

animated his life. Yes truth, beauty, he believed in Keats' legendary words.

Despite his love of other disciplines, the law was his first love. He was a brilliant lawyer and it is significant that his last public speech was in memoriam for another lawyer before the community of those interested in the law. His love of constitutional ideas was not a petty partisan exercise. He studied Constitutions as living embodiments of the moral firmaments of a society. He felt deeply about these issues and he wanted to structure a noble and just society. His interest in this subject had made him research far and wide and he was killed just weeks before he was to leave Sri Lanka to teach law and local government at Harvard University, his alma mater. *The Boston Globe* carried the reactions of grief stricken colleagues and

friends at Harvard, including the Dean of the Law School. His death reminds us of Regi Siriwardene's poem the *Roman Soldier*. While the ruthless Roman forces invaded Greece, Archimedes continued to draw his mathematical designs on the ground, seemingly oblivious to the horror that surrounded him. A Roman soldier, came over, looked at the design, could not understand its meaning so he just chopped off Archimedes' head.

And what of the perpetrators? When does impunity end? *Cat's Eye* has always been and continues to be for a negotiated settlement to the ethnic conflict, with or without third party mediation. However, such a settlement should not contain impunity for human rights violations and war crimes by either side.

Courtesy, *Cat's Eye* (Island)

A TRIBUTE FROM INDIA

We are deeply shocked at the assassination of Neelan Tiruchelvan by a suicide bomber reportedly of the LTTE and conducted in a manner characteristic of LTTE. We unreservedly condemn such cruel and senseless violence.

Neelan was a person of extraordinary talent, great intellectual refinement and unwavering political commitment for democracy, pluralism, secularism, justice and humanism. His was a voice of reason which compelled attention and inspired thousands of scholars, thinkers, activists and political leaders not just in Sri Lanka but all over South Asia.

We in India who had the privilege to know Neelan have always admired him for his outstanding work on conciliation, peace and political devolution in Sri Lanka, his fierce opposition to ethnocentric nationalism, chauvinism and militarism, his efforts at promoting South Asian solidarity and his great courage as well as immense personal charm.

Neelan was eliminated by forces of extreme intolerance because they cannot co-exist with democracy, reason and human values. His death only underscores the importance of fighting such forces in our entire region and of reaffirming our commitment to what Neelan stood for.

We send our deepest condolences to Sithie, their two sons and Neelan's countless friends and admirers.

Romila Thapar, Ritu Menon, Kamla Bhasin, Praful Bidwai, Veena Das, Ambrose Pinto, Abha Bhaiya, Miloon Kothari, Sayeeda Hamid, Maya Daruwala, Kuldip Nayyar, Seema Mustafa, Swami Agnivesh, Kamal Chenoy Mitra, Prabir Purkayastha, Imrana Qadeer, Dunu Roy, Chandrelekha, Sadanand Menon, Kalpana Kannabiran, Vasanth Kannabiran, K.G Kannabiran, Sudesh Vaid, Kumkum Sanghari, Smitha Kothari, Rajni Kothari, Ashis Nandy.