

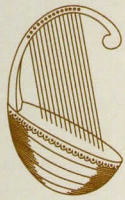


# LEGACY *of the* PIONEERS

125 Years of Jaffna Tamils  
in Malaysia

VOLUME II

| T. Selvaratnam  
| S. Apputhurai



# LEGACY OF THE PIONEERS

125 Years of Jaffna Tamils In Malaysia

## VOLUME II

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# Contents

<i>Dedication</i>		<i>vii</i>
<i>Contents</i>		<i>viii</i>
<i>Messages</i>	<i>Prime Minister, Malaysia</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Map of Malaysia</i>		<i>xii</i>
<i>Map of Ceylon</i>		<i>xiv</i>
<i>Map of Jaffna</i>		<i>xv</i>
<i>Foreword</i>	<i>Dato' Seri Dr. Visu Sinnadurai</i>	<i>xvii</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>2006 edition</i>	<i>xix</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>Volume II (2009 edition)</i>	<i>xx</i>
1	Reflection	1

## *Part 1 - Pioneers*

2	Pioneer Jaffna Tamil Immigrants	17
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## *Part 2 - Organisations*

3	Social and Welfare	63
4	Cultural Pursuits	95
5	Religious Conformity	113
6	Cooperatives and Trade Unions	135
7	Sportsmen, Sports Organisations and Officials	143
8	Politics	155

### *Part 3 – Public Sector Services*

9	Education	165
10	Civil Administration	183
11	Medical and Health	197
12	Engineering	225
13	Bench and the Bar	239
14	Uniformed Services	249
15	Scientists & Inventors	257

### *Part 4 – Private Sector Involvement*

16	Private Sector and Business Ventures	263
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### *Part 5 – Miscellany*

17	Miscellany	273
	<i>Abbreviations</i>	280
	<i>Bibliography</i>	283
	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	284
	<i>Index</i>	286
	<i>Appendix A</i>	295
	<i>Errata (2006 Edition)</i>	308
	<i>In Memoriam</i>	309
	<i>The Authors</i>	317



**Rt. Hon. Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi**  
**Prime Minister of Malaysia**



**MESSAGE**

Malaysia is a nation which is unique in many ways. The diversity in the society, symbolized by race, religion and culture, mirrors the multiplicity of ethnicity in the country. But this has been a national asset providing motivation for national unity and strength for nation building.

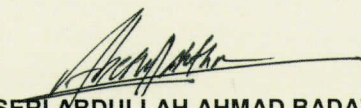
Each community in Malaysia has a tale of its own to tell. Many books and articles have been written about them. Such literature, each fascinating in its own way, has contributed to a better understanding of the different communities which have lived in this country of ours, side by side in peace and prosperity, for generations gone by.

The Ceylonese or Jaffna Tamils - now more often referred to as Sri Lankan Tamils or Tamils of Sri Lankan origin - do stand out as a minority community with its own history and characteristics distinctive to themselves. They migrated to this country more than one hundred years ago, mainly to find employment in the British colonial government. They came to Malaya to be surveyors, road construction overseers, hospital assistants, post and railway station masters, teachers of the English language and clerks in the civil service. At one point in time, there were so many of them in the railway system that the train service in Malaya was nicknamed "The Jaffna Railway"

Generally, the Jaffna Tamils were English speaking and renowned as dedicated, loyal employees who worked hard. Today, many of them have distinguished themselves as doctors, lawyers, engineers, academicians and in the civil service, including as Ambassadors for Malaysia in foreign countries.

This book, "Legacy of the Pioneers - 125 years of the Jaffna Tamils in Malaysia", co-authored by T. Selvaratnam and S. Apputhurai, two prominent members of the community, will enable its readers to have a better appreciation of the contributions of the Jaffna Tamil community in Malaysia. I wish to congratulate the two co-authors for their admirable effort.

It is also my wish and hope that the Malaysian Jaffna Tamils will continue to work hand-in-hand with all the other communities in Malaysia in building a truly united and prosperous nation which we, and the generations that come after us, can truly acclaim with great pride.

  
DATO' SERI ABDULLAH AHMAD BADAWI

10 March 2006



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