

# **A Response to D B S Jeyaraj: "Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism: Past, Present and Future"**

By Usha S Sri-Skanda-Rajah

[http://transcurrents.com/tc/2011/01/sri\\_lankan\\_tamil\\_nationalism\\_p.html](http://transcurrents.com/tc/2011/01/sri_lankan_tamil_nationalism_p.html)

D B S Jeyaraj's article "Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism: Past, Present and Future" (see link above) apart from being misleading, flawed and lopsided in laying the blame for all the past ills and the present predicament that Tamils are in, on the LTTE and the Tamil Diaspora including Tamil Nadu activists, wants Tamils to drop the clamour for separation and to follow a path of least resistance which he calls the pragmatic approach. "The objective" of his pursuit of which this article is the first, he says, "is to briefly re-appraise the past with the wisdom of hindsight, analyze the present and present a prognosis of a potential future," yet is D B S Jeyaraj (Jeyaraj) the man best placed to make that assessment, I am not sure.

My response to Mr. Jeyaraj is meant as part of an honest discourse and is not personal. I respect him for his vast knowledge and analytical skills and wish he was on our side. I have long observed him to be waging his own war through his writings against the LTTE and the Tamil Diaspora which often go uncontested. I feel the necessity to put forward my arguments against his.

Jeyaraj's article which has a cursory look at Tamil Nationalism is unashamedly biased in my view. When reading the article one has a sense that Jeyaraj's recollection of the past, shows he suffers from selective amnesia; his evaluation of the present is a mixture of cynicism, criticism, pessimism, rancor and acrimony bundled in one, not to mention hopelessly misplaced in the apportion of blame; his prognosis for the future, ah! Is yet to come, suffice to say I will be curious to know if he has a solution to the vexed Tamil national question other than recommending a pragmatic approach.

His sadness for the plight of the people after the war is real and is what we all share. But what I see as most unjust is that his criticism – all that he can muster - is heaped on the defenders and not the aggressors.

Jeyaraj must himself know the contradictions of his own theories and approach so far. Although I do not wish to pre-empt Jeyaraj's prognosis for the future, from what I know Jeyaraj has in his writings in the past, been experimenting with the "federal idea" and the most obvious question is how successful has Jeyaraj been in convincing the Sinhala nationalists or even the moderate Sinhala politicians or for that matter a fraction of the Sinhala polity on the virtues of federalism? Not so I believe, Jeyaraj's "federal idea" I see is now confined to the section called 'Archive by D B S Jeyaraj'. Does that mean his "federal idea" has been consigned to the dust-bin of history or is there a hope he would resurrect and promote it as his magic formula for peace and reconciliation; could that be the prognosis for 'Jeyaraj's Future Sri Lanka'?

But how far did Jeyaraj get with his “federal idea” previously? Again if his previous articles are anything to go by I would say not far. In an article written in February 2008 entitled “Sri Lanka at sixty – The unfinished task of nation building” to push his “federal idea” Jeyaraj pontificates to Mahinda Rajapakse on the glories of equitable power sharing. “The important point is to note that the eradication of the LTTE will not automatically result in the problem being resolved. The LTTE is only a virulent symptom of the malady. Getting rid of the LTTE -even if possible – is no durable remedy. What is required now is the creation of a just, egalitarian and plural society. There must be equitable power – sharing based on principles of the federal idea,” he wrote then. Yes, I stand fully with Jeyaraj on this and I applaud him for his realistic assessment of the malady that afflicts Sri Lanka and the cure for it – the creation of an egalitarian and plural society.

<http://federalidea.com/focus/archives/category/federalidea/by-db-jeyaraj>

In that article Jeyaraj continues with his sound arguments for power-sharing, directed at Mahinda Rajapakse: “Power is concentrated with the majority ethnicity leaving other ethnicities out in the cold. It is a case of “Maha Jathiyata Kiri, Sulu Jathiwatala Kekiri. If we are to resolve these divisions and create a strong nation on the basis of equitable power-sharing, the structure of the state needs to be radically transformed. There is no consensus so far on that. Meanwhile political differences have assumed proportions of a cruel, destructive war. The war is only a consequence resulting from political causes. The conflict cannot be resolved by military means alone and requires a settlement that would address those underlying causes. This political solution cannot be dictated or imposed upon through military might alone,” says Jeyaraj without mincing words.

But here in this article, in his mission to destroy any arguments for separation his tune changes; he becomes highly critical of even Tamil politicians of the Chelvanayagam ilk and their party which was committed to the cause of federalism. He condemns the “unrealistic confrontational approach of the Tamil politicians of yesteryear and manages to conceal or rather exclude chunks of historical facts on how they were left with no choice but to taking a hard line and how they arrived there in the first place – that’s what I mean by his selective amnesia - to try to bolster his argument that the Tamil leadership engaged in the “politics of resistance” and didn’t co-operate enough with the Sinhalese majority. He fails to mention the Bandaranaike- Chelvanayagam pact which was repudiated by Bandaranaike (who had earlier introduced the Sinhala Only Act fanning the flames of nationalism with a view to victory in the elections), who caved-in to pressure from Sinhala nationalists, mobsters and the Buddhist clergy. What about the Dudley Senanayake-Chelvanayagam pact there after in, 1965 the provisions of which were not implemented. How much more would Tamils have to endure to satisfy the benchmarks for co-operation set by Jeyaraj.

“Even Soumiyamoorthy Thondaman” Jeyaraj points out “abandoned the politics of resistance after a period of time and instead embarked on a new course of cooperative politics which paid rich dividends for his victimised people.” But what he doesn’t do is elaborate on these “rich dividends” he so glibly boasts about! It’s a fact that the

plantation community is still described as “impoverished, neglected and miserable.” Ask the up-country Tamil tea plantation workers as compared to their low country Sinhalese counterparts, and they would say they haven’t still emerged from slavery and their wages are still below par. There has been some improvement, but very minimal, the UNDP has come up with a roadmap, the challenge is to implement the proposals. I am not sure what Jeyaraj means by “rich dividends”.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4260898.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4260898.stm)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92UiSzY\\_kX8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92UiSzY_kX8)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxP9ycn7ysche>

Jeyaraj’s experience in both pursuing a “federal idea” and his frustrations at President Rajapakse’s interference in the proceedings of the All Party Representative Committee (APRC) should tell him something about the impossibility of trying to get a reasonable consensus regarding devolution for Tamils and the difficulty in preserving the independence of a committee convened to report on devolution without interference from the very person who appointed the committee.

In terms of Jeyaraj’s interest in the “federal Idea” he did participate in a study tour with the Sri Lankan media (which he is a member of, writing for the Sri Lankan Daily Mirror) with Canada as the venue, arranged by the ‘Forum of Federations’ and the Canadian government to discuss the ‘Canadian Power Sharing Experience’. Jeyaraj wrote an article “The Power Sharing Experience in Canada” mostly about the study tour itself, where they went, what they saw and ate and less about substantive issues relating to using the ‘Canadian Confederation’ as a model for Sri Lanka.

<http://transcurrents.com/tamiliana/archives/292>

<http://www.forumfed.org/en/events/event.php?id=158/>

About the APRC and Rajapakse’s interference in its affairs Jeyaraj writes: “President Rajapakse last week changed the goalposts while the match was in progress when he asked the APRC to furnish him with a comprehensive report on how the existing Provincial Councils system could be rejuvenated with enhanced devolution as provided under the 13th amendment to the Constitution. When Rajapakse appointed the APRC in 2006 he had mandated it to present a comprehensive scheme of Constitutional reform. He also promised to abide by its report. The President however changed the APRC’s direction when he announced on Jan 9th this year that the APRC should take up a fresh task. He wanted the APRC to give urgent priority to compiling a report on how the existing Provincial Councils scheme could be revived and maximum possible devolution made feasible. Rajapakse also submitted a 4 page document titled “**A Political Proposal: The Way Forward**” at the meeting held with party leaders and APRC representatives. This document outlined the guiding principles under which the President wanted the APRC to compile its report,” he writes.

<http://federalidea.com/focus/archives/285>

<http://federalidea.com/focus/archives/category/federalidea/by-db-jeyaraj>

<http://federalidea.com/focus/archives/276>

<http://federalidea.com/focus/archives/266>

In an article “President Wants APRC River to Flow Backwards” Jeyaraj writes as follows: “When President Rajapakse convened the All Party Conference (APC) and its related All Party Representative Committee (APRC) in 2006 he solemnly pledged that he would abide by its decision and implement them. A multi – ethnic panel of experts was appointed to assist the APRC. There were many who doubted President Rajapakse’s sincerity and suspected the APRC of being a time buying exercise till the war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was concluded victoriously. Others felt that Rajapakse would utilise it to evolve and push through a weak scheme of devolution as his Political solution. The APRC under Prof. Tissa Vitarana’s dedicated leadership progressed positively and well. When the President and his Sinhala supremacist cohorts found the APRC proceeding smoothly they began adopting an obstructionist course. Blatant attempts were made to manipulate the APRC into delivering downgraded devolution both substance and unit wise. There emerged a cold war between the hawks and doves within the APRC. The President instead of maintaining impartial neutrality placed himself in the hard – line camp. Thus the nation and world at large witnessed the jocular sight of a President trying hard to sabotage the work of a committee appointed by him,” says Jeyaraj, revealing his frustrations at the “President and his Sinhala supremacist cohorts” and their shenanigans.

From APRC’s proceedings it was clear it was a dismal failure and from the wrangling that went on, that too without UNP participation, one could ascertain how hopeless the situation for Tamils really is and has been in obtaining a ‘southern consensus’ towards a satisfactory political solution. Despite the indisputable fact that any attempts at even a satisfactory devolution package was and is doomed to failure, Jeyaraj asserts that with the “wisdom of hindsight” it was wrong for the Tamil political leadership to seek separation when “demands for simple power sharing through devolution had been rejected.” Instead he expresses regret at the Tamil political leadership who should have used the demand for separation “...as a bargaining ploy expecting the Sinhala leadership to agree to a negotiated meaningful compromise,” and sighs “Alas, this was not to be” showing an unwillingness to admit to the near impossibility of such an event ever materialising which he himself has observed with the APRC.

The recent remarks of former President, Chandrika Kumaratunga further illustrate my point: Speaking to Kelum Bandara of the Daily Mirror Chandrika expresses regret she hadn’t been a “dictator for six months” to push through a constitution which “sought to devolve power extensively.”

[http://www.lankanewspapers.com/news/2011/1/63592\\_space.html](http://www.lankanewspapers.com/news/2011/1/63592_space.html)

But much of this truth pertaining to the inability of the Sinhalese politicians in coming up with a reasonable consensus towards devolution for Tamils is not mentioned as Jeyaraj discusses "Tamil Nationalism: Past, Present and Future". Instead he envisions great things to happen for Tamils "under the Sri Lankan sun" if they only listened to him and dropped the idea of separation and were more "practical".

And so in this article, Jeyaraj when dealing with the past is also mum about Sinhalese persecution of Tamils, is selective when he mentions only the anti- Tamil pogrom of 1983 and none of the pogroms against Tamils that preceded it. He speaks of the anti-Tamil pogrom of July 1983 and about "Violence spreading to areas outside the North and East" something "remaining etched in memory as one where Tamil civilians were butchered in large numbers," but by whom, he doesn't mention.

He fails in this article to admit that the LTTE was a product of Sinhala hegemony and Sinhala nationalism often manifested through discriminatory policies, violence and vandalism unleashed against Tamils.

He attributes much of the violence to the LTTE and doesn't mention the violence inflicted by the state or the paramilitaries who acted on the behest of the state. He recounts the tragic consequences of war resulting in "the deaths of thousands of people – civilians, guerillas and security forces" acknowledging thousands of Tamil civilian casualties but nowhere does he condemn the Sri Lankan security forces for the massacre of civilians or the summary executions of Tamil men and women, now caught on tape or demand that the perpetrators be investigated for war crimes.

No where does Jeyaraj estimate the numbers killed or missing to be what foreign media and now the Bishop of Mannar believe it is - a staggering 146,679 people - according to the submissions made by the Catholic Dioceses of Mannar to the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) which states: "Based on information from the Kacheris of Mullativu and Killinochi about the population in Vanni in early October 2008 and number of people who came to government controlled areas after that, 146,679 people seem to be unaccounted for. According to the Kacheri, the population in Vanni was 429,059 in early part of October 2008 (Refer Annex 4 and 5). According to UN OCHA update as of 10 th July 2009, the total number of people who came out of the Vanni to government controlled areas after this is estimated to be 282,380 (Refer Annex 6).

[http://transcurrents.com/tc/2011/01/post\\_609.html](http://transcurrents.com/tc/2011/01/post_609.html)

Neither does he name the perpetrators behind the violence, vandalism, abductions and disappearances that are still taking place at present in post war Sri Lanka, except to justify it: "Much of the violence and criminal activity going on now are symptomatic of a post-war society," he says.

On the other hand the Minority Rights Group International (MRG) has on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January released a scathing report titled 'No war, no peace: the denial of minority rights and justice in Sri Lanka', highlighting the situation of Tamils and Muslims in Sri Lanka

two years after war and of rising ethnic nationalism. The report says "...minorities face daily repression and marginalization in politics and development policies, particularly in the country's north and east," claiming it has based its findings on "groundbreaking first-hand research". Of the report, the MRG in its website quotes Mark Lattimer, executive director of the MRG: Despite the end of the war, many Tamil and Muslim minorities in Sri Lanka continue to live in fear,' says Mark Lattimer, reiterating 'The government has made little mention of greater political autonomy for minorities which has always been a key demand of Tamils and Muslims. In fact, the government is now proposing legislation to change the electoral system in a way that threatens to decrease their political representation,' Lattimer adds.

"The report makes a series of recommendations to the Sri Lankan government including asking for a published policy to address minority rights issues, the resumption of all-party negotiations aimed at reaching an agreement on political representation and governance for minorities, and the development of an impartial and credible mechanism for justice and reconciliation in the country," the website states.

<http://www.minorityrights.org/10463/press-releases/rising-ethnic-nationalism-in-sri-lanka-targets-minorities-for-abuse-new-report.html>

In contrast when Jeyaraj writes about changes in demography he omits to mention the government's manipulation of the electoral system or the forced colonization and the land grabbing that's taking place in Tamil areas: "...the ethnic ratio of the North – Eastern provinces has changed to a great extent" he says, but does not say it's also because of Sinhala colonization of those provinces. Although I agree with him when he says, "it is surmised now that more Sri Lankan Tamils live in the seven Sinhala majority provinces than in the North and East regarded as their areas of "historic habitation," I attribute this to the fact that Tamils are seeking safer and greener pastures and greater job opportunities in other provinces. He fails to point out that Sinhalese have now moved in large numbers to traditional Tamil areas, a fact mentioned by the Globe and Mail in its editorial captioned: 'Sri Lanka is wasting its peace dividend': "There should be a transparent process for resolving land disputes, and greater efforts made to include Tamils in the process. They must be reassured that the government isn't trying to colonize the north by sending Sinhalese people to live there. Reconciliation – not consolidation of personal power – should be Mr. Rajapaksa's priority." The paper concludes.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/editorials/sri-lanka-is-wasting-the-peace-dividend/article1871270/>

In relation to the militarization of the Tamil Homeland, Jeyaraj has conveniently forgotten the unprovoked attack on the proceedings of the International Tamil Conference (January 1974) and the burning of the Jaffna Library (May 1981), just two examples of police, army and state brutality and vandalism when he says "Before the war began, there were only a few army, navy and airforce installations in the North and East. Security personnel were essentially confined to barracks."

But the truth as we know it, tells another story. The Tamil Homeland was under military occupation long before the LTTE, as far back as 10<sup>th</sup> June 1958 when the late SWRD Bandaranayake sent in the troops and appointed military governors for both the Northern and Eastern provinces. One must not forget that the army was utilised to inflict brutal force on ‘Tamil Satyagrahis’, modeled after Mahatma Gandhi, who were protesting the ‘Sinhala Only Act’, which opened the flood gates for future Sri Lankan army involvement in the suppression of Tamils. The Sinhala army occupation of Tamil areas was a real source of provocation, a bone of contention taken up by Tamil political parties which led in the end to Tamil militancy.

“The bitter reality is that there is little chance of this overwhelming military presence decreasing in the near future,” Jeyaraj says and again blames the “vocal warriors” for continued army occupation in the Tamil Homeland: After decades of fighting a separatist war no government can be expected to withdraw or reduce the military presence in a very short time particularly when “vocal warriors” continue to beat war drums in the Tamil Diaspora,” he writes.

Jeyaraj hits hard without any sound reasoning to support his conjecture that LTTE let go of chances for peace: “The LTTE had four great opportunities to play a political role in peace processes and bring about a negotiated settlement. They were the India inspired peace process, the talks with President Ranasinghe Premadasa, the talks with President Chandrika Kumaratunga and the Norway facilitated peace process with Ranil Wickremesinghe as Prime Minister. In a path breaking development both sides agreed to explore federalism as a solution in Oslo. Sadly the Tigers did not stay the course.” He writes.

He should know that it wasn’t as simple as that. Sri Lanka was not genuine, never really accepted federalism; a national consensus of that kind was never reached on the Sri Lankan side, where as the LTTE had more than compromised its principles – Anton Balasingam writes in his book War and Peace, “the LTTE Leader Pirapaharan was willing to accept federalism based on internal self-determination” with the qualification that “if the element of internal self-determination was blocked or denied and that the demand for regional self rule is rejected” they “have no alternative other than to secede and form an independent state.”

Contrary to Jeyaraj’s evaluation, most Tamils who followed the peace process saw no indication that the so called peace talks were going very far towards a political solution for Tamils. When the question of dismantling High Security Zones arose, Sarath Fonseka, then Commander of the Sri Lankan army in the Jaffna peninsula demanded ‘disarming’ as a condition for de-escalation and resettlement of the displaced. The demand for LTTE to lay down its arms came without any guarantee of the army pulling back from the North and East or any substantive proposal for autonomy for the Tamils.

Adding insult to injury the LTTE was left out from the American Donor Conference meeting. The LTTE’s Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) proposal was also not even discussed. By this time President Chandrika Kumaratunga and Prime Minister Ranil

Wickremasinghe were caught up in a bitter power struggle. In the new round of talks in 2006 between the LTTE and the new regime under Mahinda Rajapakse, the disarming of government backed paramilitaries was a priority for the LTTE which saw paramilitaries as instigating the violence while the Government of Sri Lanka wanted changes made to the Cease-fire Agreement (CFA) blaming the LTTE for CFA violations. In the end Sri Lanka showed the whole peace process was an exercise in futility when the new delegation appointed by Rajapakse called the Cease-fire Agreement illegal and in breach of the Sri Lankan constitution. People should be cautious not to blindly accept Jeyaraj's lopsided account of the peace process when he knows reaching a southern consensus for a political settlement was an impossible task.

<http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=17267>

<http://123srilanka.com/articles/directory.php?id=196>

Whereas the peace agreement signed by Sudan's Vice President Ali Osman Taha and Southern Sudan's main rebel group, Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLA) leader John Garang in 2005 in a ceremony attended by the then US Secretary of State Colin Powell culminated in the eventual division of the two countries. This was true despite the fact that John Garang himself argued later for a united Sudan with a constitutional order that respected 'diversity'. Thabo Mbeki the former President of South Africa and Chairman of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan comments on this point of a united Sudan losing ground on the death of Garang in a plane crash: "However that vision died with Garang when unfortunately, he perished in a helicopter crash in 2005, early in the life of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement he had negotiated. With the demise of that vision it seems inevitable that the votes cast during the south Sudan referendum which began on Sunday will result in the division of Sudan into two countries, with effect from July 9," he writes.

In exploring the idea of an 'Independent Tamil Eelam', the example of South Sudan must not only serve as a reminder of past mistakes and missed opportunities, it should provide the incentive and set the guiding principles for future initiatives. There are so many issues unresolved in the Sudanese conflict, yet a huge step has been taken towards Southern Sudanese independence which speaks volumes in favour of the parties concerned, the African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and the international community. The practical aspects of the break-up of the largest country in the African continent are challenging to say the least. The writing of two different constitutions seems an easier task compared to other more pressing issues. Dividing oil revenues from the South, sharing port facilities and the infrastructure of the North, determining territorial questions and the fate of Abyie, where the oil fields are right in the dividing line whose people did not yet get to vote, addressing the situation of minorities, including nomads and the mass movement of Southern Sudanese from the North are problems that officials from both sides are committed to resolving. The fact that violence which no one wants, may once again erupt if there is an impasse, should spur the parties towards settling these issues amicably.

His aversion for part of the Tamil Diaspora and some of its “vocal warriors” as he calls them is quite obvious. He harbours a longstanding grudge deep down rightly or wrongly that dictates his thinking which is reflected in much of his writings and is evident when he laments: “Not only was I one of the few Tamil voices in the wilderness but was also attacked viciously by LTTE minions as a traitor and lackey and sell-out etc for daring to speak truth to power. Today what I feared greatly has come to pass,” he gloats as though satisfied he’s settled a score. “The need of the hour is for Tamils to evolve a sensible and pragmatic approach to the situation they are in. What is necessary now is not confrontation but cooperation. Those continuing the old politics of sabre-rattling must realise there is no sword or blade in the scabbard or sheath to “scare” the enemy. Instead these vocal warriors make laughing stocks of themselves without perhaps realizing it,” he writes smugly.

“What is troubling in this situation is the inability and unwillingness of sections of the Tamil people to comprehend the ramifications of their predicament,” Jeyaraj writes, “The confrontational attitude of vocal warriors continues. Instead of trying to arrive at some form of political reconciliation and work for the upliftment of the shattered and battered people, an abrasive style of politics is still prevalent. The politics of confrontation is being followed in the name of “Thesiyam” or nationalism,” he mourns. Whereas Sri Lanka through the 6<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution has muzzled its Tamil citizens and politicians the Tamil Diaspora in stark contrast is exercising its democratic right to freedom of speech, assembly and association and Jeyaraj shouldn’t be raising that as a bone of contention at all.

Jeyaraj must (if he hasn’t done yet, for she quotes him) read Sukanya Podder’s article ‘Challenges to Peace Negotiations: The Sri Lankan Experience’ where she not only writes briefly but pointedly on failed pacts and negotiations, she also analyses three principle variables that impinged on negotiations. She lists ‘the unresolved or competing nationalisms of the state building project of Sri Lanka’, ‘the ruinous practice of ethnic outbidding practiced by the two major Sinhalese parties’ and the ‘authoritarian character of the LTTE, which thrives on a rationale of war and terror’, as these variables “Which have informed spoiler behavior, and foiled attempts at a decisive settlement of the ethnic conflict,” she points out. As much as I disagree with the second part of her assessment of the LTTE, as a research student, Ms Podder, in appraising these three fundamental contributory factors to failed negotiations, writes, “In the attempts at internal political accommodation and external mediation, the primary operative variables appear to be the contested nationalism thesis and the ruinous practice of ethnic outbidding,” and adds “In terms of the more recent phase of negotiations in 2002-2003 and later the Geneva talks in 2006, while all three variables work in tandem, internal political rivalry between the two main Sinhalese parties proved most critical in undermining substantive negotiations,” portraying in a way a more realistic picture than Jeyaraj. In the aftermath of the massacre and of the war and the third variable gone from the equation, with new ground realities at play, it would be interesting to know what Ms Podder’s observations would be now.

[http://www.idsa.in/system/files/strategicanalysis\\_sukanya\\_0906\\_0.pdf](http://www.idsa.in/system/files/strategicanalysis_sukanya_0906_0.pdf)

Although Jeyaraj wants a pragmatic approach he doesn't say how far he is prepared to compromise; would a compromise entail giving up the "federal idea"? Like all armchair critics he stops short of prescribing the formula for that 'panacea' he self-righteously recommends which he believes totally eludes Tamils who opt for separation; leaving the reader guessing; except to say that more will be revealed in future articles. We shall wait with bated breath for the 'D B S Jeyaraj formula'.

"A pragmatic course of action would enable the long suffering people to better their lot and regain their rightful position under the Sri Lankan sun," Jeyaraj writes; transfixed to this notion despite all signs showing otherwise. Going by past events and experiences and present realities in Sri Lanka, his dream of a rosy future for Tamils via a pragmatic approach is but a figment of his imagination. I am prepared to dream along with D B S Jeyaraj if he can come up with the elixir that would transform Sri Lanka into a paradise for Tamils, Sinhalese and all ethnicities a like and prove me wrong.

Usha S Sri-Skanda-Rajah

25 January 2011