

Dudley Senanayake - Chelvanayakam Pact, March 1965

Mr. Dudley Senanayake and Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam met on the 24-3-1965 and discussed matters relating to some problems over which the Tamil-speaking people were concerned, and Mr. Senanayake agreed that action on the following lines would be taken by him to ensure a stable government:

(1) Action will be taken early under the Tamil Language Special Provisions Act to make provision of the Tamil Language to be the language of Administration and of Record in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Mr. Senanayake explained that it was the policy of his party that a Tamil-speaking person should be entitled to transact business in Tamil throughout the island.

(2) Mr. Senanayake stated that it was the policy of his party to amend the Language of Courts Act to provide for legal proceedings in the Northern and Eastern Provinces to be conducted and recorded in Tamil.

(3) Action will be taken to establish District Councils in Ceylon vested with powers over subjects to be mutually agreed upon between two leaders. It was agreed, however, that the government should have power under the law to give directions to such councils under the national interest.

(4) The Land Development Ordinance will be amended to provide that citizens of Ceylon be entitled to the allotment of land under the Ordinance.

Mr. Senanayake further agreed that in the granting of land under colonisation schemes the following priorities be observed in the Northern and Eastern provinces

(a) Land in the Northern and Eastern provinces should in the first instance be granted to landless persons in the district.

(b) Secondly, to Tamil-speaking persons resident in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

(c) Thirdly, to other citizens in Ceylon, preference being given to Tamil residents in the rest of the island.