese. What is the genesis of this whole bloody business? In one word, History.

The vast bulk of the Lankan people have gone from different parts of India at different times. The Tamils have of course gone from Tamil Nadu. The Sinhalese claim to have come from Bengal side. The Sinhalese find themselves lighter of shade and claim that they are 'Aryans', whatever that might mean. In the words of Anagarika Dharmapala, the Sinhala ideologue, Tamils are "infidels of degraded race."

The Tamils speak Tamil; the Sinhalese speak Sinhala. That becomes a second point of differentiation.

There was a time when almost all India and all Lanka had gone Buddhist. But in the seventh century, Sanatan Dharma staged a come-back. Tamil Nadu went Saivite—and so did Lanka Tamils; but Lanka Sinhalese stayed Buddhist. That became a third point of difference.

Of course, all these differences are rooted more in fiction than in fact. For one thing Aryan and Dravidian are not 'races' but regional cultures and languages. The concept of Aryan and Dravidian as "races" was invented for the first time by the British for their own imperial purposes. And so even honest western scholars promptly rejected the theory. Max Muller, who had first been carried away by it, corrected himself to

say: "Aryan, in scientific language, is utterly inapplicable to race... It means language and nothing but language." (Bibliography of words and the Home of Aryans, London 1888, PP 120-1).

And as for fair skin, less said the better. Sinhala hero Dutugamunu's father Tissa, was known as 'Kavantissa', 'Tissa the crow-coloured.' And North Lanka was, for 400 years—from thirteenth to the seventeenth century—ruled by a dynasty founded by a Tamilian of Pandya kingdom, known as 'Arya Chakravarti'.

The Sinhalese claim to have come from Bengal by boat—just like Pilgrim Fathers—under the leadership of King Vijaya, some 2500 years ago. But Vijaya had to encounter people who were already there in Lanka. In the Mahavamsa epic, these local inhabitants are referred to as nagas and yakkhas (yakshas?) with supernatural powers. And according to the same classic, the Sinhalese are the progeny of Vijaya's Indian retinue and maidens from Madurai in the South. The Sinhala kings and noble families in later times too continued to inter-marry with people of South India. Moreover, there was much immigration to southern areas of Sri Lanka from South India from the thirteenth to the 18th centuries, and these immigrants, though Dravidian in origin, adopted the customs of Sri Lanka and also came to be called Sinhalese. This is fairly well established by social historians. Thus it would appear that the Sinhalese today are a mixture of ethnic groups migrating from India. Except perhaps for the oldest stratum of settlers prior to 500 B.C., almost all



## *The Sinhalese believe that Lanka was gifted to them by Buddha for 5500 years*

subsequent settlers in Sri Lanka came from South India, mostly from Tamil Nadu, Orissa, and Kerala and quickly became Sinhialized. In fact, some of the most vociferously anti-Tamil castes among the Sinhalese were post-fifteenth-century migrants from South India. By contrast, the Tamils of Jaffna and the East Coast have been in Sri Lanka from at least the tenth to the fourteenth century A.D., if not earlier. As for the Sinhala language, its vocabulary is predominantly Sanskritic and it has a very close affinity, both in grammar and syntax, to Tamil.

Even in the realm of religion, the two are not all that different. The South Indian influence is omnipresent among Buddhists. On a level of popular religiosity, Buddhists propitiate Hindu gods like Vishnu and Skanda, the son of Shiva. However the Buddhists view these gods as totally subservient to the Buddha, while the Tamils view the Buddha as an avatar of Vishnu. Kinship and marriage patterns among the Sinhalese are also part of a larger Dravidian pattern. It is these cultural and sub-doctrinal similarities that permitted the assimilation of South Indians through long periods of historical time, into the Sinhalese Buddhist social structure. However, Sinhalese chauvinists have convinced themselves that Lanka is Dhamma Dvipa—*island of Dharma*—that they are the chosen people, and that the Buddha has given them exclusive possession of Lanka for 5500 years.

Interestingly enough, the Tamil-Sinhala conflict is of quite recent origin. Earlier, the Sinhalese were opposed first

to Christians, later to Muslims, and later still to Malayalis. And all these conflicts had their roots in the factors and forces introduced by British rule.

With British rule came missionaries, who converted many Lankans, both Sinhalese and Tamilian. These converts soon became a privileged class. Missionaries started schools. Tamils joined these schools more readily than did the Sinhalese. As a result the Tamils gained in education and employment. As trade and industry grew, knowledge of English became an asset. Here again, therefore, the Christians, the Tamils and the Muslims did better. (Arabi Pasha, an Egyptian settler, had done much for Muslim education in Lanka.)

The Sinhalese resented all this. However, since the Tamil masses were as poor as the Sinhalese masses, and Christians were the top dogs, Sinhalese anger was directed first and foremost against Christians. Their target was not foreign rule but foreign missionaries. There was popular agitation against Christians in the press. In pamphlets, some blasphemous, others scurrilous, and in novels where the heroes were virtuous Buddhists and the villains were Christians, Christianity was ridiculed, missionaries were referred to as 'enemies' teaching a 'degrading superstition' and complaints were made against 'ignorant catechists who infest our streets.' The first issue of the 'Ceylon Free-thinker,' which appeared in 1883, had an article on 'The Evil Results of Missionary Education'.

This ideological climate and the emotions generated by the revivalist move-

ment, led to the first riot in Sri Lanka—a riot between Buddhist Kotahena, Colombo militant bhikshu, Manda whose temple Lucia's Cathedral, hadist ceremonies which ter Week. The Cat provocation and a the street fighting c 30 were injured, inc In the next phase of tion during the early list leaders such as pala and Walisinha the lead. Christianit cause of a multitu society and a 'Go Buddhist culture w there was no crime, ness.

Competition in in understanding e rivalry in Sri Lanka of the 19th century, was dominated an British as well Indian merchant c of Sinhala, Sri Lar lims had also arise base of the Mus trade, the Shri Lan derived their wealth vation and from se to the commercial counterparts accum renting, graphite m However, the Sinh Tamils were not st

ment, led to the first violent communal riot in Sri Lanka's modern history—the riot between Buddhists and Catholics in Kotahena, Colombo, in April 1883. The militant bhikshu, Migettuwatte Gunananda whose temple was close to St. Lucia's Cathedral, had organised Buddhist ceremonies which coincided with Easter Week. The Catholics took this as provocation and a serious riot occurred; the street fighting caused one death and 30 were injured, including 12 policemen. In the next phase of anti-Christian agitation during the early 20th century, revivalist leaders such as Anagarika Dharmapala and Walsinha Harischandra took the lead. Christianity was said to be the cause of a multitude of evils affecting society and a 'Golden Age' of Sinhala Buddhist culture was described, where there was no crime, violence or drunkenness.

Competition in trade is a key element in understanding ethnic and communal rivalry in Sri Lanka. By the last quarter of the 19th century, the colonial economy was dominated and controlled by the British as well as North and South Indian merchant capital. A bourgeoisie of Sinhala, Sri Lanka Tamils and Muslims had also arisen. While the economic base of the Muslim bourgeoisie was trade, the Shri Lankan Tamil bourgeoisie derived their wealth from plantation cultivation and from services, mainly financial to the commercial sector; their Sinhala counterparts accumulated wealth in liquor renting, graphite mining and plantations. However, the Sinhalese and Sri Lanka Tamils were not strong enough to com-

pete with the British, Borahs, Sindhis, Parsis, Chettiars and Muslims in the export-import trade and in the large retail trade. Thus, as an alternative, members of these two economically weak groups, competed for entry into the professions and government service. However, the small Sinhala traders were to become a vociferous pressure group which directed its hostility against 'alien' traders.

The weakness of the Sinhala and Sri Lanka Tamil entrepreneurs can be seen from the following figures taken from Fergusson Directory. In 1863, there were 33 leading merchants, exporters and importers of whom 27 were Europeans, 4 were Indians from Bombay, the only two Sri Lankans being P.B. Fernando and E. Nannytamby of Jaffna. By 1880, Colombo's retail Pettah trade was dominated by 86 Chetty and 64 Muslim firms, with only a handful of Sinhalese traders such as H. Don Carolis (furniture) and N.S. Fernando (stationery). By the 1890's new groups of Muslim traders from Gujarat—Borahs, Khojas and Memons—broke into the import-export trade, and became the new merchant princes who played a collaborative role as junior partners of the British.

During this period, Dharampala's attacks were specifically directed against Muslim traders. In 1915 he wrote: "The Muhammedans, an alien people...by Shylockian methods became prosperous like the Jews. The Sinhalese sons of the soil, whose ancestors for 2358 years had shed rivers of blood to keep the country free from alien invaders, are in the eyes of

### *The Sinhalese first quarrelled with Roman Catholics*

## *Hundreds died in the 1915 Sinhala-Muslim riots*

the British only vagabonds. The alien South Indian Mohammedan comes to Ceylon, sees the neglected villagers, without any experience in trade...and the result is that the Mohammedan thrives and the son of the soil goes to the wall."

In the 1915 Sinhala-Muslim conflagration, hundreds died in the rioting or in the 'summary justice' meted out by British troops, under Martial Law.

The reaction of Anagarika Dharmapala to these riots was revealing. Writing a month after the events, he said: "What the German is to the Britisher...the Muhammedan is to the Sinhalese. He is an alien to the Sinhalese by religion, race and language. To the Sinhalese, without Buddhism, death is preferable. The British officials may shoot, hang, quarter, imprison or do anything to the Sinhalese, but there will always be bad blood between the Moors and the Sinhalese. The peaceful Sinhalese have at last shown that they can no longer bear the insult of the alien. The whole nation in one day has risen against the Moor people. The causes are economic and spiritual."

However, it soon became clear to thinking people that the real conflict was between the rich and the poor, and not between Buddhists, Christians and Muslims. A strong movement of the working class came up. Starting in 1890, it gathered strength for forty long years. An important joint activity of the period was the attempt, in 1919, to unionise the railway workers. This inaugural meeting of 700 workers was presided over by

Armand de Souza, a leading journalist and political activist of Goan origin. It is interesting to note that the meeting was trilingual—C.H.Z. Fernando addressing the workers in Sinhalese, Peri Sundaram in Tamil and C.M. Jacob in Malayalam.

One of the Ceylon Labour Union's biggest trade union successes of the 1920's was the port strike of 1927, when ethnic solidarity proved to be a key factor in the struggle. The port workers consisted of Sinhalese, Tamils and Malayalis—the minorities forming a large proportion of the unskilled labour force. The 13,000 strikers, who held out for three weeks, demanded wage increases; they were supported by donations of money and food from other sections of the working-class and on this occasion, workers brought from India as 'blacklegs' refused to replace the strikers. The commercial life of the country was affected adversely by the strike and the government was forced to resort to arbitration, as a result of which, the workers gained significant wage increases and more time off for meals.

However, when the Great Depression came in the Thirties, throwing large numbers of workers out of job, interested parties raised sectarian issues to divert workers' attention. Instead of explaining the Depression as the crisis of capitalism in the West, local chauvinists and capitalists turned the Sinhala workers' wrath against Malayali workers! The Sinhalese were told that Malayalis were holding the jobs that should rightfully go to them. The Malayalis, most of whom

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came from Cochin, were now contemptuously referred to as 'Kochchiyas.' In 1930, in tones reminiscent of Anagarika Dharmapala, the 'Viraya' blamed the decline of the Sinhalese on the 'white man, Coast Moors, Bohras and Malayalis' and this campaign increased in intensity concentrating, in subsequent years, mainly on the Malayalis.

When, A.K. Gopalan, a well-known Communist leader from Kerala, visited Lanka in 1939 to forge Leftist unity, he personally experienced the prevalent anti-Malayali hostility, including unsuccessful attempts by ruffians to break up his meeting at Wellawatte and anti-Malayali plays, songs and incidents which he witnessed. In later years, he noted in his autobiography: 'I arrived in Sri Lanka at a dangerous time. Sinhala-Malayali enmity had reached its zenith. Interestingly enough, while the Sinhala chauvinists agitated against urban labour from India, they were all for Indian rural labour to work in their tea gardens! However, the British Government of India retaliated against the repatriation of Keralaite urban labour from Lanka, by banning any more Indian Tamil rural labour from being supplied to Lanka.'

The Sinhala hostility to Tamils, as we know it today, started only after the independence of Lanka, in 1948. Earlier, Ananda Coomaraswamy, a Tamil Lankan, had done great service to Sinhala culture by penning his monumental 'Sinhalese Mediaeval Art'. The Kumarappa Brothers of our Gandhian movement were Lanka Tamil gifts to India. After

Independence all that was forgotten.

The issue is fairly complex. The Tamil kingdom of Jaffna had ceased to be an independent unit in the sixteenth century when it was captured by the Portuguese and then by the Dutch. The Sinhala-Buddhist Kingdom in the interior of the island remained independent till 1815, when it was taken by the British. The Tamils of the East Coast and part of north-central province traditionally owed suzerainty to the Sinhalese kings of Kandy and trade routes connected the east coast with the kingdom of Kandy. Sinhalese Tamil intermarriage exceptional in the North, was accepted and practised in the East Coast until recent times. When the British took over Lanka, they introduced yet another complexity. They brought in large numbers of South Indian tribal and often low status groups as coolies on the tea plantations of the central highlands. Thus there were three Tamil-Hindu zones well established by the end of the nineteenth century: in the north in the east and in the central highlands. Though outsiders, (as well as some Sinhalese) see the Tamil problem as one, the internal reality is very different. The northern Tamils were much more orthodox Hindu than Tamils elsewhere, and were strongly patrilineal; the East Coast Tamils came from Kerala and were divided into matrilineal clans, while the Tamils of the central provinces were recently introduced groups, from South India, alienated from both the other groups. Besides, they were thrust into the midst of a surrounding Sinhalese population from whom, too, they were alienated.

A.K. Gopalan saw Sinhala Malayali enmity at its height

## Why Tamilians are prominent in Engineering & Accountancy

There are other complications: Lanka is 74% Sinhala but only 67% Buddhist; the remaining Sinhalese being Christian. Tamil speakers are 27% of the population, but only 17% of them are Hindu, the rest being Christian or Muslim. Jaffna is 92% Tamil and the Eastern Province is 68% Tamil. Christian Tamils are as active as Hindus, if not more so, than Hindu Tamils; Tamil Muslims are sympathetic to the Tamil cause, but not so active.

Under British rule, Tamils took to English education more enthusiastically than the Sinhalese. They, therefore, became more prominent in education, employment and professions. Today that is no longer the position. But the Sinhalese continue to think that Tamils have too big a cut of the Lanka cake. A few facts will illustrate the situation. In the state and corporate sector, Sinhalese are 82%, Tamils 13%, others 5%. In the Universities, Sinhalese are 74%. Educated unemployment is 29% among Sinhalese and as high as 42% among Tamils.

Tamils, however, are 22% in Accountancy and 42% in Engineering. This is so in spite of preference given to Sinhalese. Reason: Tamil-majority Jaffna is not very fertile. In addition it has been neglected. Only 2.6% of Lanka's capital expenditure has been made in Jaffna. Per capita investment in Jaffna is only half the national average. No foreign aid has ever been utilized in Jaffna. On top of this, Tamils are kept out of civil and military services more and more. In 1970

Tamils were only 5% in the Ceylon Administrative Service, and this percentage has been continuously declining. For example in 1978 there was not a single Tamil recruit to CAS! For all these reasons, bright young Tamils have been concentrating on the professions. (This has been the case everywhere in the world. Because Jews in Europe were not allowed to own land or join the army, they entered business and the professions, and outshone all others in those fields.)

During the period of state regulation of the economy, a section of Sinhala merchants who started life as petty traders were able to rise up to the top as industrialists. By the mid-seventies, these groups were well established in business, often exporting their products to the international market. The introduction of the new so-called liberal economic policy by Jayawardene, on the lines of Reagan, did not adversely affect these well-established enterprises; but immediately below them was a fairly widespread stratum of Sinhala entrepreneurs who were adversely affected. Small industrialists who were manufacturing light industrial products for the domestic market, among whom Sinhala businessmen predominated, were badly affected by the liberal import policy which opened up hitherto captive markets to foreign competition; many of these small enterprises were compelled to close down.

It is possible to substantiate the ruination of small industries by taking the case of match-making industry. Immediately on the aftermath of the removal of

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import controls, large quantities of boxes of matches were imported from China and India. The quality of these matches was superior to those manufactured locally, but there was no significant price difference. Consequently, the imported matches captured the domestic market, driving away the local product. The dozen or so small manufacturers had no choice but to close down their work-places. But the Ceylon Match Company Limited, which was the only firm in this line of business with a substantial capital base and foreign support, was able to fight back.

Simultaneously, the urban poor lost their welfare facilities, thanks, again, to Jayawardene's Reaganomics.

The Sinhala big businessmen—Upali Group, Dasa Group, B. P. de Silva Group, Maliban Group, Nawaloka enterprises, Ebert Silva, De Soysa's Associated Industries, Wijewardene Group etc.—have tried to turn the frustrations of the Sinhala middle and poor classes against Tamils. And the Sinhala politicians have been only too willing to sway the Sinhala voters by denouncing the Tamilian—and not the rich of all communities—as the villain of the piece. The old united trade unions have been replaced by the Sinhala chauvinist Jatika SevaKa Sangamaya.

The issue of autonomy for Tamil areas is nothing new.

With the democratisation of political life through universal franchise and the expansion of education in Sinhala and

Tamil, the language issue was frequently discussed in the 1940s. The main political leaders of the time were willing to espouse the cause of both languages as official languages. For example, in 1944 J. T. Jayawardene had proposed that Sinhala be made the official language 'within a reasonable number of years': this was amended to include Tamil and, by 27 to 2 votes, it was decided to recommend that Sinhala and Tamil be made the official languages, as well as languages for school instruction, public service examinations and legislative proceedings. It was only when language became a lever for gaining political power, that the leadership changed its earlier position on this issue. Bandaranaike won the 1956 election on "Sinhala Only" issue. In the debate in Parliament, Leslie Goonwardena attributed the lack of concern for minority opinion to the lack of a developed national consciousness in Sri Lanka.

"There is the danger of the division of the country...if those people...feel that a grave and irreparable injustice is done to them, there is a possibility of their deciding even to break away from the rest, of the country." (Hansard 8 June 1956)

Similarly Colvin R. de Silva argued forcefully that while the acceptance of parity of languages was the road to 'freedom of our nation and the unity of its components', 'Sinhala Only' would lead to unforeseen consequences:

"Two torn little bleeding states may yet arise out of one little state... ready for the imperialists to mop up that

*Jayawardene's 'Reaganomics' have hurt small Sinhala traders*

## How two Lanka Premiers went back on their word

which imperialism has, only recently disgorged." (Hansard, 14 June 1956).

Anil Moonesinghe contrasted the 1947 and 1952 elections, which had no slogans to 'save the Sinhala language' with that of 1956, in which it had become the main slogan. "How can one account for this except by the fact that certain people made this an election issue because they wanted to 'come to power? For them Socialism is confined to one section of the people, to one community. I have never witnessed this type of Socialism except the Socialism of Pilsudski, Hitler and Mussolini." (Hansard 11 June 1956)

A democratic demand had been transformed into an anti-democratic assault on minority rights, and the Sinhala leaders were able to delude the Sinhala public that a progressive step forward had been achieved. Instead, what happened then was quick descent into ethnic violence, which erupted even as the Bill was being discussed. Worse was to follow: This violence hit the Prime Minister himself, when a Buddhist monk shot Bandaranaike dead. The Bill was carried by 66 votes to 29.

Just to reduce in Tamil representation in the Lanka Parliament, lakhs of Tamil tea labourers were declared non-citizens. And New Delhi compounded the problem when, by the Shastri-Sirimao Pact, it agreed to leave lakhs of people as stateless citizens—legally belonging neither to India nor to Lanka. Later, in 1971, when Leftists revolted in Lanka, India lent troops to Colombo to restore order. But Colombo does not retaliate.

When Pakistan hijacked and burnt an Indian plane in Lahore, India forbade Pakistani flights over Indian territory. But Lanka allowed, Pakistan to ferry soldiers to Dhaka, via Colombo, on the eve of 1971 war for the liberation of Bangladesh!

And of course, all this while the anti-Tamil hysteria has been allowed to grow. In January 1974, police used force against the crowd at the scene of a Tamil cultural show held at the closing session of the prestigious conference of the International Association of Tamil Research. Eight persons died. In May 1981, Jaffna Public Library was burnt down by outside goondas, destroying priceless manuscripts pertaining to the history of Lanka and its peoples, while the Police looked the other way. In yet another incident, artistes and writers were beaten up at a meeting called to protest their being kept out by Ceylon Radio. In a public meeting held in 1982, by an inter-religious organization, a police officer seized leaflets that were being distributed. A Buddhist clergyman filed a suit against the police officer. The court held that the police officer had violated the fundamental rights of the petitioner and decreed that damages and costs be directly paid by him. The cabinet, however, promoted this police officer and ordered that the costs and damages be paid out of public funds! This was done, the government stated, so that "public officers should do their jobs without fear of consequences from adverse court decisions."

A senior left politician, Mrs. Vivienne Gunawardene, complained of assault and

unlawful arrest by the police during a march to the American embassy in Colombo in protest against the nuclearization of the military base at Diego Garcia. The Supreme Court, presided over by three judges, held that her arrest was unlawful and unconstitutional and ordered that the state pay her compensation. On the very day the judgement was issued, the Cabinet presided over by the President promoted one police officer involved in the case. A few days later practically all newspapers headlined the sensational news that thugs in government-owned buses paraded outside the homes of the three judges and shouted obscenities at them. The police were conveniently "not available" when the judges tried to contact them.

South Africa denounces all opponents of Apartheid as "Communists"; Lanka dubs all opponents of its anti-Tamil and anti-India policy as 'Naxalites'; it then feels free to do to them what it will.

All limits, however, were crossed when hell was let loose against Tamils in Colombo in 1983. Trouble started in a big way on the night of July 24; but curfew was not imposed until 5 PM the following day. Neither the President nor the Prime Minister used either the Radio or the TV to exhort the people to calm down. And when the President took to the air five days later, he had no word of sympathy for the Tamils. Neither the President nor any minister visited the 70,000 Tamils huddled in the misery of refugee camps.

This is the background against which moderate Tamils ask for a federal set-up

and youthful Tamils ask for partition. But Colombo refuses to consider either the one or the other.

Lanka is a small island country. It is, therefore, natural that it should be one state. But a state can subsist only on the basis of justice and goodwill. If Sinhalese think that Tamils are exploiting them, and Tamils feel that Sinhalese are oppressing them, the basis for co-existence in a single state evaporates.

In this situation, the least that Colombo can do is to give autonomy to Tamil areas. And such an Agreement should be witnessed the Lanka Leader of Opposition and by the Prime Minister of India as twin guarantors, that it shall be implemented honestly. After all if little Switzerland can have separate autonomous cantons catering to its German, French, Italian and other constituents, why can't Lanka have the same? If the French Quebec in Canada can have autonomy, why not Tamil areas in Lanka? If tribal Southern Sudan can have autonomy in a Sudan dominated by northern Muslims, why can't Tamils have the same? Actually these ideas have been circulating since the beginning of the twentieth century. As early as 1925, SWRD Bandaranaike himself put forward a federal structure of government for Sri Lanka with nine separate regional units. Before him the Kandyan leaders in the Ceylon Congress also put forward ideas for a federal structure consisting of three units. In 1940, the colonial government introduced Provincial Councils but, though approved in Parliament, they

## *Lanka's partiality for Police and prejudice against Judges*



## Lanka is befriending all the enemies of India

were not implemented.

Autonomy for Tamil areas has become a must because Tamils just don't trust Colombo any more. In 1957, Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike negotiated an agreement with S.J.V. Chelvanayakam, the top Tamil leader. This agreement, better known as the Bandaranaike Chelvanayakam Pact, was a comprehensive Regional Autonomy solution. In 1965, Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake, leader of U.N.P., concluded a similar agreement with S.J.V. Chelvanayakam. But both these agreements were not implemented due to the strong opposition to them in the Sinhala south. Neither S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike nor Dudley Senanayake, two of the foremost leaders of the country and of the Sinhalese, thought the regional autonomy would harm the interests of the country they led, and were responsible to. Rather they thought that regional autonomy was the best device to strengthen the unity of the country and its communities. But they lacked the courage and strength to implement their convictions. Today it is now President J.R. Jayawardene's opportunity to make amends for the failure of 1957 and 1965.

But he is blind to the writing on the wall. He has not held elections after 1977; and in a Zia-like Referendum, he has converted Lanka's Parliamentary system into Presidential one, with himself as President. Refusal to grant even the moderate demand of autonomy can only strengthen the extremist demand for Eelam, that is a separate sovereign Tamil

State in the northern and eastern areas of Lanka.

Kotelawala, the first Prime Minister of independent Lanka, thought that in course of time Lanka may accede to India as a constituent unit. But today's Lankan leadership does not hesitate to cut its nose to spite India's face. It has sought—and got—Pakistani, Israeli and even mercenary assistance to suppress the Tamils. It has been settling Sinhalese in the Trincomalee area to cancel out the Tamil majority there. Trincomalee (Tamil for 'triangular hill,' 'malai' being hill) is not only an ancient Tamil religious centre; its superb harbour in unfriendly hands could be a serious threat to the security of India. India, therefore, has every reason to see that no injustice is done to Tamils—or, for that matter, to the Sinhalese; and that in its animus against Tamils, Lanka does not give bases or other military facilities to any powers hostile to India. If Lanka behaves like Pakistan—and oppresses Tamils as Pakistan used to oppress East Bengal—it can only meet the same fate as Pakistan—and lose its oppressed parts!

Two questions will arise in the Indian mind. Question No. 1: Is not the Tamil issue very much like our Sikh issue? No, it is not. New Delhi has been quite foolish in its handling of Sikhs since 1980; and the Akali leadership has been often irresponsible. But the Sikhs do not suffer from any legal disabilities; they have the same civil and political rights as any other Indians.

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## Two Questions about Lanka that arise in the Indian mind

Question No. 2 : How and why should Lankan Buddhists be violent—and anti-India? Are not Buddhists supposed to be non-violent? It suits the vested interests to see that people fight among themselves, and that they do not unite against them; and politicians will do anything to win power, including dividing the people. India is a big neighbour which liberated Bangladesh against the wishes of Pakistan, and absorbed Sikkim against the wishes of China. It easily fits the Lankan image of a threatening Big Brother. (Sirimavo Bandaranaike is very unhappy that we should burn the effigy of poor Ravana every year all over the country.) The fact that the Sinhalese think that Tamils are doing better than themselves, and that they are to be found both in Lanka and in India, confirms the fears planted and nourished by their short-sighted leaders. A Sinhala school text book shows a Sinhala boy crouching in his bed. When the mother asks him why he does not stretch his legs, the child is made to say: "Mother how can I stretch myself when I have Tamils in the north and the Indian ocean in the South?" That is how anti-Tamil feelings are being fostered at all levels.

As for Lanka Buddhists, the mass of the people are sound at heart everywhere, but the same cannot be said of Buddhist priests. They are a powerful lobby, as unreasonable as any Jathedars or Nihangs. Many times only the good-for-nothing son in the family is sent out to

become a Buddhist monk. But it is these monks who control the rural vote banks for the politicians in Colombo. They are as different from Gautam Buddha as Bhinderanwales are from Guru Govind Singh.

It is the timidity of New Delhi that has allowed the Lanka sore to fester. If Lanka does not see the reason of „Autonomy, it will have to see the compulsion of partition. It has happened elsewhere; and it can happen here too.

Cyprus is an Island State in the Mediterranean Sea. It has a majority of Greeks and a minority of Turks. A few years back some hot-heads among Greek Cypriots insisted on making Cyprus a part of Greece. The Turks who are in a minority in Cyprus, did not want to become an even smaller minority in a Greater Greece. When, however, the Greek Cypriots did not listen, Turkey landed troops on Cyprus. The Turkish Army occupied not only the Turkish areas but also some Greek-majority areas—obviously as buffer or bargaining counter. One can only hope that Sinhalese will learn something from the experience of Cypriots and not strain matters to breaking point.

(Much of the matter for this piece has been derived from 'Sri Lanka : The Ethnic Conflict', published by Navrang, New Delhi, 1984; Pp 277; Rs. 145.)

□

## A Page From History

### Sindh Repulsed Fourteen Arab Invasions

HUMAYUN KABIR once said that although the Government of India was friendly with the Arabs, the people of India were not; the latter still remember the Arab invasion of India in the Sindh area in 711, which was followed by centuries of murder, loot and rapine. Humayun Kabir was right; nations have long memories.

The general impression is that Mohammed Bin Qasim came, he saw and he conquered. It was nothing of the kind. Sindh put up a resistance of which all Hind can be proud. And this heroic account comes not from Indian sources which were obviously all destroyed—but from Arab sources. It is contained in, Chachnamah, (Ijarah-i-Adabi-iat-Delhi; 2009 Qasimjan Street, Delhi-6, PP. 207; Rs. 80.) written by "Ali, son of Muhammed Kufi, originally resident of Kufah, Syria", in Arabic. Although it was written in 1216, five-centuries after the event, it is based on the accounts left in patches by eye-witnesses, or traditional accounts passed on from father to son. It is, therefore, the best account we have.

Early in the seventh century, the ruler of Sindh was Rai Sahasi, brother of the king of Chittor. He died childless. His wife Suhani married a Brahmin minister, Chach, who now became king. Chach captured even Multan and reached the frontiers of Kashmir. Interestingly enough, the Sindh-Kashmir border was not marked by any pillars, as now-a-days, but by the inter-twining of two saplings of Poplar and Deodar! On the Makran side, the Baluchistan (Sindh of those days was almost all that is Pakistan today) border was marked by date trees.

Chach was followed by his brother Chander, elder son Daharsiah and then younger son Dahir.

Of Dahir's capital Alor (or Aror) on the Indus, near Sukkur, Chachnamah says: "It is a town adorned with various kinds of royal buildings, villas, gardens, fountains, streams, meadows and trees." (p.11)

Soon after the death of Mohammed, Khalifa Umar sent an army against Sindh, when Chach was in his 35th year of rule. The Sindh troops led by Samah, defeated the Arabs led by Mughairah, at Debal in the year 11, Hijri. Mughairah was killed. The next Khalifa, Usman, sent Hakim, son of Hailah Abdi, to reconnoitre and report on Sindh. "When he arrived in the Khalifah's presence and went through the usual formalities of paying respect, the Khalifah asked him: 'O Hakim have you seen Hindustan and learnt all about it?' 'Yes, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Hakim. 'Give us a description of it,' asked the Khalifah, and Hakim gave the following epigrammatic reply: 'Its water is dark (and dirty); its fruit is bitter and poisonous; the land is stony, and its earth is saltish. A small army will soon be annihilated there; and a large army will soon die of hunger.' Khalifah Usman then enquired: 'How are the people with regard to their promises and treaties? Are they faithful or violators of their word?' Abdullah replied: 'They are treacherous and deceitful. After hearing this account the Khalifah prohibited Abdullah from invading Sindh, and no one was sent thither.' (59-60)

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However, when Ali became the third Khalifa, he again sent an army into Sindh. This was led by one "Haris son of Marrah." While the conflict was going on in a place called Kikanan in Baluchistan area, news came of Ali's assassination and the Arab Army withdrew.

The next Khalifa, Muawiyah, persisted in the attacks on Sindh. "It is related by Abul Hasam who heard it from Hazil, and Hazil from Muslim, son of Muharib, son of Muslim, son of Ziyad, that when Muawiyah despatched the expedition of 4,000 men under Abdullah son of Sawad, no one had to kindle fire in his camp, as they had carried abundant provisions for the journey, ready made for use.... The battle now raged furiously and Abdullah, son of Sawad, found it necessary to keep his men in their ranks, by making a stand himself with a party of selected men, fully armed; and he appealed to the hearts of others in the following words: 'O children of Prophet's companions, do not turn your faces from the infidels, so that your faith may remain free from any flaw and you acquire the honour of martyrdom.' The chief was killed. The army of Islam was ultimately put to flight." (61-62)

Muawiyah now appointed Rashid, son of Umar who, too, was defeated and killed. They now appointed Sinan, son of Salmah, a friend of the Prophet, who had personally blessed the child and

named him Sinan. But this Sinan was also beaten and killed at a place called Budhia, obviously associated with Buddhists.

The Arabs now were scared of Singh. Their next commander was Munzir. "Then the command fell to the lot of Munzir son of Harud son of Bashar. In the year 51 (H.) when, under the orders of the Khalifah, Munzir put on the dress of honour (presented to him), and started for his post his robe stuck to a piece of wood and was torn. Ubaidullah son of Ziyad became much grieved at this incident, and interpreted it as an evil signifying bad luck for Munzir. He bade him adieu, and returning to his place, wept for him, and said: 'Munzir will never return from this journey, and will die.' When Munzir started from there, and came to the country of the enemy, he fell ill at Burabi and gave up his soul to God." (65-66)

According to Chachnamah, at this stage, Alafi, an Arab chieftain, with his 500 warriors, sought sanctuary in Sindh, away from the tribal warfare of Arabs. And some Arab sailors, bringing gifts from Lanka to Arabia, were allegedly seized by pirates off the coast of Sindh. These two incidents became additional excuses for Arab attacks on Sindh. In vain did Dahir send word that "that is the work of a band of robbers than whom none is more powerful. They do not even care for us." (71)

Hajjaj, the demoniacal governor of Iraq now decided on war. But his troops, led

### *Five Khalifas warred on Sindh for Eighty Long Years*

## *Out of a false sense of heroism, Dahir allowed Qasim to cross Sindhu*

by Bazil were routed by Dahir's son Jaisiah at Nerun (Narainkot, now Hyderabad Sindh).

Hajjaj was furious. But the Khalifa had had too much of Sindh. Khalifa Walid wrote to Hajjaj! "The people (of that country) are cunning and the country itself is very distant. It will cost us very large sums of money to provide a sufficient number of men and arms and instruments of war, and will require unusual skill and might to carry on the war, not to mention enormous provisions. This affair will be a source of great anxiety, and so we must put it off; for, every time the army goes (on such an expedition), (vast) numbers of Mussalmans are killed. So think no more of such a design". (73)

However Hajjaj vowed that he would not leave any Kafir upto the frontiers of China, unless he could avenge his defeat, even if he had to spend the whole treasury of Iraq on such an enterprise. Wahid, therefore, reluctantly okayed yet another invasion. And Hajjaj selected his cousin and son-in-law, Mohammed Bin Qasim, after consulting astrologers.

Hajjaj told Qasim: "You must make such coat of mail for horses as to give them the appearance of wild beasts, like the lion and the elephant". He ordered tailors and armourers to prepare several coats of mail in the shape of lions and elephants, and he forwarded them. These letters of Hajjaj, together with 6000 horsemen, 6,000 camelmen and 3,000 loading camels (duly) arrived at Shiraz, and Mohammed Kasim read the letters. That was

in the year 72 after the Hijrah." (76-77)

A force of this size was more than a small seafort like Debal could face. At this stage somebody is believed to have conveyed to the Arabs that if they knocked down the huge flag flying over the fort, the defenders would lose heart. And that is what actually happened.

However, the Arab Army was on the west side of the Indus. And Dahir's Army and capital were on the east side. Alafi advised Dahir, *not* to let Qasim cross the river. But Dahir thought that that would be a sign that he was afraid to fight. And so he allowed Qasim to build a boat-bridge with the help of traitor Mokah Basayeth. Alafi now took leave of Dahir with thanks, to join hands with fellow-Arabs—obviously to save his skin—since Dahir had not heeded his wise military counsel. Dahir was advised to send away his family to safety, or seek the assistance of other kings or cut off Qasim's supplies and thus bring him to his knees. But his response continued to be heroic but unwise. And so he told his Wazir Bhandvir Samani: "O wise wazir, whatever plan you suggest, must be the best and the right one, but, at such a crisis, I do not think it proper or expedient, to send my dependents to any place in Hind, as thereby my subjects will be greatly perplexed, and the Thakurs and nobles will be much disheartened, and so will leave off fighting and disperse. I too consider it shameful and humiliating to me to make entreaties to another (prince), or to go to his door and await his permission to see him. No, this shame I cannot bear.' The

wazir said: "Your slaves will join your perdition, and give Dahir said: Arabs in opposition with all possible them, I shall kingdom winning. But if the event will be Arabia and by great means other kings said that such his precious treasury, in fight

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wazir said : 'What then is your plan? Let your slaves know it, so that they may join your personal attendants in consultation, and give you the best advice.' Rai Dahar said : 'My plan is to meet the Arabs in open battle, and fight with them with all possible vigour. If I overpower them, I shall crush them to death and my kingdom will then be put on a firm footing. But if I am killed honourably, the event will be recorded in the books of Arabia and Hind, and will be talked of by great men, and will be heard of by other kings in the world, and it will be said that such and such a king sacrificed his precious life for the sake of his country, in fighting with the enemy.'" (122-123)

The Dahir-Qasim battle raged for 10 days. The eleventh day was Thursday, June 16, 711. " 'To-day', said Kasim, is the day to kill and to be killed; so try our best,' and the battle went on, till there were heaps of infidels killed. It was then that Dahar took up his shield on his white elephant, and taking with him 400 men, armed cap-a-pie and bearing swords and iron shields and half lances with iron handles called *sel* in the Hindi language, came forth and fought with such unceasing vigour that the skin of his men's hands cracked. Now and then Dahar made his elephant rush upon the enemy. He himself carried a circular disc in the form of a mirror with sharp knives. He threw it as men throw a noose at every one, whether a horse, man or a foot-soldier who approached, and severed his head from his body.

Thus the infidels made a rush on

the Arabs from all sides, and fought so steadily and bravely that the army of Islam became irresolute, and their lines were broken up in great confusion. It was generally believed that the Arabs were defeated and put to flight, and men were struck dumb and overawed. Muhammad Kasim was then so much perplexed that he called out to his boy water-bearer :—'Give me a little water to drink'. He drank water and then returned, and loudly shouted : 'Here am I, your commander Muhammad Kasim. Whither are you running away. Up with your shields and on to the attack, that the infidels may be killed and victory be ours.' He then rallied all the forces. Mokah Basayah now came to his presence, and with all his men dismounted and stood on foot before him. By the evening, Dahar was left with only 1000 horsemen. It is related by Abdul Hasan on the authority of Abillais Hindi, who had heard it from his father, that when the army of Islam rushed on the enemy, most of the infidels were cut to pieces in the fierce assault. All of a sudden, then, there, was noise and confusion on the left hand side, and Dahar thought his men were running away. Dahar called out to them 'Come to me, come to me, I am here,' and the voices of some women in that melee replied : 'O king, we are women, and have been caught and made prisoners by the Arab troops.' Dahar said : 'What (do you say)? I am still alive. Who can seize you'? So saying he drove his elephant on the army of Islam. Muhammad Kasim then ordered his naphtha-flingers to shoot their naphtha, and one of these men, who was

*Thursday, June 16, 711 was  
a Black Day for all India*

## *How Dahir's daughters made history in Iraq*

very skilful in his profession, threw a naphtha arrow at the litter of Rai Dahar on the elephant, and the litter immediately caught fire. Dahar asked the elephant-driver to turn back the animal as he was thirsty. But the litter was already in flames, and the elephant, disobeying the driver, rushed towards the worker, and threw himself into it. The driver tried his best to check and turn back the animal, but to no purpose. Thus both Dahar and the driver were flung into water.

"Dahar then wanted to go back to the fort, but the Mussalman archers threw a volley of arrows at him, one of which pierced his heart and he fell with his head downwards in his litter, which was still on the back of the elephant. The elephant came out of the water, rushing madly at the men about him, and (thus) trampled under his feet the infidels (who had remained behind), and created wild disorder. Dahar then slowly dismounted from the elephant and was confronted by Shuja Arabi, who dealt sword-blow on the top of his head splitting it into two, down to his neck." (140—3)

"When they placed Dahar's head before Hajjaj, and reversed his royal umbrella and banners, and made the prisoners stand along with the menials and shoe-bearers, a man belonging to the family of Bani Sakif got up and recited the following verses :

"We have conquered Sindh, after enormous trouble. Betrayed is Dahar by his (masterly) strategy. (Rejoice)—the evil-doers are disgraced—their wealth

has been brought away—they are now solitary and brittle as eggs, and their women (fair and fragrant) as musk-deer are now asleep (in our harems)."

The storm called Islam, was too strong for Sindh to resist for long. Even Egypt and Iran had fallen before it. However, the important thing to note is that Sindh defeated as many as fourteen Arab attacks—by Arab accounts—from 638 onwards. It fell before the fifteenth attack in 711—the same year in which Arabs also captured even far-away Spain.

Nor did matters rest there. While Dahar's wife Ladi married Qasim in a bid to appease and tame Qasim—his sister Bai and other women in Aler fort committed johan since, they said, "it is certain that we cannot escape the clutches of these chandals end cow-eters". (153)

Dahir's daughters Surajdevi and Parimal Devi avenged the defeat in their own way. They were taken to Baghdad and presented to the Khalifa for his harem. "The interpreter first asked their names. The elder of them said, 'My name is Surijedew', and the younger said 'My name is Pirmal Dev'. He then called the elder sister to himself, and ordered the younger to be removed and taken care of. When he seated the elder near himself, she unveiled her face and the Khalifah of the time looked at it, and became charmed with her perfect beauty. Her blood-sucking blandishments took away patience from his heart, and he began to take liberties with her, and,

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catching hold of Surijewed, pulled her to himself. Surijewed sprang up and said: 'May the king live long! I, a humble slave, am not fit for your Majesty's bedroom, because the just amir, Imaduddin Muhammad Kasim kept us both with him for 3 days, and then sent us to the Khalifah. Perhaps your custom is such, or else this kind of disgrace should not be permitted by kings'. At that moment his passion for the girl blinded the Khalifah. He lost patience, and his excess of jealousy did not permit him to make any enquiries. He, therefore, immediately sent for pen, ink and paper, and with his own hand wrote an order, directing that 'Muhammad Kasim should, wherever he may be, put himself in raw leather and come back to the chief seat of the Khalifah.' (194)

These orders were literally carried out. When Qasim's dead body was brought, the two sisters said they had tricked the Khalifa into killing Qasim, because they wanted revenge on the hated invader of Sindh. The Khalifa was besides himself with rage. He ordered the two sisters to be bricked alive. (According to Tarikh-e-Masumi) they were tied to horse-tails, dragged to death through the streets of Baghdad and then their bodies were thrown into the river Tigris.)

Today Sindhi Nationalist Muslims look upon Dahir as hero and Qasim as villain. Some of them add 'Dahir' to their name. Time does not come to a stop; nor does history. In 711 Sindh lost a battle; but the war for the soul of Sindh, that is still on! □

## The Pakistani Mentality

Tragically enough, the Pakistani mentality, namely that the Indian who embraces Islam, ceases to be Indian, is as old as the Arab invasion of Sindh early in the eighth century.

After the battle of Debal, Mohammed Bin Qasim sent a Syrian noble and a Sindhi convert to the court of Dahir. Chach-namah says: "Mohammed Qasim told the new convert; when you commence delivering the message, do it in a meeting of respectable men and nobles of the place, and call for a decisive reply, as is ordered by Hajaj in his letter." Accordingly when the Syrian and Maulana Islami, as the Debalese convert was called, went into the presence of Dahir, the latter of the two envoys entered without making a bow, or paying any respects to Dahir. Dahir recognised him, and asked him: 'why do you not observe the Court etiquette usual on such occasions? Is it that you are under some pressure and are prevented from doing so?' The Debalese convert replied: "Formerly I professed your religion and so it was obligatory on me to make the obeisance due from a servant to his master. But now I have been honoured with the glory of Islam and I am attached to the king of Islam. It is, therefore, unbecoming in me to bend my head before a kafir."

"Hearing this, Dahir said to the native envoy: 'If you had not been an envoy, I would have punished you by ordering you to be killed.'"





Naxal campers

(Continued from page 16)

could not sleep at night, they started singing chorus songs, and keeping time by clapping hands. In the morning all of them worked together and re-erected the hessian sheds on their own. They had tea and breakfast, and then they again started working on the percolation tank, as though nothing had happened.

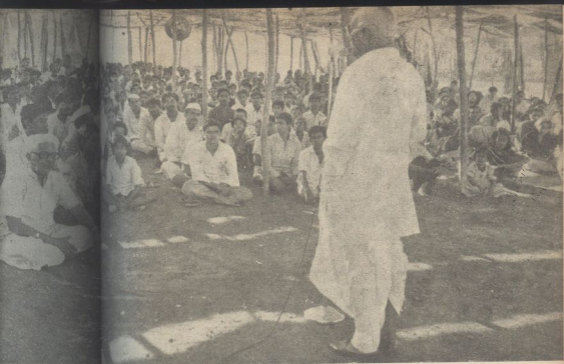
Again on May 16, a similar situation arose. We asked the ladies and younger boys whether they wanted to go to the village for shelter immediately. But all of them said they would rather be in the camp, whatever may happen, and they remained in their respective sheds.

It is really surprising that many a time snakes and scorpions appeared in the residential area. But nobody was frightened; and nobody suffered a bite. In spite of these difficulties, they vowed: "We will remain here till 31st of May and finish the job, for which we have come here." This shows that our young men and women are very sound at heart. They have the will and the vision to work in the service of the poor and the down-trodden. Here is a sound basis for national reconstruction.

This Youth Force was able to move more than five lakh cubic metres of silt from the tank, take it to different farms and spread and level it there properly.

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To prevent the silt from drifting back into the tank during the coming rainy season, these boys and girls put up stone walls of anything from 2 feet to 9 feet high, in the various fields, as deemed necessary. The total length of these walls is more than one thousand metres. More than three thousand pits, 2' x 2' x 2', were dug by these boys on the sloping heights of the surrounding hillocks, to plant trees there.

The farmers of this area have hundreds of acres of cultivable land on the hill slopes surrounding the tank. Unfortunately, till date, nobody had instructed these farmers into the art of terrace-farming on these hill-sides. The

father of Sudam Bhondwe has generously donated 6½ acres of cultivable land on these slopes, where the huts of the gurukul are now situated. Boys and girls of the camp worked on these farms of the Deendayal Research Institute and prepared a model of cultivation on the hills.

Farmers of this area are able to earn Rs. 200 or less per year per acre. They are unable to maintain their families on this low income. The farmers of this area are uneducated and neglected. Ahmednagar district is adjacent to Beed district and the Rahuri Agricultural University in Nagar has done successful experimentation on the type of land that we have in Beed. By planting a variety

## Farmers' income will go up 700 percent in five years

of trees with hired labour over a period of five years, the university has been able to earn an income of 18-19 thousand rupees per acre. We requested the head of the University Horticulture Department to come and visit the Sondara tank. He was kind enough to accept our invitation and visited the site. He examined the soil and the stony fields and said this area can produce the same yield as Rahuri, if not better. He and his colleagues assured us that they are ready to guide the farmers of this area to plant and grow fruit trees which will bring them Rs. 15,000 a year per acre after five years, and even more in successive years. The Deendayal Research Institute has formed a cooperative of agriculturists of the district, on the advice of Shri Vinayakrao Patil of Nasik district, who has created history in Maharashtra by planting near about three crore trees and made the poor farmers there quite prosperous.

The Institute was assured by local cultivators that in three years they will plant thousands of trees on their own land to prevent the silt from accumulating in the tank. And so the Sondara tank is on the way to providing a model percolation tank.

A retired Pradhanacharya of Kholshwar Vidyalya, Shri Manakshi Sagar, is the president of the management committee of the Gurukul in Sondara. He has planned that, by July 1987, he will request and persuade more than 20 retired persons, expert in different agricultural fields, to come and stay in Sondara, and

lead the life of Vanaprastha. His plan is to keep three to five students of the gurukul with one vanaprasthi each, as his wards. That will be the kind of residential gurukul here in Sondara. They will take care of the proper physical, mental and moral development of the children in their charge. These Vanaprasthis will look after the all-round development of their new young family members. In this way the Sondara gurukul will break new ground, develop in many more ways and become a model.

These Vanaprasthis, expert in many technologies, will also start consultancy for the people of Marathwada in different crafts and professions. A Crafts Training Centre is also to be started in this very place, to foster self-reliance and encourage self-employment.

There were some retired persons in the camp for the management of the Shivir. They also were thinking of ways and means of restructuring society. There are lakhs of talented retired persons in different parts of the country, most of them living in the urban areas. If persuaded to utilise their talents to guide the village youth to enable them to earn their livelihood, they could make a vital contribution to nation-building. They discussed this subject in depth and came out with a plan to organise this great force of retired persons and utilise their talents for the rural youth of the country.

The young boys and girls working on this project also discussed, during their off time, many a problem of our society.



At the camp

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*At the camp (L. to R.) Rajabhau Dhot, camp-in-charge, Shripati Shastri, Prant Karyava, RSS, Prahlad Abhyankar, Prant Sanghachalak and Nana Deshmukh*

They even chalked out a programme to solve these problems one by one. They are going to begin with re-establishing the family as the basic unit of society. They have started feeling that it is the responsibility of the family to develop the individual and society as complementary to each other. The development of the child in this direction is the beginning of social reconstruction. For this purpose they decided to work on the following lines :

1. No young man should accept dowry;
2. No girl will marry a boy who is interested in dowry;

3. Boys and girls will choose their life partner, keeping in view the family as the basic unit of society, and work for society while leading a family life;
4. They would have only two children. They will bring up children to become responsible citizens. Right from birth, they will be brought up in an atmosphere of fellow-feeling for all men.

The camp participants, both boys and girls, have decided to do the above and to organise a campaign in different educational institutions to promote these goals.

This project was not calculated just to set up a model percolation tank. When

college and university students and teachers came together in such a large number, they begin to think about basic national problems. The Institute had organised the programme, keeping this

in mind, to provide intellectual food to the participants. Much useful knowledge was imparted by many experienced workers in their talks on a variety of subjects:

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|--|-----------------------------|
| — Vanikaran and Paryavaran                                   | Shri Vinayakrao Patil       |
| — Samajik Sahbhagita Ka Adhar                                | Shri Anna Hazare            |
| — Sant Ganeshwar Ka Samaj Darshan                            | Shri Shakhre Maharaj        |
| — Bharatiya Sanskriti Ka Vishwa Vistar                       | Shri Dr. Sharadrao Hebalkar |
| — Gonda Gramoday Prakkalp                                    | Shri Ramashankar Upadhaya   |
| — Mahan Koun ?   | Shri Damu Anna Date         |
| — Vachan aur Kriti Men Samya                                 | Shri M.M.K. Shirsagar       |
| — Samajik Punarrchana Ki Samagna Disha                       | Shri Nanaji Deshmukh        |
| — Vyakti aur Samaj Men Purakta                               | Shri Nanaji Deshmukh        |
| — Manav men Vasna aur Samvedna Ka Santulan Arthat Manaviyata | Shri Nanaji Deshmukh        |
| — Sarkaravalmi Nahin Swawlambi Samaj                         | Shri Nanaji Deshmukh        |
| — Jan Sahkarita Ke Madhyam Se Vikas                          | Shri Krishna Joshi          |
| — Ekatma Manav-vad ki Pristbhoomi                            | Shri Mahesh chander         |
| — Vyakti aur Samaj Me Ekata                                  | Shri Mahesh chander         |
| — Hamari Awashykata : Dharma, Arth, Kama or moksh            | Shri Mahesh chander         |
| — Samaj Men Nari Ka Sthan                                    | Smt. Saroja Parulkar        |
| — Samajik Karyakarta Ki Bhoomika                             | Shri Yashwantrao Lele       |
| — Samajik Samta aur Arakshan                                 | Shri Rajbhau Dhat           |
| — Samajik Samta Ki Vyavahar Dristi                           | Shri Rajbhau Dhat           |
| — Pt. Deendayalji Ka Jiwan                                   | Shri Yadavrao Deshmukh      |
| — Samajik Vyastha aur Vyawsaya                               | Shri Nanaji Deshmukh        |
| — Samaj ki Adharbhut Ekai Pariwar                            | Shri Nanaji Deshmukh        |
| — Azadi Ke Andolan Ki Smritaya                               | Shri Ramlingam Swami        |
| — Samajik Sthiti aur Samvedan Shilta                         | Shri Prahladrao Ambhayankar |
| — Mahan Bharat   | Shri Shripati Shastri       |
| — Utprekar Kavya Shakti                                      | Shri Anna Tamankar          |
| — Nari Mukti Andolan :                                       | Smt. Sushila Athavale       |

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*Krishna Joshi and Rajabhau Dhat at Sondara Gurukul*

Apart from the above lectures, group discussions also took place on a variety of subjects, some of which were :

1. Role of Shivirs in development activity
2. Different aspects of the Deendayal Research Institute
3. How to work in one's own place
4. Thought of Deendayal
5. Practical meaning of patriotism
6. Programmes for restructuring of society
7. Social problems and their solution.

Apart from the above programmes, story-telling was a regular feature of the camp. The lives of great men provided inspiration. In the evenings, music programmes were arranged. Well-known singer Sudhir Phadke was good enough to be in the camp for two days. His

melodious voice and choice of bhajans made a great impact on the minds of the youth. Even after his departure from the camp, the boys and girls were under the spell of his lyrics. Daily at night, healthy entertainment programmes were arranged. There were many talented boys and girls in the camp who sang, danced and acted a variety of programmes. The well-known satirist and story-teller of Maharashtra, Shri D. M. Mirazdar, was also kind enough to come to the camp and provide a feast of interesting stories.

This Dhanntaya Abhiyan was not confined to the Sondara Percolation Tank only. A batch of 50 boys and girls was daily sent to work on the new Domri percolation tank, now under construction, three km. from our camp. And so govern-



*School-boys at work on the tank*

ment officials working there also used to visit our camp frequently. It was a new experience for government officials to see educated young men and women working in such a remote area and doing such hard work. In the beginning they thought these boys and girls will not remain there for more than three or four days. The fact that they stayed and worked day after day, and week after week, on hard rock in mid-summer, was a matter of great pleasant surprise to these officials. They said that this sort of planning and working will give them many lessons in the art and science of development. The villagers living around were all praise for this work. They used to bring thousands of jowar rotis to feed the inmates of the camp with affection. Nor was that all. They started coming in

groups of two's and three's and thus augmented our strength. In the last week, they brought their bullock-carts and started helping with moving the soil. In this way the spirit of working for the people became infectious. Young boys and girls felt confident that a new chapter in social transformation had opened in their lives and now onwards they will dedicate themselves to this very cause. The way for eradicating the old and new unsocial and anti-social attitudes and practices was found for the young generation. All sections of the society can move in this direction with the experience of this very camp. These experiences are going to inspire a new spirit in the youth. The Deendayal Research Institute will now be able to move in that direction faster than before. □

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## World Round-Up

### Pax Americana in Danger

'PAX AMERICANA' is breaking down; and steps must be taken to mend matters for a more effective international system, says Paul Streeten, Professor Emeritus at Oxford and Boston Universities.

Addressing the Harvard university on May 7, he said, in the past, the dominant nation has had four attributes: an export surplus, a capital surplus, industrial dominance and great military power. But America is retaining its hegemonic power, not in spite of its loss of the first three attributes, but because it has become the biggest trade deficit country, the biggest consumer of foreign goods, the biggest net capital importer—"the borrower of last resort." As an enormous importer and borrower, America has become crucial to the operation of the world economy.

USA is also able to continue its hegemony, Prof. Streeten says, because of America's well-established habit of leadership, its dominance in nuclear arms, its heavy scientific and technological outlays and the preference of Japan, West Germany and other countries that the United States keep its military and economic responsibilities, for the sake of their own security and that of the system as a whole.

But the breaking point may not be far, unless western Europe and Japan share its burdens.

A lasting solution to this uncertain situation lies in institutionalising a new stable international order. To this end, Prof. Streeten suggests:

"An international central bank capable of creating liquidity and global reser-

ves at a pace that would be neither inflationary nor deflationary;

"An international income tax that would be levied automatically and progressively on all countries;

"An international body to provide information for private and public decisions, on long-term investments in plant and equipment, to help prevent lurches from scarcity to excess capacity in steel, shipbuilding or other industries;

"An international investment trust, to channel capital from rich surplus countries to the developing countries."

Mr. Streeten thinks it is foolish, in a world desperately short of capital, to urge Japan to cut its savings, increase its consumption and invest more at home.

Could such an organization be kept from becoming a bureaucratic monstrosity? Recognizing that "the stupidity of an organization is proportional to the cube of the number of its members" Mr. Streeten suggests establishing a "council of wise men and women" to monitor the system.

The hard obstacles to these changes would be the resistance to any attenuation of national sovereignty—and any compromise with national security.

### Un-repayable Loans

In May 1987, Citicorp, the biggest US bank, decided to add \$3 billion to its loss-reserves. This was an admission of the apprehension that huge loans advanced to developing countries, may never be repaid.



Africa is indebted to the West to the tune of 100 billion. The figure is \$90 billion for Mexico and \$110 billion for Brazil. Interest payments are so heavy that last year Africa had to pay \$ 30 billion. And that made it a net exporter of resources, paying more in debt service than the combined total of what it received in foreign aid and earnings from commodity exports.

Country after debtor country has, therefore, asked for re-scheduling of debts. Brazil has decided to pay no more than 20% of its export earnings, as debt servicing charges.

One proposal in the West is that part of these loans may be converted into equity. That will mean handing over the debtor countries' many industries to the creditor countries. And that will be even less acceptable.

Considering the fact that most of these monies are required to be spent in the lending country, giving fillip to their industry, these loans may be treated as interest-free. Interest payments made so far, may be counted as debt-repayments. The only other way is to repudiate these debts—as was done to “reparations” after World War I.

### What Japan Can Teach the World

With Japan forging ahead as the most successful industrial country, many books have appeared on what Japan can teach the World. In a recent article in the New York Times, Akio Morita, Chairman of Sony Corporation says :

“An American friend recently said to

me, ‘Akio, I bought an American TV rather than a Japanese TV because we have a terrible trade deficit. I found out later that the American set was made in Taiwan, and the Sony set that I decided I wouldn’t buy, was made in the United States.’

“As I had to tell my American friend, what we were seeing was the difference between a company with faith to invest in itself and a company that had no faith in itself at all.

“I am afraid that American industry has lost faith in itself, and that the trade imbalance would not be corrected until that faith is regained. The Japanese automobile industry, in particular, is investing heavily in new plants in the United States, creating thousands of new jobs. The American automobile industry, on the other hand, is investing in the Japanese automobile industry, not to obtain a foothold in the Japanese market, but to buy engines and even complete automobiles, to be sold in the U.S. market under their own brand name.

“Unfortunately, America’s brightest managerial talent is engaged in takeover moves and empire-building. The best students do not study engineering but become MBAs or lawyers and, eventually, professional money makers. This is not productive.”

“America must return to fundamentals, to making things of real value. A business organization’s real asset is its people—but how can you expect your people to be motivated to work when they are traded like merchandise ?”

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American industry itself, and that the error could not be corrected. The Japanese, in particular, is now planting in the thousands of American automobile plants, and is investing in the automobile industry, in the Japanese engines and even to be sold in their own brand

America's brightest minds are engaged in takeover bids. The best engineering but not the best managers. This is not

on to fundamental value. A real asset is its value you expect your employees to work when they are not working for the company?"

## The New Miracle Cow

Mexico has just developed a cow that is only two feet tall and gives one gallon of milk a day.

According to Juan Manuel Berruecos Villalobos, director of the Veterinary Medicine School at the National Autonomous University of Mexico: "Our idea was to create a low-cost animal, one that could be easily maintained in a small amount of space and without much resources."

Beginning with one of the largest breeds of cattle anywhere—an Indonesian zebu, which stands nearly six feet (1.8 meters) tall and weighs up to 2,000 pounds (about 900 kilograms)—Mr. Berruecos has bred selectively over five generations a dwarf version of the same animal that averages just 300 pounds in weight and two to three feet in height. They are producing three to four litres daily, compared to the six litres or so you get from a full-sized cow.

The advantage of what he has dubbed the mini-cow, Mr. Berruecos said, is that up to 10 can survive on three acres (1.2 hectares) of grassland, or about what it takes to support one normal zebu.

The little cows are cute, but they are almost too tame. When you try to move them, they just stand there and look at you.

Notimex, the Mexican government's news agency, published a long editorial praising the project and suggesting that, while it "might seem laughable," the day might come when urban families prefer tiny Holsteins to cats or dogs. It proposed that the animals be kept on rooftops and nourished with left-overs from the dinner table.

In the next phase of the project, Mr. Berruecos plans to experiment with embryonic implants, gestating as many as eight mini-cow fetuses in a single normal-sized adult cow, to speed reproduction.

## Humour in the Service of Business

Believe it or not but many US business houses are taking regular courses to foster a sense of humour in their officers. These include Pepsicola, IBM and American Telephone & Telegraph Company.

The companies hope that developing their executives' sense of humour will help them deal with stress on the job.

Based on medical studies that have found that a sense of humour can be a contributing factor to good physical and mental health, the workshops do not teach people how to tell jokes (only 1 per cent of the population can do that well, anyway).

The workshops teach a sense of humour, a sense of perspective, positive thinking, along with good nutrition and exercises for relaxing. "Take your work seriously but take yourself lightly" is the motto. Half-day sessions for 20 to 40 employees cost \$ 4000.

A few mornings a week, some executives practise some of the funny facial exercises they have learned at the workshops in front of their bathroom mirrors, to help themselves relax before work.

Sound effects, such as wolf howls, accomplish a similar task; they loosen people up and make them laugh.