

LTTE raises funds for major development projects in north. (1994, December 04). The Sunday times.

LTTE raises funds for major development projects in north

By Our Defence Correspondent

The Tamil Eelam Economic Development Organization (TEEDOR), formerly known as the Research Organization of Eelam Tamils (ROOT), the economic wing of the LTTE, has launched a major development programme for the northern province.

Eight groups have been established by the LTTE in consultation with the University of Jaffna "to discuss, develop and launch a master plan for the internal development of the independent sovereign state of Tamil Eelam."

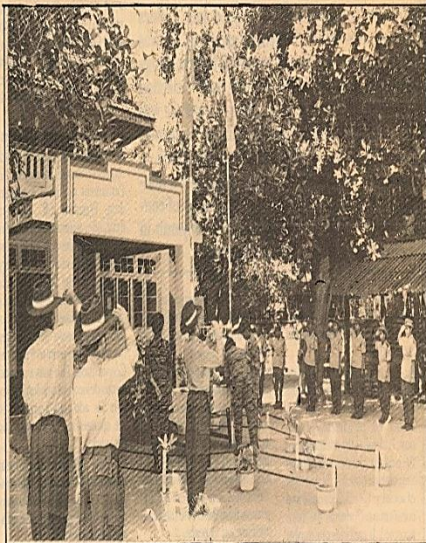
The groups are working in the fields of (1) cities (2) roads, railways and airports (3) sea transport and harbours (4) electricity (5) telecommunications (6) irrigation and water management (7) industries (8) water supply and sewerage system.

While the LTTE has insisted on maintaining a high degree of secrecy for the projects, a section of anti-LTTE dons and students in the university has released information about the LTTE master plan.

Under this plan, the projects are to be externally funded. The LTTE has requested some 30 odd of its offices overseas to gather expertise and resources. Through, agriculture and animal husbandry, are part of the internal development master plan, the LTTE offices overseas are not making a distinction and are focusing intensely on aspects of the master plan.

Among the foreign funded projects already in operation are a readymade garment sewing project in Kilinochchi, poultry breeding projects in Allipalai and Naachchiar and the installation of an animal energy based lift irrigation system in Manal Aru.

Among the key projects the LTTE is canvassing overseas for financial and technical support are a Rs. 200,000 project to cultivate passion fruit in Kilinochchi; a Rs. 600,000 project to generate animal husbandry feed in Udutivu; a Rs. 200,000 project to erect windmills in the "northern part of Tamil Eelam"; a Rs. 55,000 project to establish goat farming in Thennarachi; a Rs. 1,000,000 project to develop fish industry - products and sales in Manal Aru (Weli Oya area) and a Rs. 250,000 project to develop feedlot livestock in the Vanni region.



LTTE police: infrastructure expands

So far the LTTE has been successful in securing pledges or generating funds overseas for the following six projects. Rs. 1.4 million for processing hide in Navalkuli; Rs. 1 million for rural poultry breeding in Valikamam area; Rs. 2.9 million for animal husbandry in Kilinochchi; Rs. 40,000 for Naachchiar poultry breeding in Allipalai; a coal industry for Rs. 316,000 in Manal Aru; Rs. 40,400 for the installation of an animal energy based lift irrigation system also in Manal Aru and a carpentry workshop for Rs. 31,000 in Kilinochchi.

The LTTE is designing a number of fund raising campaigns and research projects which will become operational in 1995. It is establishing a fund of Rs. 10 million for the rural development and a fund of Rs. 250 million for paddy marketing in "the northern part of Tamil Eelam." The research projects are the building of a gasifier for Rs. 70,000, the development of a foot pedal water pump for Rs. 15,000, a wind energy project for Rs. 45,000 and a biogas project for Rs. 75,000.

This includes the establishment of a research centre of alternative sources of energy in Kopyai and one of the first projects of the centre being a solar energy project costing Rs. 60,000.

Other than Paris, London, Toronto, the LTTE offices in Australia, particularly the office in Mt. Waverley, Victoria 3149, have been active in supporting the LTTE plans to develop the northeast. Early this year, Rs. 500,000 raised in fund raising efforts in Victoria and in Canberra, were transferred to the LTTE. The LTTE used the Ceylon Tamil Association of Victoria and the Canberra Tamil Association as the front organization.

The Tamil Society of the Northern Territory of Australia too had contributed an unknown amount from Australia to the LTTE in Sri Lanka.

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Among the TEEDOR projects that have received wide publicity are the soil and water research project, the LTTE loans to fish mongers, the sunflower ground nut cultivation project, the poultry housing project, the cattle first aid center project and the Bombay seed onion project.

TEEDOR is engaged in soil and underground water research analysis in the bare land at Kopyai called Kopyavil. TEEDOR which undertook test paddy cultivation in this area with the University has found that the area is suitable. Further research is being carried out to

reclaim the whole land for cultivation. TEEDOR has established Village productivity committees. One of the first tasks of these committees was to assist some 20 odd fisher families with income below poverty. They were selected by the committee from Vethettihurai North-West and North-East and each family was given Rs. 5000 to engage in the sale of fish.

Of the TEEDOR branches established in the North, the focus on Mullaitivu branch has brought LTTE wide praise. One of the most successful projects of TEEDOR has been the establishment of a Rs. 59,000 project to cultivate sun flower and ground nut in the Tattamalai area in Mullaitivu (Weli Oya).

From time to time the Tamil Refugee Organization (TRO), the refugee and the rehabilitation wing of the LTTE, which inadvertently received a massive grant from Germany, collaborates with TEEDOR in establishing joint housing projects.

One of the first TEEDOR housing projects has been to construct poultry houses and present 20 birds per family to 15 families with low income selected from the villages of Kondavil, Puttur and Chankanaai.

Among the TEEDOR community projects are the establishment of a first aid center for cattle, the provision of Bombay seed onions from its store in

Kondavil, the tree-planting activities in Vavuniya and Kilinochchi and the goat supply project also in Kilinochchi.

TEEDOR is headed by Raviv, a product of the Jaffna university. He is known among the Tamil community as Root Ravi because the precursor of TEEDOR was known as the Research Organization of Eelam Tamils (ROOT). Ravi is regarded more liberal than many of the other heads of LTTE departments. Early this year, there was some disagreement between Ravi and some other leaders, but he has decided to continue his work for the love of the Tamil community.

TEEDOR lost two very important leaders recently. One was the head of TEEDOR for the Eastern Province known as David alias ROOT David who was killed by an Army team led by a former militant who is reputed for taking his target irrespective of the internal, location and time.

Second was the head of the LTTE shadow "Government Agent" known as Willis. Though Willis was not closely in TEEDOR, he supported its activities. Willis a former bus conductor turned militant from Mullaitivu had a disagreement with the LTTE leadership and committed suicide.

Undoubtedly, TEEDOR with its headquarters in Travankudi will grow in importance in the years ahead. The Tamil people has once again demonstrated their ability to survive under conditions of war. The generosity of the LTTE has enabled TEEDOR to become almost a parallel economic force to the LTTE military and propaganda efforts internationally.

After the Raju Gandhi murder, the LTTE has suffered internationally. Many Sri Lankans particularly expatriates believe that the current government has not done enough to project the Prabhakaran murder by Prabhakaran to weaken the LTTE further on an international scale. Some have interpreted this as being politically difficult, while others have told that national states like the LTTE insurgency should be dealt at a place which is politically above.

The LTTE focus to raise funds for non-military activity is partly triggered by the unwillingness on the part of the international community to assist them militarily or politically.

Christmas ceasefire

By our Military Analyst

Military intelligence

has again warned that there is a serious threat to the life of the Deputy Defence minister from the

Tigers



Ratwatte, heavily guarded

The public posturing between the government and the LTTE over the resumption of peace talks continued this week, with the government announcing at the weekly Cabinet news briefing that negotiations would resume soon, but declining to give a clear date.

On the Tigers' side, the same game was being played. A surprising peace gesture by the government of returning the ashes of a top Tiger cadre killed two weeks ago was turned down unceremoniously.

The ashes of Lieutenant Colonel Adamas alias 'Mali', the deputy commander of Tiger intelligence, were sent to Vavuniya by the forces, to be handed over to the LTTE, but the Tigers refused to accept the offer, giving no reason.

Tiger supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran himself had denounced the offer for releasing Adamas' body after he was killed in an army ambush while apparently on a scouting mission near the Kokkarudavai army camp, where the Tigers conducted ceasefire in effect.

Ministry officials reported to the President their longstanding preference to open the Elephant Pass route rather than the Pooneryn one. Elephant Pass is controlled by the Army, and the ministry wants to open the route without moving the camp, believing that this camp is less likely to be overrun by a surprise Tiger attack than the Pooneryn camp.

Meanwhile the mess over the cancelled Rs. 3.5 billion Russian arms tender continued this week.

After the Air Force called fresh tenders for three Antonov transport planes, and six transport helicopters, there was a general uproar among Colombo's considerable arms dealing community, which consists of local agents who swing arms deals and then swear that they were government-to-government, with no private participation.

Many of them were unhappy that the new tender only allows 16 days for bids to be submitted, a process which usually takes several months. Charges that the first step should be a cessation of hostilities, and not a ceasefire. This would mean that there will be no actual attacks on each other's camps and patrols, but other warlike activities, such as building bunkers, building up forces in offensive positions, and intelligence activities will continue.

No date has been set for this, but the government is keen that it be announced by the United Nations' High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). It will be followed by a general ceasefire.

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The Defence Ministry, now under the direct control of President Chandrika Kumaratunga, this week gradually agreed to opening of the Pooneryn-Sampulpa route to the Jaffna Peninsula. However, the strategic Pooneryn army camp will not be removed. The Tigers have been repeatedly calling for this.

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Meanwhile, military intelligence has again warned that there is a serious threat to the life of Deputy Defence Minister Anura Kumara Ratwatte, from the Tigers. Col. Ratwatte, is now being guarded by the elite commando unit of the army, in addition to the usual bodyguard.

Several heavy armed commandos in camouflage uniforms now form a human wall in front of Col. Ratwatte whenever he is in public, even at cocktail parties and other formal occasions when he meets top officials and diplomats outside his office.

Meanwhile an army request for 1,000 sets of body armour for its senior officers was this week turned by the ministry, with only 500 sets being ordered due to the high cost. Each set costs 550 pounds Sterling or about US \$5,000, totalling almost Rs. 13 million.

Tenders were called earlier and bids were received from Israel, Britain and the US, according to Defence Ministry sources. Field tests of the armour were conducted at an army firing range by a special committee appointed by the Army Commander, with various types of ammunition and explosives being used for the tests. The American bid was finally selected, and the shipment is to arrive shortly.