



Women in Tamil Eelam

KAYALVIZHI

Editor's note: In addition to general research, this piece has been composed with contributions from anonymous sources who were involved in the struggle with accounts of their personal experiences. As the focus of this article is centred around the role of women in the armed resistance, a more holistic account of their role has not been included in this particular article especially in regards to outfits such as the Suthanthira Paravaikal.



Women's entry into the armed struggle is the inevitable extension of their long contribution to national political campaigns against the genocidal SL state. However, the involvement in Parliamentary politics and non-violent campaigns did not change the cultural images of women. The history of women in combat in the armed struggles is a chronicle of a fundamentally different order. They belong to a totally new world - a world outside a normal woman's life. And that's what makes these female fighters so interesting and admirable.

Training and carrying weapons, confronting battle conditions, enduring the constant emotional strain of losing close associates, facing death every day, are situations that most women not only wish to avoid, but are also uneasy by. But these women have flourished under such conditions and created for themselves, not only a new women's military structure, but also a legacy of resistance and bravery.

The women's motivations and the LTTE's brand of nationalist feminism are crucial to examine how the Tamil women's experiences in the movement have affected their views on gender in society. The genocidal effects upon the livelihood of women is also crucial to conceptualise the issue.

MOTIVATIONS OF FEMALE COMBATANTS

Women's involvement

When we study the early history of women's participation in the national struggle we can see a constantly emerging militant tendency in women committed to a cause, determined and not afraid to face dangers.

Women were involved in medical care, information collection, fundraising and recruitment, but were soon given military training and participated in combat. In 1983, during the anti-Tamil riots thousands of Tamil civilians were murdered, which left a trail of rape, arson and looting. This proved to be the ultimate revelation of the depths of Sinhala chauvinism and racism. As a consequence, the armed resistance of the LTTE gained legitimacy as a mode of political struggle.

The first group of women were trained in Tamil Nadu in 1985 for their first combative battle with the SL military in July 1986. In October 1987, the national leader of Tamil Eelam, Velupillai Prabhakaran set up the first all-female training camp in Jaffna, for the second and subsequent groups. By 1989 this unit had its own leadership structure.



It is well known that the LTTE had requested each Tamil family to contribute at least one member to the organisation.

Notwithstanding this and the persistent allegations of forcible conscription, most recruits are volunteers. The initial 'pull factor' towards the LTTE's active recruitment of women seems to be primarily a pragmatic response to the need for more fighters created by the loss of men through death. However, this

does not account for the 'push factors' of the female combatants. There are a variety of different and intersecting reasons as to why women have chosen to join the militants; some of these are common to both female and male combatants, while others are gender-specific to women.

Young women too experienced the horror of the racial riots - they themselves were victims of the riots. The forces of social constraint which had obstructed their deeper participation earlier, had left them exposed and defenceless in the face of violent racist hatred and state terror - deepening genocidal oppression now propelled them out of their established social life into a new revolutionary world.

Further, the militant patriotism of Tamil women to join the armed struggle brought increasing pressure on the LTTE leadership to step up its policy of inducting women into the armed struggle. These women demanded their right to self-determination to exercise their patriotic sentiments similar to their counterparts.

The Leadership of the LTTE, committed to the emancipation and equality of women welcomed such demands and expanded its military programme for the training of women. The national leader was confident that women had the potential for military training and combat. He was determined that women should have equal opportunity for participation in all aspects of the armed struggle. Even he admits, however, that women have exceeded his expectations of them.

He is known to have stated that, "Tamil women are subjected to intolerable suffering as a consequence of male chauvinistic oppression, violence and from the social evils of casteism and dowry" and suggests that some of these problems "can be resolved if men and women recognise each other's liberty, equality and dignity and enter into a cordial relationship based on mutual understanding and share the responsibilities of family life and also contribute to the development of society."

Oppression

Beneath this ideological motivation there are also more specific, more personal factors operating. One such factor, intertwined with nationalist ideology, is the communal perception of suffering, oppression and injustice. Sometimes this is related to a personal experience; in other cases, it has been received as part of the Tamil narrative of oppression and suffering, made tangible by witnessing the experiences of friends and neighbours.

Some of them made it clear that she and many of the other combatants were motivated to join the LTTE because of their anger over the deaths of loved ones at the hands of the Sri Lankan military and police

Many ex-cadres would say that they were all happy that within the LTTE they have had the opportunity to engage in such activities which they were raised to believe were inappropriate or dangerous for women.

For example, one of them stated that: "I wanted to join but at that time I was not sure whether I could because I'm a girl, I'm a very soft person -- we were treated like that. I knew that we have to go to the jungles, and we have to fight, and we must go alone at night. I knew that I could do that, I wanted to do that, but a small suspicion was in my

mind, whether I am capable of doing these things, because of the way I was brought up in my house. But I was able to see the other military cadres, the girls, who were doing all sorts of things. So, then I thought, if they can do that, why can't I do these things?"

Self-confidence and military training of female cadres

The women in the fighting unit live and function as a separate force of the military structure of the LTTE. It has its progressive aspects and is a positive development for the women of Tamil Eelam.

The evolution of female fighters into a self-reliant structure breaks with the traditional female dependency and has given the young women tremendous opportunities. Through their own structure the female cadres learnt administration, decision-making and leadership. All activities were undertaken by the women themselves and allowed them to develop self-confidence.

The training period provides an insight into the particular character and talents of these women. Through consultation and discussion between trainees and instructors, female cadres branch off into areas of their particular interest or talent. They break - here again - new ground by moving into fields of work not normally undertaken by women in Tamil society.



They learn to use and maintain communication equipment, how to handle explosives, learn about mining, weapon technology, electronics, etc. Other cadres may specialise in the use of heavy weapons. Some studied within the fields of medicine, political work, intelligence work etc. In the meantime, female cadres who demonstrate a particular aptitude for combat situations are selected for further military training. These female combatants undergo Special Commando training with more sophisticated and rigorous training to become part of an elite fighting force.

The women's military wing is a well-organised and highly disciplined force. According to an anonymous source, the LTTE's naval force, the Sea Tigers, were primarily female and the suicide squad, known as the Black Tigers, had a large proportion of women. The number of female combatants is naturally a military secret, but estimates vary between about 15 - 20 % to one third of their core combat strength.

SITUATION OF WOMEN AFTER 2009: SAME AS BEFORE THE ARMED STRUGGLE

After 2009, women in this country faced many problems. A very large number of them are victims of violence, mainly rape. Detainees are often exposed to sexual abuse by the security forces. In Tamil Eelam, the very large number of widows and women living alone in war are in particular threatened by the strong military presence and the increasing consumption of alcohol amongst the Tamil population. Due to the precarious socio-economic situation, many are forced into prostitution and risk being victims of human trafficking or sentenced to forced labour. This is the effect of a component of counterinsurgency (COIN) measures.

Violence committed in prison

Even after the end of the conflict, security personnel in prisons and rehabilitation camps continue to use sexual violence as an instrument of torture. In a report published in February 2013, Human Rights Watch documents 75 cases of rape and sexual abuse in prison. Most of the victims are Tamil women.

One female had mentioned that she was arrested in November 2011 in her house outside Colombo and held for several weeks at the headquarters of the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) in Colombo where she was interrogated and raped. Another said she was arrested in April 2012 by two men in a white van when she returned home to Kilinochchi and was then photographed naked in prison and raped several times. A third woman who had travelled from Britain to Colombo in July 2011 to attend a conference, was subject to detailed interrogation at the airport by CID officials. A few days later, two men violently pulled her into a white van, then raped and mistreated in prison, with the help of a police officer.

Each of the three victims were burned with cigarettes in the back, on the chest and on the genitals. These people were not released until after a bribe was paid by members of their respective families.

Violence against former LTTE cadres

Even after being released from rehabilitation centres, veterans and LTTE executives are bothered by the military and the police CID. They are forced to report once a month to the local police or military station. Many veterans of the LTTE are also harassed.

Arbitrary arrests based on suspected ties to the LTTE affect both Tamil women and men. In April 2012, for example, Tamils from the Trincomalee area were arrested without an arrest warrant and held for several days in military prison camps without due process. Often suspected of being linked to the LTTE, returnees from abroad are also threatened. Women who have been imprisoned in rehabilitation camps are significantly more exposed to gender-based violence.

Differently abled women

These women are exposed to additional discrimination and prejudice. The situation would be even more difficult in the countryside, as most of these women would live in great poverty and have less access to health and other public services and would suffer even greater discrimination.

Socio-economic situation of widows and women living alone in the occupied Tamil homeland

The Women's Action Network and Centre for Human Rights and Development estimate that 90, 000 widows live alone across the occupied Tamil Homeland and are particularly affected by socio-economic difficulties.

In addition to caring for their children and often elderly or mutilated family members, they must also find sources of income to feed this small world. In view of their restricted mobility, they can generally only exercise the most poorly paid and least sought-after occupations.

As the war of national liberation continues, the female fighters of the Liberation Tigers with their specific character and history in the war of liberation, have made a major contribution towards uplifting and re-defining the status and image of women in the evolving new Tamil society. Tamil female cadres have altered the trajectory of Tamil history and introduced a radical new dimension into the history of Tamil women. But today, women no longer experience freedom as they did in Tamil Eelam. The fear and insecurity are very present and a stark contrast to the independence that they had so recently experienced. As a strong proponent of resistance these women continue to be undermined and subjected to sexual violence by the oppressors to ensure that any such genocidal resistance is stifled in the belief that the violent suppression of women would silence the struggle for Tamil liberation.



International News

02.06.2020: **China** – According to Xinhua News, SL's Foreign Minister had expressed SL's continuous support to China's sovereignty and national security, especially regarding Hong Kong in a Tweet. The Tweet was reportedly made after Trump had threatened to impose sanctions against China due to the Hong Kong matter.

03.06.2020: **UN** – UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has expressed concern regarding the restriction of freedom of expression within the Asia-Pacific, including SL, reports Colombo Gazette.

08.06.2020: **Arab countries** - According to Sunday Times, the Ministry of Foreign Relations said the Ambassadors of Arab countries had assured the Arab world's fullest cooperation and support for continued excellent relations with SL and to safeguard the welfare of Sri Lankans in the gulf region.

11.06.2020: **US** – Pompeo has been reported to have released the 2019 International Religious Freedom Report which had mentioned that SL government officials continue to systematically discriminate against religious minorities in SL in 2019 and thus repress religious freedom, reports Colombo Gazette.

12.06.2020: **China** – The first meeting of the China-SL Belt and Road Political Parties Joint Consultation Mechanism was conducted as a video conference on 11.06.2020 and commenced

engagement between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the main political parties of SL, reports Colombo Gazette.

15.06.2020: **ITJP** - According to Newswire.lk, Major General Suresh Tuan Sallay, the Incumbent Director of the State Intelligence Services of SL had sent a letter to ITJP and Ms. Yasmin Sooka. In this letter he said, the defamatory remarks from ITJP had damaged the significant reputation of Major General Suresh Tuan Sallay. For that he he was reported to have requested compensation of LKR 1 billion.

15.06.2020: **Egypt** - The Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt in SL had expressed that they would continue to support SL to eradicate extremism, reports Colombo Gazette.

16.06.2020: **US** – In an online discussion with journalists, the US Ambassador to SL, Teplitz was reported to have mentioned that a decision regarding SL's engagement with the MCC agreement would be made following SL's Parliamentary election in August. According to Newswire.lk, the US are awaiting a decision from SL following SL Cabinet's concerns that some clauses in the agreement were harmful to its constitution and national security.

16.06.2020: **Pakistan** – According to Colombo Gazette, Pakistan's foreign minister, Qureshi had mentioned that countries including SL were not free from

the influence of India's hegemonic agenda.

16.06.2020: **UK** – According to Colombo Gazette, Alan Gemmell OBE had been appointed as the UK Trade Commissioner for South Asia and is tasked with strengthening trade and investment relations with the UK's economic partners within the region including SL.

18.06.2020: **Germany** - The German Embassy in Colombo has signed an agreement with Human Link to grant over LKR 2 million to promote inclusive physical and psychological health care for differently abled children, reports Colombo Gazette.

18.06.2020: **China** – The Acting Ambassador for China in SL, Hu Wei had met Gotabaya at SL's Presidential Secretariat to hand over President Xi Jinping's letter to Gotabaya in light of Gotabaya's upcoming birthday and as a commendation of SL's COVID-19 containment efforts, reports Colombo Gazette.

18.06.2020: **EU** – EU Ambassadors in SL had met with Gotabaya to discuss the development of SL's economy following the COVID-19 pandemic, reports Colombo Gazette.



European Ambassadors meet with Sri Lanka's president.
Source: Colombo Gazette

20.06.2020: **Norway** – According to Daily FT, the newly appointed Ambassador-designate of SL to Norway, Godfrey Cooray had assumed duties on 15.06.2020 and had emphasised plans to strengthen bilateral relations.

22.06.2020: **Pakistan** – Pakistan's High Commissioner in SL, Maj. Gen (Rtd) Muhammad Saad Khattak was reported to have notified a private media service that Pakistan had alerted SL regarding a plot to launch the Easter Sunday Attacks with no corresponding cautionary action conducted by SL. However, the then SL State Minister of Defence, Wijewardene denies that they had received any such warning, reports Colombo Gazette.

23.06.2020: **Israel** – In a statement made to the UNHRC, SL has been reported to have requested Israel to cease the annexation of occupied West Bank due to the human rights concerns in Palestine, reports Colombo Gazette. It was further reported that they had emphasised the importance of the implementation of UN General Assembly resolutions to allow the Palestinian

people access to their inalienable rights of statehood as the coexistence of 2 states would be crucial for long term security and peace.



Sri Lanka reported to have requested Israel to cease annexation of West Bank.

Source: Colombo Gazette

24.06.2020: **HRW** – HRW published a combined statement condemning SL's "assault on human rights and press freedom" in regard to their treatment of journalist and human rights defender, Dharisha Bastians and her family. Bastians has been reportedly targeted by SL's CID in its investigation into the abduction of a Swiss embassy employee. She had also been reported to be subjected to harassment by the SL authorities and defamation campaigns by pro-government media.

24.06.2020: **HRW** – According to Colombo Gazette, the South Asia Director for HRW has been reported to have mentioned that Karuna should have already been investigated for war crimes yet raised concerns that it would be possible that Karuna would escape accountability whilst considering that as a war criminal, Gotabaya was the president of the island.

24.06.2020: **Norway** – Following instructions from Gotabaya, Ambassador of SL to Norway, Cooray was reported to have presented King Harald V with an

invitation to visit SL, reports Colombo Gazette. SL's Foreign Ministry had reported that the invitation was extended at the Royal Palace in Oslo on 22.06.2020.

25.06.2020: **Afghanistan** – According to Colombo Gazette, the foreign ministers of Afghanistan and SL had discussed bilateral relations during a telephone conversation, reports Colombo Gazette.

25.06.2020: **Lebanon** – SL's Ambassador Shani Karunaratne had called on Lebanon's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of the Republic of Lebanon, Nassif Hitti to express concerns regarding migrant workers in Lebanon and discuss the stabilisation of the Lebanese economy, reports Colombo Gazette.

26.06.2020: **UK** – The UK's Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon has mentioned that he had raised the issues of justice, accountability and reconciliation during a call with SL foreign minister Dinesh Gunawardena, reports Colombo Gazette.

26.06.2020: **US** – The US Embassy in Colombo had mentioned that the GoSL had not spent any money from the MCC grant, reports Colombo Gazette.

26.06.2020: **Pakistan** – As a part of the Pak-SL Higher Education Cooperation Program, Pakistan had offered, completely funded scholarships for 1,000 SL students, reports Colombo Gazette.

28.06.2020: **US** – According to PMD News, Gotabaya had appointed a four-member Committee to review the proposed MCC on 01.01.2020. According to Colombo Gazette, the expert

committee had submitted their final report regarding the MCC to Gotabaya on 25.06.2020 and the findings had been made public on the PMD.

29.06.2020: **EU** – Whilst SL had not been considered for the approval of visas by the EU when internal border controls were lifted as it is a country outside of the EU, the Delegation of the EU to SL and the EU Member States Embassies in Colombo issued a statement assuring SL that they had not been blacklisted, reports Colombo Gazette.

29.06.2020: **US** – The Spokesman of the US Department of State, Ortagus and Secretary of State, Pompeo had spoken with Dinesh Gunawardena to discuss issues of mutual interest and reaffirmed their commitment to SL's sovereignty and development, reports Colombo Gazette. Gunawardena was also reported to have updated Pompeo regarding the MCC Review. According to Sunday Times LK, US-SL cooperation in COVID-19 crisis management had included bilateral assistance amounting to USD 5.8 million.



Foreign Minister for Sri Lanka, Dinesh Gunawardena.
Source: Colombo Gazette

30.06.2020: **India** – A spokesperson of the High Commission of India in SL was reported to have mentioned that the 2 countries were engaged in discussions regarding the postponement of SL's repayments to India, reports Colombo Gazette.

30.06.2020: **UN** – The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has been reported to have highlighted concerns regarding SL's targeting of the Muslim community within the island in an address to the UNHRC, reports Colombo Gazette.

Military News

01.06.2020: **India** - According to navy.lk, the Indian Naval Ship (INS) Jalashwa arrived at the port of Colombo in the morning of 01.06.2020 to take 700 Indian nationals back to India.

02.06.2020: **Promotion** - According to Daily Mirror, Major General Jagath Gunawardena assumed office as the 55th Chief of Staff of the Army, on 01.06.2020, during a simple ceremony at

his office in the Army Headquarters, amid religious observances.

02.06.2020: **Navy** - According to Sunday Times LK, SL navy personnel situated at the Colombo port had been removed last Sunday following the detection of a navy personnel infected with COVID-19 at Gaffoor Building in Fort but are reported to be reinstated from 03.06.2020.

03.06.2020: **Presidential Task Force** - According to Newswire.lk, Gotabaya has established a Presidential Task Force with Top military and police officers to build a **"secure country and a disciplined, virtuous and lawful society"**. The purpose of this Task Force will be to curb illegal activities, the prevention of the drug menace, *implementation of legal action against persons responsible for illegal activities conducted in Sri Lanka while residing in another country* and preventing the occurrence of crimes in and around prisons.

04.06.2020: **US** - According to Newswire.lk, an US diplomat had skipped the PCR test at the Bandaranaike International airport with his diplomatic immunity.



Bandaranaike International Airport waves PCR testing for US diplomat.
Source: Newswire.lk

08.06.2020: **Promotion** - According to Daily Mirror, a total of 98 officers of the Sri Lanka Army Volunteer Force (SLAVF) had been promoted by the recommendation of Shavendra Silva, to their next ranks by Gotabaya.

08.06.2020: **Buddhism** - 65 Division troops under command to the Security Force HQ- Kilinochchi added their share to the

commemoration of the Poson festival – 2020 under the guidance of Major General D.M.H.D Bandara, army.lk said.

PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE

ESTABLISHMENT of a Presidential Task Force to build a Secure Country, Disciplined, Virtuous and Lawful Society in accordance with the powers vested in His EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT by Article 33 of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

To:

1. Major General (Retired) Kamal Gunaratne Esquire
Secretary to the Ministry of Defence
2. Lieutenant General Shavendra Silva Esquire
Commander of the Sri Lanka Army
3. Vice Admiral Piyal de Silva Esquire
Commander of Sri Lanka Navy
4. Air Marshal Sumangala Dias Esquire
Commander of Sri Lanka Air Force
5. Mr. C.D. Wickremarathne Esquire
Acting Inspector General of Police
6. Major General (Retired) Vijitha Ravipriya Esquire
Director General of Customs
7. Major General (Retired) Jagath Alwis Esquire
Chief of the National Intelligence Service

Presidential Directive 2178/18 issued on 02.06.2020 by Gotabaya.
Source: Newswire.lk

09.06.2020: **Appointment** – According to Colombo Gazette, the DIG of SL police, Waruna Jayasundara had replaced Senior DIG Latheef as the STF's new Commandant following Latheef's retirement.

17.06.2020: **Museum** – The navy's Vice Admiral Piyal De Silva had declared the opening of an underwater museum in Galle which was constructed by the navy according to instructions from Mahindha, reports Colombo Gazette. It is reported that the purpose of the project was to boost tourism and the regeneration of corals and fish breeding.

20.06.2020: **Promotion** - According to Daily Mirror, Gotabaya had promoted another set of 71 Officers to their next rank following recommendations from Shavendra Silva.

22.06.2020: **Navy** – The SL navy camp which was closed on 27.04.2020 due to the outbreak of COVID-19 has been approved to be reopened from

23.06.2020 by SL's Health Ministry, reports Colombo Gazette.

25.06.2020: **Mali** - According to army.lk, newly modernized 9 Unicorn/Unibuffel vehicles, a recovery vehicle and 3 containers consisting imported spare parts are scheduled to be sent to the Combat Convoy Company (CCC) in Mali for the SL troops serving in the UN Peacekeeping Mission.

27.06.2020: **Security** - The US State Department's Country Reports on Terrorism 2019 has mentioned that SL's border and maritime security remained vulnerable in 2019, reports Colombo Gazette.

30.06.2020: **Police** – According to Kamal Gunaratne, while many of SL's police were dignified, some were a disgrace to the entire police force as they were involved in illegal activities such as trafficking, illegal mining and logging etc, reports Colombo Gazette.

Domestic News

Tamil Eelam

02.06.2020: **Explosives** – According to Colombo Gazette, a stock of the LTTE's explosives which were hidden by them in Ampara were destroyed in a controlled explosion by SL's STF following court approval. Investigations are reportedly in progress regarding the discovery of the stash.

04.06.2020: **COVID-19** - Students from the art faculty of Jaffna University have harvested vegetables grown by themselves. These vegetables were distributed amongst 150 families. This initiative was launched by the students to help locals during the curfew.



Jaffna University students successfully cultivate on 10 acres of barren land and participate in distribution of goods for pandemic relief.
Source: Newswire.lk

13.06.2020: **WHM** - Col. Rathnapriya Bandu is contesting from SLPP for Vanni District according to Newswire.lk. Col. Bandu had made headlines after Tamils gave him an emotional farewell in Visuvamadu, after his duty as the Commander of the Civil Defence Force was over.



Former Civil Defence Force Commander runs as SLPP candidate for Vanni District.
Source: Newswire.lk

19.06.2020: **Suicide** – A young occupational police officer from the intelligence unit was reported to have shot himself and committed suicide at the Kalmunai Police station, reports Colombo Gazette. He was reported as deceased.

Sri Lanka

01.06.2020: **Cabinet** - According to PMD News, Mahindha was sworn in to replace Arumugam Thondaman following his demise, as the new Cabinet Minister of Community Empowerment and Estate Infrastructure Development before Gotabaya at the Presidential Secretariat.

03.06.2020: **Mahindha 50 years** – The Mahindha Rajapaksa Center published a video celebrating 50 years of Mahindha's political journey. Whilst many prominent individuals had shared their positive views regarding him, it is notable that Tamil politicians had made statements in this video as well. Former SL Cabinet Minister Anandasangaree and TNA's R. Sampanthan had made acclamations regarding Mahindha where Sampanthan had attributed that Mahindha had established lasting and genuine peace on the island upon the basis of justice.



11,055 views • Jun 3, 2020

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Sampanthan contributes to video celebrating Mahindha's 50 year political journey.
Source: YouTube

07.06.2020: General Election – A mock election was held at Ambalangoda Vilegoda Dhammayukthikarama Temple as a trial to gauge the adherence of COVID-19 guidelines issued by SL's Ministry of Health, reports Colombo Gazette. The mock election was conducted under the supervision of the Chairman of SL's Elections Commission.

08.06.2020: Protest ban – According to Colombo Gazette, the National Movement for Consumer Rights Protection had scheduled protests to occur before the Chinese Embassy in Colombo between 08.06.2020 – 11.06.2020. The protest was reportedly directed against the Chinese government and demanded compensation for the loss SL had faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A court order has been reportedly issued to prevent the protest from occurring.

10.06.2020: General Election - According to Newswire.lk, the General election will be held on 05.08.2020.

11.06.2020: Trade unionist killed - The Chairman of the Lanka Self Employed Professionals' National Three Wheeler Federation, Sunil Jayawardana was reported to have died after being assaulted by several individuals, reports Newswire.lk. It is speculated that the "leasing-mafia" was behind the attack. It is noteworthy that Sunil Jayawardana was a contestant for the upcoming general election.

15.06.2020: Sirisena - According to Daily Mirror, an event organised by former President Maithripala Sirisena, who is contesting the general elections, to distribute scholarships among 360 students selected for universities from the Polonnaruwa District, had been suspended by SL's Elections Commission.

16.06.2020: Development - According to PMD News, 85 technicians from Iran had arrived in SL to complete the Uma Oya Multi-Purpose Development Project.

18.06.2020: General Election – According to Colombo Gazette, the EU had informed SL's Elections Commission that it would not be sending its usual election observer mission and has proposed the deployment of an Election Expert Mission (EEM) to assess the electoral process. It is reported that the EEM would consist of around 2-3 experts.

19.06.2020: Task Force – According to Colombo Gazette, the Pathfinder Foundation had recommended in a statement that a Presidential Task Force on Ocean Resources be formed to address the conservation and sustainable use of territorial ocean resources.

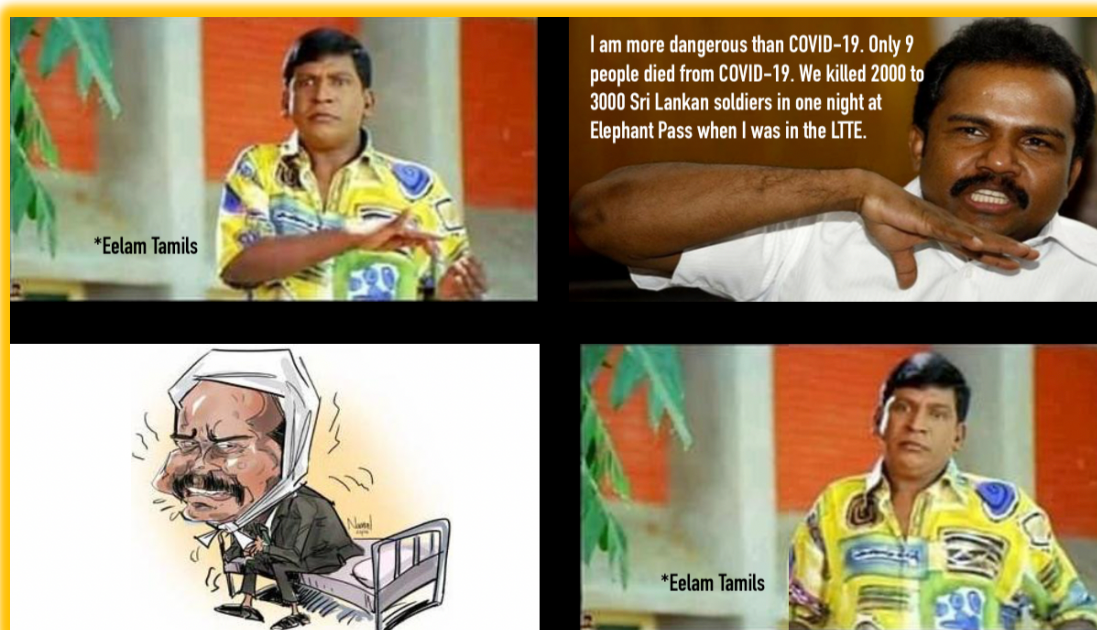
20.06.2020: **Nepotism** - Mahindha expressed his continued support and guidance for Gotabaya despite claims of a growing rift between the brothers on a political basis. The statement was made in celebration of Gotabaya's birthday, reports Colombo Gazette.

20.06.2020: **CID** – Former SL Minister Rishad Bathiudeen was questioned by SL's CID for over 5 hours regarding allegations of importing rice for the Cooperative Wholesale Establishment (CWE) in 2017, reports Colombo Gazette.

22.06.2020: **Karuna** - The acting IGP had ordered the CID on 22.06.2020 to immediately launch an investigation into the statement made by Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan alias Karuna, reports Daily Mirror. The media further reported that Karuna had attributed the former UNP leaders as responsible for causing more destruction to the country through strengthening the LTTE and JVP insurgency during the "LTTE

period". According to Colombo Page, Karuna who will be contesting in the upcoming elections, had mentioned the following at a public meeting: "Yes, I am more dangerous than COVID-19. Only 9 people died from COVID-19. We killed 2000 to 3000 Sri Lankan soldiers in one night at Elephant Pass when I was in the LTTE. Thousands were killed in Kilinochchi as well," which has caused widespread concerns.

22.06.2020: **General Election** – According to Colombo Page, the Norwegian Embassy in Colombo had formed an agreement with PAFFREL on 19.06.2020 to ensure that health and safety regulations were adhered to during the elections. The agreement was reported to also focus upon empowering women to be involved in the election and its monitoring processes.



Karuna Meme

Source: Puradsi Media – Phoenix the Next Generation

22.06.2020: **Parliament** – According to Colombo Gazette, SL's Parliament Secretariat had mentioned that Parliament Committees would be encouraged to hold virtual meetings for their effective operation. It was further reported that a mock exercise was conducted by senior management.

23.06.2020: **Cyber Security** – The Institute of National Security Studies was reported by Daily FT to have held a webinar on the topic of "The Challenges of Cyber Security in Sri Lanka".

23.06.2020: **Karuna** – Karuna has been reported to have informed the CID that he was unable to appear for investigations as he was unwell, reports Colombo Gazette.

23.06.2020: **Constitutional Council** – According to MENAFN, SL's Parliament Secretariat had mentioned that their Constitutional Council was scheduled to meet on 24.06.2020 at the Speaker's Residence under the supervision of former speaker, Karu Jeyasuriya.

25.06.2020: **Ports** – According to Colombo Gazette, Gotabaya had instructed Dinesh Gunawardena to halt the use of SL ports as an international transit point.

25.06.2020: **Karuna** - According to Daily Mirror, Karuna arrived at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) this morning to give a statement over his remarks that he killed some 2,000 to 3,000 Sri Lankan soldiers in one night at Elephant Pass. According to Colombo Gazette, he was questioned for 7 hours.

25.06.2020: **Injunction** – SL's Court of Appeal issues an interim injunction preventing the case against the Former Navy Commander Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda and 13 others for the abduction and murder of 11 youth from being heard, reports Colombo Gazette.

26.06.2020: **Karuna** - According to Daily Mirror, The UNHRC had mentioned that Karuna should also be investigated for the wholesale recruitment of child soldiers.

26.06.2020: **Trafficking** – The US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP) for 2019 has denoted that there were isolated reports of SL officials who were allegedly complicit in human trafficking and mentioned that SL does not fully meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking but is in the processes of attempting to do so, reports Colombo Gazette.

28.06.2020: **Karuna** – According to Colombo Gazette, Karuna had mentioned in Kalmunai that he had evidence to expose the connections that existed between the TNA and the LTTE.

28.06.2020: **Conspiracy** – Mahindha mentioned in a speech titled "Defeating domestic and foreign conspiracies against Sri Lanka", that foreign powers had interfered in SL's 2015 Presidential elections causing his defeat, reports Colombo Gazette.

30.06.2020: **Land** - According to PMD News, Gotabaya had instructed the relevant officials to expedite the system of electronic registration of lands in order to eradicate frauds in land registration

and to speed up the process of land registration. SL's PMD had mentioned that SL is expected to launch an e-Land Registration programme by August 2020 where coordination between related entities in charge of land registration was encouraged through the formation of a committee, reports Lanka Business Online.

30.06.2020: **Land** – According to News First LK, Pahiyanigala Ananda Sagara Thero had mentioned that SL's Minister for Land and the Secretary to the Ministry of Lands were exerting pressure onto authorities to abolish circular 05/2001 which allocates forest lands under the supervision of Divisional and District Secretaries. The Thero was reported to have mentioned that the removal of the circular was with the intention of selling SL's forest lands to MNCs.

30.06.2020: **Conspiracy** – In a statement issued on 29.06.2020, Mahindha was reported to have encouraged voters to disregard minor issues such as Karuna's statement and Thondaman's funeral and rather focus on voting for a party that would protect the island from the influence of foreign conspiracies, reports Economy Next.

30.06.2020: **General Election** – TISL's Executive Director was reported to have requested law enforcement officials and government bodies to prosecute public officials involved in the misuse of public property during the General Election. The statement was reportedly made by the director whilst announcing 2 hotlines to allow complaints to be made, reports Colombo Page.

Economic News

01.06.2020: **Australia** – According to Colombo Gazette, the GoSL had mentioned following SL Cabinet approval that over 2, 500 Australian cows would be imported to SL for inbreeding to allow the local production of milk in the long term.

04.06.2020: **CBSL** – In a weekly SL Cabinet meeting briefing, co-cabinet spokesman, Bandula Gunawardena was reported by Newswire.lk to have mentioned that the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) would only be responsible for deposits of up to LKR 600,000 into financial institutions

which it supervises as the repayment of any amount exceeding it would be difficult.

04.06.2020: **Canada** – According to Colombo Gazette, Canada and SL had signed an agreement to grant CDN 400,000 to provide vulnerable women and girls access to health and wellbeing services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

08.06.2020: **CBSL** – The Governor of the CBSL released a statement clarifying concerns regarding the safety of public deposits through "educating" the

general public regarding the stability of financial institutions, reports Newswire.lk. The statement was reportedly released to assure the public that they were not at a risk of losing their deposits.

11.06.2020: **Employment** – According to Colombo Gazette, SL Cabinet had approved the minimum employment age to the age of 16 through amending local labour laws. The raise is reported to be implemented to coincide with the World Day Against Child Labour on 20.06.20.

12.06.2020: **India** - According to Newswire.lk, the Indian EXIM-bank is expected to provide SL a loan of USD 100 million. According to MERCOM India, the loan was provided for the installation of rooftop solar systems for government buildings and low-income families. Reports indicate that SL's Cabinet had mentioned that the following districts would be targeted; Trincomalee, Moneragala, Anuradhapura and Hambantota.

16.06.2020: **Central Bank** - According to Daily Mirror, Gotabaya had criticised Central Bank officials for failing to support the SL government's proposals for economic revival, unlike the Central Banks of other countries.

17.06.2020: **COVID-19** - According to PMD News, the 'ITUKAMA' COVID-19 Fund balance had surpassed LKR 1, 386 million with corporate, individual donations and direct deposits.

18.06.2020: **China** - According to Daily mirror, the Chinese embassy had mentioned that China Development

Bank (CDB) would deliver another concessionary loan of USD 140 million – USD 70 million before the end of this month and the remainder by the end of the year - to tide over the present financial problems.



China's Flag
Source: Google Images

18.06.2020: **China** - Economy Next reported that SL had approved a mixed development tower block project in Colombo Port City where the sea has been purchased by a Chinese company.

18.06.2020: **Estate** - According to Colombo Gazette, SL's Prime Minister's Office had mentioned that a final decision regarding an LKR 1, 000 salary for estate workers would be announced by 25.06.2020.

19.06.2020: **Infrastructure** – According to Colombo Gazette, Mahindha and other officials had inspected construction work for the Central Expressway at Mirigama.

19.06.2020: **Infrastructure** – GoSL had announced that a Japanese-funded

Light Rail Transit (LRT) system project planned to be constructed from Malabe had been temporarily suspended by SL's current administration for renegotiation and review, reports Colombo Gazette.

19.06.2020: **Imports** – Data from SL's state-owned petrol company, Ceypetco has indicated plans to increase jet fuel imports by 38% by 2021 to meet the demands of SL's aviation sector, reports S&P Global Platts.

19.06.2020: **Boycott** – According to The Hindu, the Chief Minister of the Tamil Nadu government had rejected a proposal for milk trade with the genocidal Sri Lankan military as the Tamils of Tamil Nadu would not prefer their milk to be supplied to the forces. However, it was reported that they were still open to continue trade with the general population regardless of whether they were Tamil or Sinhalese.

19.06.2020: **US** - According to Daily mirror, USAID had supplied critical medical supplies worth USD 102, 310 to SL's Ministry of Health to provide specialist care for high-risk COVID-19 patients requiring maternal and neonatal care.

21.06.2020: **Insurance** – As a part of a World Bank-funded project, the Insurance Regulatory Commission of SL has been reported to have appointed a Dutch consultant to modernise the insurance sector, reports Economy Next.

22.06.2020: **Exports** – According to Ada Derana, SL's Export Development Board (EDB) had implemented a digital export promotion program last week to counter

the effects of COVID-19 upon the export market.

26.06.2020: **UN** – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been reported to be cooperating with SL's Ministry of Tourism and Aviation and the SL Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) to assist the revitalisation of SL's tourism sector, reports Colombo Gazette.

27.06.2020: **International donors** – According to The Hindu, SL's Prime Minister's Office had quoted Mahindha to have renewed requests for debt relief from international monetary organisations.

27.06.2020: **World Bank** – Mahindha has been quoted to have told film industry professionals at the Temple Trees that the GoSL had not received "a single Dollar" from World Bank, and that SL's economy had collapsed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reports Colombo Gazette.

28.06.2020: **CSE** – According to Colombo Gazette, Dumith Fernando has been appointed as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the CSE and his position will be in effect from 01.07.2020.

29.06.2020: **UN** – The 32nd Joint Meeting of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Commission for East Asia and Pacific (CAP) and the UNWTO Commission for South Asia will be virtually hosted by SL Tourism on 30.06.2020 on the theme of "Impacts of COVID-19 on the tourism sector and the recommendations for the recovery process.", reports Colombo Gazette.

30.06.2020: **Australia** – With funding from the Australian government, Australia Awards was reported to have held a 10-day “Sustainable Tourism Development” Short Course in Australia in February 2020. 19 individuals from SL were reported to have participated in the course and

were reported to have completed the course in an online workshop in June 2020. They had expressed enthusiasm to implement what they had learnt to revive the COVID-affected SL industry, reports Griffith University.

News about Oppression & Resistance

01.06.2020: **Remembrance** – Tamil journalist and *Naadduppattralar* (patriot) Nadesan’s 16th remembrance was commemorated by Tamil journalists in Jaffna and Batticaloa on 31.05.2020, reports TamilNet. It was reported that the Jaffna event had proceeded despite the fact that around 15 occupational police officers and SL intelligence personnel were stationed at the entrance of the venue to intimidate the Tamils.

15.06.2020: **Intimidation** – Tamil dairy farmers who had met journalists and rights activists in the Chengkaladi division on 01.06.2020 to complain about the exploitation of their pasturelands by Sinhala colonists, were harassed by a Tamil Information Officer from the Media Unit of the Batticaloa District Secretariat who was acting in a partial manner, reports TamilNet.



Occupational Sri Lankan police seen intimidating Tamils attempting to commemorate remembrance event for Tamil journalist Nadesan.
Source: TamilNet

18.06.2020: **Surveillance** – According to TamilNet, SL's intelligence wing was engaged in preventing community organisations in the East from engaging in human-rights related issues unless it was stated in their organisations' statute hence intimidating the leaders of the organisations to procure their statutes. It was also reported that the organisations had been questioned as to whether they had received funding from the diaspora or any other foreign contacts.

19.06.2020: **Surveillance** – A UN Special Rapporteur noted in a report submitted to the UNHRC that heavy surveillance was present within the occupied Tamil homeland due to heavy militarisation despite a decade since the end of the armed conflict. According to Colombo Gazette, it had been further mentioned that there had been an increase in surveillance in SL in 2019 especially after the Easter Sunday attacks.

20.06.2020: **Shooting** – A Tamil youth, Narakasa Ramakrishnan was killed by occupational SL armed forces who repeatedly shot at him when he did not stop his motorbike when they had requested him to do so. Whilst the shooting occurred in Muhamalai Kilinochchi, TamilNet reports that 4 other individuals who had been travelling in a tractor behind the motorbike were arrested by police. The locals were reported to have protested for 2 hours as they were concerned regarding the safety of the 4 other individuals. It is reported that the murdered victim may

have been involved in small-scale sand mining and the occupational forces had hostilities with local sand miners as it interfered with their excavation attempts.



Family and friends of murdered Tamil youth, Narakasa Ramakrishnan hold sit-in demonstration.
Source: TamilNet

23.06.2020: **Norway** – According to the Asian Tribune, the Island had reported that a key LTTE activist in Norway, Narakasa Sethuparan had been arrested at Bandaranaike International Airport by SL's TID on 22.06.2020 when he was attempting to return back to Norway. Sethuparan was reportedly detained for questioning and then later released following a complaint made by Arigunaraja Selva to the Kankesanthurai police station.

30.06.2020: **Arrest** - According to Sunday Times LK, 22 individuals had been taken into custody from Kilinochchi in recent weeks by occupational police. They were reportedly arrested under the charges of attempting to revive the LTTE. A senior official from HRCSL had mentioned that complaints had been lodged by the families of the detainees.

Message from Kaalagam*

After the release of 12 Tamil activists who had been arrested by the E8 Counter Terrorism Police Department PDRM under fake-LTTE revival charges the situation in Malaysia has returned to a tense climate. The allegations were believed as politically motivated and were made in early February of this year. The High Court judge is scheduled to announce a verdict on the judicial review of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who were gazetted under Terrorist Group act AMLA in 2014 by 08.06.2020. The judicial review application was filed at the Kuala Lumpur High Court Registry on 08.01.2020 and identified Malaysia's Home Minister as the first respondent and the Malaysian Government as the second respondent.

The High Court Judge has been reported to have established the verdict date after undertaking affidavit-in-reply with the former Home Minister, Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi. Hamidi remains firm on his decision to gazette the LTTE as a militant group based on reports from PDRM Special Branch in 2014 - five years after the group was defeated through the combined efforts of the Sri Lankan armed forces and various other global conspirators. The verdict announced on 06.08.2020 will be a turning point in the Malaysian Tamil political scene as most believe that the declaration of the LTTE as militant group in 2014 (even after its defeat in 2009) under AMLA Act, was a tactical political move and had been instigated by the Sri Lankan Government which is also due to address its pending investigations into its committal of war crimes/genocide.

* An ancient name for Malaysia.

Signs of Structural Genocide

03.06.2020: **Structural Genocide** – Gotabaya's 11-member Presidential Task Force for "Archaeological Heritage Management" combined with a second 13-member team with mostly military commanders will lead the Sinhala-Buddhicisation of the Eastern Province (a portion of the occupied Tamil homeland) and engage in heritage genocide. However, according to TamilNet the Gazette notification regarding this task force had indicated that Panumure Thilakawansha Thero was mentioned as

the "Chief Prelate for the Northern and Eastern two Provinces" hence indicative that the occupation and genocidal destruction was planned to target a larger section of the Tamil homeland.

08.06.2020: **Buddhism**- According to army.lk, the occupational 54th Division Headquarters in Mannar contributed its share to the commemoration of the Poson Day-2020 on 05.06.2020 by conducting a series of religious and humanitarian events where 2 new

Buddha statues were placed for veneration in two newly constructed shrines inside the camp premises. The Buddhicisation of the occupied Tamil homeland is a component of structural Tamil genocide.

14.06.2020: **Poachers** – According to TamilNet almost 80 Sinhala sea cucumber poachers from the South had stationed themselves with the support of occupational SL military and Colombo's fisheries authorities near Point Pedro Harbour from 11.06.2020 claiming to have permits to poach despite it being illegal. The presence of the poachers prevents Tamil fishers from accessing the harbour, hence impacting their livelihood. There is a likelihood that the poachers may engage in behaviour which would be environmentally detrimental thus destructing the territorial waters of occupied Tamil Eelam.

17.06.2020: **Militarisation** – Occupational SL officials have been reported to have completely cordoned Analaitheevu (an islet off Jaffna) from the rest of the peninsula hence dismantling the livelihoods of locals, reports TamilNet. The cordon was reported to have occurred after locals had confronted occupational SL navy officials as they had suspected that they had harassed Tamil women within the week. As a result, the sailors had assaulted the Tamils and the locals continued to be harassed and intimidated by the occupational forces. The heavy militarisation where the SL navy, police and army have intimidated the Tamils constitutes as structural genocide where the alienation of the islet from the peninsula further

disintegrates the territorial integrity of the occupied Tamil homeland.

22.06.2020: **Sacrilege** – According to Colombo Gazette, occupying police and military officers were spotted within the historic Nainativu Nagapooshani Amman Temple in Jaffna with footwear, a practice which violates the culture adhered to within temples. Occupational forces have had an extended presence in Nainativu where the heritage of the site has been systematically manipulated to convey the narrative of a Buddhicised island and thus negates the site as a Naga-Tamil speaking place of inhabitancy and worship. Tamil politicians have expressed concern and called for an inquiry, reports Colombo Gazette.

23.06.2020: **Encroachment** – Sinhala colonists were reported to have set up huts in the Tamils pasturelands in Batticaloa despite claims from SL Forestry and Mahaweli authorities that the intruders were evicted, reports TamilNet.