

# ublishandbedamned

This was an era when bodies floated on the Kelani river or ended up on tyre pyres on the main roads.

The publisher also had to face the wrath of the JVP for not publishing in full the Wijeweera Q&A.

On another occasion, a close relative of Wijeweera was at the publisher's office, demanding to see him.

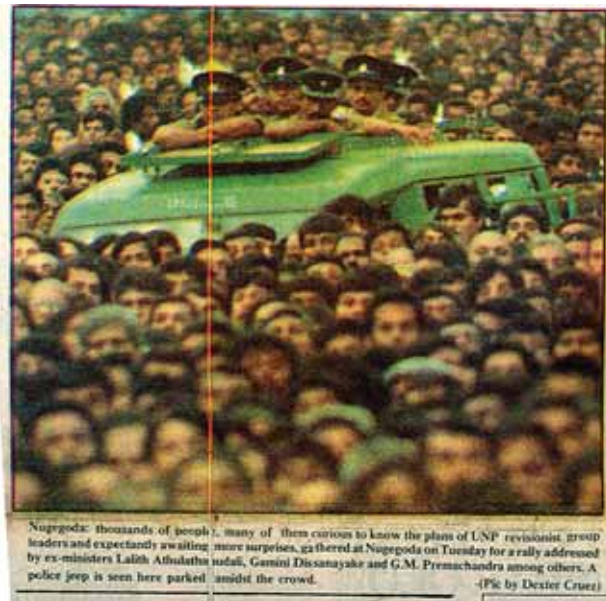
The publisher's office assistants told him that the boss was not in office. The visitor angrily stormed out of the office, vowing to come back with an army of JVP rebels, because he felt the office assistants had prevented him from seeing the boss.

The Sunday Times security officers took no chances. They closed the gates and kept the doors shut. A few

hours later, around 4 p.m., there were big thuds on the door. 'Dora Arinawa' (open the door), shouted the voice from outside. It made half the security staff run through a back door all the way to the residence of the publisher. One of them ran shouting, 'Onna JVP enawo' (JVP is coming). It later turned out to be one of our drivers who wanted to report for duty at 4 p.m.

During this era of terror, we journalists, probably due to our over enthusiasm or activism, were sometimes oblivious to the publisher's balancing act and the need for it. Aware that the government even took into consideration the size of the front page main photograph in gauging a newspaper's degree of

antipathy to the powers-that-be, the publisher had the habit of downsizing it, much to our disappointment. He would ask us what our front page picture was and how big it would be on the page. Knowing that he would reduce the size by a column or two, we would, on the instructions of the then assistant editor, Lalith Alahakoon, tell him that we wanted to make it six columns (the paper had ten columns) width-wise. He would say four, which would be the size we wanted anyway. One such picture is reproduced here today to illustrate this article. Thus we beguiled the boss, for journalism's sake – for a greater cause. For us it was journalism; for him it was a question of survival.



Nuwara-Eliya: thousands of people, many of them curious to know the plans of L.N.P. revisionist, group leaders and expectantly awaiting more surprises, gathered at Nuwara-Eliya on Tuesday for a rally addressed by ex-ministers Lalith Athulathuruduge, Gamini Dissanayake and G.M. Premachandra among others. A police jeep is seen here parked amidst the crowd. (Pic by Dexter Cruz)

## What would we do without our Kuru

BY ISHIKA AMERASINGHE

Whether it's his 'kuru the' (Kuru's cuppa) which was reduced from two cups of milk-tea and a plain tea a day and an occasional bonanza of a cup of steaming coffee at night, to one cup of tea, due to economic factors (salli madiy ne!), his characteristic 'ha-ha' (ok, ok) or his steadfast commitment to work taking page proofs from one floor to another, seeing to it that page proofs are sent to the chairman, he needs special mention as we celebrate 25 years.

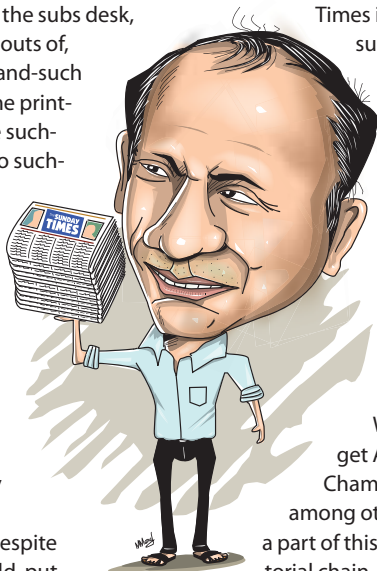
Never a grumble on his lips in spite of the physically tiring work especially on Saturdays when deadline-mania grips the subs desk, with constant shouts of, "Kuru, has such-and-such page come on the printer", or "Kuru give such-and-such page to such-and-such proof reader, the editor, news desk, Layout", "Kuru, here's money for lunch .....". – Don Nimal Premasiri Kuruwitarachchi is there sprightly as ever running here and there despite being 55 years old, put-

ting some of his younger colleagues to shame.

Even in the wee hours of Sunday morning when the editorial finally folds up with all the pages sent to bed, Kuru will still have energy left to clear up scattered proofs and the general mess of the Sub-Editors' Desk. Once in a way the day's weariness rubs off on him but he will give you a cheerful send-off in spite of a drooping head and drooping eyelids.

Kuru's application for well-deserved leave is always greeted with a groan because he is so much a part of the editorial desk.

Kuru joined the Sunday Times in 1993 after the closure of the Sun newspaper. He and his present band of men Sampath, Charles, Raju and Sanjeeva, have made their mark not, perhaps, with the pen but by being an essential and important unit in the family that is the Sunday Times. We should not forget A.R. J. Bandara and Champika Thushara among others who were once a part of this vital link in the editorial chain.



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