CONCLUSION
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An analysis of India-Sri Lanka relations during 1950-2000 reflects both the elements of continuity and change. However, except some melodramatic cases, the elements of continuity seems to be more apparent than change. Throughout this period the force of continuity, maintenance of status quo and consensus has constantly interacted with personality factor. In fact, each succeeding Prime Minister has tried to add a new direction to India’s foreign policy. As far as India’s policy towards Sri Lanka is concerned, the period 1950-2000 has witnessed some basic continuity as well as remarkable changes in such policy.

The India-Sri Lanka relations after achievement of independence by both the countries could not be the same as they were few centuries ago. The independence of Sri Lanka added a new dimension to India-Sri Lanka relations. For the first time in its history, Sri Lanka came face to face with an India which was not just the southern part of the mainland with which Sri Lanka had political relations in the past, an India which was not being ruled by the same paramount power as Sri Lanka, a unified country immensely large in size and yet its equal in international status. Both happiness and suspicion grew out of the enormity of India lying as a colossus on the north of
the tiny island state. The new spirit of collaboration between the two countries on issues of geopolitical importance however lessened Sri Lanka's sense of insecurity. As Bandaranaike himself admitted, but this harmony in perception did not bring a positive assurance of security for Sri Lanka. Attempts to solve the outstanding bilateral issue of the status of Indians domiciled in Sri Lanka brought no results during this period. On the other hand internal political developments such as the Sinhala only Act of 1957 and the Sinhala – Tamil Communal riots of 1958 resulted in the weakening of the political position of the Sri Lanka Tamil minority in Sri Lanka arousing new fears of Indian interference.

The period between 1955-60 marked the hey day of non alignment and Panchsheel in Asia then India under Nehru’s leadership was confident.

India was keen on restoring friendly bilateral ties based on equality and respect for territorial integrity. But the Sri Lanka misgivings continued and premier Senanayake and his successor Kotelawala were unconcerned about India’s friendly feelings.

During Bandarnaike regime a rest rained approach towards the issues of Kachhathivu island and language riots in Sri Lanka was observed from New Delhi. Nehru and Bandarnaike adopted a common approach towards international issues and the superpower relations.
On 25 September 1959 Bandarnaike was assassinated and it followed a period of uncertainty with regard to India’s growing friendship with Sri Lanka. But there was a sigh of relief when his wife Sirimavo Bandarnaike took over as Prime Minister in July 1960. She visited India and exhibited a remarkable consistency in following the policies emunciated by her late husband.

By the early 1960s the Indian Ocean perimeter of Indian strategic interest assumed a new importance. The shift in US policy of acting under the British umbrella to a direct use of naval power in the Indian Ocean set the stage for a new big power rivalry in the Indian Ocean. For India on the other hand the 1960s were a decade of insecurity relations with china, the key stone of Nehru’s foreign policy in Asia, turned into a dramatic conflict which was further aggravated by the acquisition of nuclear capability by China in 1964 and the Sino-Pakistani strategic collusion. The two India-Pakistani wars of 1965 with direct – assistance from out side powers for Pakistan, amounted to the failure of Nehru’s strategy of keeping external involvements out of South Asian conflicts. All these made India embark on defence and strategic planning with a new determination and aimed at acquiring nuclear capability.

These developments had a marked influence on India-Sri Lanka relations from the early 1960s while India was deeply involved in regional
conflicts Sri Lanka was inclined to avoid commitment in order to safeguard its own national security. This required more positive diplomacy than before.

The period between 1970-76 was a period of intense disagreement tempered by mutual accommodation of security interest at every level regional, Sub systematic and statal. This period on the one hand marked a heightened concern over security of smaller states in particular in South Asia as well as in Indian Ocean.

Following shifts in India’s policy towards Sri Lanka can be seen. Some basic continuity as well as markable changes in the policy. The three successive governments led by Morarji Desai (1977-79). Indira Gandhi (1980-84) and Rajiv Gandhi (1985-87) have their own style of foreign policy with respect to Sri Lanka but remaining govt. (1987-2000) not so far. Added to this the impact of situational factor can not be under estimated.

The Janta government while traveling through the path of genuine non alignment, good neighbourhood diplomacy and confidence building exercise in South Asian region perhaps underestimated the gravity of the ethnic situation in Sri Lanka and its possible consequences on India in future. Janta government treated the Sri Lanka problem as a domestic affair of Sri Lanka and provided moral justification against undue meddling by India. Morarji
Desai failed to visualize any linkage between domestic development in Sri Lanka and India’s security concerns.

Significantly, the policy decision of Janta government with respect to Sri Lanka was reflective of some important factors. Janta region was more idealist than realist and particularly regarded as soft on foreign policy. During Janta period the ethnic stride in Sri Lanka although had reached at the pinnacle of volcano, the terrorist movement for Eelam was branded as ill conceived and illegal by Morarji Desai. Despite the sign of ethnic solidarity and cooperation between Sri Lanka Tamils and the people of Tamil Nadu rampant chest beating in Tamil Nadu and resultant pressure on center did not occur by the time. There was no report of extra regional powers interference in Sri Lanka which could have posed serious threat to India’s security concerns.

Therefore, it can be said that Janta governments policy towards Sri Lanka did not show any departure from the fundamentals of the policy followed by earlier governments what ever changes it brought about were nothing but continuing adjustments to the changing need in the changing domestic and international context.

Post Janta period witnessed phenomenal change in the style of Indian leadership with respect to Sri Lanka issues – first, India was directly affected
by the ethnic violence of 1981 and 1983. Second, fight between the Tiger extremism and army atrocities, the passage to India remained the only hope for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. As a result, India faced refugee problem of devastating nature. Third, communical disturbance in Sri Lanka led to adverse reaction in Tamil Nadu. Fourth, the presence of Tamil terrorist in Madras who brought with them the culture of drug and violence, started creating low and order problem for India. Fifth, the 1980 riots also created a threat to internal stability and order in Tamil Nadu. Lastly the personal and political relation between Indira Gandhi and Jayewardene not cordial.

In this back drop, following shifts in India’s policy towards Sri Lanka can be seen. First, Indira Gandhi considered Tamil question in Sri Lanka as a national issue for India. Second, keeping aside Janta governments neutralist posture, Indira Gandhi treated Sri Lanka as not just another country. Fourth, Indira Gandhi interpreted India’s interference in Sri Lanka as ‘strategic necessity’ on account of extra-regional powers involvement in the region on Sri Lanka’s invitation, that bound to affect India’s security concerns, adversely. Fifth, although India did not support the Tamil’s demand for Eelam it also disapproved any military solution to the ethnic crisis by Sri Lanka government. Sixth, to contain Sri Lanka governments hardline approach towards the Tamils. Indira Gandhi started international diplomacy. Sixth,
when Sri Lanka government did not take the issue seriously and put a ban on food and fuel supply to Jaffna which led to hardship of the people and international condemnation Rajiv Gandhi started assertive diplomatic offensive and intervened in Sri Lanka through air-dropping in Jaffna.

Rajiv Gandhi’s decision of air dropping made India a direct party in the Sri Lanka conflict on the one hand and exposed the military solution as a ‘non-option’ for both the militants and the Sri Lanka government. This led to the signing of the famous India-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987.

Rajiv’s policy was reflective of few important factors – first, although, Rajiv Gandhi inherited India’s involvement in Sri Lanka from Indira Gandhi, he was committed to bring peace in Sri Lanka and genuine and lasting friendship with India’s immediate neighbours. Second, Rajiv Gandhi understood the emotional response of Indian Tamils and wanted to act with rationality and justice. Third, India under Rajiv Gandhi rejected Tamil terrorists activities in Sri Lanka in toto. Fourth, the extremities and uncompromising stand of both the Tamil terrorists and Sri Lanka government, the plight of innocent Jaffna Tamils mixed with the refugee problem and threat to India’s internal stability, regional security perceptions accommodation of western strategic interests in Sri Lanka with respect to Trincomalee and voice of America, as against India’s national interest etc. had
created an inconclusive situation and provided a proper justification for India’s intervention in Sri Lanka.

The periods of V.P. Singh was Prime Minister for 11 months, Chandra shekhar for 6 months, Narasimha Rao for five years by purchasing loyalties of M.Ps, Deve Gowda for 10 months, Inder Kumar Gujral for six months and Atal Behari Vajpayee for 13 months. Not only this, even during their short temporary and tension, ridden regimes all the Prime Ministers were on tenter hooks because of their quarrelsome coalitional partners. A temporary Prime Minister can not provide leadership while dealing with powerful western countries and global institutions.

After this Atal Bihari Vajpayee again had been an active Prime Minister but he had not made a mark as an innovator of ideas or initiator of concepts and doctrines in the foreign policy field. He had shown no evidence of a special vision in respect of international affairs. While Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi even P.V. Narsimharao be described as leaders with a global vision, Vajpayee comes no where near their clout and aura of course, when compared to Nehru his successors emerge with faded, feeble images. But even among them some have measured upto the expectations of their countrymen.
India’s relations with Sri Lanka to be marked by warmth and cordiality. Chandrika Kumartunga paid a state visit to India, during the visit, the two dies signed on agreement to establish a free trade area between India and Sri Lanka. The two country also signed a memorandum of the understanding to set up the India-Sri Lanka foundation. The foundation would promote bilateral exchanges in various spheres.

India extended ban on the LTTE while insisting that the ban would not impede its afforts to mediate between the Tigers and Chandrika Kumartunga government. India was yet to receive any formal request for diplomatic interventions from the Sri Lanka government. At the third week of May 2000 the Norwegian took initiative international peace afforts. A delegation led by Erik Solheim. Special adviser to the Norwegian government on Sri Lanka arrived in New Delhi to hold consultation with the Indian government.

Erik Solheim reassured India that his country recognizes India’s legitimate interest in Sri Lanka and that no obstacles would be placed in the way of any Indian initiative that was relied for India.

Throughout the period of study 1950-2000 though the situational perceptual, variations brought about significant changes. Some basic continuity in India’s policy towards Sri Lanka remain intact.
After independent Sri Lanka added a new dimension to India-Sri Lanka relation. For the first time in its history Sri Lanka came face to face with India. Secondly, Both happiness and suspicion grew out of the enormity of India lying as a colossus on the north of the tiny island state. Thirdly, the issue of the status of Indian domiciled in Sri Lanka. We can say that after independent Sri Lanka face three major problems.

First - Citizenship issue – that is the problem of stateless person of Indian Origin.

Second - Ethnic crisis – that is the problem of relationship between two ethnic communities (Sri Lanka & Tamils)

Third - Demand of Tamil people for a separate and sovereign Tamil state. The above problem still generated some strains in India – Sri Lanka relations.

Consequently, Sri Lanka developed a fear psychosis from India. Secondly the defence pact with Britain and common wealth connection were interpreted as a major two counter future threat from India. Thirdly, the fear of Sri Lanka was further exacerbated on the question of the political status of person of Indian origin in Sri Lanka who became stateless as a result of the citizenship act of government independence. There was also marked shift in over all perspective of Sri Lanka foreign policy during Bandarnaikey tenure.
Sri Lanka followed the policy of non-alignment and also requested Britain to withdraw its basis from the island state. Broadly speaking the foreign policy of Sri Lanka was more vigorous and outward looking, reflecting its urge from attainment of status in International Community. From time to time India has offered credit facilities and loans to Sri Lanka.

During the period 1958 to 1976 several trade agreements were signed between India and Sri Lanka. The three successive Indian governments led by Morarji Desai, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi continued to denounce neighbouring countries suspicious of India so called hegemonistic in the region and professed equal and beneficialism, bilateralism, open policy of friendship and mutually advantageous cooperation with the neighbours. Secondly, Indian government desired for peaceful everlasting solution of Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis within the frame work of unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. This indicates the assertion of the basic tenants of India's foreign policy to respect the unity and integrity of a country. Thirdly, the period showed continue advocacy of regional solution to the regional problems. Lastly seen their was no evidence of extra regional powers presence in Sri Lanka during Janta regime both Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi and endeavoured hard to keep South Asian regional away from extra regional power politics. Its
shows continuity of India’s policy since independence, to check extra regional powers interference in the Indian Ocean region.

The post 1987 period has witnessed significant domestic developments in Sri Lanka. After the North –East provincial council election in November 1988, the EPRLF government led by V. Perumal was installed with the help of New Delhi. However, it miserably failed to gain popular support. The regime of President Premadasa (December 1988 – May 1, 1993) was notable for its own upheavals. His anti-Indianism and antipathy towards the “Agreement” tended to make his government close to the LTTE with an objective to embarrass IPKF and humiliate India. This also led to collapse EPRLF government and dissolution of North-East provincial council. Moreover, Premadasa’s continued demand for withdrawl of IPKF more positive result when National Front government of India led by V.P. Singh consented upon such withdrawl. On 24 March, 1990 the withdrawal of IPKF was completed. Nevertheless, Sri Lanka started bleeding tragically only after ten weeks of IPKF departure and the Tamil areas were again stained with conflict, chaos and disorder President Premadasa’s well – intentioned miscalculations apparently proved counter productive and cost him his life on May 1, 1993.

The advent of new Prime Minister Chandrika Kumartunga, who get elected on August 19, 1994, can be seen in the back drop of escalating
terrorism, both by militants and the government, which resulted in the tragic assassination of Premdasa, Ranjan Wijeratne and Lalith Athulathmudali. In fact, she got elected on one-point agenda of ‘bringing peace back to strife-torn Sri Lanka’. Significantly, Chandrika gave top priority to the ethnic crisis and created a special ministry for this purpose. Her sincere peace effort backed by devolution package, however, have not been able to brought peace in the island because of LTTE’s rejection of such package. LTTE has also started making fresh demands as a precondition for stable ceasefire, such as total removal of restrictions on fishing and free movement of boats off the north–eastern shores and permission for armed LTTE cadres to move about, who were previously confined to their hideouts in the forest of Eastern province.

Undoubtedly, Chandrika Kumartunga’s approach to settling the ethnic issue did not find matching ideas from the LTTE, that has over the years seen temporary truces and negotiations as brief interludes in its march of the eventual creation of a ‘Tamil Eelam’.

As a matter of fact, the changing role of Chandrika from a dedicated peace – maker to a determined fighter can be seen as an out come of terrible disappointment in her peace – efforts.
Significantly, the resumption of hostilities has injected a new vigour in Sri Lanka government with renewed commitment to finish the terrorists. As a result, the Sri Lanka forces has captured the famous Jaffna town – a citadel of Tamil terrorists activities. In such a situation possibility of any major break though in the ethnic struggle in near future for an everlasting peace in united Sri Lanka has become more a dream than reality.

As far as India’s policy towards Sri Lanka is concerned, it underwent some historical changes in post 1987 period. First, as mentioned earlier, IPKF was withdrawn by V.P. Singh government. Second, Rajiv Gandhi’s tragic assassination by LTTE Cadre in 1991 was the strategic blunder of devastating height that had changed the picture completely. Such an unprecedented loss to India created an atmosphere of hatred and antipathy against the LTTE. Third, Tamil movement in Sri Lanka lost all sympathy and support from New Delhi and Tamil Nadu. Fourth, on Sri Lanka issue, the Indian government led by P.V. Narsimha Rao has not taken any keenness and has maintained a some how neutral posture.

India policy towards Sri Lanka does not need any adhoc approach, but a proper long term perspective. But Indian domestic politics has undergone profound changes with the emergence of coalition governments, the incremental empowerment of new segments of Indian civil society. The Higher
levels of political consciousness and consequent rise in political expectations. These developments have had an impact the dynamics and objectives of Indian foreign and security policies. India is going through a period of domestic politics changes. For example, in the Past V.P. Singh was Prime Minister for 11 months, Chander Shekher for 6 month, Narasimha Rao for 10 months, Inder Kumar Gujral for six months and Atal Behari Vajpai for 13 months. Not only this even during their short temporary and tension ridden regimes all the Prime Ministers were on tenter hooks because of their quarrelsome coalitional partners. A temporary Prime Minister can not provide leadership can not handled international situations. While dealing with powerful western countries and global institution.

In 2000 a coalition government formed under the leadership of Atal Behari Vajpayee. He has been active Prime Minister but he had not made a mark as an innovator of ideas or initiator of concepts and doctrines in the foreign policy field. He had shown no evidence of a special vision in respect of international affairs. While Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, even P.V. Narsimha Rao can be described as leaders with a global vision. Vajpayee comes no where near their clout and aura of course, when compared to Nehru, his successor emerge with faded. Feeble images but even among them, some have measured upto the expectations of their countrymen. India is
in transition although it is half a century old. But one factor of foreign policy is as true to day as it was in the Nehru era, while the domestic policies evoke controversies and divisions, foreign policy has remained by and large bipartisan. There is truly a national consensus behind our foreign policy. Secondly successive Prime Ministers have managed to maintain continuity in the essentials of our independent foreign policy while introducing changes in the peripherals.

As per as India's policy towards Sri Lanka is concerned India always tried to develop Intra regional pattern of relationship on the credible basis of equality of status. Adhering to this policy and showing full respect to Sri Lanka, India peacefully resolved many bilateral problems like Kachchativu and Maritime Boundary issue etc. which were existing for along time.

The problem that most hindered close understanding between India and Sri Lanka after their independence arose from the people of Indian origin settled on the island. The ethnic issue in the meantime was slowing acquiring all the potentialities of an additional source of conflict. As a result of 1983 violence, an emotional feeling was aroused amongst Indians. Also the flood of refugees swarmed into Tamil Nadu, this made India a much more concerned party.
In present situation the prospects of peace in Sri Lanka seems to be a for cry. Brodly speaking the genesis of Sri Lanka ethnic crisis lies in non acceptance by political leaders of the pluralistic nature of Sri Lanka policy since independence. The ethnic factor became sharper in 1956 when S.W.R.D. Bandarnaike tried to co-equate Sinhala nationalism with Sri Lanka nationalism. This led to relative deprivation of Tamils in Sri Lanka and sequent ethnic rights in mid 50’s also the history of Sinhala Tamil relationship during the last four decades has been a story of missed opportunity. The Sri Lanka government treated the issue more interims of Terrorism and less as a problem deserving a political solution. In fact the Tamil problem is a political problem, which demands a political solution and any other course would be not only counter productive but even disastrous.

Significantly, the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka has a essentially Indian dimension in the context of close emotional bonds of Sri Lanka Tamils with their counter parts in Tamil Nadu. Although such a bond, instead of being an asset to our relations, has become a major irritant, India can not afford for long to be a silent spectator of Sri Lanka crisis. The trend of future events in Sri Lanka is bound to have long term implications not only for India - Sri Lanka bilateral relationship but also India’s long term stake for peace and security in the regional frame work.
Thus, in the present phase of severe fighting between the LTTE and the Sri Lanka forces, India must benefit from the earlier experience and perform behind the scene job to bring India-Sri Lanka relations to that earlier cordiality.

Now, India’s policy towards Sri Lanka does not need any adhoc approach but a proper long term perspective. For this a close watch on developments in Sri Lanka is essential. Moreover a policy of total indifference or hands of will be counter productive to Indian national interest. India should come out of present neutralist posture and through diplomatic endeavor try to put out the fire in neighbouring Sri Lanka before it engulfs us, too.

Both Chandrika Kumartunga and Ranil Wikramsinghe will have to work together for the peace and prosperity of their national in matters that need not in fact divide then without either of their national or international images by party squabbles over vote bank politics. There remains a good prospect that Sri Lanka can survive its current problems but without that, it might not.

In the context of present Sri Lanka crisis India should not to tally shy off from Sri Lanka developments. There is no scepter military solution to the problem of Tamil problem. Sri Lanka government should take all necessary steps for eradication of national inequalities in the field of language, education
race and culture. Sri Lanka’s survival as an united entity will always be in the permanent interest of India.