CHAPTER I

INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

India-Sri Lanka relations are based on a deep and abiding friendship which has been built on shared historical experience and common civilisation and cultural values sustained by geographical proximity and ethnic affinity. India and Sri Lanka, though unequal in size, population, economic strength and international clout, have generally had healthy and cordial relations. The strong ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious links between the two countries have resulted in the development of close relationship at the people to people level.¹ In this chapter, an attempt has been made to discuss the historical background of India-Sri Lanka relationship, formation of both the countries-their geographical, social, economic and political structural set up which influences the nature and content of their relationship. Various factors which determine India-Sri Lanka relationship will be discussed.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

India and Sri Lanka have unique and deep rooted relationships which are more than 2,500 years old. The geographical continuity, coupled with constant movements of people, led to begin India-Sri Lanka interaction. There are ethnic identities, for instance, the people of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal have links with the Sinhalese of Sri Lanka. Also, the people of Tamil Nadu have long standing links with Sri Lankan Tamils of all categories going back to ancient times.²

In order to understand the whole panorama of relationship between India and Sri Lanka, it is very important to know the early original settlers of Sri Lanka. The history of Sri Lanka is based on myths and legends and it is difficult to know who the first settler of Sri Lanka was. It is generally accepted

that ‘Vaddas’ were the first who colonized the island. The next who came to Sri Lanka in 500 BC were the Aryan of Northern India. It was the Prince Vijay, who founded the first independent kingdom of Sri Lanka. Another stock of people who settled mostly in the North-East region of Sri Lanka was the Dravidians from South India.3

During the region of Mauryan Emperor Ashoka (247-237 BC), India-Sri Lanka relations were very cordial. Buddhism was introduced in Sri Lanka during this period. The Emperor Ashoka sent Mahinda in the 3rd Century BC to preach the teaching of the Buddha and Buddhism took one of its firmest roots anywhere in the world.4 Perhaps the greatest contribution by India to Sri Lanka, it was Gandhiji who urged Buddhism’s revival in the Island during his visit in 1927, repeating over and over again,

“Buddha himself was an Indian, not only an Indian, but a Hindu among Hindus.... He ventured to reform Hinduism..... and I venture to say that Hinduism became broadened.....and why should not the people of Lanka, who have inherited the teaching of the great Master do better than the children of the Motherland?5

The society of Sri Lanka, more or less developed in a similar way as in India at that time. Both were agricultural and caste-ridden and based on joint family. The Indian system was followed in matter of governance as much as the religion, the culture and the language from India have had their influence on the Island from the earliest times. Buddhism brought the Pali language, that varied from Sanskrit. With Vijaya would have come an Indo-Aryan language and witt Elalan would have come an archaic Tamil. Together they contributed to the Sinhala and Tamil spoken in the island.6

3 Farzana Begum (2009), Dynamics of Indian Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs, Swastik Publications, Delhi, pp. 6-7.
4 Ibid., p. 7.
5 S. Muthiah (2003), The Indo-Lankan: Their 200 Year Saga, Indian Heritage Foundation, Colombo, p. 1.
6 Farzana Begum, op. cit., p. 7.
THE MAP SHOWING THE SEA ROUTES THE EARLY SETTLER WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED TO REACH CEYLON FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF INDIA

Source: S. Muthiah (2003), The Indo-Lankan: Their 200 Year Saga, Indian Heritage Foundation, Colombo, p. 1.
On the other side, south Indian invasions on Sri Lanka affected India-Sri Lanka relations to a considerable extent. For the first time in 177 BC, two South Indian Sena and Guttika possessed the power of Anuradhapura and ruled for twenty years. In 145 BC a Tamil king Elara of Chola dynasty took the throne of Anuradhapura and ruled for forty four years. A Sinhalese King Dutthagamani waged campaign against the Tamil monarch and finally deposed him. The Tamil threat to the Sinhalese Buddhist Kingdom had become very real in the 5th and 6th centuries AD. Three Hindu Empires of Southern India; the Pandya, Pallava and Chola were becoming more assertive. By the middle of the 9th century the Pandya had risen to a position of ascendancy in Southern India, invaded Northern Sri Lanka and sacked Anuradhapura.

Towards the end of the 10th century the Sinhalese made a defensive alliance with the Cheras and the Pandyas against the Chola. Rajaraja I (985-1014), the most distinguished Chola ruler conquered most of Ceylon. The medieval period of Sri Lanka continued to be influenced by North India and was affected by South Indian invasions. Between 1200 and 1500 the Sinhalese kingdoms slowly fell apart. The central power collapsed and the local governors sought assistance from South India in their intrigues and quarrels. The Sinhalese established firmly in the centre and southwest of the island.

INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP UNDER FOREIGN RULE

The modern history of Sri Lanka begins with the arrival of the Portuguese in the 16th century. The Portuguese established a trading centre in Colombo in 1505 AD. Their main object was trade. The arrival of the Portuguese in Sri Lanka was marked as the end of the Indian period of Sri Lankan history. Portuguese power was replaced by the Dutch who remained in power from 1658 to 1795.

The political connection between mainland India and Sri Lanka was almost broken up. The 16th and 17th centuries were marked by Mughal rule in India. Since the time of Akbar, none of the Mughal rulers made any serious

---

7 Ibid. p. 8.  
8 Ibid. p. 9.  
9 Ibid.
exercise to extend their direct rule over South India.\textsuperscript{10} British power in Sri Lanka was an extended by-product of the Anglo-French rivalries in South India. Britishers became the supreme power in the Indian Ocean and the surrounding sea was bound to affect Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{11} By the Treaty of Amiens (1802) between the Dutch and the Britishers, Sri Lanka became a Crown colony and in 1815, the whole Island came under the British rule. In its initial period of British rule, Sri Lanka was controlled by the government of Madras for four years. And even when Sri Lanka became the Crown colony of Britain it had close parallels with India.\textsuperscript{12}

The British impact on India-Sri Lankan relations has been long lasting. The British liked Indian labourers more than the Singhalese labourers because they were "manageable, regular and hard working." The policies adopted by the British created serious rift between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. The introduction of the Roman Catholic Church was also responsible for the tension between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. But despite the sinister game of the British and the Catholic Church, India has always occupied a place of capital importance in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{13}

\textbf{INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP (1947-1990)}

India-Sri Lanka relations over the years since independence, stand out as a unique example of the manner in which two neighbouring states in South Asia have succeeded in resolving their disputes and problems through political co-operation, discussion, negotiation, diplomatic efforts etc.\textsuperscript{14} Although India-Sri Lankan relations were normal and cordial in the post-independence period, yet there were a few disagreements between them, of which the most important were Sri Lanka’s pro-western orientation in the context of the strategic importance of Sri Lanka from the point of view of India’s security, its 'Defence Pact' with Britain. The presence of Indian Tamils

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Jyoti Lal Oran, op. cit., p. 8.
\end{flushright}
in Sri Lanka, citizenship issue of Indian Tamils, ethnic conflict of Sri Lankan Tamils, ethnic riots, Sri Lankan Tamils' demand for 'Eelam' and the constant influence of Tamil Nadu in Sri Lankan affairs are the main constraints in the India-Sri Lanka's relations. On the other hand, Sri Lanka suspected that India being a big brother may cause harm to its sovereignty in order to establish its hegemony in South Asia.

After independence, Jawahar Lal Nehru became the first Prime Minister of India and D.S. Senanayake assumed the office of Prime Minister in Sri Lanka. During Senanayake's tenure, the India-Sri Lanka relations were cordially. The relation with India received Senanayake's close attention. Senanayake came to India in 1947 and Jawaharlal Nehru also visited Sri Lanka in 1950. India and Sri Lanka signed a Trade Agreement in February 1952. Sri Lanka also contributed to the relief of victims of Assam during the earthquake in 1950. India gave 15,000 tonnes of rice to Sri Lanka. A Sri Lankan Parliamentary delegation visited India during March-April 1954 to extend and make good relations. As far as the foreign policy of Senanayake is concerned, "he held the view that the best guarantee of Ceylon's independence was the goodwill of the power which had granted it (Britain)."

After Senanayake, John Kotelawala became the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. He visited India in 1954 and Jawahar Lal Nehru also visited Sri Lanka in the same year.

The United National Party leaders during this period always saw India with distrust and took all precautions to meet any eventuality of danger from India. They leaned heavily on Britain for Sri Lanka's defence. Sri Lanka signed Defense Pact with Britain in 1947 and provided them naval and air bases at Trincomalle and Katunayake respectively.

From the Indian viewpoint, the strategic location of Sri Lanka and their attitude and western approach was a constant source of concern. K.M. Pannikar had advocated the strategic unity of India, Burma and Ceylon which

15 Shipra Mehra, op. cit., p. 45.
17 Farzana Begum, op. cit., p. 17.
is one of the pre-requisites to a realistic policy of Indian defence. Jawahar Lal Nehru as early as 1945 had pointed out the ethnic, linguistic and cultural unity of India and Sri Lanka and supported the formation of a close union as an autonomous unit of the Indian federation.

All these had created some misgivings between India and Sri Lanka. Later on, Jawahar Lal Nehru himself in a special message to the Sri Lanka Government, said that India did not wish to interfere with the Island's sovereignty and assured them of Indian goodwill and peaceful intention towards Sri Lanka. Since then, almost all the Prime Ministers, have assured Sri Lanka that India had no intention to harm her sovereignty and territorial integrity.

As far as the fear of Sri Lanka regarding India was concerned, Jawahar Lal Nehru made his stand clear. When he visited Sri Lanka in 1950 to attend the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Conference, he said:

"Some people fear that the great country India might want to develop or sort of absorb Ceylon. I assure you that if any people have any such idea it is completely wrong."

Although Senanayake and Kotelawala's policies were West-oriented yet because of Jawahar Lal Nehru's personality and actions, the relation between the two countries remained cordial.

The issue of Tamils of Indian origin caused strain between India and Sri Lanka. This remained Sri Lanka's central issue of concern in relation to India till the bigger issue of Sri Lankan Tamils demand of a separate state came up.

The Ceylonese constitutions of 1920 and 1923 had given the Indian Tamils in Ceylon political and legal rights equal to those of the indigenous population residing in Ceylon. With the Sinhalese assuming power in 1948,
they disenfranchised the Indian Tamils. The Sri-Lankan government led by UNP in the first parliament enacted discriminatory Citizenship Acts of 1948 and 1949. These Acts were designed to deny citizenship and voting rights to the great majority of Indian Tamils, in order to divide them in Sri Lanka. With the advent of mass politics, the status and rights of Indian Tamils acquired prominence.

Citizenship Acts had an immediate impact on India-Sri Lanka relations. Given its strong ethnic linkages, the Tamil Nadu politicians reacted strongly. Several agreements, (including that between Jawahar Lal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India and Prime Minister John Kotelawala in 1954, that between Srimavo Bandaranaike, then Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and Lal Bahadur Shastri Prime Minister of India in 1964 and that between Srimavo Bandaranaike and Indra Gandhi the then Prime Minister of India Pact of 1974) did address the problem, however the problem of citizenship of a sizeable numbers of Tamils of the Indian origin could not be resolved satisfactorily until the Sri Lankan government passed a law in 1987 granting citizenship to Tamils of Indian origin.

India-Sri Lanka relations got strained when China attacked India in October, 1962 and Ceylon did not criticise the attack and failed to brand China as an aggressor. Prime Minister Srimavo-Bhandaranaike resisted the pressure to do so.

In reply to Jawahar Lal Nehru’s letter in which he sought Sri Lankan support, Mrs Bandaranaike said, “India would not want to do anything to prejudice her territorial integrity or self-respect by submitting to negotiations under pressure of armed forces.” But soon after, Mrs Bandaranaike adopted the policy of neutrality and failed to brand China as an aggressor. However,

22 For detail of these Acts see appendix I and II.
24 All the pacts have been discussed in detail in chapter II of the thesis.
26 Shipra Mehra, op. cit., p. 63.
27 Ibid., p. 63.
28 Ravikant Dubey, op. cit., p. 102.
the masses of Sri Lanka including UNP, the leftist party and the Tamil Parties gave their unconditional support to India.

Srimavo-Bhandaranaik made attempts to mediate in the dispute and tried to bring China and India on the negotiation table. Sri Lanka along with five other Non-Aligned countries namely, Burma, Ghana, Cambodia, Indonesia and UAR, met at Colombo on 10 to 12 December, 1962 to find out a solution of the above problem. The solution arising from these negotiations was known as ‘Colombo Proposals.’

India accepted these proposals in their entirety. China, while accepting these proposals in principle began making efforts to wriggle out of the Colombo Proposals. Throughout the conflict between India and China, Sri Lanka tried to follow the policy of neutrality but the attitude of Mrs Bandaranaike showed her closeness to China than with India.

But despite this, the sincere efforts made by Mrs Bandaranaike to mediate in the dispute could not be questioned. Sri Lanka’s role as a peace maker was motivated by her sincere desire to prevent the continuation of hostilities between India and China.

Following this, Sri Lanka entered into a maritime agreement with China. Sri Lanka gave China the most favoured nation status and provided facility to Chinese warships, knowing fully that it is against the Indian interests and this agreement became a subject of grave concern to India. Its significance had been stated by Ravi Kaul, a former Commander of the Indian Navy. He stated,

“Sri Lanka is as important strategically to India as Eire is to the United Kingdom or Taiwan to China. As long as Sri Lanka is friendly or even neutral, India has nothing to worry, but if there be any danger of the island falling under the domination of a

29 Shipra Mehra, op. cit., p. 66.
31 Ravikant Dubey, op. cit., p. 102.
power hostile to India; India cannot tolerate such a situation endangering her territorial integrity. “

After the death of Jawaharlal Nehru on 27th May 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister of India. Though Shastri’s tenure was short but he tried his best to solve the problems with Sri Lanka. It was the time when “India felt the desperate need to have good relations with her neighbours.”  

India also tried its best to improve trade relations with Sri Lanka. A major development regarding Tamil citizenship issue was the signing of the Sirimavo-Shastri Agreement in October 1964. 

After Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi assumed power in 1966. During the period of Indira Gandhi, India-Sri Lankan relations became more strengthened. In 1968, Dudley Senanayake came to India and assured and agreed with government of India to implement 1964 Pact.

Meanwhile, Mrs Bandaranaike won majority in 1970 and formed government under United Front. During this period, India and Sri Lanka had vast expansion of economic and cultural relations. In March 1971, the communalist party J. V. P. led an insurgency against Sri Lankan Government. Emergency was declared on 16th March, 1971; on the request of Bandaranaike, India sent its forces to Sri Lanka to tackle this situation.

In March, 1956, India extended her territorial waters boundary from the conventional three miles to six miles and later on extended it to 100 nautical miles. This was done specifically with the object of protecting fishing and other living resources. This proclamation would have covered Sri Lanka’s area also. Sri Lanka also issued proclamation extending her territorial water to six nautical miles and claiming fishing rights over a contiguous area of 100 miles of her territorial water. In 1967, both countries extended their territorial areas up to 12 miles. The dispute over the possession of Kachchathivu, an uninhabited coral Island with 1 sq. mile area; existed before 1967. The

---

34 Agreement discussed in detail in chapter II.
Government of Madras claimed the Island as it belonged to Ramanathpurang Samasthan which was taken over by the Madras Government under the Zamindari Abolition Act.36

The Government of Sri Lanka claimed it as it fell under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church of Jaffna and it was used as naval bombardment range under Ceylon defence regulation during Second World War. Extension of territorial waters by both countries led to overlapping both in Palk Straits and Palk Bay. After protracted talks and negotiations an agreement was signed demarcating their maritime boundary in Palk Strait on 26th June 1974, and its effectiveness from 9th July 1974.37

The agreement demarcated a boundary in the sea from a point about 18 nautical miles north of Point Pedro in Straits of Palk to Adam's Bridge, which accounted for a distance of approximately 86 nautical miles. The agreement accepted each country’s sovereignty and exclusive jurisdiction over the land and water on its side of boundary line. The vessels of each country were to enjoy in each other’s water the right of navigation as they had traditionally enjoyed. This agreement also resolved the question of overlapping of jurisdiction created by the extension by both countries of their limits of territorial jurisdiction in 1967.38

Another maritime boundary agreement of 1976 affecting the boundary in the Gulf of Mannar and the Bay of Bengal was signed. The agreement defined marine area in the Gulf of Mannar by latitude and longitude at 13 points which were equidistant from the coast of the two countries. The lines connecting their points constituted maritime boundary in Gulf of Mannar. Under this agreement, each party was also required to respect rights of navigation through its territorial sea and exclusive economic zone in accordance with the laws and regulations and rules of international law.39 This delimitation of the international boundary is considered as a landmark in India-Sri Lankan relation and culmination of many years of negotiation between the two countries.

36 Ravikant Dubey, op. cit., p. 102.
37 For complete detail of the agreement see appendix IV.
38 Ibid.
39 For complete detail of the agreement see appendix V.
In March 1971, insurgency occurred almost all over Sri Lanka. American Embassy was attacked; one personnel of police force was killed. Emergency was declared on 16 March, 1971. Mrs. Bhandaranaike in a broadcast to the nation stated that certain parties were engaged in a movement known as the Guevara Movement aiming at overthrowing a democratically elected Government. She also appealed to many countries, including India for help. India responded favourably.

India-Sri Lankan relation suffered another setback during Bangladesh War. During India-Pakistan war in December 1971, Sri Lanka Government granted air facilities through Colombo from West Pakistan to East Bengal (now Bangladesh). The Government of India stopped Pakistani overflight as it was believed that Pakistani troops were being transported in disguise of civilians. Sri Lankan plea was that she wanted to observe neutrality in conflict between the two countries and maintain friendly relations with Pakistan. Another reason given out by political analysts was that if the integrity of Pakistan were to be endangered, then integrity of Sri Lanka might be threatened, so Sri Lanka abetted in the ruthless suppression of Bangladesh. She considered it as internal matter of Pakistan. These events did affect India-Sri Lankan relations but not very seriously.

India and Sri Lanka share common outlook on various issues like non-alignment and declaration of Indian Ocean as Zone of Peace. India and Sri Lanka were greatly concerned to preserve the Indian Ocean as an area of peace. Both countries realise the Great Powers’ activity as a threat to the peace and integrity of littoral, hinterland and Island states in the area. India strongly supported Sri Lankan’s move to make the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace in the Lusaka Summit in 1970 as well as in the United Nations. The UN adopted a resolution to the effect in its 26th Session in 1971.

As the Tamil demand for ‘Eelam’ came up and it created a big gulf in the cordial relationship between the two countries. India remained aloof from domestic development in Sri Lanka over Sri Lankan Tamil conflict. Many ethnic riots had taken place between the Sinhalese and the Tamils since 1956. Sometimes the Indian Tamils and the Indians suffered a lot, yet the
Government of India did nothing beyond issuing a curtly statement expressing its concern at happenings in Sri Lanka.

In the General Election of March 1977, Indira Gandhi lost power and the first Non-Congress Government in India was formed at the Centre. On the other hand, in Sri Lanka also Mrs. Bandaranaike was defeated by UNP in July 1977 General Election. J. R. Jayawardene became the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. In February 1978, J. R. Jaywardene held the office of the first Executive President of Sri Lanka.

President J. R. Jayawardene visited India in October-November 1978. In a press conference during his visit, President Jayawardene said that there was no question of stopping repatriation of Indian labour from Sri Lanka and the repatriation of the Indian labour had to proceed in accordance with the agreement signed between two countries.\(^{40}\) Morarji Desai also visited Sri Lanka in February 1979. He addressed a special session of the Parliament. He showed his willingness for cooperation in economic and technical field. Morarji Desai openly criticised those people who were demanding a separate state for Tamils. He clearly stated,

"I do not encourage them. They should not do this. They are Ceylonese and not Tamilian." \(^ {41} \)

After the fall of Morarji Government, Indira Gandhi came back to power in 1980. India-Sri Lanka relations during her second term took a different turn. The personal equation between Indira Gandhi and Jayawardene was not very good. Jayawardene’s largely western approach created trouble for India as Sri Lanka refused to condemn the American naval base in Diego Garcia.\(^ {42}\) Jayawardene gave Trincomalee Tank Farm to a Singapore based company secretly linked with US in 1981 for the renovation and expansion of refueling facilities while the Indian tender was rejected. Subsequently, a number of incidents occurred which caused irritation between India and Sri Lanka.\(^ {43}\) Inspite of all these, both the countries showed their commitment for

\(^{40}\) Farzana Begum, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
\(^{41}\) Ravi Kant Dubey, *op. cit.*, p.105.
\(^{43}\) Ibid., p. 13.
cooperation. In January 1981, India gave a Rs100 million line of credit to Sri Lanka.

In July 1983, serious ethnic riots took place in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{44} Indira Gandhi appointed G.Parthasarthy as her special envoy to help Sri Lanka in solving the Sri Lankan Tamil Conflict. But Jayawardene thought of this act as interference and intervention.\textsuperscript{45} Since riots, the Sri Lankan Government has adopted such a line in Foreign Policy, which has directly affected the security of India. The revival of defence treaty with UK, the Trincomaltee Tank Farm Deal, expansion of scope of the voice of America, Sri Lanka collaboration with a private British Security Organisation Keeny Meeny Services (KMS), having ex-Special Air Services (SAS) and many such steps created disharmonious relationship between India and Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{46} This embittered India towards Sri Lanka yet Indira Gandhi assured that no outside power should meddle in Sri Lanka.

Over and above all this, Jayawardene Government lifted the nine-year old ban on foreign ships using the facility at Trincomalee Harbour. Several US Navy ships came to Trincomalee. Leader of SLFP Party Srimavo Bandaranaike had also warned the government against turning Trincomalee into a US Naval base. The then Indian Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao also expressed concern of the government of India in a guarded language by stating that it considered the existence of any Foreign Military or naval base in the region as a threat to peace and tranquility, which would have adverse effect on our security arrangement.\textsuperscript{47}

The Sri Lankan government was shaken by the activities of Tamil militants and felt her army was not competent to fight these militants. After 1983 July riots, Jayawardene was making frantic appeal to several countries

\textsuperscript{44} After LTTE attack against army soldiers in Jaffna on 23 July, 1983, anti-Tamil riots erupted in Colombo. The Sri Lankan government, under President J. R. Jayawardene, intervened only belatedly to stop the killing and looting, which left several hundred dead and thousands homeless.


\textsuperscript{47} S. D. Muni, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 127.
including US, UK, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Israel for political and military help. Sri Lanka propagated to these countries that there was a threat to its unity and integrity from Tamil terrorism which was supported and encouraged by the government and people of India, and there could be direct military invasion by India for the creation of an independent Tamil state in Sri Lankan territory.\textsuperscript{48} After 1983 ethnic riots, Israeli Intelligence Agency, Mossad and Shin Bet were also involved in tackling the Tamil insurgency problem in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{49}

July 1983 riots, for the first time involved India in Sri Lanka ethnic conflict. From 1983 to 1987, Sri Lankan government had adopted a line in foreign policy, which directly affected the security of South Asia and particularly of India. India considered Sri Lankan Tamil conflict its internal matter. But India's direct involvement in assisting Sri Lanka to work out a political solution to the ethnic conflict, at Sri Lanka’s request, began in the wake of July 1983 riots. Anti Tamils riots had a significant impact on India and its relationship with Sri Lanka. These riots began the flow of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees into India.\textsuperscript{50} The ethnic riots and the subsequent civil war between the Sri Lankan army and the LTTE also led to an emotional upsurge in Tamil Nadu in favour of Tamils of Sri-Lanka. The main opposition party, DMK called for an all party conference in June 1983, to express solidarity with the Tamils of Sri Lanka, and pleaded that asylum should be given to the militant groups. The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M. G. Ramachandran, convened an all party meeting on 28th July 1983 in Madras. The meeting strongly condemned the killing of Tamils in Sri Lanka and further, decided to send a delegation to New Delhi to seek India's intervention to end the ethnic violence in the island. Also, the Tamil Nadu Assembly moved a resolution on 24th October 1983, expressing condolence for innocent Tamils who were killed in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{51} Another thing, which gave Tamil Nadu reason to show legitimate interest in

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{51} M. Mayilvaganan (2008), "India’s Policy towards Sri Lanka-2007: Continuity and Change," World Focus Series-2, India’s Foreign Policy: Continuity and Change, New Delhi, p. 56.
the crisis in Sri Lanka, was that it was Tamil Nadu who was bearing the large number of Tamil refugees. Their number reached around 150,000 after the ethnic riots of 1983.52

Therefore, the government of India could not remain a passive spectator to mass killing of the Tamils, as the Tamils in India were watching the government of India’s lack of action with anxiety. The people and political parties in Tamil Nadu exerted pressure to force India to save the lives of “their brethren” in Sri Lanka. The Indian government condemned the killing of Tamils in Sri Lanka and sent foreign minister Narashima Rao to Colombo to ascertain facts on the spot. Prime Minister Indra Gandhi was forced to take some steps to placate the people of Tamil Nadu.

In response to all these developments, Prime Minister Indra Gandhi stated in the Lok Sabha that India did not pose any threat to Sri Lanka and it had no desire to interfere in Sri Lanka’s internal matters. But she clearly warned Jayawardene government that any external involvement in this region would complicate matters for both the countries. She emphasised that in course of dealing with developments in Sri Lanka, India was directly concerned. She further expressed that,

"India could not be regarded as ‘Just another country’ as every development in Sri Lanka affected India also." 53

If Indian government failed to respond to the Tamil sentiments in India, this might lead to the demand for creation of an independent Dravidistan and ultimately India’s unity and integrity would have been in danger.54

After the assassination of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in November, 1984, Rajiv Gandhi assumed power and became the Prime Minister of India. The precarious conditions prevailing within and outside the country at that point of time, made the policy makers concerned and sensitive

52 Farzana Begum, Dynamics of Indian Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 44.
about India's security. On the one hand, India was facing internal challenges in the form of terrorism in Punjab and secessionist forces in the other parts of the country. On the other hand, happenings in neighbouring countries were also not in India's favour. Pakistan was also engaged in anti-India activities and was also procuring military equipments from China and America. China was promoting tension in India by providing military assistance to Pakistan.55 In this context, the extra regional powers involvement in Sri Lanka had a serious impact on India-Sri Lanka relations.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi determined his priorities in view of the conditions mentioned above. Rajiv Gandhi pledged to strengthen the ties with India's “immediate neighbours in South Asia” and wanted to solve problems on the basis of mutual respect, sovereign equality and friendship.56 He recalled G. Parthasarathy and appointed Romesh Bhandari as Secretary to the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The second important step taken by Rajiv Gandhi was to curb Tamil militant activities in India. These steps were appreciated by the Sri Lankans.57

A meeting was held between Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayawardene on 2 and 3 June, 1985 in New Delhi. The two leaders discussed the ethnic issue and its impact on bilateral relations. Both the sides agreed that immediate steps should be taken to defuse the situation and create a congenial climate acceptable to all concerned, within the framework of unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. Every effort should be made for speedy restoration of normalcy in the northern and eastern provinces, as this would be conducive to the early return of Sri Lankan citizens in India to Sri Lanka. They reaffirmed the traditional friendship between India and Sri Lanka and the two leaders decided to remain in close touch with each other.58

The meeting between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayawardene in June 1985, led to two rounds of talks at Thimpu. The first
round of talks was held on 13th July, 1985 and the second on 12th August 1985. In spite of the Government of India’s zeal and determination, the Thimpu Talks were clouded by uncertainty. For the settlement of Tamil problem, the Tamil delegation put four basic principles in front of Sri Lankan Government: (i) acceptance of their traditional homeland; namely, the Northern and Eastern province in Sri Lanka; (ii) recognition of the Tamils as a distinct Nationality; (iii) right of self determination; and (iv) granting Sri Lankan citizenship to all Tamils in the country.

The second round of talks started on 12th August, 1985, J.R. Jayawardene rejected the first three demands of Tamil delegation, and expressed that Sri Lankan government had already announced its intention to grant Sri Lankan citizenship to all stateless persons. During the talks, it was reported that Tamils were brutally massacred in Venuniya in the North. Tamil groups walked out from talks against the backdrop of the alleged killings of Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan army and ultimately Thimpu Talks collapsed.

The government of India, continuing its efforts to find a political solution to the ethnic crisis of Sri Lanka, sent a mission under Cabinet Minister P. Chidambaram in May 1986 to Sri Lanka, which brought two rounds of talks between the TULF and UNP government. LTTE leader Prabhakaran assured India that militants would not stand in the way if the TULF reached an agreement with Colombo. Natwar Singh and P. Chidambaram visited Sri Lanka in December 1986 and formulated a new proposal identified as ‘19 December Proposal’. Meanwhile, the ethnic crisis of Sri Lanka took a new turn, when the LTTE started carrying out its plan to take over the civil administration in the north which was under military control. The question of LTTE’s control over

60 Ravi Kant Dubey, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
61 Shipera Mehra, *op. cit.* p. 120.
63 The 19 December Proposal involved formation of a new Eastern Province by excising Sinhalese majority areas (Amparai Electoral District) from the existing Eastern Province and creation of Tamil Provincical Council in the Northern and the reconstituted Eastern Province.
the Jaffna Peninsula and possibility of declaring it Eelam created the worst situation in Sri Lankan Parliament in January 1987. In response to these LTTE activities President Jayawardene imposed an economic and communication blockade on the Jaffna Peninsula in January 1987. This caused considerable hardship to the civilian population in Jaffna. Hundreds of innocent Tamils were killed by the Sri Lankan soldiers. Seeing the crucial situation in Sri Lanka, Rajiv Gandhi sent Dinesh Singh as his special emissary on 14th March, 1987. Faced with mounting pressure from the hard line Sinhalese and fundamentalists, Jayawardene launched ‘Operation Liberation’ in the Jaffna Peninsula in May 1987. In Indian Parliament and in Tamil Nadu, the question of economic blockade and killing of Tamil civilians by Sri Lankan forces outraged everyone and there was a huge pressure on Rajiv Gandhi, to do something immediately.

On 1st June 1987, India informed the Sri Lankan Government through the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, J.N. Dixit that India was going to send relief supplies to Jaffna by sea. On 3rd June, India sent relief supply in Jaffna in a flotilla of 19 fishing boats flying the Red Cross flag. The government of Sri Lanka rejected the supplies and blocked the Indian flotilla’s entry into Sri Lankan territorial water. In a “drastic move” Indian Government sent five Indian Air Force AN-32 transport aircrafts escorted by four Mirage 2000 fighter plans on 4th June, 1987 to Sri Lanka. They dropped twenty five tonnes of relief supplies in and around Jaffna. During this period, relations between the two countries reached almost breaking point with risk of military confrontation.

Sri Lanka condemned this Indian action as gross violation of its independence, an unwarranted assault on its sovereignty and territorial integrity. In response to Sri Lankan criticism, India stated that its activity in Jaffna Peninsula was justified in view of the conditions prevailing there. India had carried out its activity with a view to provide humanitarian assistance. India had no negative intention towards Sri Lanka.

---

64 Avtar Singh Bhasin, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
65 Ibid., p. 139.
Due to prevailing circumstances, the imperative for India was to abandon its earlier non-interventionist policy and get involved in order to pre-empt all possible or actual foreign involvement and to protect India’s unity, integrity and security. Later on, social and internal pressure and finally external realities made the Sri Lankan government come to an Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement (ISLA) on 29th July, 1987. It came out due to compulsion rather than rational perception of the ethnic conflict. After the accord, the scenario changed rapidly, which included India sending its IPKF, Sri Lanka’s demand of withdrawal of IPKF, LTTE’s disillusionment with India, assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, and India’s decision to adopt hands-off policy in the internal matters of Sri Lanka.

FACTORS DETERMINING INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP

Relations between any two countries depend much on the foreign policy they adopt and there are certain factors that usually determine the foreign policy of any country. The basic power relationship between India and Sri Lanka is determined largely by the immense disparity in their size. In terms of both population and geographical area, India is more than 50 times bigger than Sri Lanka. The asymmetrical power relationship made the Sinhalese elite deeply suspicious of India in the past. But the common culture, tradition and shared ethnicity of the Tamil living in Tamil Nadu and in northern and eastern province of Sri Lanka have always been a significant factor in India-Sri Lanka relationship. The following factors determine India-Sri Lanka relationship.

(i) GEO-STRATEGIC LOCATION OF SRI LANKA

The specific geo-strategic location of Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean has been the most important factor in their relations. Sri Lanka is virtually located in the centre of Asia and the sea lanes between the Far East and the African

67 For the text of Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 29 July, 1987, see Appendix VII.
and Arab worlds. This location gives the Island a central position midway on the ancient maritime trade route between West and East Asia. Another factor which influences their relations is the location factor. India is the closest neighbor of Sri Lanka, separated from it at its narrowest point by 22 miles of sea called the Palk-strait. The implication of such a close proximity is that developments in each country have affected the other. Their bilateral relations have been influenced accordingly. Sri Lanka had also used its geo-strategic location to neutralise India’s position by cultivating extra regional powers and even expressing her desire to give base facilities to the United States of America. India is always worried about the harbor’s status; her occupation by any external power has serious repercussions for her security. Ships passing from Yangon and Kolkata going west to the Suez or the Cape or those sailing from Mumbai of the Gulf and eastward to Singapore still use Sri Lanka’s excellent harbours in Colombo and Trincomalee. That is why Sri Lanka has always occupied an important place in India foreign policy calculations.

The Island nation thus occupies an important place in the critical sea lines of communication. Trincomalee has the capacity to serve as a major naval base, and an extra regional naval force could well dominate the sea routes in the area and disrupt Indian shipping. The British realised the strategic importance of Sri Lanka and the concept of strategic unity of India and Sri Lanka emerged, whereby the possession of Sri Lanka came to be regarded as a prerequisite of the defence and security of India.

After the British, Indian policy makers were also very sensitive towards Sri Lanka. K.M. Panikkar, a well known Indian writer and scholar advocated the strategic unity of India, Burma and Sri Lanka for India’s defence.

---

70 Farzana Begum, Dynamics of Indian Diplomacy, op. cit., p. 220.
71 Ravi Kant Dubey, op. cit., p. 79.
73 Farzana Begum, op. cit., p. 151.
75 S. U. Kodikara (1965), Indo-Ceylon Relations since Independence, Ceylon Institute of World Affairs, Colombo, pp. 32-34.
Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1945 had pointed out the ethnic, linguistic and cultural unity of India and Sri Lanka and supported the formation of a close union of autonomous units of the Indian Federation.

Ravi Kaul opined that,

“Fears were not about a threat from Sri Lanka, but that if anybody with inimical interests towards India gained a foothold in the island nation, India’s security interest could be adversely affected.”  

However, in Sri Lanka, these views aired by the Indians were looked upon as an expression of expansionism. Sri Lankan Prime Minister John Kotewala told in the parliament that the writings of K. M. Panikkar were tantamount to a proclamation of a ‘Monroe doctrine’ for South Asia.

He further commented that, “The day Ceylon dispensed with Englishmen completely, the island would go under India.” Moreover, it was made clear that the defence agreement of 1947 between Sri Lanka and Britain was a shield against external military intervention in Sri Lanka. As a counter-balance to India, Sri Lanka adopted a pro-western attitude which created a security problem for India.

Jawahar Lal Nehru himself in a special message to Sri Lankan Government repudiated any such suggestion and said that India did not wish to interfere with the island’s sovereignty and assured them of India’s goodwill and peaceful intention towards Sri Lanka. Since then, almost all the Prime Ministers have assured Sri Lanka that India had no intention to harm her sovereignty and territorial integrity, yet Sri Lanka politicians always create the fear psychosis of the danger from the big neighbour.

Sri Lanka’s insecurity which prevailed till 1960s was one of the reasons why it adopted pro-Western policies. This kind of approach by Sri Lanka contributed to insecurity on India’s part as India perceived this strategy as a
threat to its security and interest. In the 1970s, Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty, Bangladesh war, rapid growth in Indian military power and emergence of India, as nuclear power in 1974, vastly increased the insecurity of Sri Lanka. In particular, the role played by India in the formation of Bangladesh created great suspicions among the Sri Lankan, regarding India's intention.81 In the decade of 1980s, the security issue of India and Sri Lanka took a new turn and entered in a different phase. Tamil separatist's activities had already started in 1970s which took the form of full blown struggle by 1980s.

After 1983 ethnic riots in Sri Lanka, India was not asked for help because of its sympathies towards Tamils Sri Lanka approached other countries like, the US United Kingdom, China, Israel, Pakistan etc., for help.82 India was extremely sensitive particularly to the possibility of US involvement into the security management of the South Asian region. In response to these unprecedented developments, Indira Gandhi brought a security doctrine of India for the South Asian region, which is popularly known as India's 'Monroe Doctrine.'83

In spite of India's repeated assurances, Sri Lanka did not pay any heed and continuously kept on taking such steps as increased India's concern for its security. In response to these Sri Lankan activities, India decided to take definitive actions. India dropped relief supplies in June 1987 by air under cover of Indian Air Force planes, without Sri Lankan permission in response to the economic blockage of Jaffna by the Sri Lankan Government.

After this Sri Lankan Government agreed to accept India's role in solving its ethnic conflict. The Sri Lankan Government was aware that beyond a point it could not overlook India's concern. Finally on 29th July, 1987 the "Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement" was concluded. Only after this Agreement was India able to stop extra - regional powers from entering Sri Lanka.84

In the post 1990 phase, India has adopted a new policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. This new policy has also

---

81 Ravikant Dubey, op. cit., p. 104.
83 According to the Monroe Doctrine, "India will neither intervene in the domestic affairs of any state in the region unless requested to do so, nor tolerate such intervention by an outside powers; if external assistance is needed to meet an internal crisis; states should first look within the region for help."
84 Padmaja Murthy, op. cit., p. 355.
contributed to removing the cultivated fear complex of Sri Lanka. The leadership and the people in the island have changed their mindset and thinking about India; for the first time, India is considered as an asset rather than a threat to the Island security.\(^85\) In the post LTTE era, both the countries are concerned about their security and are extending cooperation in various fields including defence.

(ii) TAMIL FACTOR IN INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP

The Tamil factor has always played a major role in India-Sri Lanka relationship. Most of the Tamils in Sri Lanka were of South Indian origin, especially from Tamil Nadu. Hence a special emotional attachment was always there between the Tamils of Tamil Nadu and those of Northern and Eastern province of Sri Lanka. And this is the reason why any incident against Tamils in Sri Lanka provoked a sharp reaction in Tamil Nadu.\(^86\)

The biggest irritant in India-Sri Lanka relations was the problem of statelessness of the Indian Tamils. This involved the future of about nine lacs of persons of Indian origin, their identification with the political, economical and social life of the island.\(^87\) Sustained efforts and various agreements that had been made in the last 3 to 4 decades between India and Sri Lanka led ultimately to the solution of this complex and complicated problem.\(^88\)

Besides Indian Tamil problem, Sri Lankan Tamil conflict became a major factor in determining India-Sri Lanka relationship. Sri Lankan Tamil conflict is the result largely of continued discrimination against the Tamils by the successive Sri Lankan governments both before and after independence. This discrimination was indulged in for vested political interests.\(^89\) Ethnic conflict created a serious rift between the Sinhalese and Tamils. India being an ethnic Kin-State is bound to be deeply affected by the ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils.

\(^85\) P. Sahadevan, op. cit., p. 153.
\(^87\) Ravi Kant Dubey, op. cit., p. 43.
\(^88\) All the agreements have been discussed in detail in chapter II of the thesis.
\(^89\) Various aspects of Sri Lanka ethnic conflict has been discussed in detail in chapter III.
When the Sri Lankan Tamil leaders demanded a separate state 'Eelam',\textsuperscript{90} they started to internationalise their cause and this attempt sought the support of political parties of Tamil Nadu in India.\textsuperscript{91} Supporting Sri Lankan Tamils had become an important factor in Tamil Nadu's internal politics in order to woo the voters.\textsuperscript{92} Successive governments in India could not ignore the views and sentiments of Tamil Nadu because of its being a politically sensitive and articulate state.\textsuperscript{93} The emergence of coalition politics at the national level and increasing influences of regional political parties on foreign policy formulation in both the countries over past two decades have given an extra dimension to India-Sri Lanka relationship.\textsuperscript{94}

(iii) INDIAN OCEAN AS A FACTOR IN INDIA - SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP

India and Sri Lanka were much concerned to preserve the Indian Ocean as Zone of Peace (IOPZ) in the context of the escalation of great power rivalry in the Indian Ocean from the late sixties onwards.\textsuperscript{95} The originator of "Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace" concept was of Mrs Siirimavo Bahandaranaike the then Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. The proposal was made at the Non-Alignment Summit in Cairo in October 1964.\textsuperscript{96} But the important thing is that both the countries took different stands in this context from time to time.

As far as India was concerned, it gave a lot of importance to its ocean security after the Britishers left, because Indian history is witness to attacks from different countries through sea. And because of this very reason, India

\textsuperscript{90} Eelam mean in Tamil-Sri Lanka, 'Tamil Eelam' means where Tamils are in majority; Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. In order to ensure their survival and progress, the Tamils in 1976 demanded a separate state-Tamil Eelam'.

\textsuperscript{91} Ravikant Dubey, op. cit, p. 108.

\textsuperscript{92} For complete detail, see Chapter V, part II.

\textsuperscript{93} Tamil Nadu politics influences the course and configuration of Indian politics in a manner that no government of India can ignore Tamil Nadu. These concerns had obliged India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, in July 1987 to go to Colombo and sign the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, even at the risk of his life.

\textsuperscript{94} Kulwant Kaur, op. cit., p. 183.

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., p. 104.

\textsuperscript{96} The Cairo NAM conference adopted two resolutions having a direct bearing on the concept of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. One was the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons covering the oceans of the world, especially those Oceans which had been hitherto free of nuclear weapons. Second was in the opposition of big power's efforts to establish and maintain bases in the context of cold war rivalry in the Indian Ocean region.
took great pains to strengthen its Navy.\textsuperscript{97} When Britain left, the concept of power vacuum came into existence and America tried its best to get hold of it. India's prime concern became security of this area from any extra regional forces. India wanted this region to be free from the superpower rivalry.

As far as Sri Lanka was concerned, its government in initial years, showed little interest in this context because of its traditional friendship with the west. Realising its strategic position in Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka signed a defence pact with Britain in order to secure its position.\textsuperscript{98} Later on, it focused more upon balancing Indian power by joining hands with Pakistan. Sri Lanka talked of general disarmament, instead of reducing superpower rivalry in the region.

But initially, Sri Lanka was not concerned about it because of its western approach. The two countries differed in their approach and Sri Lanka's approach clearly showed that it feared threat from India because of its increasing military and nuclear power. On the other hand, India was concerned more about reducing the dominance of superpower rivalry in the Indian Ocean region.

However, the idea of IOPZ began to lose its relevance in the post 1990s phase. Presently, the internal threats are more serious than the external threats. India and Sri Lanka have understood this fact and are cooperating with each other. This has resulted in the establishment of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) which is a more realistic approach than that of IOPZ.

(iv) HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

Sri Lanka's historical antecedents formed another factor in its relations with India. The Ceylon history is integrated with that of India, which played a crucial role in shaping the relations in the past. Infact, roots of the population of Sri Lanka are in India. The Sinhalese went from the Indo-Gangetic plain in

\textsuperscript{97} K. M. Panikkar (2009), \textit{India and the Indian Ocean}, Quoted in, Farzana Begum, \textit{Dynamics of Indian Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs}, Swastik Publications, Delhi, p.153.

\textsuperscript{98} Padmaja Murthy, Indo-Sri Lanka Security Perceptions, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 348.
the ancient period and the Sri Lanka Tamils migrated from South India. Buddhism was introduced in India during the rule of king Ashoka. The Sinhalese Language belongs to the Indo-Aryan Language family. In this context, the memories of Tamil invasions from South India and the ethnic linkage between the Tamils across the Palk-Strait have contributed a fear complex in the minds of majority community. As a result, the fear and minority complex of the Sinhalese reflected in the country’s foreign policy and relations with India.

(v) POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING

Understanding at the level of political leadership and regime has also been an important factor in India-Sri Lanka relationship. The Congress regime in India and the SLFP Government in Sri Lanka always enjoyed good relations. On the contrary, the UNP leaders did not enjoy a good rapport with the Congress leaders, but they enjoyed mutual understanding with the non congress parties in India. Both the countries faced difficulties and irritants under the UNP and the Congress regimes. At the same time, the relationship was cordial under the UNP and the government headed by President J.R. Jayewardene and Janata party government led by Prime Minister Moraji Desai. In the post 1990 phase, the personality factor has lost its importance in the bilateral relationship. Indian government has followed the policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan young generation leaders who have succeeded the old party leaders also follow a pragmatic policy of cultivating India irrespective of the party in power in India.

Misunderstanding and mistrust between the two resulted in many ups and down in their bilateral relationship. The Kachchativu dispute and divergent security perceptions between the two countries created turbulence. The ethnic riots of July 1983 and the subsequent civil war between the Sri Lankan army and the LTTE have made a decisive impact on the domestic politics of India and the India-Sri Lanka relationship. India’s intervention in

100 P. Sahadevan, op. cit., p. 144.
internal affairs of Sri Lanka from 1987-90 further aggravated the situation. Apart from the disturbances caused by the illegal movements of Tamil groups, smuggling of illicit weapons, drugs, refugees and fishermen, influenced India Sri-Lanka relationship.

INDIA-SRILANKA: GEOGRAPHICAL SET UP

India is the seventh-largest country by geographical area, the second most populous country, and the most populous liberal democracy in the world. India is the largest country in the Indian subcontinent stretching 3,214 km north to south, and 2,933 km, east to west. India has a coastline of over seven thousand kilometers, bounded by the Indian Ocean on the south, the Arabian Sea on the west, and the Bay of Bengal on the east. India borders Pakistan to the west; the People’s Republic of China, Nepal and Bhutan to the north-east; and Bangladesh and Myanmar to the east. In the Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia.101

Sri Lanka is a medium sized island, strategically situated in the Indian Ocean102, to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal and to the southeast of the Arabian Sea. It is separated from the Indian subcontinent by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. According to Hindu mythology, a land bridge to the Indian mainland, known as Rama’s Bridge, was constructed during the time of Rama by the vanara architect Nala, often referred to as Adam’s Bridge.103 Sri Lanka is located between 5 degrees 55 north and 9 degrees 50 north latitude and 79 degrees 42 east and 81 degrees 52 east longitude,

102 The Indian Ocean is of special significance because of its geo-strategic and geo-economic position. It touches the shores of three continents-Asia, Africa and Australia. It provides shorter and more economical routes for transportation and communication between the two major seas. Its littoral states as well as the Ocean itself are tremendously rich in natural resources. More than half of the world’s known oil reserves are in the Indian Ocean region. Other valuable minerals such as gold, diamonds and uranium are also found in abundance in this region. For more detail see, Anand Mathur (2002), “Growing Importance of the Indian Ocean in Post-Cold War Era and its Implication for India,” Strategic Analysis, Vol. 26, No. 4, October-December, pp. 550-559.
103 S. S. Upadhyay, op. cit., p. 20.
south-east of peninsular India and from the Indian subcontinent at its narrowest point by 22 miles of sea called the Palk-strait.104

The total area of Sri Lanka is 65,610 km. Land area is 64,470 km and water area is 870 km. North to South distance is 432 km and East to West is 224 km. Land boundaries is 0 km.105 It is approximately half the area of Tamil Nadu in India (50,132) sq. miles. The 24th largest island in the world, Sri Lanka is shaped like a pearl or tear drop or, less romantically, like a mango or pear, laying only a few degrees north of the equator.106 Sri Lanka is divided into nine provinces comprising of 24 administrative districts. Sri Lanka’s population is 21,128,772.107 Sri Lanka is famed for its beautiful landscape which makes it a popular tourist destination.

SOCIAL SET UP

India is one of the most religiously diverse nations in the world, with one of the most deeply religious societies and cultures. Almost every major religion of the world is found in India. Religion has been the life blood of the Indians. In spite of various changes in the different religions, the nature of religion has not been changed from the ancient days to present society. Religion plays a central and definitive role in the life of the country and most of its people.

Like India, Sri Lanka is also a pluralist society, a mosaic of self aware communities distinguished from one another along ethnic, religious and linguistic grounds. Ethnic identifications are very strong in Sri Lanka. Every permanent inhabitant belongs to one and only one of the ethnic compartment into which the population is divided. Each ethnic group has its own identity, customs and traditions. Ethnic composition is the single most important

104 Jyoti lal Oran, op. cit., p. 1.
105 Because Sri Lanka is surrounded by Indian Ocean.
source of tension as also a political tool.\textsuperscript{108} According to the census carried out in 2001, the ethnic composition of the Sri Lanka Population is tabulated below\textsuperscript{109}:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sinhalese</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tamils</td>
<td>17.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (i) Sri-Lankan Tamils</td>
<td>12% (Estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (ii) Indian Tamils</td>
<td>5.010%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sri-Lankan Moors (Muslims)</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burghers, Malay and Veddahs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The majority of Sri Lanka’s people (nearly 82\%) are known as Sinhalese.\textsuperscript{110} They are largely Buddhist (76.7\%). The Tamils form the next major ‘Ethnic group’,\textsuperscript{111} with a population of 17.1\%. This ethnic group comprises Sri Lankan Tamils (12\%) and the Indian Tamils (5.1\%). They are concentrated in the northern and eastern province forming 92\% and 68\% of

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Sinhalese} The majority community of Sri Lanka is called ‘Sinhalese’ from ‘Sina,’ the Sinhalese word is used for Lion- meaning descended from a lion. The separatist group, the LTTE, make use of the tiger as a symbol.
\bibitem{Ethnic} ‘Ethnic group’ refers broadly to any group of individuals who have some objective According to Urmila Phadnis, "A striking religious and linguistic congruence has been the hallmark of group differentiation amongst the two largest ethnic groups of Sri Lanka, the sinhalese and the Tamils. For more details see Urmila Phadnis (1979), "Ethnic Groups in Sri Lanka", in David Taylor and Maccon Yapp, (eds.), \textit{Political Identity in South Asia}, Curozon and Humanities, Great Baitain, pp. 191-208.
\end{thebibliography}
their population respectively. There are other ethnic groups like Moors (Muslims)\textsuperscript{112} who constitute the third major ethnic group, Burghers Malays and Veddahs (7%).

Religious affiliations of the people of Sri Lanka according to census of 2001 are follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Census and Statistics (2001).

Sri Lanka Religious affiliation of the people of Sri Lanka is: Buddhist (76.7%), Hindus (7.8%), Islam (8.5%), and Christians (7%).\textsuperscript{113}

**ECONOMIC SET UP**

After India got independence from colonial rule in 1947, the process of rebuilding the economy started. For this, various policies and schemes were formulated. First five year plan for the development of Indian economy came into implementation in 1952. These Five Year Plans, started by the Indian government, focused on the needs of Indian economy. On the one hand, agriculture received the immediate attention; on the other side industrial sector was developed at a fast pace to provide employment opportunities to

\textsuperscript{112} By descent, Muslim in Sri Lanka may be Moors, Malays or Memons. The Moors are believed to be descendants of Arab traders who settled in the island from the 7th century onwards. For detail see M.Mayilvaganan (2008), "The Muslim Factor in Sri Lanka Ethnic Conflict," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 32, No. 5, September, p. 833.

the growing population and to keep pace with the developments in the world. India's mixed economy combines features of both capitalist market economy and the socialist command economy, but has shifted more towards the capitalist market economy. Since then, the Indian economy has come a long way. The GDP at factor cost, which was 2.3% in 1951-52, reached 9% in financial year 2005-06.

(a) Indian economy is diverse and encompasses agriculture, handicrafts, textile, manufacturing, and a multitude of services. Although two-thirds of the Indian workforce still earns their livelihood directly or indirectly through agriculture, services are a growing sector and are playing an increasingly important role in India's economy. The advent of the digital age, and the large number of young and educated people fluent in English, is gradually transforming India as an important back office destination for global companies for the outsourcing of their customer services and technical support. India is a major exporter of highly-skilled workers in software and financial services, and software engineering. Trade liberalisation, financial liberalisation, tax reforms and opening up to foreign investments were some of the important steps, which helped Indian economy to gain momentum. The Economic Liberalisation introduced by Manmohan Singh in 1990, then Finance Minister in the government of P. V. Narsimha Rao, proved to be the stepping-stone for Indian economic reform movements. These significant economic reforms have transformed India into one of the fastest growing economies, adding to its global and regional clout.

In the post 1990 period, India has emerged as one of the wealthiest economies in the developing world; during this period, the economy has grown constantly with only a few major setbacks. This has been accompanied by increases in life expectancy, literacy rates and food security. India is undoubtedly one of the most preferred destinations for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI). With the world’s third largest economy, in purchasing power and the second fastest growing large economy, India has made rapid progress especially in information technology and other significant areas such

as auto components, chemicals, apparels, pharmaceuticals and jewellery. India has always held promise for global investors. India's liberalised FDI policy (2005) allows up to a 100% FDI stake in ventures. Industrial policy reforms have substantially reduced industrial licensing requirements, removed restrictions on expansion and facilitated easy access to foreign technology and foreign direct investment FDI.\textsuperscript{115}

Pegging India's growth rate in the 2008-09 at between 7 and 8 per cent, the Union Finance Minister, P Chidambaram, has reiterated that India would continue being the second fastest growing economy in the world, despite the ongoing global economic slowdown. Though the global financial crisis has affected the Indian equity and foreign exchange markets, the macroeconomic brunt of the meltdown is not much due to the overall strength of the domestic demand and the largely domestic nature of its investment financing. After the signing of the bilateral trade agreements and nuclear deals with many countries, Indian economy will further boost.\textsuperscript{116} Challenges before Indian economy are population explosion, poverty, unemployment and rural urban divide. These challenges can be overcome by the sustained and planned economic reforms.

(b) Sri Lanka’s economy is primarily agricultural; emphasis is on export crops such as tea, rubber and coconut. Cocoa, coffee, cinnamon, cardamom, pepper, cloves, nutmeg, citronella, and tobacco are produced. Rice, fruit and vegetables are grown for local consumption. Staple cereal is cultivated extensively. Sri Lanka is an exporter of amorphous graphite. Petroleum refining is also important and precious and limestones are mined. Sri Lanka’s most dynamic sectors now are food processing, textiles and apparel, food and beverages, port constructions, telecommunications, insurance and banking.\textsuperscript{117}

Since 1948, there is a steady growth observed in the GDP and the total value of all goods and services produced. Till 1977, the agricultural sector


\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.

was the major contributor to GDP, but later on the contribution of manufacturing sector rose from 12 per cent to 16 per cent in the late 1980s and remained static through the 1990s. Sri Lanka is a lower middle income developing nation with a gross domestic product of about $32 billion. This translates into a per capita income of $1,6000. Sri Lanka’s 90.07% literacy rate in local languages and life expectancy is of 74.97 years. Sri Lanka income inequality is severe, with striking differences between rural and urban areas. About 15 per cent of the country’s population of 20.1 million remains impoverished.118

In 1977, Sri Lanka shifted away from a socialist orientation and opened its economy to foreign investment. Since then, the government have been deregulating, privatizing and opening economy to international competition. The ethnic disputes of 1983 precipitated a slowdown in economic diversification and liberalization. The JVP uprising in the late 1980s caused extensive upheavals and economic uncertainty. Sri Lanka was among the first countries in South Asia to liberalise its economy and open up to foreign investment. Since then, the government has been deregulating, privatising and opening the economy to international competition. But the pace of reform has been uneven. A period of aggressive economic reform under the UNP led government that ruled from 2002 to 2004 was followed by a more statist approach under former President Chandrika Kumaratunga and current President Mahinda Rajapaksa.119

Despite the shadow of ethnic conflict over the economy since 1983, economic growth has been around 4.5 per cent. Privatisation has increased, reform, and a stress on export oriented growth helped revive the economic performance, taking GDP growth to 7 per cent in 1993. Economic growth has been uneven in the ensuing years as the economy faced a multitude of global and domestic economic and political challenges. In fact, the economic crisis will have a far deeper impact on the war-torn economy of Sri-Lanka. Sri Lanka post 1990 phase of underachievement and economic crisis can be attributed

119 Jyoti Lal Oran, op. cit., p. 3.
to the country's 25 years of ethnic conflict.\textsuperscript{120} In the post-LTTE era, the focus of the government has shifted to the development of the economy.

Overall, average annual GDP growth was 5.2\% over 1991-2000. In 2001, however, GDP growth was negative 1.4\% the only contraction since independence. Growth revived to 4.0\% in 2002. Following the 2002 ceasefire and subsequent economic reforms, the economy grew more rapidly, recording growth rates of 6.0\% in 2003 and 5.4\% in 2004. The service sector is the largest component of GDP (54\%). In 2003, the service sector continued its growing expansion, fueled primarily by strong growth in telecom and financial services. The December 2004, tsunami killed 32,000 people, displaced 443,000, and caused an estimated 1 billion in damage. The economic situation in Sri Lanka is stable, but hampered by the resumption of hostilities between the government and the LTTE, escalating oil prices, and high inflation and interest rates. GDP grew by 6.8\% in 2007, down from 7.7\% growth in 2006. Sri Lanka's key exports such as garments and tea performed well. Remittances from foreign workers, estimated at 2.5 billion, also helped the economy. In the post 1990 period tea crop has made significant contributions to export earnings.\textsuperscript{121}

The future of Sri Lanka's economic health primarily depends on political stability, return to peace, and continued policy reforms, particularly in the area of fiscal discipline and budget management. Rising oil costs and the 26 years of ethnic conflict have contributed to Sri Lanka's high public debt load (86\% of GDP in 2007). Sri Lanka needs economic growth rates of 7-8\% and investment levels of about 36\% of GDP for a sustainable reduction in unemployment and poverty. In the past 10 years, investment level has averaged around 25\% of GDP. Agriculture has lost its relative importance to the Sri Lankan economy in recent decades. Garment exports will face increased competition in a quota free era.\textsuperscript{122} The future of the tea industry is


\textsuperscript{121} M. Dinakar and V.V. Ramani (2005), "Sri Lankan Economy: Growth Prospects," The ICFAI University Press, Hyderabad, p. II.

threatened by a shortage of plantation labour and growing competition. The government hopes to take advantage of Sri Lanka’s strategic location on shipping routes, make use of free trade agreements with other countries to achieve regional trading hub status.\textsuperscript{123}

**POLITICAL SET UP**

On 15th August 1947, India gained independence from British rule. Three years later, on 26th January 1950, India became a republic, and a new constitution came into effect. India is the largest democracy in the world. The Constitution defines India as a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic. India has a federal form of government and a bicameral parliament operating under a West minister-style parliamentary system. It has three branches of governance: the Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary. The President of India is the official head of state elected indirectly by an electoral college for a five year term. The Prime Minister is, however, the defacto head of government and exercises most executive powers.\textsuperscript{124} India constitutes the major portion of the Indian sub continent. India’s northern and north-eastern states are partially situated in the Himalayan Range. The rest of northern, central, and eastern India consists of the fertile Indo-Gangetic Plain. In the west, bordering southeastern Pakistan lies in the Thar -Desert. Southern India is almost entirely composed of the peninsular Deccan plateau, which is flanked by two hilly coastal ranges, the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats. India is a union of twenty-eight state and seven federally-governed union territories.

On 4th February 1948, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, formerly known as Ceylon won its independence (from United Kingdom) as the Commonwealth of Ceylon. Sri Lanka’s capital is Colombo. Sri Lanka is divided into nine provinces comprising 24 administrative districts. Don Stephen Senanayake became the first Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. In 1972, the country became a republic within the Commonwealth, and the name was


\textsuperscript{124} S. S. Upadhyay, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 3.
changed to Sri Lanka. On 21st July, 1960 Sirimavo Bandaranaike took office as Prime Minister, and became the first female head of government in post colonial Asia and the first female Prime Minister in the world.

Sri Lanka was known as Ceylon until 1972, when its name was changed to Sri Lanka by the Republican Constitution on 22nd May 1972. Sri Lanka could be called a nation of immigrant’s chiefly coming from the mainland of India. Legends and historians say that prior to the arrival of these immigrants the island was inhabited by the Yakkas and Nagas and later by the Veddas, who were primitive tribes in the land. Settled life and organised government to the island came with the original immigrants from India from about the 6th century BC who according to the historians, came from Bengal and Orissa. There were also colonists coming from the Western coast of North India, as could be gathered from the ancient chronicle “THE MAHAVAMSA.”

The Constitution of Sri Lanka establishes (1972) a democratic, socialist republic in Sri Lanka, which is also a unitary state. The government is a mixture of the presidential system and the parliamentary system. The President of Sri Lanka is the head of state, the commander in chief of the armed forces, as well as head of the government, and is popularly elected for a term of six years.

Sri Lanka’s last constitution was adopted on 16th August 1978. In this constitution, the President is both the chief of the state and head of the government. The President is elected by popular vote for a six years term. Prime Minister holds largely ceremonial title of head of government. Cabinet is founded by President in consultation with the Prime Minister. Sri Lanka has unicameral parliament of 225 seats. The Members of the Parliament are elected by popular vote on the basis of an open-list, proportional representation system by electoral district to serve six years term. Sinhala is the official language of Sri Lanka. The 13th Amendment to the Sri Lanka Constitution (1987) declared Tamil to also be an official language and English

125 Ibid., p. 15.

36
as the link language. Sri Lanka is divided into nine provinces comprising 24 administrative districts.\footnote{Jyoti Lal Oran, op. cit., p. 5.}

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A number of studies have been conducted on India-Sri Lanka relations. But relations between the two countries during the post 1990 phase need to be explored. The work of some scholars especially on this topic cannot be ignored. No doubt, every piece of research is a step ahead of the previous study. It is an advancement of knowledge. Knowledge is a continuous flow from one generation to another. This study owes a debt to the previous distinguished research scholars like P. Ramaswamy, Avtar Singh Bhasin, Ravi Kant Dubey, T. D. S. A. Dissanayake, Verinder Grover, S.U. Kodikara, S.D. Muni, Urmila Phadnis, P. Sahadevan, Depinder Singh, V. P. Vadik, A. J. Wilson, Adluri Subra Manayam Raju for their brilliant studies in this field.

P. Saran, in his study, *Government and politics of Sri Lanka*,\footnote{P. Saran (1982), *Government and politics of Sri Lanka*, Metropolitan Publication, New Delhi.} realized that the composition of Sri Lanka society and religious affiliation of its people that in plural society like that of contemporary Sri Lanka, with solidarity patterns based upon religions, language, ethnic identity, caste and region commanding a loyalty rivaling at least in some situations that which the nation state itself is able to generate. A national consensus basic on social and political goals is hard to establish but an overwhelming number of middle class Ceylon Tamils in the north and east look towards the Sinhalese south and the capital city, Colombo, for economic gain and political preferment. This inhibits the development of a separatism that looks to south India as an alternative focus of loyalty. Since Sinhalese Buddhists are politically and socially divided and are not sure of their own strength and cohesion, they tend to regard the non-Buddhist minorities, especially the Ceylon and Indian Tamil and Roman Catholics as a greater threat than they actually are, and there are
two nationalisms in Sri Lanka, a Sinhalese nationalism and a Tamil nationalism. This study is 25 years old, so it does not cover ethnic riots of 1983.

V. P. Vadik, in his study, 'Ethnic Crisis in Sri Lanka: India’s option', has attempted to analyse the historic and cultural cleavages between the Sinhalese and the Tamils which acquired sharper edges owing to the two groups’ conflicting perception about the distribution of benefits and opportunities in at least five fields; language, education, employment, distribution of land and land settlement and devolution of power.¹²⁸ He divided India’s options into three categories namely Military Intervention, Persuasion and prolonged diplomacy. Vadik remarks that N. C. Suitheralingam raised the demand for ‘Tamil Eelam’ in 1956 also, when the ‘Sinhala only’ policy was introduced by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, later on in 1977 Ceylon Workers Congress and Tamil Congress made a joint front and presented six demands to the Government. He highlights the six demands of the Tamils as: 1. Official status for Tamil, 2. Secular Sri Lanka 3. Citizenship for the Indian Tamils. 4. Guarantee of fundamental rights 5. Banning of the caste system. 6. Decentralization of Powers. But why the Sri-Lankan government failed to fulfill these basic demands has not been explained in this study.

M. S. Venkatachalam’s study on, ‘Genocide in Sri Lanka’, analysed how the multipronged suppression by successive Sri Lanka governments made Tamils lose their faith in the theory of co-existence with the Sinhalese.¹²⁹ It led to the formation of students’ federation in 1972 in Jaffna. This federation put forth its demand for separate Tamil state. Two years later in 1974 youth federation consisting of students and youth was formed to fight for the cause of the separate Tamil state. From 1961 to 1972, the demand was only for a federal status then the Tamils, faced by Sinhalese fanaticism, were agitating for a separate sovereign state Tamil Eelam. When the UNP tried to do something, SLFP opposed it and when SLFP tried to do something,
the UNP opposed it and all efforts made by the Tamils failed. Then it led to formation of TULF and TULF in 1976 at the first convention decided that they will fight for a separate state. The Tamil youth who were driven to the verge of frustration decided to take arms and they called themselves 'Liberation Tigers'. Though LTTE, EROS, TELO, PLOT, EPRLF organisations rallied under different names and banners, their objective was the formation of an independent Sovereign 'Eelam State'. This study examines the Sri Lankan Tamils but ignores others.

S. Piyasena and R. Y. Sendheera in, 'India, 'We Tamils' and Sri Lanka', focus on the problem of Indian Tamils and say that the majority of Tamils are concentrated in northern and eastern provinces one third of them continue to live in other parts of the island in the midst of Sinhalese majority. Herein lies the major obstacle to settlement of their grievances. According to them, Indian Tamils who have been the most exploited community in Sri Lanka were deprived of even some of their basic rights that were gradually established during the colonial era, by two sets of legislation, i.e., the citizenship acts of 1948 and 1949 and the land reforms laws of 1972 and 1975. In the face of extremist threats from the Sinhala majority, the interethnic solidarity among Indian Tamils has started looking toward militant groups. The presence of the Tamil Nadu state, in close proximity to Sri Lanka has been chiefly responsible for the devastating influence which some vested interests in Tamil Nadu brought upon the politics of Tamils in Sri Lanka had been a major cause of the continuation of the ethnic dispute in Sri Lanka. This study represents only the problem of Indian Tamils and their link with Tamil Nadu Tamils.

P. Ramaswamy in his book, 'New Delhi and Sri Lanka: Four Decades of Politics and Diplomacy', has deftly interwoven the past of India Sri Lankan relations with those of the contemporary era with all doubts, suspicious and animosity pervading through a tradition of ties ordained by

---

history and geography. The tragedy of Sri Lankan Tamils, according to P. Ramaswamy is related with the Island’s progress towards freedom. As in other countries of the world and particularly India, so is the case of Sri Lanka. British policy was designed to consolidate imperial power and authority through every means necessary and possible. The British perspective was to divide and rule. He has rightly pointed out, that while in the Sinhalese psyche, the north and east India struck highly emotive strings; in the Tamil Psyche what mattered was the relationship between the north and east of Sri Lanka or the “home land” of the Tamils and their links with the Tamils of South India. Ramaswamy has drawn the justifiable conclusion that “the people of the both sides were Indian according to their origin and the conflict if carried to the logical limit may mean a conflict between the north and South in India today. Although this study is very useful but it does not reflect the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict.

Ravi Kant Dubey’s study on, ‘Indo-Sri Lankan Relations: with special reference to the Tamil Problem in Sri Lanka’, is an account of Indo-Sri Lankan Relations with special reference to the serious ongoing Tamil problem. Sri Lanka is a small state, but it has acquired a strategic importance due to its geographical location both in its relation with India and in international politics. This study analyses causes of conflict on various issues. It studies the origin and cause of the Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka right from the beginning, the signing of 29 July India-Sri Lanka Accord and the post Accord period. This book contains in detail the Sinhala Tamil relations concerning language, colonization, education, employment opportunities, devolution of power, etc.

Verinder Grover’s study on, ‘Sri Lanka Government and Politics,’ deals with the survey of events in Sri Lanka; Authoritarianism, the ethnic conflict, Sinhala nationalism, Sri Lanka foreign policy with SAARC

While tracing the history of Sri Lanka, he says that the early political system in Sri Lanka was that of kingdoms where the king had almost absolute powers. This system remained until the island fell to colonial invaders. In 1505, the Portuguese had formed settlements in the west and south which was taken from them in the middle of the next century by the Dutch, in 1796 the British Government annexed the foreign settlements to the presidency of Madras. In 1802, Ceylon was constituted a separate colony. In the beginning of the 19th Century, the British subjugated the kandayan kingdom in the central highlands. He explains that the grant of independence by Britain in February 1948 was accompanied by a constitution. However, in 1972 the earlier constitution was revised and Ceylon became the Republic of Sri Lanka. In second revision of 1978, the constitution vested executive power in president as Head of the State who is elected directly by the people. This study is basically historical investigation. It represents only the constitutional aspect of development.

Lieutenant General Depinder Singh, Overall Force commander (OFC), IPKF in Sri Lanka in his book, ‘IPKF in Sri Lanka’, described the land and its people; the genesis of the ethnic conflict; the planning and induction of the IPKF; the battle for Jaffna has been properly chronicled; and the mistakes and shortcomings in our planning and execution have been honestly stated. The insurgency stage after the capture of Jaffna has been adequately described, but why the IPKF could not bring it to a successful conclusion has not been fully explained. The General’s work is an authoritative and gripping account of the most controversial operation undertaken by Indian Army, an operation that almost everyone welcomed at its inception and almost everyone condemned a mere two month later. Many unknown facts about the LTTE, their training methods, motivation, bordering on fanaticism, professional capabilities including the dreaded expertise in the use of

---


explosives, their autocratic and obsessively secretive culture and the manner in which perceived rivals and opposition are decimated, are recounted in detail. The General explains the planning that preceded the launch of operation Pawan, code name of the military intervention in Sri Lanka and then moves to the souring of relations between the IPKF and LTTE and how the LTTE obduracy made the fighting that started on 10th October, 1987, inevitable.

Avtar Singh Bhasin in his book, *India in Sri Lanka between lion and the Tigers*, opined that Sri Lanka has been in turmoil for most part of the half century of her existence as an independent nation. Both the Sinhalese and the Tamils trace their ancestry to India, Buddhism and Hinduism followed by the respective communities has their roots in India. Sri Lankan Tamil and Indian Tamils had been at the center of ethnic conflict. While the issue of the citizenship for the Tamils of Indian origin was resolved on 9 November 1988 when Sri Lanka government passed a bill to grant citizenship to all the people of Indian origin. The problem of Sri Lanka Tamils continues to be intractable. Their rich cultural heritage and a long history of independent existence on the same Island came in conflict with the Sinhala pride. Ethnic conflict that dominated relations between India and Sri Lanka during the five decades since their independence was between Sri Lanka state and its citizens, willy-nilly India got involved in them. India got involved to palliate the emotional upsurge of sympathy among her own Tamils who claimed ties of ethnicity with their brethren across the Palk Strait. The projection of domestic politics in the domain of foreign relations and sitting in judgment on another country's domestic politics brought into sharp focus the dichotomy in Indian thinking. It was torn between commitment to Sri Lanka's unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty and Tamil demand for separate state. This study ignores the fact that India has intervened in Sri Lanka Conflict as per the provisions of Indo-

---

Sri Lanka Agreement of 29th July 1987 and IPKF has saved Sri Lanka from disintegration.

P. Sahadevan and Neil Devotta, ‘Politics of Conflict and Peace in Sri Lanka’, is the latest and significant study. This study focus on the manner in which Sri Lanka has missed numerous opportunities to secure peace between Sinhalese and Sri Lanka Tamils and impact of the ethnic conflict on Sri Lanka economy. This book provides an institutionalist explanation to the conflict examines Sinhalese-Tamil ethnic divisions and evaluates the extent to which the Sri Lanka Political system encouraged ethno centrism. This work also analyses how military operations and political agreement have failed to solve this ethnic conflict and provides structural explanation for the LTTE’s resistance to accept a negotiated peace, which would require the LTTE to step back from its stated goal of creating a ‘Tamil Eleam’. According to him, India’s policy has evoked different responses from Sri Lanka. While the intervention was initially unilateral and therefore resisted by both the Sinhalese majority and the government, they have now reversed their past anti-India stand and perception by totally disapproving its current non-interventionist policy and seeking its direct role in the conflict. We agree with P. Sahadevan that the strategic divergence between India and Sri Lanka was the fundamental cause for bilateral tension and acrimonious relations.

Alok Bansal, M. Mayilvaganan and Sukanya Podder (eds.) in their book, 'Sri Lanka search for peace' analysed the issues relating to the stalled peace process in Sri Lanka, which was initiated after the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) of 22 February, 2002 between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE. There is consensus among the contributors that in order to strengthen the peace process, it is necessary for international community, including India to engage both the players and encourage Norwegian facilitation to address the concern of all parties. Bansal observed that during

the process of negotiations, it was clear that there was a vast unbridgeable gulf between the LTTE demands and what the government was willing to concede. The LTTE for a long time demanded a separate Tamil homeland and accused the Sinhalese dominated Government of discrimination, where as the Sinhalese were in no mood to even devolve reasonable powers to the Tamils. In this atmosphere of mistrust, the 2002 CFA came as a welcome respite. The LTTE for the first time mellowed down its demand for complete independence and exhibited its willingness to accept the idea of autonomy within a united Sri Lanka with very wide ranging devolution of power to the provinces. However, The LTTE proposal for an Interim Self-Governing Authority (ISGA) was summarily rejected by the Sri Lankan political establishment. Then new government supported the peace process but went on with its military Strategy to counter LTTE, which started its suicide attack since early, 2006. Although this study is very helpful in understanding the Norwegian efforts, yet it ignores other aspects of the ethnic conflict.

After review of this literature, we come to conclude that all studies done by V. P. Vadik, P. Saran, Verinder Grover, Venkatachalam, R.Y. Sendheera, A.J. Wilson, S.J. Tambiah and P. Sahadevan etc., have analysed the various aspects of Sri Lanka, Tamil conflict. These studies are related with the discriminatory attitude adopted by the successive Sri Lankan governments against the Tamils. Other studies undertaken by P. Ramaswasy, Avtar Singh Bhasin, Ravi Kant Dubey, Depinder Singh, Alok Bansal, S. Piyasena and R. Y. Sendheera etc., are related with Indo-Sri Lanka relations with reference to Sri Lanka Tamil conflict. The focus of these studies was on pre-1990s period, when India-Sri Lanka relations were very troublesome and by and large conflictual. However, all these studies neglected post-1990s period. During this period, significant changes have taken place in India-Sri Lanka relations. The nature and pattern of relations are completely different. This study is an endeavor to fill this gap.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The main objectives of the proposed study are as follows:
- To analyse the transactions India–Sri Lanka relations have followed in the post-independence period, based on the nature of relations and the issues dominating the bilateral agenda. Specially, the focus of this study is to cover the following aspects. (a) Decades of divergence and resolving the disputes. (b) Confictual relations. (c) Comprehensive economic co-operation in the post 1990 phase and changing political relationship.
- To analyse India’s non-interventionist policy in the internal affairs to remove the cultivated fear complex of Sri Lanka.
- To analyse Sinhala nationalism, the Citizenship, problem of Indian Tamils, Kachativu dispute, divergent security perception between both the Nations.
- To assess India’s intervention in the ethnic conflict and its approach to find out a solution.

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What factors brought qualitative changes in India-Sri Lanka relations during post 1990 phase?
- How does Tamil Nadu influence the relation between India and Sri Lanka?
- How does the ethnic conflict influence the relations between India and Sri Lanka?
- Why did India intervene in an ethnic conflict? India’s imperatives, motives, guiding factors and limitations on this issue?
- What is India’s new policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka?
• How the strategic divergence between India and Sri Lanka was the fundamental cause for bilateral tensions.

SCOPE OF THIS STUDY

The study is confined to India and Sri Lanka relations post 1990 phase and will try to cover the following aspects: (a) India-Sri Lanka relations: historical overview (b) India-Sri Lanka relations: decades of divergence. (c) India’s response to the Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. (d) India-Sri Lanka economic relations in the post 1990 phase. (e) India-Sri Lanka changing political relationship: Influence of Tamil Nadu politics.

India-Sri Lanka relations have undergone a qualitative and quantitative transformation in the post 1990 phase. The journey of relations from conflictual to normal and thereafter to co-operative is the manifestation of this qualitative change. Political relations are close as never before. Economic and commercial relations are on the course of unprecedented growth. Cooperation in the areas of defence and security has increased and there is a general broad-based improvement across all sectors of bilateral co-operation. India-Sri Lanka relations are multifaceted and interconnected; invariably, therefore they have implications for domestic politics and economy of in the two countries. Nearly every bilateral issue between them is intertwined with some domestic issues and therefore became a matter of domestic political debate. In post 1990 phase India and Sri Lanka have established, a dense bilateral network of institutions and mechanisms so as to ensure sustained cooperation irrespective of domestic politics and changes in the external environment of the two countries. By keeping all things in mind, all the above given aspects will be covered in this study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A few words about research methodology. The study involved an analysis of the historical as well as the current events. An effort has been
made to trace the historical background of the India-Sri Lanka relations as they developed around the Indian Tamil Problem and Sri Lankan Tamilian ethnic conflict. It was necessary to go into the history of these relations in order to properly understand their present state. For this purpose, the study is based on the historical/documents analysis approach. This study relies on primary as well as secondary sources. Secondly, since the post 1990 phase of India-Sri Lankan relations is a recent event, we have had to heavily depend on periodical literature, newspaper clippings, research journals, books and unpublished material. The researcher has visited Sri Lanka Embassy, various Libraries of different universities and help from the Internet has been sought.

Finally, to give the study a systematic shape, it is divided into six chapters.

In the first chapter, historical antecedents of India-Sri Lanka relations and various factors which determine India-Sri Lanka relations have been discussed. Formation of both the countries, their constitution and important developments which are related with this study are discussed.

The second chapter holds a discussion on the problem of Indian Tamils, Citizenship Acts of 1948 and 1949, Kachchativu dispute, divergent security perception, fishermen issue, refugee issue and various bilateral agreements between India and Sri Lanka for the resolution of these differences. How these differences and bilateral agreements determine India-Sri Lanka relations has been discussed.

The third chapter deals with the conflictual relations between the two countries, ethnic riots of 1983 and their adverse reaction in Tamil Nadu, Sri Lanka’s urge for military solution, changed security scenario and prolonged negotiations under India mediations which resulted in bilateral India-Sri Lanka Agreement of 29th July, 1987 and subsequently India’s Intervention in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka and its result. This chapter mainly focus on ethnic conflict of Sri Lanka and India response to the ethnic conflict from 1987-1990 and 1990 to post LTTE-era.
The fourth chapter discusses significant economic relations and changes which have taken place in the post 1990 phase, in the nature and pattern of relations. Comprehensive economic co-operation through ISFTA and various agreements are discussed.

In the fifth chapter India-Sri Lanka political relations, India policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka and the ending of mutual misperception and mutual understanding are analysed. Political attitude and perception of both the nations are discussed in this chapter. Influence of Tamil Nadu politics on India-Sri Lanka relations is also discussed.

The sixth Chapter gives a summary, concluding observations and suggestions on the basis of the study.