

Reference made in the
District Court of Kalmunai.

Mr. A. M. Samsudeen, *President,*

KALMUNAI LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION

Before we commence work for the day will you please permit me to make a reference to the untimely death of Mr. Advocate T. Mylvaganam, a leading member of our Bar, which took place on the 26th of December, 1974 at the Batticaloa Hospital. The news of his death came as a shock to all of us, because only a few days earlier he had appeared to be quite well and had appeared in this Court.

The late Mr. Mylvaganam was born into a very leading and influential family of Batticaloa on the 19th day of December, 1918. He was the son of the late Mr. Advocate T. C. Tharmalingam. The late Mr. Mylvaganam had his earlier education at Central College, Batticaloa, Hartley College, Jaffna and St. Joseph's College, Colombo. I understand, Sir, that he had the most unusual distinction of entering the University College at the age of 17 in the year 1936. He did his History Honours at the University of Ceylon and after passing out as an Honours Graduate, he entered the Law College in the year 1940. He passed out as an Advocate in the year 1943. At the Advocate's Final Examination he was awarded a first prize in Law of Evidence.

After passing out as an Advocate, the late Mr. Mylvaganam did not practice immediately. In the year 1944 he started his career in the Government Service as an Assistant Food Controller and he continued in that position for four years. He started his Law practice only in the year 1948. He settled down to practice in Batticaloa in which his family had a large interest, and within a short time he acquired a large and leading practice. He was mainly engaged in Civil work.

Within a short period of 25 years he had become a leading member of the Bar and he was appearing in most of the civil cases that came up both at Batticaloa and Kalmunai at the time of his death. In the conduct of his cases he displayed a consummated skill which was in no way inferior to that of the leading lawyers of Sri Lanka. He was fair minded, painstaking, thorough

and conscientious to the highest degree and he was the master of the art of quite patience and dignified advocacy. Though the law had been his profession he had never allowed it to dominate his life to the exclusion of everything else. During his short life he had held a number of distinguished posts at various times. He was a Director of the People's Bank, Chairman of the Co-operative Bank, Chairman of the M. P. C. S., Batticaloa, Chairman of the Rent Control Board, Batticaloa and at the time of his death he was the Chairman of the Fisheries Corporation, Batticaloa and a Member of the Hospital Committee. He also took deep interest in the political life of Batticaloa not for selfish reasons but purely out of love for the people.

The late Mr. Mylvaganam would have proved a tower of strength to both Batticaloa and Katmunai Bar and great aid to the Judge had he been able to continue in practice. Unfortunately he was not to be and the death had snatched him away from us at the height of his career.

We mourn today the passing of a fine advocate and gentleman in the true sense, who unselfishly gave his best in everything he did to the people of the Eastern Province. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word and he was held in high esteem by all those who came into contact with him. His memory will always be referred with great affection.

He was possessed, Sir, in abundant measures of the many supreme qualities which go to make a great lawyer. He had an intellect, logical and well developed. He had a sound grip of the fundamentals of the law, and a gift or knack of distinguishing between essential and non-essential.

The late Mr. Mylvaganam was extraordinarily cheerful without a particle of arrogance and had overflowing kindness of heart. He was most unassuming of men, a fine gentleman and steady friend, and no friend of his who needed help or sympathy was disappointed. Though he is gone away he yet leaves in our hearts the story of his life as an example and inspiration to all of us.

In his own life, the late Mr. Mylvaganam was a devoted husband and fond parent. In summing up of his life and character, I would quote what Justice Soertesz once said when passing a reference to one of his colleagues which amply fits to the late Mr. Mylvaganam - "We have in his life a record of

great service, record full of good work. He was not only a great and able advocate, but he was a great man, free of ill will, malice and hatred."

On behalf of the members of the Kalmunai Bar, I extend my deepest sympathy to his grieved widow, his children and his relations who mourn his loss today.

I would respectfully ask your honour to direct a copy of this minutes to be forwarded to Mrs. Mylvaganam and his children with the deepest sympathy of the Kalmunai Bar.