

April 2003



CONFLICT SENSITIVE JOURNALISM SERIES

Muttur Media Monitoring

The Muttur Problem: A Political Solution?

It is our hope that the violent communal clashes between the Muslims and Tamils will come to an end after talks between community leaders on both sides.

Starting with the disappearance of two persons by in LTTE controlled territory, the resulting violence has taken many lives and made thousands homeless and destitute.

Both sides each other for the violent uprising - the Muslims blame the LTTE, the Tamils blame Muslim extremists. There is also criticism that the police and the army did not do enough to quell the tension and conflict.

Furthermore, it is evident that both the communities do not have clear channels of communication. There is a great deal of mistrust and miscommunication between the Tamils and Muslims.

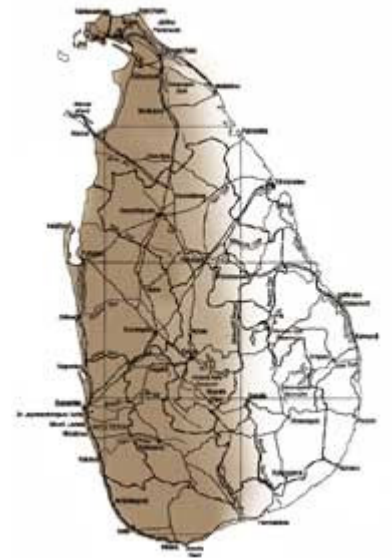
After the third week of April, when the clashes were at their peak, measures were taken by community leaders and the religious leaders together with the LTTE to control the conflict. The SLMM also facilitated these meetings.

However, there was no immediate trust building on account of these measures. Nevertheless, an environment safe for the resurrection of destroyed livelihoods was created on account of these agreements and measures

on the ground.

The authors of this newsletter hope that further initiatives help build confidence levels of all the communities in this region.

Sri Lanka has suffered enough communal violence does not need more conflict.



About this Newsletter

This newsletter is the result of a field visit to Muttur and is part of an ongoing project on conflict sensitive journalism conducted jointly by the

Centre for Policy Alternatives and USAID-OTI.

The project aims to take journalists from Colombo to areas of ethno-political and communal conflict to conduct practical hands-on exercises on conflict sensitive

journalism. Most of the journalists that are part of this programme have worked with CPA in the past.

This project gives them the opportunity to develop their theoretical knowledge on the subject.

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Special points of interest:

- Report on Muttur Clashes
- Details of Conflict Sensitive Journalism Workshop
- Community perspective on communal violence
- Alternative space to mainstream media
- Grassroots voices featured in articles

Hidden Fires - Burning Issues

Seetha Ranjanee

Qu an ember under the ashes is sometimes not a good thing. Because most people do not suspect that there might be the possibility of a fire bursting into flame all of a sudden, given the right conditions. The fires of racial disharmony that suddenly erupted in Muttur recently were also like a hidden ember that had been fanned into flame. It was a flame that had come into being several times before as well. If we are aware that there are embers under the ashes that might become a burning inferno, maybe we can concentrate our efforts on preventing that from happening. All that is needed is the ability to understand the situation.

We went on a fact-finding mission to Muttur and what we realized was that the embers of racial violence had again been fanned into flame. This time the catalyst had been the disappearance of two Muslim youths named Mowzul Mohamed Nazeem (28) and Abdul Razak Jabeer (25) while they were in Sampur, which was under LTTE control. While no motive is known for these disappearances, since it took place in an area under LTTE control, the

Muslim community sought answers from the LTTE. On day the LTTE denied any involvement (April 13), the mother of one of the youths, named Mohamradu Madara Kiyathu Umma (47) committed suicide. This caused the Muslims of the area to close down their shops and start protesting. Things escalated from here to the point where by the 17th, Tamil youths were barricading the Maligativ intersection and sending back the Muslims who came from Muttur to travel to Alioluwa. Two of the Muslims who'd been turned back had assaulted two Tamil youth near Palathoppur area. On April 17th, around 500 Tamil villagers from Maligativ and Palli-

kudiiruppu attacked the Palathoppur village. They were armed with shotguns, machetes, clubs and even T56 assault rifles. Two Muslims died in this incident and five were wounded. Their homes and shops were destroyed. The same night, a group from Sampur attacked a village named Wattama near the Muttur jetty. They looted the village and then set fire to their houses. In retaliation, the Muslims set the houses of the Tamils living in Muttur town on fire.

While the fires of racial discord were bursting into flame all over the place, some efforts were also underway to put these flames out. While the truce signed between the LTTE political wing leader of the Trincomalee district, S. Thilak, and the chairman of the group of Muslim religious leaders, M. M. Kareem Mawlawi, is a step in the right direction, it's



President of the Muttur Al-Shura Council Moulavi M.M. Kareem and LTTE Trincomalee District Political Head S. Thilak

unfortunate that they failed to implement it according to the spirit of the agreement. While it was known that an agreement had been signed between the two groups, the general public did not know the specifics. The Mowlawi says that he had read out the contents at the mosque and had also used the public address system for the benefit of non-Muslims of the area. But the Tamils who lost their homes and took refuge at the St. Anthony's church in Muttur and Fr. Joseph Dunstan who's in charge of the church only knew that there was an agreement but not the details of the agreement. After the sign-

ing of the agreement two Muslims were murdered in Selvanagar and Jinnanagar on the 22nd and 23rd of April. While LTTE political wing leader Thilak had promised to hold an inquiry into the two killings when informed by the Mowlawi, nothing has been done yet. When we went over to the LTTE check point in Sampur to find out the LTTE response to this we weren't able to meet Thilak.

The end result has been that the series of incidents has left five Muslims dead and 10 wounded. And there's still no clue as to the whereabouts of the two missing youths. On the tamil side four people have died and several others were wounded. Thousands from both sides have been left with no homes or anywhere to go. However, the mistrust that has been sown by the incident between the Tamil and Muslim people is going to be another ember hidden in the ashes which might burst into flame at a later date. The question often asked by the mere 500 Tamils living in Muttur surrounded by a Muslim population of around ten thousand is: "Whenever a Muslim is attacked by Tamils elsewhere, why do they always take it out on us?" They remember other incidents in the past that they have had to suffer like this. They fear that there is an ongoing campaign to drive out the Tamils and to make the area a Muslim stronghold.

The same question is asked in turn by Muslims who live in areas where there's a Tamil majority. They have had to question the meaning of peace when they've stayed the night with Tamil friends and have been assaulted by those selfsame friends during the night. They accuse the Tamils of wanting to drive the Muslims out of Muttur the same way that the Muslims have been driven out of Jaffna and Mannar. They look at their paddy fields from the refugee camp in Jinnanagar and bemoan the fact that their fields lie fallow while they are stuck in the camp. The pain of having to rebuild their lives from scratch over and over again is palpable around them.

Sceptics might have a sneaking suspicion

Hidden Fires contd...

that this might simply be an effort to justify the building up and training of cadres by creating a conflict and then saying that they need protection. But it is an undeniable fact that both groups accuse each other based on suffering that they've undergone. Sri Lankan history shows an unpleasant tendency in our culture where an incident in one place provokes retaliatory attacks on a group living somewhere else altogether. At a time when two decades of war is just ending and the first hopes of peace is just beginning to show, such conflicts in a former area right in the middle of the conflict zone is not an encouraging thing. Letting this incident escalate is even worse. Rumours and misinformation take wing and fly at the speed of thought. As well as looking into the disappearance of the two youths and rectifying the situation, seeing to it that the people are better aware of

things so that such incidents don't take place again in the future is the responsibility of the powers that be. They should show people that it is against everybody's best interests to make statements that sow mistrust and animosity among the different communities.

After two decades of waging war, the two combatants are searching for avenues for peace. The forces of one side seem to have acted responsibly and sensibly in this area. Reinforcements were brought to the checkpoints and they had dispersed the rioters without resorting to weapons. If they had used weapons this might have turned from a regional conflict into a situation that affected the peace process. So their leaders should have explained the situation to them. Not only should the peace agreement between the Mawalawi and LTTE leader Thilak should have been publicized and the specifics ex-

plained to the people but the terms of the agreement should have been carried out. In order to dispel the misunderstanding among the communities, the help of religious leaders, teachers and officials can be enlisted. Everyone must work together to ensure peace and freedom of movement in these areas. Otherwise no trust will be built between these communities. As long as there is fear and suspicion about others, such conflicts are inevitable. It is the LTTE's responsibility to act transparently in an incident that occurred in an area under their control.

As long as people act responsibly and sensibly, the close checkpoints will not reopen and there is hope that we will be able to completely douse the embers hidden in the ashes in Muttur so as to prevent them from ever being fanned into a flame again in the future.

Ethnic Clashes in Muttur: A field report

Muttur is a small town in Trincomalee District in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. According to figures for the year 2000, the population of the Mutur Pradesheeya Sabha (local government authority) area was 57753. Of this, the majority were Muslim –32471 persons. In addition, there were 25135 Tamils and 157 Sinhalese persons living in the area. There are 42 Grama Sevaka Divisions in the Mutur PS area.

Most of the Tamil people of the Mutur PS area live in and around Sampur, which is controlled by the LTTE. There are 6 Grama Sevaka Divisions in Sampur. A small subsidiary of the river Mahaweli flows into the sea from close by the town. The LTTE has its bases in the area on the other side of the river. About 500 Tamil families live in the town. Most of them are Christians. There are some Hindus as well, and there is a kovil in the town.

There are two ways of approaching Mutur.

One can go by road, from Kantalai and through the LTTE controlled area of Sampur. Or one can go from Trincomalee harbour by boat or ferry to Mutur. During the times of the clashes most people were avoiding the road and using the sea route to Mutur.

The first thing that strikes anyone landing on Mutur jetty is the fact that a large part of the jetty is destroyed. Next, one sees a large board advertising the work of the Mutur Jetty Development Project. Soldiers were to be seen hastily erecting bunkers, as if they were at war. During the day we spent in Mutur we observed the security forces engaged in the construction of bunkers, specially in the beachfront area between the Mutur jetty and the LTTE-controlled territory.

There are bunkers throughout Mutur town as well. The Pradesheeya Sabha hall being used by the army as their main base in Mutur is surrounded by bunkers and hundreds of sand bags. This seemed to demonstrate a readiness to face battle rather than for any attempt to resolve Tamil-Muslim tensions. While military strategies may be useful to contain a potentially explosive situation, in

the long term they do nothing to resolve ethnic tensions.

Muslims told us that on the 25th the Tamil community had planned to hold a demonstration calling for the withdrawal of the camps of the security forces within the town. This had been called off on the request of the army. There was no way of getting a confirmation of this story. There seemed to be no indication that the army as contemplating moving out of the Mutur town in the near future. Some of the Muslims maintain that following the CFA, some of the security arrangements in the town were changed; they see this as being linked to the eruption of violence in the recent past.

The first clash between Tamils and Muslims in Mutur following the signing of the CFA occurred in October 2002. This spread beyond Mutur to Valaichchenai with disastrous consequences. In October 2002, the LTTE established a political office in Mutur. The tensions arose out of a story that LTTE cadre had assaulted a Muslim youth accused of desecrating crosses that had been erected in a public place by Tamil Christians

Ethnic Clashes in Muttur contd...

in Muttur. The LTTE office was set on fire during the clashes that took place and has not been re-opened since.

The Muslims in the area say that since 1987 they have had to face numerous problems when travelling through Sampur; abductions and extortion have been commonplace. Most of the stories however could not be confirmed. The Muslim community leaders told us that on each occasion on which a Muslim, or property such as carts and cattle belonging to Muslims had been taken away by the LTTE, they complained to the Police. According to them, the Police is the agency that should have a complete record of these incidents. At present, tracing these records from Police sources remains difficult.

Following the signing of the CFA it seems that these incidents of abduction and extortion came to a complete halt. The disappearance of 2 Muslim youth – Mohamed Naseem and Abdul Razak Jabeer - on April 1 2003 was the first such incident to take place since the CFA came into being.

As a consequence of the CFA there had been an agreement that Muslims entering the Sampur area would travel only on the main road. In many parts of the Eastern Province where Tamil and Muslim villages co-exist in close proximity this type of informal agreement between both groups has been quite common. The Tamils maintain that the two Muslim youths who were abducted had travelled off the main road. While the Muslim community says that the young men were traders in dried fish and had travelled to Muttur for that purpose, some Tamils state that in fact the youth were engaged in the buying and selling of ganja (cannabis). There was no way of confirming this speculation.

The mothers of the two men travelled to Sampur and met with the LTTE leaders there. They were first told that their sons were in LTTE custody; later this story was reversed and they were informed that their sons were in fact not in LTTE custody. It was due to despair in the face of this situation that on April 13, Jabeer's mother Qayatamma committed suicide. It is indeed a



An open prison - The IDP Camps in Muttur. © Buddhika Weerasinghe

failure of all those responsible for the maintenance and monitoring of the CFA that this situation could not be dealt with during the entire 2 week period that elapsed from April 1 to April 13. This is especially so considering the explosive situation that prevailed in Muttur during the period, and in light of the subsequent clashes.

The unease that prevailed among the Muslim community in Muttur rose to a peak following the suicide. There was no hostility expressed against the Tamils in Muttur. However there were several incidents in which Tamils from Sampur who had come to Muttur were assaulted and a Tamil youth was abducted and later released. On April 14, Thambimuttu Chandrasekera, a resident of the welfare centre located in the premises of St. Anthony's Church, was abducted and released near the jetty on April 16.

As tensions grew in the town, Muslims who lived in the areas on the other side of the river, adjacent to the LTTE-controlled area, began to leave their homes and move into schools in Muttur. On the 17th, some of these

settlements were attacked by a group of Tamils armed with poles and some primitive shot guns. It seemed that their main objective was to loot and destroy the homes belonging to Muslims. Even though the Police was aware of the situation, they did not take any steps to prevent it. The same situation prevailed in Valaichchenai in 2002 where the need to apprise the Police of how they could act in the face of such a situation came to the fore.

Some Muslims who have been displaced as a result of these clashes say that there were some persons with machine guns behind the group that actually engaged in looting and burning. Many of the homes have been burned down completely and people have been left with only the clothes they were wearing as they fled the mob.

Most of the displaced Muslims we spoke to, especially women, said that they had no idea why they were attacked. They could not speak to us without coming close to tears. One woman who had built and equipped her home after returning from 8 years of work in

Ethnic Clashes in Muttur contd...

West Asia was speechless. It was hard for them to discern any reason behind these recent attacks.

On the evening of the attack, evening mass was being celebrated at St. Anthony's Church because it was Good Friday. Many Tamils were in church that day when they heard the first gun shots and then saw flames over the area in which they lived. Some of them who are now living as displaced persons in the premises of the church have never gone home since that day. An armed Muslim group was involved in the attack on the town. If the security forces had not intervened, the situation would have been much worse.

Attacks on Muslim settlements continued in the next few days. According to a report maintained by the Mosque Committee, 74 homes in the Thakwa Nagar GS Division, 41 homes in the Periyapalam GS Division, 26 homes in the Aleem Nagar GS Division, 18 homes in the Palanagr GS Division were destroyed, along with 15 fibreglass boats. They estimate the loss to be in the range of 18 million rupees.

By April 22, there were 8985 Muslim families living as displaced persons in 15 welfare Centres. The total displaced Muslim population was 29,363. This means that except for a few thousand, the entire Muslim populace of Muttur has been displaced from their homes as a consequence of these clashes. A senior government officials pointed to the tendency of all groups in Muttur being constantly seeking state subsidies and support as being one reason for the extremely high figures of displacement.

On April 14, as tensions flared up following Qayatamma's suicide, the electricity supply to the town was disrupted. Since the power lines are laid across LTTE-controlled territory the assumption is that the disruption was caused in that area, and that the LTTE did nothing to prevent this. Muslims state that the disruption of power has happened in the past as well.

If the LTTE is to express its honest intention to establish peace in Muttur, they should first

take steps to restore the power supply lines, according to the Muslim community's leaders. Day to day work and business in the town has been badly affected by the lack of electricity.

Most of the people who live in and around Muttur are fisherfolk. Muslims said that they were prohibited from fishing in the seas off the LTTE-controlled area in Sampur and feared that the tensions over fishing rights would ignite further clashes in the future.

On April 20 there was a meeting and discussion between the head of the Muttur Mosque Committee, Maulvi M.M. Kareem and Trincomalee District LTTE leader Tilak. The meeting was held in the SLMM office in Trincomalee. Mr. Sambanthan, Deputy Leader of the TULF and MP for Trincomalee started off the meeting and then withdrew from the proceedings. The discussion which lasted for four hours yielded some positive results. Although the talks took place between Mr. Kareem and Mr. Tilak, there were several other leaders of the Muslim community present at the dialogue.

Six points of agreement were reached at this meeting:

1. Take every step possible to enable Tamil-speaking people (Tamils and Muslims) to live together without fear and insecurity and to build mutual trust between the two communities.
2. Maintain close links between the two communities in order to facilitate the above.
3. To affirm to the Tamil and Muslim communities that the violence has to end, and to ensure the maintenance of peace.
4. To appeal to the law enforcement agencies to take all steps necessary to maintain law and order in the areas under government control.
5. The LTTE will guarantee the security of Muslims living in areas under their control.
6. To appeal to all concerned for their cooperation in maintaining peace in Muttur.

This agreement was disseminated to the press as a Press Statement on April 21 by the SLMM in Trincomalee. Yet, most of the Tamils and Muslims in Muttur were unaware of this. If there had been steps taken to display the agreement in public places and also have it read out through public address systems, the tensions could have been greatly diffused. The lack of initiative and foresight on the part of the authorities in publicizing the agreement which was reached with much effort, must be deplored.

In the early hours of April 21, the day on which the Agreement was signed, a Muslim youth in Thoppur was abducted and beheaded. Mr. Kareem asked Tilak about this incident when they met to sign the Agreement. Tilak expressed his regret over the incident and said that he would deploy his investigating team to apprehend the perpetrator. Yet Tilak was not willing



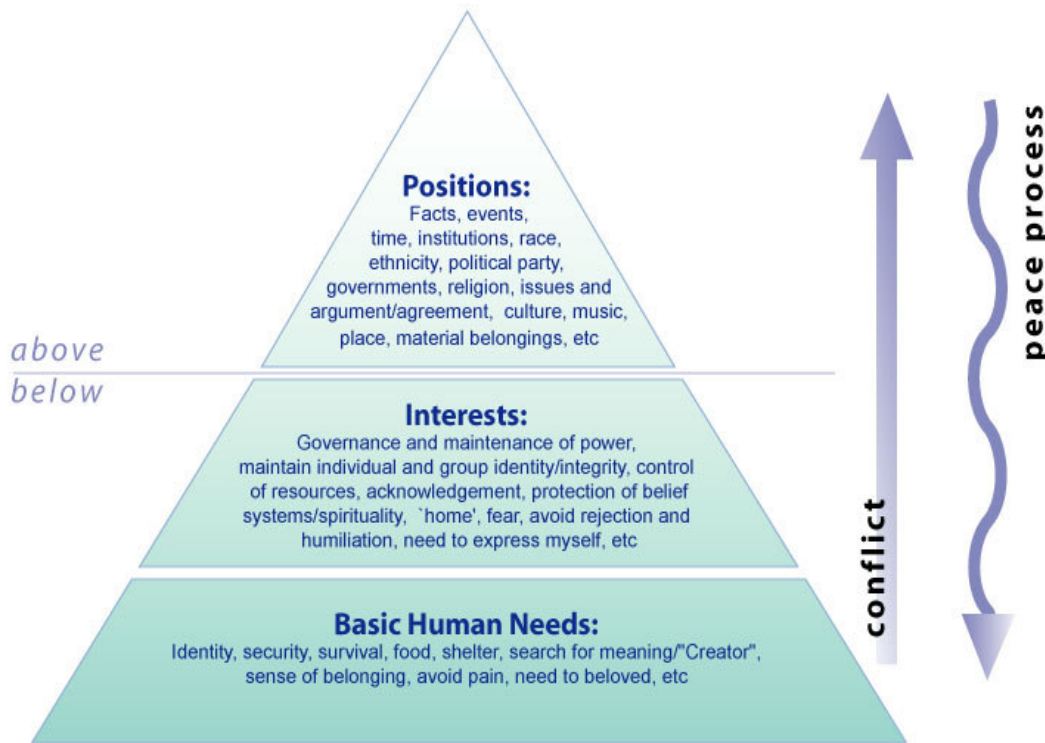
What will their future be like?

to make any commitment regarding the arrest of those identified as being responsible for looting and burning Muslim homes.

During the time of the talks it seemed that Maulvi Kareem and Tilak developed an understanding which was maintained by both through regular telephone conversations. However, up to April 25 nothing had been

Ethnic Clashes in Muttur contd...

Anatomy of Conflict



Compiled by Hannes Siebert, Media Peace Center, Nobel Appeal Foundation

done by the LTTE to apprehend those responsible for acts of violence including the looting and burning of Muslim homes. Some Muslims feel that Maulvi Kareem has been deceived by the LTTE. If mutual trust is to be built up between the two communities, then the LTTE must play a more positive role.

Every Muslim we spoke to in Muttur was very clear that there was no 'third force' involved in incidents of violence in their areas. Maulvi Kareem said that Tilak maintains that there are other Tamil groups operational in the area.

Tamil community leaders expressed their concern that no Tamils were included in the dialogue regarding the restoration of peace to Muttur. The Tamil community believes that they have been worst affected by ethnic clashes in the area. They say that Tamils in Muttur have been subjected to attacks in

1985, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003 and that among them there are families who have gone through a series of cycles of displacement, losing their homes six or seven times. They feel that the relative prosperity of Tamils in Muttur town is one of the underlying reasons for these attacks. Their opinion is that whenever there is any trouble for Muslims anywhere in the east, the Tamils of Muttur have paid the price.

Among the Muslims of Muttur there is a fear that just as the LTTE expelled Muslims from Jaffna and Mannar they would take steps to expel the Muslims from Muttur as well. Some of them do not believe that the LTTE genuinely intends to create a peaceful atmosphere in the area.

In the same way, the Tamil community believes that the Muslims seek to drive them out of Muttur. They understand the constant

attacks on them as a part of such a strategy.

Opinion-makers of both communities in Muttur reject these fears as being baseless and stress the need to work towards achieving a peaceful state of affairs in the area.

The chief government officials in the town say that there is a real absence of any political or civil authority in the area. Several minor incidents of ethnic tension are reported on a regular basis each month; they feel that some systematic steps of healing and reconciliation must be taken to address the situation. However, there is no leadership that is coming forward to fulfil this need.

There have been several peace Committees set up from time to time in Muttur. There is also an Inter-Religious Committee. The chief of the Police heads one

Peace Committee. Two more Peace Committees are led by the Divisional Secretary. None of these Committees seem to have been able to intervene in the tensions of the past weeks in any effective manner.

The two communities in Muttur – Tamil and Muslim – are very inter-linked in terms of their economic and social existence. There is more space to build harmony and bridges among them than there is to sow the seeds of discord. This is why putting the establishment of peace and mechanisms for reconciliation in Muttur should move to the top of the agenda of all those who work for peace and co-existence in Sri Lanka.

Conflict Sensitive Field Workshop

P

articipation

20 journalists participated in the programme. 17 from Colombo based mainstream media, 1 from NGO publication of Kurunegala and two provincial journalists from Muttur.

Narrative

The group left Colombo on the morning of 10th May 2003 and reached Muttur the same evening. As we turned to Muttur bound by-road and proceeded towards Kalar we were greeted by a herd of 30 wild elephants. We got down and get close enough to frame them in our cameras. So big and strong but innocent - that was the appearance. We took the blind men and the elephant as an example to look at the stories we will be looking for in Muttur.

Driving in to the hinterland half an hour we met with the first signs of the aftermath of the recent clashes. Muslim refugees living in small tents on bare land. All had heart-breaking stories. Tamils they knew for years had attacked them in disguise. They had been banned by the LTTE to cultivate their paddy lands and showed us vast paddy lands that they were not able to cultivate. The whole group was moved by their stories we spent more than an hour listening and taking notes.

Around 9.00 pm a group of Muslim youth visited us at Arabi College Road. They were agitated and wanted us to come with them to witness LTTE firing on the other side and Muslims feeling the area. According to them Muslim youth were getting armed with polls and machetes. Although some in the group went with them, I didn't.

Around 15 minutes latter we heard voices of hundreds of people which sounded like they were in trouble. I, with three others, hurried to the direction of voices. Hundreds of Muslims were on the street, men, women and children. The first person I spoke to told me an alleged member of the LTTE had run through their village. Then two youths approached me and said that that hundreds of

LTTE cadres had passed through the village, escorted by the army. We walked up to the sentry point and inquired. "Yes, we escorted LTTE cadre as they crossed to the other side. They would have been attacked by these people if we did not give them protection" was the answer we received.

On the way back we saw an army motorbike coming and overheard the pillion rider telling the agitated people "Don't worry, we just escorted Tamil civilians". We talked to them, and Captain Peiris of 2GB answered our questions. He assured us that they were all Tamil civilians and that they would not escort large groups of tigers without SLMM monitors. But the Muslim youth didn't believe him and insisted that what the sentry said was the right story.



Communities must learn to live together

The group who went to witness the LTTE firing came back. No firing was heard but Muslims were fleeing. No armed Muslim youth were there. A day later we were told by the Police Inspector Wijesingha of the Muttur police that there was a political meeting night before in the Tamil village and that fire-crackers were lit, sounds that could be mistaken for gunfire. First lesson on conflict reporting had been learned: don't let your feelings for the victims carried you away from checking the stories again and again.

Malavi Kareem, who is the President of Mosque Committee was very positive on bringing peace back to the people of Muttur. He was the Muslim cleric who singed the Memorandum of Understanding with the

LTTE area leader S. Tilak. At the same time we met Muslims who do not trust the MoU.

At the Catholic Church a priest told us that Muslims hated educated Tamils and had killed so many doctors and engineers of Muttur Tamil community. We asked him for names of those killed and requested him not to continue making allegations if he did not have the relevant facts and figures.

We had extensive discussions with Muslim and Christian clergy, Muslim and Tamil refugees, Police and Military, teachers and some other government officials.

On our way back from Muttur we had the briefing from Major Nanayakakra of 2GB. Even after one and half days of discussions we were still filling the blanks of the whole picture. Major Nanayakakra explained the territory and sequence of events using a military map.

Every time we spoke to someone at length there was new information on what happened. All sides justified their story by that acts of other side. Efforts to find out who started the chain reaction became futile. Instead we concentrated on the context.

Tamils were feeling let down by the media, who felt that their own fight had not been reported properly. Muslims even produced cuttings from recent articles in newspapers, which they said were factually incorrect. Media coverage was also criticized at the Police Station and Army Commander's Office.

At the beginning it was a gloomy picture but we slowly discovered the positive elements that had the capacity to engender positive changes. We met people who were courageous enough to go against the ethnic currents. Tamils and Muslims want to live together in Muttur. They need to talk to each other of their grievances and expectations.

The question we endeavoured to answer was whether the media could play a role in bridging gaps by giving both communities a space to air their voice?

Notes by Sunanda Deshapriya, Head, Media Unit, CPA

Project Partners

The **Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA)** was formed in 1996 in the firm belief that the vital contribution of civil society to the public policy debate is in need of strengthening. Focusing primarily on issues of governance and conflict resolution, CPA is committed to programmes of research and advocacy through which public policy is critiqued, alternatives identified and disseminated.

The **United States Agency for International Development's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI)** helps local partners advance peace and democracy in priority conflict-prone countries. Seizing critical windows of opportunity, OTI works on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key transition needs. OTI has worked in over twenty countries, providing the U.S. Government with innovative tools for bringing peace-building ideas to life.

Details of Project

Participants: Ravindra Chadralal, Buddhika Weerasinghe, Kasun Yapa, Seetha Ranjani, Salika Perera, Priyantha Pradeep, Lakshman Muthuthanthri, Sunil Jayasekara, E.M. Bandara Manike, Marushideen, Kamal Liyanarachchi, N. Ganeshan, Chameera Fernando, Ranil Hettiarachchi, C. Atukorala, Wasantha Chandrasoma, Sunanda Deshapriya, Sisira Kannangara, Dhammika S. Kumara.

People met in Muttur: Townsfolk of Jinna, M.S.M. Sareef (Secretary of Kinniya Pradeshiya Sabha), Lt. Ratnayake (Muttur Naval Regiment), Mohamed Anes (Thinakkural Newspaper), Maulavi Kareem (President of the Muttur Al-Shura Council), A.S.M. Sakeeb (Red Cross), Fr. Joseph Dunstan, K. Vallipuram (Principal of Ralkali Vidyalaya and member of Peace Committee), S. Shadeeshwaram (GS of Thenguvil), S. Anton (Business Leader), K.M.R. Eeswaran (Muttur Methodist Church), G. Nididasen (St. Anthony's Church), Chandimal Wijesinghe (Muttur Police Crimes Div.), Maj. Gen. Wasantha Nanayakkara (SLA) and about 300 IDPs.

Places visited in Muttur: Jinna IDP camp and surroundings, Muttur Jetty and surroundings, Wattam, Nadvathul Ulim Muslim Vidyalaya and IDP Camp, St. Anthony's Church, Muttur Police Station, Palanagar Army Camp, Sampur LTTE Checkpoint.

Media Unit @ CPA

Media freedom, the public's right to know and the individual's fundamental right to freely hold and express opinions are inextricably linked with good governance and democracy. The Media Unit in CPA was constituted to further CPA's objectives of formulating policy options to inform and shape the practice and culture of governance in Sri Lanka. The Media Unit examines hopes to engender a socially responsible media by examining the content and form of media coverage, and by publishing 'Media Monitor', a journal highlighting problems with media reportage in Sri Lanka.

The Media Unit has worked with International Media Support (Denmark), IMPACS (Canada), the PressWise Trust (UK) and a number of Sri Lankan media institutions, including the Free Media Movement (FMM), the Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association (SLWJA) and the Editors Guild in its interventions in Sri Lanka.

You can also use this space to remind

In 2003, the Media Unit hopes to engage in activities related to the Freedom of Expression, a national advocacy campaign for the Freedom of Information, Suicide Sensitive Journalism, a handbook for Conflict Sensitive Journalism and a project that will look at helping NGOs and civil society organisations engage with mainstream media more effectively.

Contact Us

Sunanda Deshapriya (Head) or Sanjana Hattotuwa (Coordinator)

24/2, 28th Lane, off Flower Road,
Colombo 7, Sri Lanka

Tel: 565304/6

Fax: 074-714460

Email: cpa@sri.lanka.net

Website: www.cpalanka.org

Some of our publications and research papers

- *Complete training manual on Right to Information*
- *Suicide Sensitive Journalism Handbook*
- *Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Survey for journalists*
- *Media and Conflict in Sri Lanka*
- *Various articles on Conflict Sensitive Journalism, Media Bias, Media Ethics etc.*
- *Various research papers on media in Sri Lanka*

All of these documents are available on www.cpalanka.org/media.html