

INTRODUCTION

1. The LTTE's centre of gravity was its leadership and the global support network dependent heavily on its diaspora population. Today, over a third of the Sri Lankan Tamil population live overseas. About a million Sri Lankan Tamils and those of Sri Lankan Tamil origin largely live in Canada (400,000), UK (300,000), India (150,000) and France (100,000). The Sri Lankan conflict increased the pace of outmigration starting with the ethnic riots in July 1983. Triggered by a LTTE ambush, the riots and the steadfast escalation in violence created a Tamil refugee diaspora largely in India and subsequently in the West with Canada and Europe as its main hubs. While the pre-1983 migrants were mostly professionals, the post-July 1983 wave of migrants were mostly asylum seekers. By successfully attempting to infiltrate migrant and diaspora pockets in North America, Western Europe and Australia, the LTTE created community organizations to merge these two waves of migrants. Thereafter, the LTTE invested in propaganda to build support within these communities to sustain its insurgent and terrorist campaign in the north and the east of Sri Lanka.

2. The conflict created a deep division between the Sri Lankan diaspora. With the LTTE creating community organizations, the Tamils who were valued members of Sri Lankan community organizations overseas were compelled to join the Tamil community organizations. Nonetheless, the older generation of Tamils always identified themselves as Ceylonese and remained non communal. An appreciable segment of the educated Diaspora Tamils attempted to influence and guide the LTTE to abandon suicide attacks, refrain from attacking civilian targets, and stop forced conscription of Tamils including the kidnapping of children. As evidenced by LTTE's last stand of holding nearly 300,000 Tamils as hostages in the government declared No-Fire Zone, the Diaspora elite failed in their efforts to wield influence on the LTTE. The end of the conflict in May 2009 has created the ideal environment for Tamils, Sinhalese, Muslim and Burghurs living in Sri Lanka and overseas to rebuild relations and live together as Sri Lankans and those of Sri Lankan heritage.

The Context:

3. The LTTE established a presence in the UK since 1976 with N.S. Krishnan as its first Western European representative. By exploiting the freedoms enshrined in western liberal democracies, the LTTE was able to build a robust state of the art international network only after July 1983. Both Madras (now Chennai) and London emerged as the main hubs to coordinate a campaign against the Sri Lankan state. As Sri Lanka had stepped out of the Non Aligned orbit, the LTTE was covertly assisted by India's foreign intelligence service, the Research and Analysis Wing and overtly by the Tamil Nadu chief Ministers M.G. Ramachandran of AIDMK and by M. Karunanidhi and DMK. With state and political patronage, the LTTE built a vast infrastructure in Tamil Nadu where over 100,000 Sri Lankan Tamils found refuge. By establishing or taking control of existing media organizations, the LTTE lobbied the Tamil diaspora globally. With the support of a narrow segment of the diaspora, the LTTE was able to make significant impact on both Western politicians susceptible to diaspora votes and both international organizations and advocacy

NGOs especially human rights NGOs to support its agenda. Although the LTTE organization in Sri Lanka was dismantled in Sri Lanka in May 2009, the international network of the LTTE still remains intact.

4. The LTTE activities in the diaspora can be divided into four categories.

Propaganda:

5. Recognizing that information was a force multiplier, the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran invested in building a range of media organs that politicized, radicalized and mobilized segments of the Tamil community. Starting with signatory and letter campaigns leading to public protests and demonstrations, the LTTE activities graduated into media conferences, seminars and workshops sponsored by NGOs. Among the organs that disseminated LTTE news included websites, print media, radio and television. The principal websites: Tamilnet, Tamilwin, Sangathi, Athirru, and Lankasiri.

6. The principal print media are: Ulagar Thamilar, Canada, Eelamurusu, France, Erimalai, France, Tamil Guardian, UK, and Pulathil, Canada.

7. The principal radio stations are, Voice of Tigers, Norway, IBC, UK, TRT, France, CMR, CTR, ATBC, and Tamilstar, Canada

8. The principal TV stations are, TTN (closed), Tharisanam, Australia, Thenral (closed), TV1 – Canada, TVI – Canada, GTV – UK, and Tamil 24 – Europe.

9. In addition to promoting and inculcating the ideology of separatism, these media organs created the impression that the LTTE was winning. To reach out to Tamil emotions, the LTTE magnified the collateral damage and the isolated atrocities committed by the security forces, and highlighted LTTE successes. Although the LTTE conducted the worst human rights atrocities, the LTTE had a dedicated human rights budget and fed information to human rights groups, select politicians and the international media. The LTTE was very effective in cultivating media personalities and organized media campaigns targeting different audiences to create public opinion against the Government of Sri Lanka. Among those recruited by the LTTE included former and serving journalists of both Tamil and mainstream newspapers. Among the terrorist groups worldwide, the LTTE was one of the first to pioneer the use of social media – the LTTE used facebook, email, skype, webpages and twitter. The LTTE gained mastery in the creation and distribution of fake propaganda material, such as the number of civilians killed in the final phase of the Sri Lankan conflict, that had an appreciable impact in shaping diaspora and international public opinion.

Fund Raising:

10. After the LTTE female suicide bomber Thenmuli Gayathri Rajaratnam alias Dhanu assassinated Rajiv Gandhi on May 21, 1991, the international stage was set for the proscription of the LTTE. Nonetheless, the LTTE was able to raise funds through a series of front, cover and sympathetic organizations it created. Only a small segment of the diaspora voluntarily supported the idea of the separate state, but the LTTE applied both explicit and implicit coercion on the diaspora to contribute funds and participate in its demonstrations and other lobbying and campaigning activities. Furthermore, the LTTE used deception by creating several charities, community organizations and educational institutions to generate host government and NGO funds. In Canada, LTTE operating under the banner of the World Tamil Movement and other fronts accessed federal, provincial and metropolitan funds reserved for migrant communities.

11. Contributions from the radicalized segments of Sri Lankan diaspora have been identified as one of the two principal centres of gravity of the insurgent and terrorist campaign. For instance, the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization was the principal vehicle used by the LTTE to raise and transfer funds. According to the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence, the LTTE raised USD 50 million in 1993, USD 75 million in 2002, and USD 200 million in 2008. The LTTE international accountant S. Ramachandran alias Sana Chandran in Holland audited and coordinated the movement of funds to Malaysia and to China for LTTE weapons procurement in North Korea and dual user technology procurement in Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. The LTTE leaders, including financiers, were arrested in the US, Canada, UK, France, Holland, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and in Australia. Investigations revealed that the LTTE had invested in supermarkets, real estate, patrol sheds and in shipping. After the military defeat of the LTTE in May 2009, the LTTE fund raising declined by 15%. The diaspora were shocked when they discovered that most LTTE leaders especially fund collectors lived well when they worked two jobs to support their family and their extended family in Sri Lanka.

Procurement:

12. To supply arms, ammunition and explosives, both the Tamil New Tigers (the predecessor of the LTTE) and other Tamil militant groups relied on Tamil coethnics in Tamil Nadu to support them in the 1970s. The support the LTTE received was modest until August 1983 when the Government of India decided to support the LTTE and other Tamil militant groups. However, the LTTE procurement network located in Madras was disrupted after the LTTE attacked the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka in October 1987. After 32 months the departure of the IPKF in February 1990, the LTTE expanded its procurement network worldwide. With the support of LTTE activists in the diaspora, the LTTE procured weaponry from the Middle East notably from Lebanon, Eastern Europe (notably from Bulgaria and Ukraine) and from East Asia (mostly from North Korea). A few members of the Tamil diaspora with British, US, Canadian, European and Australian passports were co-opted by the LTTE to travel and procure both weaponry and dual user technologies.

13. The LTTE procurement department was headed by Selvarasa Pathmanathan until 2002 and thereafter Ponniah Anandrarajah alias Aiyiah, an auditor working in the US and in the Middle East took over the responsibility. Like his predecessor, Aiyiah, a US citizen wanted by the FBI, coordinated LTTE procurement from Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. A FBI operation in 2006 prevented the LTTE from procuring high explosive explosives like TNT and Octol – shaped charges commonly used in warheads of guided missiles and sub munitions, a mobile 3D Air Defence Radar System, and high powered Electronic Vehicle Jammers designed for blocking remote controlled improvised explosive devices. The Deputy head of LTTE procurement Pratheepan Thavarasa, a British educated Engineer, arrested in Indonesia and deported to the US was planning to procure among other items, gas masks, chemical suit and hand-held trace detector for explosives, chemical agents, toxic industrial chemicals or narcotics. The LTTE purchased many dual user technologies that enhanced LTTE's battlefield performance. The LTTE invested time understanding, manipulating and designing electronic circuits for end use in new indigenous products or repairing existing systems. For instance, LTTE procured systems that allowed for stencil printing of integrated circuit boards for various electronics applications. These circuit boards were used as a part of explosive devices manufactured by the Technology wing of the LTTE led by Prabhakaran's son Charles Anthony.

14. The LTTE communications wing led by Raju primarily relied on VHF Private Mobile Radio (PMR) handheld transceivers and VHF Tactical Man pack units as the main communication structure employed on the battlefield. The field unit capability of the LTTE was looked to be improved on in addition to improving signal intelligence capabilities against the Sri Lankan Security Forces, and improving electronic intelligence gathering capabilities in areas under LTTE control. Increasing efforts were made to bring capabilities that allowed for secure wireless communications between operatives in the field and communications to base stations during conventional and covert operations. This included both systems to monitor, log, and in some instances jam Sri Lankan Security Forces VHF radio communications and systems to monitor, log civilian mobile phone communications from areas under LTTE control.

15. Under W. Manivannan alias Castro, the Head of LTTE's International Secretariat in the Wannu, the LTTE digitized the battlefield with real-time wireless Video communication enhancing uninterrupted access to contacts around the globe through portals like the internet to send and receive data, broadcast propaganda material globally from within the Wannu, LTTE's last stronghold. The LTTE built systems that allowed for independent internet access through satellite, and connecting several remote sites via wireless networks to the main site. In addition to trying to develop systems that allowed for real-time wireless video data transmissions from the field, the LTTE planned to build systems that allowed the Sea Tigers to have a wireless video surveillance capability. The LTTE attempting to develop a sea or land based Unmanned Remotely Piloted Vehicle capability but international law enforcement and intelligence operations disrupted LTTE attempts. With the increase in threat from the Sri Lankan navy, the LTTE was planning to procure naval Weaponry like Advanced Ship based Radars. In addition to arming its ships with suicide boats, the LTTE fitted at least

one ship with torpedoes. While LTTE manufactured sea mines were ineffective, the LTTE purchased Under Water Divers Propulsion Vehicles (DPV) had a limited success.

16. Although most diaspora elite refrained from supporting the LTTE, a few were either duped or volunteered to support the LTTE. Diaspora support to the LTTE included technical specialists from Raytheon, IBM, Microsoft and a few reputed companies. During the peace process, when the Sri Lankan government engaged the LTTE, Prabhakaran exploited the opportunity to reach out to them. Most of their support was channelled through Wannu and Kili Tech, two organizations controlled by the LTTE that attempted to groom a generation of competent and knowledgeable technicians.

Shipping:

17. With the procurement of the first LTTE ship MV Cholan in Singapore in 1984, the LTTE built a state of the art shipping network unsurpassed by any other insurgent or terrorist group. Although the captain and crew of most ships were merchant mariners initially, the LTTE trained a group of Sea Tigers as mariners to staff them. While the entire fleet was destroyed by the Sri Lankan navy with intelligence provided by the US, Indian and by Sri Lankan intelligence, a few ships survived. It was the destruction of the LTTE shipping network by the Sri Lanka Navy that severed the LTTE logistical line creating the conditions for the army to cripple and dismantle the LTTE. After the defeat of the LTTE, the LTTE ship Captain Ravishankar Kanagarajah in Canada and Sea Tiger leader Shanmugasundaran Kanthaskaran in the UK used LTTE ships for human smuggling. After changing its name to MV Ocean Lady, MV Princess Easwary, the last LTTE ship to transport arms, ammunition and explosives from North Korea, transported 76 Tamils, including LTTE cadres from Thailand to Canada in October 2009. Under LTTE instigated diaspora pressure Canada admitted them including its Captain Kamalraj Kandasamy, who was LTTE's most experienced captain. Charging each migrants USD 10,000-40,000, the LTTE organized another shipment, MV Sun Sea, that transported 492 Tamils including LTTE members and their families from Thailand to Canada in August 2010. They included LTTE maritime wing members, procurement officers, intelligence operatives, explosives experts and a female suicide cadre to Canada. Although a multinational law enforcement task force disrupted other shipments, LTTE cadres that engaged in shipping and procurement has moved to criminal activity ranging from bank, credit card and cheque fraud to human smuggling.

Narcotics:

18. While Pottu Amman was engaged in trafficking narcotics from India to Sri Lanka throughout the 1990s, Soosai discussed about raising funds for the LTTE by doing drugs at least from 2002. Although the LTTE had promulgated that the people cannot do drugs, the LTTE itself engaged in trafficking it. There was rivalry between the three factions. Through the intelligence wing, 12 kg of heroin transported into Sri Lanka for sale in Nehgambo and Puttalam was seized by the Sea Tigers. Pottu Amman had arranged for the transfer to be

made in a civilian boat transporting civilians. Unknown to the Sea Tigers that it was an LTTE operation executed by its intelligence wing, they took the civilian and the narcotics into custody. Instructed by Prabhakaran both the heroin smuggler and the heroin were transferred to Pottu Amman's custody. Pottu Amman used the same routes and methods used to smuggle arms, ammunition and explosives to the south to transfer drugs to the south.

19. As the networks between Sri Lanka and India became heavily penetrated both by Indian and other intelligence services, the LTTE built new cells for procurement in India. This included strategies for transferring funds not from Sri Lanka but from third countries to India for procurement. At the request of Soosai in 2008, Shanmugasundaran Kanthakaran transferred Rs 5 lakhs from the UK to Mehan, a trained LTTE cadre in India to procure heroin and transfer it to Sri Lanka. Rather than transfer funds from Sri Lanka, LTTE preferred to use the funds raised overseas for procurement activities overseas. Based in India, Mehan was one of a team of LTTE cadres engaged in procuring supplies for the LTTE. Mehan's team included both Sri Lankans and Indians, trained and untrained. Mehan reported to Kirange in Kilinochchi. Kirange's chain of command led to Soosai and Prabhakaran. Due to the extensive patrolling of the Western seaboard, the LTTE transfer of heroin from India to Sri Lanka was intermittent. The LTTE relied on criminals in the south for distribution. The LTTE invited some of them and provided weapons training. Working with Sinhalese and Muslim criminals, the LTTE Intelligence Wing led by Mallawi Theepan build an underground network in the south notably in Colombo.

The Future:

20. At the end of the war, the Sri Lankan government approached Tamils including LTTE leaders living overseas to visit Sri Lanka and see for themselves the developments in Sri Lanka's north and the east. Despite pressure from Western governments, the UN and other bodies overseas to prosecute LTTE cadres, the government followed a far reaching strategy of rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration of ex-LTTE cadres. Although nearly 50% of the Sri Lankan Tamils and Tamils of Sri Lankan heritage living overseas travelled to Sri Lanka during the conflict, over 80% have visited Sri Lanka since the end of the conflict. The segment of the diaspora politicized, radicalized and mobilized by the LTTE under the pretext of creating a mono-ethnic Tamil state is distancing itself from the LTTE remnants overseas.

21. Although the bulk of the diaspora that supported the LTTE have abandoned their struggle, a few hundred LTTE activists remains committed. The LTTE has split into a number of factions. The most significant factions under intelligence and law enforcement scrutiny are: The Tamil Eelam Peoples Assembly led by Perinpanayagam Sivaparan alias Nediyan in Norway, the Global Tamil Forum led by Father S.J. Emmanuel in London and the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam led by V. Rudrakumaran in New York. Although after the defeat of the LTTE, most LTTE activists living overseas are disillusioned, these three leaders have managed to reorganize the LTTE. Today, Nediyan, widely considered as the successor to Prabhakaran, operates out of Oslo, Norway, the new LTTE HQ. In addition to managing the LTTE branches in a dozen countries, he works closely with the Global Tamil Forum, influencing the staff in a dozen LTTE front, cover and sympathetic

groups mostly in Europe. It is ironic that their premier agenda is to pressurize the NGOs, International governments and Western governments to investigate Sri Lanka's human rights record in the final phase of the campaign against the LTTE.

22. The surviving LTTE leadership is also determined to ensure that the LTTE survives as an organization. Aiming to ensure the continuity of the fighting spirit into the third generation, the LTTE maintains a 350 schools in Europe known as Thamil Cholai/Alagam schools. When the LTTE was a force in the north and the east of Sri Lanka, the LTTE had invested in building these schools. Determined to preserve the LTTE spirit in these students, the teachers inculcate hatred against the Sri Lankan state. Functioning as non profit organizations, they received funding from local governing bodies. The head of many of the schools and the head of the LTTE front organizations were the same. These children were persuaded or coerced to participate in LTTE propaganda event in Europe. Dressed like LTTE cadres, some male and female children, holding improvised guns, appeared to participate in combat. It is very likely that the LTTE will evolve and survive as a propaganda and a lobbying organization in the coming years. More than a threat, the post-Prabhakaran LTTE is likely to be a nuisance both to the Diaspora and to the Sri Lankan state.

Conclusion:

23. Throughout the conflict, the ability of the LTTE to exercise pressure over the diaspora was phenomenal. It was largely a result of LTTE's ability to control and manipulate the Tamil media and to discipline the community with threats. The impact of the LTTE controlled-diaspora organizations to convince the international community that there were human rights violations in the final phase of the Sri Lankan conflict was appreciable. In parallel, the impact of the anti-LTTE Sri Lankan diaspora organizations to expose LTTE atrocities was minimal.

24. Until the defeat of the LTTE in May 2009, the Sri Lankan government made no concerted effort to reach out to the Tamil community overseas to reach out to them. Had the government developed a strategy to co-opt the diaspora elite, reached out to the community leaders, and work with the Tamil community, the impact of LTTE misinformation and disinformation campaign could have been minimised.

Thank you all!