

**THE 'INDIA FACTOR' IN SRI LANKA'S  
SECURITY, 1983-2003**

*Dissertation Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Award of the Degree of*  
**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**SHWETA SINGH**



**South Asia Studies Division  
Centre for South, Central, South-East Asian & South-West  
Pacific Studies  
School of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067  
India**

**2004**



CENTRE FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL, SOUTHEAST ASIAN & SOUTH WEST PACIFIC STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY**

NEW DELHI – 110 067

Phone : 26704350

Fax : 91-11-2616 5886

91-11-2619 8234

Dated: 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2004

## CERTIFICATE

Certified that dissertation entitled “THE ‘INDIA FACTOR’ IN SRI LANKA’S SECURITY, 1983-2003” Submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university and is my own work.

*Shweta Singh*  
(SHWETA SINGH)

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

*Uma Singh*

**Prof. UMA SINGH**  
(Chairperson)

**CHAIRPERSON**  
Centre for South, Central, South East  
Asian and South West Pacific Studies  
School of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067

*Sahadevan*

**Dr. P. SAHADEVAN**  
(Supervisor)  
**SUPERVISOR**

Centre for South, Central, South East  
Asian and South West Pacific Studies  
School of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067

*To*

*Mumma & Papa*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I am exceptionally grateful to Almighty for giving me this opportunity to gain knowledge and understand its virtues. I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. P. Sahadevan for his help in understanding my potential and coaching me to realize it. His deep insight on the subject and consistent guidance throughout the course of my research enabled me to complete this work successfully. His intellectual inspiration would stand by me for life. I also appreciate his commitment towards enhancing learning activities amongst his pupils.*

*A very special thanks to Prof. S.D. Muni, Dr. Nancy Jetly and Dr. Savita Pande. Discussions during the course work helped me broaden my approach and understanding on the subject. I am also thankful to other faculty members of our division.*

*I am extremely grateful to Mumma-Papa for always being there, listening to me and understanding me. Without their support and encouragement any endeavour in life is unimaginable – “Thank you mumma.... Thank you Papa...”*

*A very special thanks to the ‘genie’ in crisis Shams, who is solution personified for any problem; Richa, the granny in life, with the mantra, “Be calm, Eat good food, to do good work”. Nidhi and Mukund, who though very far in distance are yet very close, Archana who has always been there with a helping hand. Parwez Bhaiya, Rose, Utpal who always kept spirits alive in the most difficult days also.*

*I am also extremely thankful to the staff of JNU Library, World Bank Library, IDSA, Indian Council of World Affairs for providing me suitable and required references and books for my work.*

*Last, but not the least I am thankful to Mr. Manoj, for typing out my dissertation and finishing in time.*

*Shweta Singh  
(Shweta Singh)*

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ER's	Emergency Regulations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Force
JVP	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
KMS	Keeny Meeny Services
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
PA	Peoples Alliance
RAW	Research Analysis Wing
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SLFP	Sri Lankan Freedom Party
TULF	Tamil United Liberation Front
UK	United Kingdom
UNP	United Nationalist Party
USA	United States of America
VOA	Voice of America

## **PREFACE**

National Security is one of the dominant problems facing states. States which are the highest form of political order that we have so far been able to develop and sustain, seem unable to coexist with each other in harmony.

Regional subsystems exist in world politics as distinct 'theatres of operation'. South Asia as a region provides a clear example of a security complex. The focus of the study would be to understand the security sensitivities of the smaller states of South Asia, and how India as a bigger power, impinges on their security concerns. Both the positive and negative dynamics of 'India factor' would be analysed in the context of Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Maldives.

The main objectives of the study is to analyse whether the geopolitical context of South Asia defines the relations between India and Sri Lanka; study the changing security perceptions of both Sri Lanka and India in the eighties and the nineties; what are the factors that brought about a change in the security perceptions of Sri Lanka; and analyse whether the autonomy of smaller states gets constrained and linked to a greater power, India.

In this context the following two hypotheses would be put to test: First, the relative autonomy of smaller states gets constrained and influenced by a larger power in a regional framework. Second, a regional subsystem marked by asymmetry of power relations tend to create insecurity in the minds of smaller states.

The scope of the study is limited to the period 1983-2003. And it would deal with national security defined by its military aspects only.

The present study is divided into five chapters:

Chapter one, would analyze the concepts of security, security complex and small state security. The basic approach would be that the security problem of states cannot be analysed without reference to regional system, and the character and dynamics of the system cannot be understood without reference to the states.

Chapter two would discuss the nature of the region in terms of its geographical contiguities, extensive socio cultural linkages and systemic divergence. It will also examine how India impinges on the security of smaller South Asian States (Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Maldives).

Chapter three would attempt to understand how Sri Lanka's conception of "insecurity" is perceivably intertwined largely with India. Here, the role of geography, leadership and ethnic conflict would be analysed as factors that contributed to insecurity. The focus area would be post-1983 developments, where one would analyse the policy imperatives and strategic compulsions.

Chapter four would focus on the changing perception of Sri Lanka vis-à-vis India in the security realms. It would analyse how India is seen as a source of security both in terms of defence and strategic cooperation and economic benefits that the smaller neighbour derives

from it. A comparison would be made between the developments in the 1980s and the 1990s.

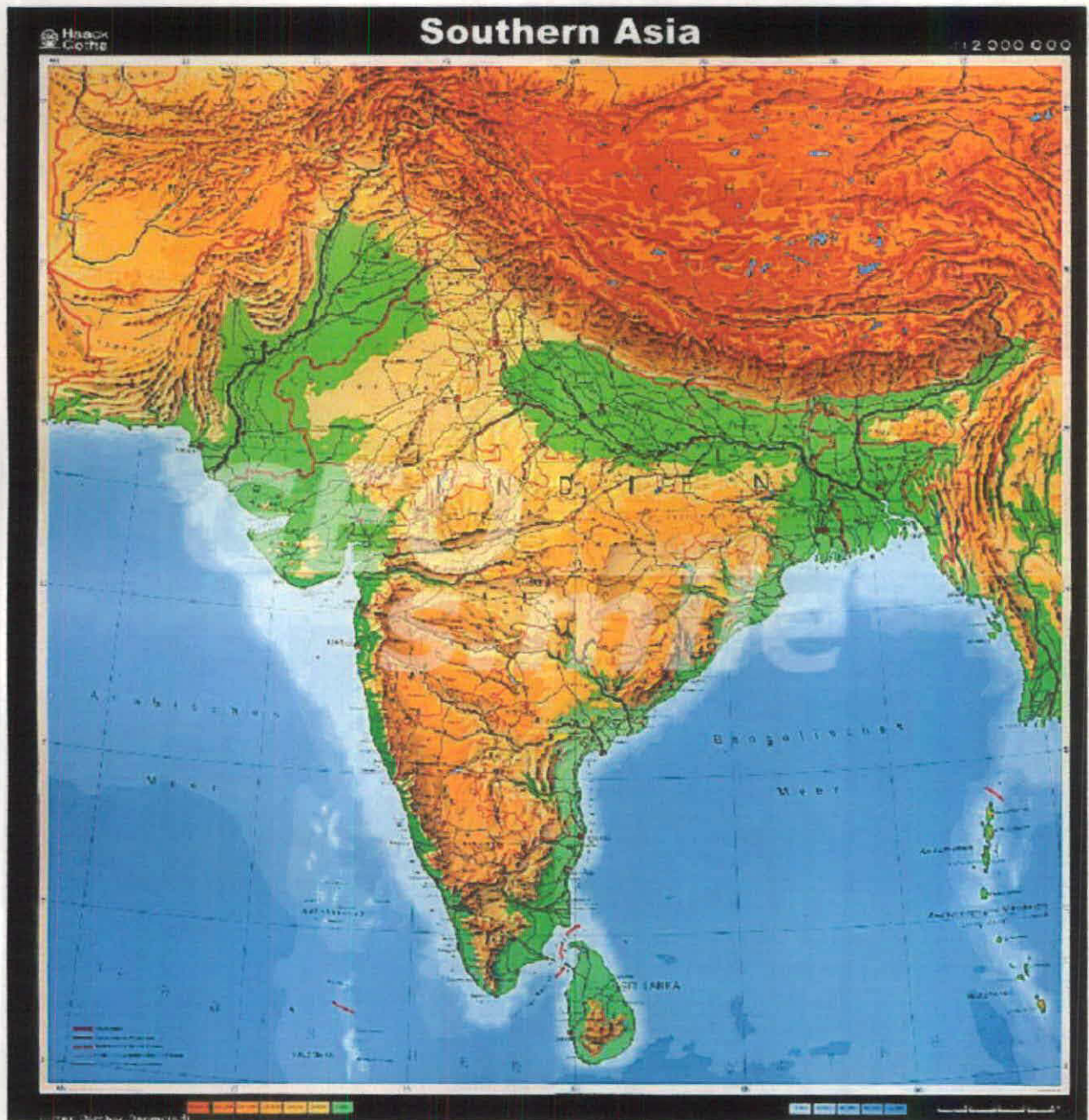
The concluding chapter would test the hypothesis and would attempt to develop broad arguments in terms of small state security.

This study is based on historical and analytical method. The required data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. As regards the primary sources, the letters exchanged by the two parties and other government publications provided valuable information. Various books, articles, periodicals and newspaper reports were also consulted to broaden the understanding of the subject.



# CONTENTS

	<b>Page No.</b>
Acknowledgement	i
List of Abbreviations	ii
Preface	iii-v
Maps	vii-ix
Chapter I : Security Complexes and the Dynamics of Small State Security: A Theoretical Framework	1-14
Chapter II : The South Asian Subsystem and the 'India Factor' in Security	15-42
Chapter III : India as a Factor in "Insecurity" of Sri Lanka	43-70
Chapter IV : India as a Factor in "Security" of Sri Lanka	71-90
Chapter V : Conclusion	91-95
Bibliography	96-108
Appendix	109-112







Base 802734A1 (D00127) 3-01

**SECURITY COMPLEXES AND THE DYNAMICS OF SMALL  
STATE SECURITY: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

**INTRODUCTION**

The anarchical international system requires that states rely on themselves for protection. National Security – a country’s psychological freedom from fear of foreign attack – is hence of paramount priority.

The concept of security is essentially a ‘contested concept’, and it generates questions as well as answers. The basic questions are:

- (i) What does security mean in a general sense?
- (ii) How is this general meaning transferred to the specific entities like state?
- (iii) What exactly is the referent object of security when we refer to national security?

To begin with, it is important to understand that in both international relations and strategic studies, state is a central focus of analysis and one needs to understand the complex nature of interplay between the ambiguous symbol of security and ambiguous structure of state.

To understand this nature of interplay three components of state can be emphasized. These are<sup>1</sup>

- The physical base of the state.
- The institutional expression of the state.
- The idea of state.

The additional factors, which make state a distinctive group of entities, are size and sovereignty.

The basic objective to delineate these components of state is to bring about the point that states are exceedingly dissimilar as objects of security. Because of this diversity, the nature of security as a problem necessarily differs substantially from state to state. The multilayered nature of the state opens it to threats at many levels, and vulnerabilities depend on the unique structure and circumstances of the states concerned. In this context, it is also important to mark the distinction between weak and strong states which is vital for any analysis of national security.

The focus of the study would be

- Concept of security
- Security complex
- And understanding small state security which would include
  - Defining the concept of small state security
  - Threats to small state
  - Locating small state security in a given security complex

---

<sup>1</sup> Barry Buzan, People States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations, (London, Harvester, 1983), pp. 40-41.

## CONCEPT OF SECURITY

There are two crucial conceptual choices i.e. security for whom and against what? Traditionally the conceptualization of security was generally taken explicitly or implicitly from classical realist paradigm. Therefore the above questions were answered in the following manner i.e. security for the state termed as national security and against threats of it being attacked or subjugated by violent means by an external or an internal enemy. Different doctrines of national security gave different emphasis to these two kinds of threats.

It was gradually realized that there would be “security dilemma”. John Herz introduced the idea of security dilemma in the early 1950s.<sup>2</sup> This is a structural notion which says, that the self help attempt of states to work after their security needs tends automatically to the rising insecurity for others as each interprets its own measures as defensive and measures of others as potentially threatening. The security dilemma idea is widely acknowledged in the literature but apart from some work by Robert Jervis, there has been almost no attempt to build on it.<sup>3</sup> Arnold Wolfers in his book *Discord and Collaboration* characterizes security as an ‘ambiguous symbol’. His was an attempt to reflect the many dimensional complexities of the concept.<sup>4</sup> In addition to these core works, one can find only a few other

---

<sup>2</sup> John H. Herz, “Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma”, *World Politics*, Vol. 2, 1950, pp. 157-180.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976), p.p. 167-214.

<sup>4</sup> Arnold Wolfers, *National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol*, *Discord and Collaboration*, (Baltimore John Hopkins University Press, 1962), pp.48-52.

conceptual discussions of security. Headley Bull, Bernard Brodie, Frank Tager and Frank Simonie, make brief but useful contributions.<sup>5</sup>

Leonard Beaton argued for a range of systemic considerations instead of merely confining conceptions of security to the idea of parochial national security.<sup>6</sup> Stanley Hoffman argues for the need to begin 'turning national security into an aspect of world order policy.'<sup>7</sup>

Headley Bull argues against excessive self interest in approaches to national security and for a broader view in which common linkage and interests among national securities receive greater attention.<sup>8</sup> The present study would transcend the arena delineated by the concept of security bound to the level of individual state. And infact there has been greater political initiatives on rethinking security<sup>9</sup>, together with a series of penetrating conceptual and theoretical analysis.<sup>10</sup>

Barry Buzan, demonstrates the importance of levels and argues that the security dilemma goes in two directions: National Security may both support and threaten subnational (e.g. group or individual) security. Later analysis showed the need for a level between state, whose security problems can very rarely be seen in isolation and an international system which is not that fairly interconnected in this

---

<sup>5</sup> Headley Bull, The Control of the Arms Race, (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1961), p. 25; Bernard Brodie, War and Politics (London, Cassell, 1973), pp. 72-82; Frank N. Trager and Frank L. Simonie, "An Introduction to the Study of National Security", in F.N. Trager and P.S. Kronenberg (eds.), National Security and American Society (Lawrence, Kansas University Press, 1973), pp. 116-32.

<sup>6</sup> Leonard Beaton, The Reform of Power: A Proposal for an International Security System, (London, Chatus & Windus, 1972), pp. 116-32.

<sup>7</sup> Stanley Hoffman, Primacy or World Order, (New York, Mc Graw Hill, 1978), p.252.

<sup>8</sup> Bull, n. 5, p. 25.

<sup>9</sup> Common Security: A Blueprint for Survival, the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, New York, 1982. *Concepts of Security, Disarmament Study Series* No. 14. United Nations, New York, 1986.

<sup>10</sup> Gert Krell, The Development of the Concept of Security, FrankFut 1979. Carolyn M. Stephenson ed., Alternative Methods for International Security, (Washington DC, 1982), p. 271.



respect to make it analytically meaningful to talk about 'global security'.

This had led to the notion of 'security complex'<sup>11</sup>, a set of states for which it is true that security of each is interlinked to security of other states in the set, whereas there is little such linkage to states outside the set. In today's world, Europe, North East Asia and Southern Asia are among the examples.

### **SECURITY COMPLEXES**

Infact the middle level of analysis is an important, but seriously neglected area of international relations. It is important to understand that it is in this middle area that the concept of security finds one of its most useful applications. As security encompasses both subjective and objective factors, it directs inquiry more towards the nature of relations among states than towards the more rigid attempts to compare attributes which are characteristic of power analysis.

It can be further argued that the security problems of states cannot be assessed without reference to the system, and the character and dynamics of the system cannot be understood without reference to states.

The concept of security can only be understood by reintegrating the levels. Infact the full richness and meaning of the concept is to be found in the interplay among them individual, states and the system.

---

<sup>11</sup> Buzan, op. cit. Waever, Barry Buzan; Movten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre, Identity, Migration and New Security Agenda in Europe, (London, 1993), pp. 72-74.

All of them play a part. Barry Buzan uses the term security complex to label the relevant structures at this level of analysis.<sup>12</sup>

Buzan defines a security complex “as a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another”. Security complexes tend to be durable, but they are neither permanent nor internally rigid.<sup>13</sup> It is further argued that the idea of security complexes, is new, though shadows of it can be found in earlier writings about local balances of power and subsystems. Security complexes differ from power balances, as the name indicates on the basis of the organizing principle involved. Security is the broader idea, and security complex include, but are not limited to, balances of power.

Subsystem is an extremely broad notion and security complex could be seen as a type of sub-system. Attempts to apply the idea of sub-systems has tended to take a regional approach, and has concentrated either on questions of war and stability<sup>14</sup>, or on questions of integration<sup>15</sup>, or on simply increasing the attention paid to local factors in the general analysis of international relations.<sup>16</sup> Security complex take a specific functional idea, security as their defining principle, and thereby avoiding the broad regionalism which has sapped interest in the utility of sub-systems approach.

---

<sup>12</sup> Buzan, n. 1, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Buzan, n. 1, pp. 46-47.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Haas, ‘International Subsystems: Stability and Polarity’, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 64, No. 1, 1970, pp. 65-78.

<sup>15</sup> Bruce M. Russett, International Regions and the International System, (Chicago, Rand McNally, 1967), pp. 116-24.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Brecher, ‘International Relations and Asian Studies: The Subordinate State System of Southern Asia’, *World Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1963, pp. 116-32.

The international system as a whole contains a large number of security complexes. Some of them intersect or overlap and some of them fit inside each other. So it is difficult to define the boundary of any particular security complex with precision.

The links which make a security complex together may be of many types – geographical, physical, strategic, historical, economic or cultural and states outside the complex may play a major role within it, without the complex itself being central to their security concerns.

South Asia as a whole provides a clear example of an important, middle level security complex. The heart of this complex is the rivalry between India and Pakistan, two large states whose insecurities are so deeply intertwined that their national securities, particularly in terms of political and military security, cannot be separated. A number of much less powerful states are bound into the complex for geographical reasons, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. What binds the South Asian security complex together is the dominant role of local issues and relations in defining the national security priorities of the states within it. And a layer of local, interstate disputes frequently define the principle binding insecurities of the complex as a whole.

The South Asian case provides a clear example of what security complexes consist of as structural factors of an international anarchy. They act as nodes in the system, not only defining intense and relatively durable local patterns, but also serving to guide and shape the impact of larger external powers on these local patterns. The local

and external patterns tend to reinforce each other, but the impact on the local pattern is greater because of the disproportion in size and resources.

Security complexes are a typical product of an anarchic international structure. Almost every country will be able to relate its security perspective to one or more complexes, and the concept provides a useful tool for organizing patterns of relations, and for arranging them into lateral (South Asia and the Middle East) and hierarchical (South Asia and Sino-Soviet) categories. Infact this perspective has its uses and is part of any comprehensive analysis. It has its own thrust in a system within which the differentiation in power and status between the top and bottom of the hierarchy of actors is very large.

## **AN UNDERSTANDING OF SMALL STATE SECURITY**

### **DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF SMALL STATE**

The term small states was first used in the treaty of Chamount in March 1814. Those states who were incapable of providing 60,000 men for next 20 years in case of French aggression were considered as 'small states'<sup>17</sup>. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research<sup>18</sup> and the Commonwealth Consultative Group<sup>19</sup> accepted population as the

---

<sup>17</sup> Abdur Rob Khan, Md. Humayun Kabir, 'The Security of Small States. A framework of Analysis' in M. Abdul Hafiz, A. Rob Khan, ed., Security of Small States (Dhaka, 1987), p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Jacques Rapaport, et a., Small States and Territories: Status and Problems. A Study by United Nations Institute for Training and Research (New York: ARNO Press, 1971).

<sup>19</sup> Shiela Harden (ed.), Small is Dangerous (London, 1985), p. 9.

determinant factor and considered one million or less population as a small state.

The Commonwealth Secretary General Shridath Ramphal, in the inaugural meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on small states, spoke on 'vulnerability' as the criteria for defining a state<sup>20</sup>. The weak, vulnerable small state is characterized as one in which nation building process is at the initial stages, the elite base is 'small, where there is a tendency to curtail alternative leadership and the regime security is linked with the state security.<sup>21</sup> Lack of resources or small resource base, high imports and dependence on foreign aid, technology and high debt burden are the hallmarks of a small state.<sup>22</sup>

Rothstein argues that a small state is one, which accepted its inferior status as a permanent feature of its existence. Accordingly 'small power is a state which recognizes that it cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities and then it must rely fundamentally on the aid of other states, institutions, processes or developments to do so. The small powers belief in its inability to rely on its own means must also be recognized by states involved in international politics<sup>23</sup>. Hence, the inability to survive is the criteria for relationship between a small state and great power.

---

<sup>20</sup> Shridath Ramphal in his speech at the inaugural meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Small States at the Marlborough House on 18 July 1984 said "Small is Beautiful but Vulnerable", cited in *BISS Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 3, July 1986, p. 371.

<sup>21</sup> Khan, n. 17, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>23</sup> Robert L. Rothstein, Alliances and Small Powers (New York, 1968), p. 58.

David vital analyses the small state as isolated entities who avoid reliance on external support of a great power and take their own independent decisions.<sup>24</sup> However, Robert O. Keohane opines that 'instead of focusing on whether security can be maintained by ones own resources we should focus on the systemic role that state leaders see their countries playing.'<sup>25</sup>

Basically one can argue that there are varied perceptions in defining and understanding a small state.

### **THREATS TO SMALL STATE**

There are basically two sets of problems concerning the security of small states. First, what factors affect their security and to what extent can these be affected by the state themselves? Second, how do small states define their problems of national security, how do they attempt to solve them and what types of small nations tend to make what definitions and what changes? Basically the crucial problem of conceptualization concerns 'security'.

As regards the threat to a small state, it has been approached from various dimensions. The minimalist approach of security concentrates on the military-strategic aspect to contain threats emanating from external aggression. The maximalist approach of security deals with both physical and non physical threats.

---

<sup>24</sup> David Vital. *The Inequality of States* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 190-191.

<sup>25</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "Lilliputians' Dilemma: Small States in International Politics", *International Organization* (Boston), Vol. 23, No. 1, 1969, p. 295.

The military threats to small state extends all the way from outright incorporation into another state, turning a small nation into a country or satellite of another state, imposition of an unpopular regime, supervision, undue interference in a small nations internal or external policies.<sup>26</sup>

According to Buzan<sup>27</sup> there are essentially three ways in which a state can be threatened. The first is the classical external military threat. The second threat is an overthrow of the legitimate political institutions of a state by means of what is often and vaguely referred to as subversion, with or without the use of violence, with or without external support. The third threat is phrased as being against the idea of the state. One extreme case is the strong state, where neither any significant group of its inhabitants nor any neighbour or great power questions the legitimacy of that state, its institutions or its boundaries.

The opposite extreme is the weak state, where sizeable group of its inhabitants, or significant other states, or both, question its very existence, its constitutional definition or its boundaries. Security problems of the latter type of states is often labeled in terms of separatism, secessionism, irrendentism. Ethnically homogeneous states tend to be stronger than others but this is neither a necessary condition nor a sufficient one. Being a strong or weak state in this sense has no logical relations, and limited empirical relation is only to military capability.

---

<sup>26</sup> V.V. Svecies. *Small National Survival* (New York, 1970), pp. 25-26.

<sup>27</sup> Buzan, n. 1, pp. 48-49.

To sum up, one can argue that the concept of security has always occupied an important place. At the same time, the complexity of world politics is also well marked. So on the one hand, the concept of security needs to be understood by reintegrating the different levels of analysis, on the other, one also needs to understand the intrinsic nature of the concept of 'security complexes' to make further analysis on small state security.

### **LOCATING SMALL STATE SECURITY IN A GIVEN SECURITY COMPLEX**

Smallness is interesting from a security perspective when it is most importantly linked to political context. In this perspective it is important to understand the political context, which signifies the combination of transitory (situational) and given (constant or long term) characteristics which together make a specific occasion for decision making. Situational characteristics include elements such as degree of threat to prioritized values and degree of time pressure.

Given characteristics may be geography, ethnic composition, resource endowments, etc. The factors in themselves may be reasonably familiar; this point here has to do with linking smallness to the context, because only in this way is it possible to undertake a meaningful analysis of the significance of size.

While one attempts to study small state security, it is important to point out that population of a small state is seen then as the embodiment of peace. The notion that they could represent a threat to anyone is incomprehensible to them. In fact they may be right; that is



they are not in themselves likely to be able to threaten security a major neighbouring power. But when the small states geographic location is viewed from the vantage point of one or another of the leading great powers, it is a different matter.

From this perspective the security issue linking the two neighbours becomes a question of how the security of the small state can be used by another great power. Basically when decision makers consider the security dilemma, the assessment of potential threat is a logical ingredient in rationally preparing for action.<sup>28</sup>

Secondly, in the given context the significance of a highly strategic small-state location becomes accentuated in high tension period. Given high tensions, the nearest great power is more likely to respond to apparently non-confirming small-state action with restrict measures, and more likely to take punitive measures to keep the options of the small state to a minimum.

Thirdly, for the development of stable relations between states, trust is essential and historical experience is the strongest conditions that manifests in the development of trust. The leaders of a democratic small state cannot deviate too much from the dictates of the collective historical memories if they are to remain in good terms with their own purpose. Even more, they cannot escape from the influence of their own share of the collective memory. Thus history at times may work against

---

<sup>28</sup> Max Jakobsin, The Diplomacy of the Winter War, (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 172-75.

attempts to stabilize a relationship, especially in the case of small state – big power dynamics.

### **CONCLUSION**

To conclude, one can argue that one needs to understand the concept of security in order to have a proper understanding of the national security problem. And in this context, one's understanding indicates that the security problem of the states cannot be assessed without reference to international or regional system and the character and dynamics of the system cannot be understood without reference to the states. What comes out clearly by way of analysis of the concept of security, is that the middle level of analysis is an important arena for study. It also provides a framework for further study by which one can understand the dynamics of security complex and its linkages to small state security.

## CHAPTER II

---

# **THE SOUTH ASIAN SUBSYSTEM AND THE 'INDIA FACTOR' IN SECURITY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Studies on South Asian security usually focus on the problem of larger states notably India and Pakistan, or those with endemic conflict. The recent history of wars, nuclearisation and the ugly and frequent outrages of terrorism draw attention to the plight and predicament of these states. Nevertheless the concerns of the smaller states, are no less valid, and can have wider regional and, indeed, global ramifications.

Small states usually have a sharply focused security agenda that involves reacting to events and scurrying with meager resources to address direct threats to national security. The agendas of specific states vary, depending on factors such as location, ethnic linkage, resource endowment, level of development and sensitivities of a bigger regional power. The security agenda of these states, do also operate within the existing geopolitical context.

So the focus of the present chapter would be to understand, security sensitivities of the smaller states of South Asia, and how India, as a bigger power, impinges on their security concerns. The study would focus on Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives. For this purpose one would attempt to understand:

- The concept of Regional Subsystem
- Define South Asia as a Regional Subsystem and focus on its three basic attributes, essential for the purpose of this study, such as
  - Asymmetry among South Asian States
  - Linkages between domestic and regional policies
  - Indian centrality and the security concerns of smaller states of South Asia

### **DEFINING REGIONAL SUBSYSTEM**

A subsystem is simply a component of a larger system with systemic properties of its own i.e., “a structure that is perceived by its observers to have elements in interaction or relationships and some identifiable boundaries that separate it from its environment”<sup>1</sup>.

The term “regional” is less clear. It identifies the nature of “identifiable boundaries”, that is the interaction boundaries that are regional. Regional subsystem need not be geographical regions per se. In this context one can basically take note of the basic attributes delineated by Thompson in Regional Subsystem analysis.<sup>2</sup>

- The actors pattern of relations or interactions exhibit a particular degree of regularity and intensity to the extent

---

<sup>1</sup> MC Clelland, *Theory and International System*, (New York, Macmillan, 1966), pp. 17-24.

<sup>2</sup> William R. Thompson, “The Regional Subsystem”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 1, March 1973, pp. 89-117.

that a change at one point in the subsystem affects other points.

- The actors are generally proximate.
- Internal and external observers and actors recognize the subsystem as a distinctive area or “theatre of operation”.
- The subsystem logically consists of at least two and quite probably more actors.

It is important to understand the concept of regional subsystem, because to assess the security problem of the states, the dynamics of regional security relationship among states must be considered along global and domestic perspectives. Though there is not a great deal of definitional agreement on what constitutes a regional subsystem, broadly one can define it as a geographic and historic zone, which is marked by conditions of interrelatedness, wherein a change at one point in the system affects all the other points.

### **SOUTH ASIA AS A REGIONAL SUBSYSTEM**

South Asia is a prime example of a regional subsystem, comprising, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives – all of which are tied to India by dictates of geography and culture. Major security perceptions of South Asian states link together sufficiently closely so that their national security problems cannot be considered apart from one another.

The sovereign states of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal and Bhutan constitute an area situated between the Himalayan mountain ranges to the north and the Indian Ocean littoral to the South. The region is bordered to the west by the Kithar Mountains of Baluchistan, the Hindu Kush, the Karakoram, the high plateau of Tibet; and to the east the foothills of Bhutan, and the Chittagong, Mizo, Chin, Naga and the Patkai hills on the Bangladesh-Burmese Border. The republic of the Maldives is situated just over 500 km to the south west of Sri Lanka, and the Indian Island dependencies of Lakshwadeep, Daman, Diu and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. For the purpose of present study one would argue in favour of the existence of three kinds of states within South Asia.

**INDIA:** The largest country in the region in terms of tangible measures of power, for example, possession of military and economic strength, population and land size. But it has not necessarily and continuously been the dominant power in terms of intangible measures of power, namely an ability to organize alliances, secure consent and authority to manage threats, shape the distribution of power within the region, and minimize or exclude foreign interference or external pressures on India and region.

**PAKISTAN:** Is less powerful than India in terms of tangible measures listed earlier, but is an essential player in the South Asian structure.

## **OTHER LESSER SOUTH ASIAN STATES**

Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives have particular foreign policy orientations and positions in the South Asian system.

They share Pakistan's concern about 'Indian hegemony' but unlike Pakistan, they are either in alliance with India (Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) or, in the absence of a formal alignment, they rely on methods and strategies that differ sharply from those of Pakistan vis-a-vis India.

According to Leo Rose there is a great and permanent divide between India and South Asian neighbours. 'All the other South Asian States have until recently considered India as a major threat to their security and national integrity'<sup>3</sup>. The small neighbours of India fear Indian dominance rather than of an outside enemy.<sup>4</sup> The small neighbours are wary of Indian interference on their national independence, territorial integrity and security.

Infact the interactions of domestic and international state systems can be most clearly conceived with reference to what Buzan and Rizvi called a 'security complex'. While the security complex is above all a regional configuration it is perceived in the context of both the international and domestic political system. A security complex is a sub-system of the international community of states that for reasons of geography, history and culture are intimately related to each other.

---

<sup>3</sup> Leo E Rose and Satish Kumar, 'South Asia' in W.J. Feld and G Boyd (eds.), Comparative Regional Systems (New York, Pergamon, 1980), p. 268.

<sup>4</sup> Anil Jayawardena, 'Changes in Power Structure and Security Perceptions in the South Asian Subsystem', in P.V.J. Jayasekera, (ed.), Security Dilemma of a Small State (New Delhi, 1992), p. 291.

This concept allows an understanding of the states of South Asia from a genuinely regional perspective and not as a mere extension of the international security environment as perceived by the dominant actors situated within the international system generally.

It is also important to understand that a security complex is not static, it can be changed by the deliberate policy of a state and the changing perceptions of an elite; it can be 'overlaid' by wider complexes through invasion or internal collapse, as with the case of the Soviet-East European complex focused upon a divided Germany.

Regionally, the states of South Asia share a common history of British colonial rule and common constitutional habits derived from the British period. For much of the nineteenth century, the entire area existed either under the British colonial administration of the Raj, or as in the case of Nepal and Bhutan, as sovereign or notionally separate states under varying degrees of British paramountcy.

One important point of note, is that the territorial dimensions of South Asia are rather fluid and open to some criticism. But what cannot be ignored is that there is remarkable degree of shared socio-economic and political experience. Domestically, the politics of South Asia are dominated by either the decay of established political institutions (as in India and Sri Lanka) or the difficulties that arise when trying to create and sustain new ones (as in Bangladesh, Pakistan and to a lesser extent, Nepal). All the states are beset by a



growing assertion of regionalism and ethnicity, problems of political legitimacy and the stresses caused by volatile political participation.

In 1995, all the states faced ethnic challenges and were engaged to a greater or lesser extent in asserting the primacy of a specific territorial configuration in the face of regional challenges. Throughout the region, these challenges range from demands for greater decentralization to outright separation.

The basic objective, as mentioned earlier, would be to focus on three basic attributes of the region essential for the purpose of the study:

- (a) Levels of asymmetry among South Asian States.
- (b) Linkages between domestic and regional politics.
- (c) Indian centrality and its role in the security dilemmas of smaller South Asian States: The focus would be on Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Maldives.



TH- 11434

#### **(A) LEVELS OF ASYMMETRY AMONG SOUTH ASIAN STATES**

It can be argued that with its fairly distinct boundaries - the Himalayas in North and the Indian Ocean which surrounds the peninsula on the other three sides, South Asia is probably the best defined subsystem in contemporary international setting.

Here, what one needs to take note is that asymmetry in size, population, power and resources between India and the rest of the

DISS  
327.5405493  
Si646 In  


countries of the region has had an intimidating impact on the smaller states, and so the need for consequent discussion.

The size and population of states of South Asia differ enormously, the extreme case being from the micro state of Bhutan with a population of just over 1.4 million living within an area of 47 thousand square kilometers, to the Republic of India, with a territorial area of 3,288 thousand square kilometers. The states of South Asia have notably differing capacities to rule and administer their complex societies. Pakistan was one of the few post colonial states to actually disintegrate.

By the mid 1990, the population of South Asia accounted for just over one fifth of the total global population. Each month, the regional population increases by just under one million individuals, a demographic trend that maintains continual pressure upon the resources and productive capacities of the respective states.

The quality of life varies between states and most significantly within each state. The average life expectancy in India, for both men and women, was sixty years of age, although landless labours in the states of Bihar and Orissa are much less likely to achieve this.<sup>5</sup> In the kingdom of Bhutan, men are expected to live until about forty-eight, with women more likely to make it into their fifties. In Sri Lanka, life expectancy is seventy-one years, Pakistan fifty-eight with Bangladesh on fifty seven.

---

<sup>5</sup> This information comes from the 1991 census by the Government of India, p. 401.

Levels of literacy vary between the states and within the states. In the 1991 census, Indian literacy rate was 52 percent. Bhutan is worse than India, with barely 35% of the country literate, while Sri Lanka boasts the highest mean average of adult literacy. Nepal is, on average, the most illiterate state in South Asia, with just over a third of the population able to read and write. In Sri Lanka, 88 percent of the population is literate.

As would be expected, the economic powers of these states reflects their size. In 1988-89 India's gross domestic product (GDP) was approximately US \$270.64 billion, making it approximately the tenth largest economy in the world.<sup>6</sup> For the same period, Pakistan's GDP was calculated at US\$39.07 billion. By contrast Nepal's productive capacity was just over US\$3 billion. Close by, the state of Bangladesh – the erstwhile 'East wing' of old Pakistan – has a GDP of US\$119.01 billion. Most of the economies of the South Asia region are mixed economies, containing various mixes of public and private enterprises and until very recently, 'dirigiste' styles of economic planning aimed at achieving industrialization.<sup>7</sup>

Gross national production (GNP) divided by population, generates a series of per capita figures that, although highly aggregate, nonetheless give some indication of the potential reserves at the command of each state. In 1992, India's GNP per capita was US\$320, Sri Lanka was US\$540, Nepal was US\$170, Pakistan was US\$410,

---

<sup>6</sup> Annual Report, Ministry of External Affairs, 1988-89, New Delhi, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Bhutan was US\$180, while Bangladesh was US \$220.<sup>8</sup> The distribution of National Wealth and income is unevenly distributed in each country, both in terms of socio-economic background and in terms of region.

Although each state of South Asia has followed a slightly different set of development strategies since independence, recently there has been a significant degree of convergence. Moreover the states of South Asia are interlinked by a whole series of economic and trade agreements, most notably the conditions set by World Bank loans for development projects and the conditionality agreements negotiated with International Monetary Fund (IMF) as part of various structural adjustment programmes. The fact is that the states of South Asia face similar economic problems, and are all attempting to diversify their economic activity with an eye to foreign capital and possible market shares, which paradoxically discourages co-operation and -limits the effects of intra-regional trading agreements.

So, basically there is asymmetry in terms of size, population, socio-economic development, and so consequently power status. This gets manifested in the 'us' versus 'them' feature of the context, and play its role in strategic thinking and formulation.

## **(B) LINKAGES BETWEEN DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL POLITICS**

Any discussion on the international politics of South Asia would not make any sense without an understanding of the legacies of partition and the origins and the forms of Indian and Pakistani

---

<sup>8</sup> Annual Report, Ministry of External Affairs, 1992-93, New Delhi, p. 4.

nationalism. The boundaries drawn up in the closing weeks of British rule crossed areas of linguistic and cultural affinity and divided them into two ethnically diverse states.

One of the most enduring legacies of the colonial period for South Asia remains that of unresolved boundaries and unspecified borders, and the fact that India and Pakistan continue to share extraordinary degrees of commonality in terms of popular and political culture and indeed religion. These legacies have been a cause of a considerable regional friction and stress, frequently blurring the distinction between 'internal' and 'external' threat perception, and complicating the need to devolve power to local and regional elites.<sup>9</sup>

The extraordinary high degree of ethnic, cultural and linguistic overlap in South Asia, both within and between states, give rise to "the fear of 'balkanisation' – a process wherein parts of a territorially defined state attempt to cede on the grounds of ethno-linguistic self determination-often with overt or covert support from a rival state-or to join another state altogether. Hence it can be emphasised that ethnic strife in South Asia is part of the dynamic of the state-society relationship itself and not some extraneous, process projected on to South Asia from 'outside' the region".<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, secessionist demands are not confined to the larger states of the region. The most tragic example of secession based upon a

---

<sup>9</sup> R.H. Jackson, Quasi states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 297.

<sup>10</sup> Iftekharuzzaman, "Emerging Strategic Trends in South Asia", *BISS Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1992, pp. 76-92.

sub-nationalist movement comes from Sri Lanka, where since 1983 the Sri Lankan Tamil minority has been at war with the Sinhalese majority. Various attempts at finding a political solution usually through adoption of some form of political devolution or federalism have not produced any result.

Bangladesh too, has had difficulties with tribal groups in the Chittagong Hill tracts crossing into the state of North-East India. Bilateral negotiations with India over the return of Chakma refugees to the Chittagong Hill Tracts started in 1993 as the militant group, the Shanti Bahini, insisted that Chakma refugees will return only if they are assured greater autonomy within Bangladesh. Infact a case in point is that India's secularism, democracy, federal principles and linguistic autonomy are often at variance with its neighbours and add to regional dissonance.<sup>11</sup>

### **(C) INDIAN CENTRALITY AND THE SECURITY CONCERNS OF SMALLER STATES OF SOUTH ASIA**

The territorial state of India dominates the political geography of South Asia. Even a cursory view over the region reveals the extent of India's centrality. It is the only state that shares borders and has cultural affinities with all other states. India has 72 percent of the territorial area, 77 percent of its population and approximately 78 percent of the regions natural resources. Also with each of its neighbours, India has special ties in terms of ethnicity, language,

---

<sup>11</sup> Atul Kohli, 'Democracy and Development', in J.P. Lewis and V. Kallab (eds.), Development Strategies Reconsidered, (New Brunswick, 1986), pp. 153-82.

culture, kinship, common historical experience or shared access to and dependence upon vital natural resources.

It has been noted by observers within India and also within the region that India's long term goal's has been to translate this physical domination into a political and economic one. But, in this context, it is important to understand that relations between India and its neighbours did not develop in vacuum. The fact is that formative experiences led to an Indian sub continental civilisational base among the South Asian countries. However, on the other hand the political ethics of South Asian States have varied often with competing interests, rivalries and outlooks, which have resulted in a variety of policies, diplomatic, economic political and military problem.

As a result of common civilisational Indian pull, the basis of Indian sub continental unity is cultural, not political or strategic. Secondly, the relationship between India and its neighbours have passed through different phases, involving wars, social and ethnic conflicts, diplomatic controversies, economic competition, arms race and propaganda and a structure of power relations has emerged.

The third theme is that although India is the biggest country and the strongest power in the subcontinent, it is not an expansionist state. It has not seized opportunities to conquer its smaller neighbours or forcibly to intervene except in the case of Goa, Sikkim and Bangladesh. Its troops have intervened in Sri Lanka (1971, 1987-89), Maldives (1989) and Bangladesh (1971), but they returned upon completion of

their mission. These interventions were seen by the host countries at times as benign and on the other occasions as hostile. 'Hostile interventions' have raised the spectre of Indian hegemony, but 'benign intervention' have been welcomed as aiding the cause of regime security.

But what basically comes out as a marked feature in this analysis is that asymmetry in size, population, power and resources between India and the rest of the countries of the region has had an intimidating impact on the smaller states. This is certainly the perceptions of India's neighbours, especially Pakistan, who from the moment of its separation from British India, feared apparent Indian designs.

Other States have also raised concerns about the motives of Indian actions. One Bangladeshi analyst noted recently that "the international role of a state is essentially a function of its power capabilities and an elite's perception of their role.... India has all the nascent tendencies for greater power ability"<sup>12</sup>. A recent book on the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord records these same views from the perspective of Colombo.<sup>13</sup> The term 'great power' used frequently by Indian commentators and commentaries on Indian foreign policy, generally, denotes global as well as regional ambitions.

---

<sup>12</sup> M.G. Kabir and S. Hasan, Issues and challenges facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy, (Dhaka, Peoples Press, 1983), p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> K.M. de Silva, Regional Powers and Small State Security, (London, John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 175.



As regards Indian motives it could be argued that basically after the 1962 and the shock of China attack; “an involution of preoccupations took place. India became less concerned about having a high international profile in various fora, and more concerned about strengthening the components of its national power. Non-alignment became, more or less, a loose synonym for a tradition real politic approach”<sup>14</sup>.

Analysts of Indian Foreign Policy, especially in the 1980’s, have argued in terms of ‘Indira Doctrine’. While not explicitly articulated as was the Munro Doctrine, it definitely indicated in the direction of regional foreign-policy posture of hegemonic assertions. Former Indian diplomat Eric Gonsalves observed:<sup>15</sup>

“....Whether we like it or not, India has to play the leader in the regional sub-system. We should realize that India is the only country that will be able to play this role. Nobody else in the region... is going to pick up the pieces if something goes wrong... India should learn to ignore the kind of tauntings it gets from others in such situations, instead of issuing statements about our injured innocence. Perhaps it is because we are new to this game of power diplomacy...”

The rationale of this position was to become abundantly clear in 1987 when India claimed the right as the regional ‘policeman’, to assist Sri Lanka in place of other ‘non-regional powers’.

---

<sup>14</sup> A Vanaik and P. Bidwai, ‘India & Pakistan’ in R.C. Karp (ed.); Security without Nuclear Weapons? Diffusing Perspectives on Non-nuclear Security, (London, Oxford University Press ISIPRI, 1992), p. 263.

<sup>15</sup> Eric Gonsalves, quoted in Anirudha Gupta, “A Brahmanic Framework of Power in South Asia?”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 25, 1990, p. 711.

Being a military power, India has one of the largest standing armies in the world. Excluding a large pool of reserves, the Indian army numbered over one million men. While the army continues to take the maximum share of the Indian defence budget both the Air force and the Navy also have been considerably expanded since the mid 1970's.<sup>16</sup> Commenting on the scope and nature of India's military developments since the mid 1970's an analyst observed that it requires no great insights to divine what India envisions for herself – the status of the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> great power by the end of the century'.<sup>17</sup>

Such technical developments give contemporary India an oxymonic image of a major power. This long list of Indian achievements clashes with strongly held concepts and images of mass poverty, political corruption and the vagaries of a caste based society. Both the images are often subject to exaggeration.

### **INDIA AND THE SMALL STATE SECURITY: BANGLADESH, BHUTAN, NEPAL AND MALDIVES**

There are three broad aspects common to the countries under study which make them important for India and on which India's security perceptions and policy responses are based.<sup>18</sup>

First, their geostrategic location: while Nepal and Bhutan are on the northern and northeastern borders respectively, with China as their

---

<sup>16</sup> R. Thomas "The Armed Services and India's Defence Budget", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 20, 1980, pp. 280-97.

<sup>17</sup> Raju Thomas, "U.S. Transfers of Dual use Technologies", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 30, 1990, pp. 825-45.

<sup>18</sup> Padmaja Murthy, Managing Suspicions: Understanding India's Relations with Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, (New Delhi, Knowledge World, 2000), pp. 1-5.

neighbour in the north, Bangladesh borders the sensitive northeastern States of India, and links South Asia with South East Asian while Sri Lanka down south is part of India's coastal and oceanic strategy.

Secondly, India does not perceive a direct military threat from the four countries under study and given the asymmetry in defence capabilities, such a scenario is highly unlikely. However, flowing from their vital geostrategic location is the apprehension that any country from outside the region or within the region (Pakistan) having interests inimical to India can gain foothold in any of these four countries and thereby pose a threat to Indian interests. Therefore, it is essential that countries in India's neighbourhood do not become vulnerable and thereby expose India too. Even in the context of internal stability, these countries should not adopt policies (internally and externally) which would be detrimental to the security interests of India, thereby posing a threat to Indian interests.<sup>19</sup>

Third, therefore, is the need for political, social and economic stability in these countries. It is important because instability can spill over into India with detrimental effects, and also make these countries vulnerable to external influence and pressure. In fact, it is the potential vulnerability of these countries to become unstable due to either their low economic development, military preparedness, inability to resolve their internal social conflicts, grappling with problems of legitimizing

---

<sup>19</sup> Murthy, n. 18, pp. 1-2.

autocratic rule or ensuring effective functioning of nascent democracies that is a cause of concern for India.

## **NEPAL**

Nepal, a landlocked country located at an altitude varying from 70 to 8,884 metres is bordered by two countries – India and China. To its south, east and west is India. To the north, Nepal is bordered by the Tibetan region of China. There are 28 passes on the Sino-Nepal boundary, of which three important routes are open throughout the year.<sup>20</sup>

Right since the time modern Nepal was established in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>21</sup>, India's security perception in its northern frontier has been linked to Nepal. It is important to note that Nepal was not a British colony like India, though there were treaties which regulated the relations between two.<sup>22</sup> Thus, right from the time of British rule, the China factor was present, and it intensified following the independence of India in 1947.

Articulating, India's concern, Nehru said in Parliament on December 6, 1950.

“.....our interest in the internal conditions of Nepal becomes still more acute and personal, if I may say so, because of the developments across our borders, because of the developments in China and Tibet to be frank. And regardless of our feeling about Nepal, we are interested in our own

---

<sup>20</sup> Sangeeta Thapliyal, Mutual Security, The Case of India-Nepal, (New Delhi, Lancer 1998), p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Kannchanmoy Majumdar, Political Relations Between India and Nepal, (New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1973).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

country's security, in our country's borders. Now so far as the Himalayas are concerned, they lie on the other side of Nepal, mostly, not on this side. Therefore, the principal barriers to India lies on the other side of Nepal, and we are not going to tolerate any person coming over the barrier. Therefore, much as we appreciate the independence of Nepal, we cannot risk our own security by anything going wrong in Nepal which permits either that barrier to be crossed or otherwise weakens our frontiers"<sup>23</sup>.

India's policy, therefore, was aimed at ensuring stability within Nepal and also preventing it from developing close relations with any other country which would be detrimental to Indian interests. Thus, India sought a relationship with Nepal wherein it would be sensitive to Indian interests. When differences between Nepal and India increase, their security concerns assume more importance, but during the period of convergence, they do not cause much disturbance. The geostrategic importance of Nepal as articulated by free India was a continuation of the perceptions of British India which had concluded treaty arrangements with Nepal in this regard.

India's policy towards Nepal gave rise to strong anti-Indian sentiments within the Nepalese society Nepal's perception of India is a stereotypical case of the 'small state's fear complex', in which it has attempted to play off Indian dominance by making diplomatic overtures towards China.

---

<sup>23</sup> M.D. Dharmadasani, "Democratic Experiment in Nepal, India's Role and Attitudes" in Verinder Grover (ed.), Encyclopedia of SAARC Nations, Nepal, Vol. 5 (New Delhi, Deep and Deep, 1997), pp. 97-117.

Ramesh Thakur has noted that:

“India views China as an intruder within the region, while China believes that her participation within South Asia is legitimate (and) other states welcome the Chinese counter weight to Indian pretensions to regional hegemony”<sup>24</sup>.

So it is important to take note of the fact that in 1988, Nepal finally concluded a border settlement with China, a telling diplomatic victory that further isolated India as one of the few remaining states yet to settle its borders with China. Since the 1980s Nepal has benefited from a significant amount of Chinese aid. Chinese cooperation on various road building projects has however, touched upon Indian security concerns, especially in the sensitive Xian ping district which in turn borders on ‘Azad Kashmir’<sup>25</sup>.

This said, however, Nepal has broadly accepted their so-called ‘special relationship with India’. Socio-cultural links with India are obvious enough – Nepal is closely linked to India through Hinduism. In 1950, India and Nepal signed a treaty of ‘everlasting peace and friendship’, while in 1954 an aide memoir issued in New Delhi suggested closer association between India and Nepal on matters of foreign policy, especially in relation to China and Tibet<sup>26</sup>. In 1965 New Delhi and Kathmandu signed an ‘arms assistance agreement’ which recognized the rights of Nepal to arm itself from anyone, except China

---

<sup>24</sup> Ramesh Thakur, “Normalising Sino-Indian Relations”, *Pacific Review*, Vol. 4, 1999, p. 15.

<sup>25</sup> Wang Hong Wei, “Sino-Nepali Relations in the 1980’s”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 25, 1985, pp. 512-34.

<sup>26</sup> A Ramakant, *Nepal, China and India Relations*, (New Delhi, Vikas, 1976), pp. 267-86.

and only when India would not itself provide the weapons. It was this agreement that Nepal had appeared to violate in 1986.<sup>27</sup>

The intimacy of these complex socio-economic and cultural links, as is so often the case within the region, is as much a source of tension in bilateral relations as they are a source of agreement. Moreover, such links tend to extend domestic political traumas in one state into the domestic political arena of another.

### **BHUTAN**

Bhutan too provides an interesting arena for study. Here too, India's articulation of its security interests were, in a sense, a continuation of British India's concerns, since the end of British colonialism did not reduce the geostrategic importance of Bhutan.

Bhutan was more like a buffer state for the British.<sup>28</sup> Following India's independence, in military terms the threat arose from the fact that the Chinese had built massive troops concentration in the Chumbi valley in Tibet which is adjacent to northwest Bhutan. "A mere 80 mile march southward from the Chumbi valley across the northwest borders of Bhutan will cut off not only the Bhutanese Kingdom but also the northern strip of West Bengal, Assam and the northeast of India. Further, Bhutan's northern border is equally weak. On that side, the high mountain wall is broken at five points. The enemy can swoop down upon central Bhutan through these points even in the bitterest of winter. The logistic advantage this position gives to the Chinese is that

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Kapileshwar Lab, India and Bhutan (New Delhi, Sindhu Publications Ltd., 1974), pp. 27-28.

they will have only to descend from the northern heights to the valleys of Bhutan, while the defenders will have to struggle their way up from the plains to the rising ranges to meet the invaders".<sup>29</sup>

In fact India's attitude towards Bhutan underwent a qualitative change following the uprisings in Tibet in 1958-59 and the consequent Chinese actions. Nehru made an official visit to Bhutan and convinced the king to open up slowly. All this resulted in a change in Bhutan's attitude towards its policy of isolation. Following these events, and fearing a threat to its territorial integrity, Bhutan is said to have asked for a defence pact to be concluded with India.

Nehru responded by saying that it was not necessary and that any aggression against Bhutan would be considered an aggression against India.<sup>30</sup> These events brought India and Bhutan closer economically and politically which was reflected in the convergence in security issues too. This period also coincided with Bhutan making its presence felt in the international arena by becoming a member of international organizations. While traditional security concerns arising from the geostrategic location of Bhutan remains, there is now a possibility that insurgents, refugee leaders and pro-democracy elements coming together may be detrimental to India's interest.

---

<sup>29</sup> Ravi Verma, India's Role in the Emergence of Contemporary Bhutan, (Delhi, Capital Publishing House, 1988) pp. 137-149.

<sup>30</sup> Surjit Mansingh, "China-Bhutan Relations", *China Report*, vol. 30, no. 2, April-June 1994, pp. 175-186.



Basically, bilateral relations which have been smooth and peaceful on the security front till the 1990s, are now facing challenges, requiring difficult and important decisions to be taken.

### **BANGLADESH**

With respect to Nepal and Bhutan, the traditional security interests are well articulated by British India and specific mechanisms through treaty arrangements were adopted to meet these threats. The case of Bangladesh, however, is different, since it was only in 1971 that Bangladesh, became a separate, sovereign political entity. The security concerns can be spelt out as follows.

- India shares very long borders with Bangladesh nearly 4,000 km. These borders are shared, apart from West Bengal, with the sensitive north eastern states of India, which have the problem of insurgency. The Indo-Bangladesh borders are porous which enables the insurgents to take refuge in Bangladesh. With support from official Bangladeshi authorities, they can frustrate Indian attempts at combating insurgency.<sup>31</sup>
- These porous borders also result in the massive illegal movement of people, primarily for economic reasons, into India. The demographic changes which follow in India have important consequences (political, religious, economic) with

---

<sup>31</sup> Dinesh Kotwal, "Instability Parameters in North-Eastern India", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 24, No. 1, April 2000, pp. 137-149.

regard to Indian internal security.<sup>32</sup> In this sense, stability in Bangladesh-both political and economic is essential for India.

- Bangladesh has strong political and defence links with China and Pakistan – two countries which are important for India and with which it has fought wars also.
- Bangladesh faces the Bay of Bengal, it has access to the sea and, therefore, unlike the other two countries (Nepal and Bhutan) discussed earlier, it is not landlocked and dependent on India. However, it is in India's interests that Bangladesh's ports are not used against India.

However, given Bangladesh's size relative to India, a candid assertion of bilateralism by India could only give rise to mistrust and suspicion. Bangladesh is surrounded by India on all sides, the cultural affinities between the two-refracted by fourteen years within a united Pakistan – could be both supporting and suffocating.

By the early 1975 period when the domestic support for the Mujib regime was melting away in the face of anti-Indian propaganda and accusations of domestic corruption - the left wing of Bangladeshi politics argued that a glorious free Bengal had been reduced to a mere satellite, 'another Himalayan kingdom' within an extended Indian economic core. The 'Muslim fundamentalists charged that Bangladesh

---

<sup>32</sup> Kotwal, n. 31, pp. 151-54.

had escaped from the Punjabi embrace of West Pakistan only to fall under the Hindu juggernaut'.<sup>33</sup>

Until recently, Delhi has resisted Bangladesh's attempt to be part of any larger international framework that might impinge upon its own regional dominance. This is especially true in the case of managing river waters that flow from India to Bangladesh. India would like to see a rail route or other transit facility across Bangladesh, as well as the opening up of river traffic. Dhaka has resisted these requests, partly out of fear of being overwhelmed by India, but also because such access represents one of its few bargaining chips. Moreover because of social and cultural ties, the domestic ethnic politics of one state often resonates in the other.

### **MALDIVES**

The fundamental cause that gives rise to Maldives sense of insecurity and vulnerability is basically its peculiar geo-physical configuration. Infact Maldives has found itself vulnerable to the power rivalry owing largely to its location – the strategically important Gan Island in Addu Atoll, where the British Royal Air Force had base facilities, is just 240 miles away from the Diego Garcia in the Chagos archipelago. Apart from the fear that stemmed from a large scale naval presence in the vicinity of the Maldives, it was the concerted attempts

---

<sup>33</sup> L. Rose and R. Sisson, War and Secession: India, Pakistan and Creation of Bangladesh, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1990), p. 37.

of some of the extra regional powers at seeking base facilities in the Gan Island that heightened the country's security concerns.<sup>34</sup>

But what is important to note here is that whereas in the case of other smaller South Asian States, the 'India factor' mostly remained negative, in the case of Maldives, it is a major source of strength. The context for this mutually beneficial relationship is provided by the tension free socio-historical setting under which both India and Maldives interact.<sup>35</sup> Basically, Maldives does not suffer from Indophobia, rather it trusts India's assurance to respect its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Maldivian leadership adopts a pragmatic approach towards India by acknowledging its pre-eminent position in South Asia as a given reality that cannot be simply wished away.<sup>36</sup>

Infact India is considered as a source of contingency security assistance to the island state in the time of crisis. In the past, the real military threat to the country arose from mercenaries who tried to stage as many as two coups in 1980 and 1988 – in quick succession at the behest of some of the expatriate Maldivian, who were disgruntled with the existing political system.<sup>37</sup> India had responded swiftly to President Gayoom's plea for military help. In this context in the Maldivian society there was not only deep appreciation and gratitude for India's timely military assistance, but also a reassertion of its belief that Maldives had nothing to fear from India.

---

<sup>34</sup> P. Sahadevan, "Maldives: Search for Security" in Dipankar Banerjee, *Security in South Asia* (New Delhi, Manas Publications, 1999), p. 256.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> P. Sahadevan, "India and Maldives: A Mutually Beneficial Relationship", *South Asian Studies*, Jaipur, Vol. 27, No. 2, July-December 1992, pp. 32-48.

<sup>37</sup> Sahadevan, n. 34, p. 256.

The crux of the argument is that with Bangladesh and Nepal, in the security arena, the 'India Factor' has been in the negative domains of interaction, but with Bhutan and Maldives, it is marked by friendship and cooperation.

### **CONCLUSION**

To conclude, one can argue that South Asia is a clear case of 'security complex' and the neighbourhood defines the case for 'small state' complex. And there are certain unchangeable and inescapable regional realities. The first is India's preponderance over all others in South Asia, based on size, resources, development and power, allied to influence. A second is India's unique centrality. No two other states themselves can interact directly with each other without touching or crossing Indian land, sea or air space. Also, with each of its neighbours, India has special ties in terms of ethnicity, language, culture, kinship, common historical experience or shared access to and dependence upon vital natural resources. A third reality is the coterminality of the national borders of regional member states with those great natural physical barriers which encompass South Asia- the Himalayas and the Indian Ocean. Probably, no other region in the world presents such an integral security zone.

So with regard to threat perception and security concerns, the South Asian region is characterized by discord and divergence. The pattern of strategic dissonance has been fairly consistent over the years with India, on one hand, and its neighbouring countries (Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka), on the other. Whereas India's security

perceptions have generally been extrovert, conditioned more or less by the imperatives of geopolitics that were laid down by the British and its own aspirations to become powerful, those of the neighbours have mostly been introvert centered within the region, particularly vis-à-vis India.

**INDIA AS A FACTOR IN “INSECURITY” OF SRI LANKA**

**INTRODUCTION**

India and Sri Lanka are asymmetrical neighbours, whether one considers population or physical size. India is a large subcontinental state with 1.2 million square miles in extent, while Sri Lanka is a small island of twenty-five thousand square miles. And therefore, the prominent issue between the two is inevitably related to the wider issue of regional power/small state relationship. Linked to this issue are conflicting visions of the essentials of national security from the time India and Sri Lanka attained independence in 1947 and 1948 respectively.

The focus of this study is to analyse the dynamics of interaction between Sri Lanka and India, within the larger framework of what Buzan and Rizvi describe as a ‘security complex’. A study of the following dimensions, would help delineate a case for the ‘Indian Factor’ as a source of insecurity:

- (A) The dynamics of locational determinism
- (B) The historical context
- (C) Strategic divergence 1983-90: Sri Lanka in the shadow of Indian elephant.

## **(A) THE DYNAMICS OF LOCATIONAL DETERMINISM**

Sri Lanka's geostrategic location is highlighted by the fact that it is virtually in the centre of Asia and the sea lanes between the Far East and the African Arab World. This location gives the island a central position midway on the ancient maritime trade route between West and East Asia.<sup>1</sup>

The island nation thus occupies an important place in the critical sea lines of communication. Trade and naval activity in the Indian Ocean can be monitored from here. 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.<sup>2</sup> Geography, therefore, has played a primary role in Sri Lankan security, as it occupies one of the most exposed and central positions of any country in the world.

The British realized the strategic importance of the island nation. India, on the eve of independence tried to advocate the concept of strategic unity between India and Sri Lanka, whereby the possession of Sri Lanka came to be regarded as a prerequisite for the defence and security of India. Britain, the major sea power of this period, considered the Trincomalee harbour facing the Bay of Bengal on the islands east

---

<sup>1</sup> Ajay Darshan Behera, in P.R. Chari (ed.), Perspectives on National Security in South Asia: In search of a New Paradigm (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 1999), p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> Rahul Roy-Chaudhary, Sea Power and Indian Security (London, Brassey's, 1995), p. 135.



coast, to be of strategic importance. It thus, became an important bastion in the British defence network.<sup>3</sup>

The geostrategic significance of Sri Lanka was again highlighted during the last phases of World War II when Japanese bombs hit Colombo, Trincomalee and Madras.<sup>4</sup> All this brought out clearly the vulnerabilities of the Indian coasts, and Indian planners subsequently responded to these threats by suggesting various proposals. They spelt out how since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the future of India had been determined primarily by the oceans. As part of the mechanisms to meet the threats arising from the ocean, proposals pleading for common defence links among Burma, Sri Lanka and India came up.<sup>5</sup>

These proposals brought out the vulnerabilities of India's maritime assets. It was in this background that K.M. Panikkar suggested the evolution of common defence plans including Britain, Mauritius, Scotia, Ceylon, Siam, Indo-China. Such common defence policies were suggested by other Indian leaders and thinkers also.<sup>6</sup>

For India, enunciation of such policies was part of the mechanism to face potential threats. However, many in Sri Lanka viewed such policies as part of India's expansionist agenda, against which effective measures had to be taken. India did not perceive a

---

<sup>3</sup> Shelton U. Kodikara, Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka (Delhi, Chankya Publications, 1982), p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Choudhary, n. 2, p. 17, The author says, '...the entry of the Japanese navy into the Indian ocean in December 1941 effectively brought British supremacy in the era to an end. The fall of Singapore in February 1942, the occupation of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in March and destruction of British workshops in April increased the military threat to India'.

<sup>5</sup> K.M. Panikkar, "India and The Indian Ocean" in Shelton in Kodikara, Indo-Ceylon Relations since Independence, (Colombo, The Ceylon Institute of World Affairs, 1968), pp. 32-34.

<sup>6</sup> S.D. Muni, Pangs of Proximity-India and Sri Lanka's Ethnic Crisis (New Delhi, Sage, 1993), S.D. Muni refers to the views of Nehru, where he talks of the possibility of cooperation among various countries in the interests of Indian security.

threat from Sri Lanka as such the apprehension was that if anybody with interests inimical towards India were to gain a foothold in the island nation, India's security interests could be adversely affected.

However, in Sri Lanka these Indian views were looked upon as an expression of expansionism.<sup>7</sup> So, much so, they were perceived as threats against which necessary measures had to be taken. Hence, Sri Lanka signed a defence pact with the United Kingdom on Nov. 11, 1947.

The island's location increased its vulnerability mostly during the cold war period marked by the militarization of Indian Ocean. Buttressed by a strategically important natural harbour in Trincomalee in Eastern province, Sri Lanka had used its location to neutralize India's position by cultivating extra regional powers and even expressing its desire to give base facilities especially to the United States.

Sri Lankan overtures to the US served both as an irritant and an embarrassment to the Indian government.<sup>8</sup> It was vital for India to ensure that the port of Trincomalee did not become a US base. It was crucial for India, as the dominant power in the region, that a 'hostile state does not emerge on its southern flank', threatening its geopolitical interests in the strategically important Indian Ocean.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Kodikara, n. 3, pp. 21-22.

<sup>8</sup> S. Hennayake, "The Peace Accord and the Tamils in Sri Lanka", *Asian Survey*, April 1989, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 405.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 406.

Ethnic violence broke out in 1983, when the second cold war was at its height. There was also the possibility of ethnic 'fratricide' spilling over into the Southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, only twenty five miles across the Palk strait from Sri Lanka, with its fifty six million Tamil population.<sup>10</sup> India's firm and categorical stand against external involvement in Sri Lanka frustrated, to a large extent, Colombo's frantic moves to build up a strategic design and nexus in the region aimed at countervailing India. But India's disapproval of Sri Lanka's security measures, was attributed to its desire for hegemony in the region along the lines of what they called 'India's Monroe Doctrine'<sup>11</sup>.

Though many countries (including the UK, the US, China and Pakistan) supplied arms or allowed military sales, none of them was prepared to become Sri Lanka's strategic partners in a real sense. The western powers didn't buy Sri Lanka's argument of India as a potential aggressor. This in fact was a further demonstration of the geopolitical determinants of what has been called 'locational determinism'<sup>12</sup>. This represented a defacto recognition of Indian regional hegemony.

It also demonstrated how asymmetrical power factor made the Sinhalese ruling elite deeply suspicious of India. One Indian analyst, concluded that 'India's security interests are coterminous with Sri

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 407.

<sup>11</sup> K.M. de Silva, Regional Powers and Small State Security: India and Sri Lanka (New Delhi, Vikas, 1995), pp.35-38.

<sup>12</sup> A.J. Wilson, The Break up of Sri Lanka: The Sinhalese-Tamil Conflict, (London, Murst, 1988), pp. 177-200.

Lanka and not vice versa'<sup>13</sup>. This further demonstrates the asymmetrical dynamics of the security relationship.

Ravi Kaul, a retired commander of Indian Navy, perceptively commented:

Sri Lanka is as important to India as Eire is to the United Kingdom...As long as Sri Lanka is friendly or neutral, India has nothing to worry about, but if there is any danger of the island falling under the domination of a power hostile to India, (she) cannot tolerate such a situation endangering her territorial integrity.<sup>14</sup>

Infact it can be argued that much of the strategic divergence and the “Indian fear” arose out of locational dynamics, which infact got reflected in the conflicting visions of security.

### **(B) INDIA AND SRI LANKA: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

The objective is to study the antecedents of “Indian Factor” in its negative dimensions by way of locating it in two linked arenas:

- (i) Historical memories of the Sinhalese and cross country ethnic linkages.
- (ii) Personal identities and their role in the formulation of strategic thinking.

---

<sup>13</sup> Sreedhar, 'An Anatomy of the Trincomalee Deal', *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 12, No. 2, June 1984, p. 242.

<sup>14</sup> R. Kaul, cited in Poulouse, T. (ed), Indian Ocean Power Rivalry, (New Delhi, International Publications Service, 1974), p. 66.

(i) **Historical memories of the Sinhalese and Cross Country Ethnic Linkages**

Sri Lanka's past history has been profoundly influenced by its proximity to India. According to tradition, the Sinhalese (who comprise over 70% of the islands population) are descendants of settlers who came from North India in the sixth century B.C. Buddhism, the religion of majority of the Sinhalese, came from India in the third century B.C. Ancient Sinhalese art and architecture was essentially Buddhist in character and influenced by Indian forms.

The period eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, saw the rise of several powerful South Indian imperialist powers – the Chola empire, the Pandyan Empire, the Vijayanagar Empire. The period was marked by a series of South Indian invasions of Sri Lanka, and at various times the island, or a part of it, was incorporated as an integral part of one or other of these empires.<sup>15</sup> It almost became axiomatic that the existence of a powerful South Indian empire would imperil the independence and integrity of the island. It has been argued that the Sinhalese attitudes to the Indo-Sri Lanka question itself, are perhaps more easily understood when it is said that conflict between the South Indian Tamils and the Sinhalese is rooted in ancient tradition of Sri Lanka's history.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> University History of Ceylon, Vol. I, part I (Colombo, Ceylon University Press, 1960), pp. 411-14 and 684-90.

<sup>16</sup> B.H. Farmer, Ceylon: A Divided Nation (Oxford, 1962), p. 32.

Moving through the ages, it can be argued that one of the primary factors that have affected the bilateral relationship between India and Sri Lanka is the status of Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka, both before and after independence. Even though they constitute only 5.6% of the population, Indian Tamils have been regarded with suspicion and hostility by the majority Sinhalese population, since 1823, when the first tea plantation workers arrived in Sri Lanka. They have accordingly been the subject of contentious negotiations between the two countries.<sup>17</sup>

Both sides had strong differences and solution seemed to evade them. It was only in 1964, following the Srimavo-Shastri pact, that a mutually acceptance solution was signed. In 1988, the Sri Lankan government addressed the question by enacting the grant of citizenship to stateless persons (special provisions) act which sought to settle the residual issues arising from earlier agreements. All these discussions, however led to a lot of bitterness between the two countries.<sup>18</sup>

**(ii) Personal identities and their Role in the Formulation of Strategic Thinking**

When one talks about the historical context, one needs to take note of the fact that the mode of articulation of interests and strategic concerns by ruling elite also does play a prominent role in the

---

<sup>17</sup> Urmila Phadnis and Nancy Jetly : 'Indo-Sri Lankan Relation: The Indira Gandhi Years', in A. Damodaran and Bajpai, (eds.) Indian Foreign Policy: The Indira Gandhi Years, (London, Sangam, 1991), pp. 149-50.

<sup>18</sup> Urmila Phadnis, "The 1964 Indo-Ceylonese pact and the 'stateless' persons in Ceylon", in Virender Grover, (ed.), Encyclopedia of SAARC Nations, Sri Lanka, vol. 5 (New Delhi: Deep and Deep, 1997), pp. 97-117.

formulation of security vision. It was Don Stephen Senanayake, the first Prime Minister and elder statesman of the country, who perceived India to be a potential threat to the islands security. The basis laid by Stephen Senanayake in terms of 'India factor' got inculcated further in the succeeding generations of Sri Lankan leaders.

And infact the 'India factor' in the insecurity of Sri Lanka got manifested in the 1947 defence agreement with Britain. It was further reiterated by actions of Srimavo Bhandarnaike who did not identify with India on the Sino-Indian War of 1962 and the Indo-Pak war of 1971.

The ground realities indicate that until the seventies, the ruling elite and leadership, deliberately articulated the 'India factor' in the insecurity of Sri Lanka. Later, India's style of conducting neighbourhood relations did contribute to islands fear and insecurity.

### **(C) STRATEGIC DIVERGENCE: 1983-90**

#### **INDIA AS A SOURCE OF INSECURITY AND THE DYNAMICS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT**

India was initially only concerned with the issue of the plantation Tamils in Sri Lanka. The issue of the Sri Lankan Tamils did not concern it initially for they had acquired over the years an independent historical identity, different from the Indian Tamils. It was in the late 1970s that the growing difference between the Sri Lankan Tamils and the Sinhalese had their repercussions on the Indian people and polity, especially of Tamil Nadu. The ethnic riots of July 24, 1983, which led to

the refugee influx into Tamil Nadu and other security concerns changed the course of the Indian attitude and resulted in Indian involvement.<sup>19</sup> The various efforts by India led to a lot of resentment in Sri Lanka.<sup>20</sup> It needs to be noted that the ethnic crisis is primarily an internal problem of Sri Lanka and became a bilateral problem only when it tended to spill over and affect India in terms of both internal and external security.

**(i) The Context: Sri Lanka Undertakes a Global Search for Security, 1983-84**

It needs to be underlined that to meet the situation following the riots, Sri Lanka decided to adopt a military solution to the problem. Thus, a series of steps were taken whereby Sri Lanka approached other countries for political and military help. These included the USA, UK, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Malaysia. India was not asked for help as its sympathies lay with the Sri Lankan Tamils.

What is of utmost importance is that in its interactions with the rest of the world, Sri Lanka made out that there was a threat to its unity and integrity from Tamil terrorism, with the support and encouragement of the government and people of India, and that there could be a direct military invasion by India for the creation of independent sovereign Tamil state.<sup>21</sup> They looked upon India, as in the

---

<sup>19</sup> Ajay Darshan Behera, "Mediation to Intervention: India's Role in the Sri Lankan Conflict", in Virender Grover, (ed.), Encyclopedia of SAARC Nations, Vol. 3 (New Delhi, Deep and Deep, 1947).

<sup>20</sup> de Silva, n. 11, pp. 45-46.

<sup>21</sup> Muni, n. 6, p. 52.



words of Ivor Jennings, “a mountain that might, at any time, send down destructive avalanches”<sup>22</sup>.

The external help to Sri Lanka took the following form:

- By November 1983, Keeny Meeny Services (KMS), a specialized outfit for fighting terrorism, with headquarters in the UK, was contacted to train Sri Lankan Commandos, Colonel Jim Johnson, KMS Partner and ex SAS officer, Colonel David Warker, the team commander visited Colombo and finalized plans for the training.<sup>23</sup>
- After July 1983, the government of Sri Lanka sought military training assistance from Pakistan.<sup>24</sup> Pakistan contributed Rs. 10 million, and this aid included military equipment sent in Pakistani civil planes to avoid any Indian suspicion and protest. A Pakistan naval ship made a goodwill visit to Sri Lanka in the first week of August 1984.<sup>25</sup>
- The Sri Lankan government secured the assistance of the world famous Israeli intelligence agencies, Mossad and Shin Bet, to strengthen its own intelligence set up and military training facilities. According to a Sri Lankan view, Israel’s Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir is reported to have

---

<sup>22</sup> Ivor Jennings, *The Commonwealth in Asia* (London, 1953), p. 113.

<sup>23</sup> Rohan Gunaratna, *Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka: The Role of India’s Intelligence Agencies* (Colombo, South Asian Network on Conflict Research, 1993), p. 11.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

said that Sri Lanka could count on the “resources of Israel to fight the common enemy-terrorism”. The Israelis also informed Colombo that the former had captured Sri Lankan Tamil militants in Lebanon. This view, thus holds that such events made Israel assistance vital and amenable for Sri Lanka.<sup>26</sup>

- Sri Lanka also received sizeable and cheap military supplies from China.<sup>27</sup> China was supposed to have provided military assistance ranging from naval vessels to weapons.

It was not just the military assistance which Sri Lanka was seeking from the international community which aroused Indian anxieties. Sri Lanka also accommodated certain strategic interests of the other countries, which India felt would pull Sri Lanka into the cold war calculations.

The strategic interests included:

- The visits of US naval ships for refueling and crew rest and the statement by General Vernon Walters, the special envoy of the US President, that the US would be satisfied if Sri Lanka permits some short lease (crew rest) and that the ships could remain on the high seas for long period.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> Gunaratna, n. 21, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> Muni, n. 6, p. 52.

<sup>28</sup> Muni, n. 6, p. 54.

- The contract for the renovation and expansion of refueling facilities at the strategic harbour of Trincomalee, the World War II vintage oil storage tank farm, was awarded to a Singapore-based private consortium with suspected US links, after the bids by India which were supposed to be the lowest, were rejected. Following India's protest, Sri Lanka had to cancel the contract and reopen the tenders.<sup>29</sup>
- The establishment of a powerful Voice of America transmission facility, expected to be the largest of its kind outside the USA, aroused the maximum Indian concern. Indian fears arose from the possibility that the facility could serve as a hi-tech outfit to monitor naval and land communications and movements in the region, including those of India. This facility could also beam high frequency messages to US submarines deployed in the Indian Ocean region.<sup>30</sup>
- It was during this time that the President of Sri Lanka made the assertion that the defence pact with Britain, entered into in 1947 remained. Infact this was technically correct because in 1956, only the bases had been closed and the pact itself was not abrogated. The emphasis on the pact at a time when India was concerned about its security only increased its suspicions.

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Muni, n. 6, p. 55.

**(ii) An Analysis of 'India Factor' as Source of Insecurity**

A study of the 'India Factor' as a source of insecurity would involve:

- (a) Change in attitude and support to the Tamil cause
- (b) Military training and assistance to Tamil separatists
- (c) An understanding of how Sri Lanka was infact in the shadow of Indian elephant
- (d) Peace Accord of 1987: India extracted concessions

**(a) Change in Attitude and Support to The Tamil Cause**

It was in the context of the developments that Indian attitude to Sri Lanka itself acquired a new dimension of importance. There was renewed interest for the Tamil cause and India, for the first time in 1983, began to extend its mediatory role on behalf of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Whether this new interest derived from India's humanitarian concerns or its strategic interests is debatable. India's mediatory role in 1983, to be sure, must be placed in the context of the attitudes and orientation of the Tamil Nadu Government and Tamil Nadu political parties, which had become strongly supportive of the cause of all Tamils of Sri Lanka.

This new interest in Sri Lankan Tamils, also however coincided with India's new security interest in Sri Lanka arising from its

misgivings regarding the direction of Sri Lanka's foreign policy at this time.

1983 brought about a new demonstration of interest in the island. India's high stakes and interest in the conflict developed from Sri Lanka's strategic policy as well as the spill over effect of violence in the island since 1983. Sri Lanka High Commissioner in Delhi was summoned to South Bloc and told by Shankar Bajpai that India was watching with regret development in Jaffna and measures taken by Sri Lanka to deal with the ethnic problem.<sup>31</sup>

Bajpai referred in particular to Emergency Regulations enacted by the Sri Lankan Government in June 1983. The High Commissioner who had asked whether this was an expression of concern from the Indian Government or from Tamil Nadu, he was told that it was the concern of the Indian Government "at the highest level".<sup>32</sup>

The media reaction, was very adverse charging India of having added Sri Lanka to its list of troubled neighbours:<sup>33</sup>

India has had own problems of separatists and terrorists. Let the Indian government settle their own problems first.

The Island (21<sup>st</sup> July 1983) also charged that India's action "smacks of a big brother telling a little country how it should run its affairs".

---

<sup>31</sup> *The Statesman*, July 7, 1983.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *The Sun*, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1983.

India rejected the charge of interference in Sri Lanka's internal affairs but, following, the outbreak of communal violence after 23<sup>rd</sup> July, India began to take a more active mediatory role in the affairs of Sri Lanka. With regard to the possibility of Indian physical intervention, Jayawardene must have duly noted the pronouncements by Indira Gandhi following the riots. In her telephone conversation with Jayawardene, she reportedly expressed the view that India could not be regarded as "just another country" as every development in Sri Lanka affected India also<sup>34</sup>. This was a coded reference to the historic, cultural and linguistic ties that existed, in particular with Tamil Nadu, and also their strategic interdependence. A.J. Wilson also notes that in conversation with Tamil expatriates in New York in 1983, Indira Gandhi reportedly said 'that she would have ordered the Indian army to invade, but demurred because of the 'defencelessness of the Indian plantation workers'<sup>35</sup>.

India was also aware that international criticism would be aroused following an invasion and it was sensitive to the previous precedent set by the actions in the formation of Bangladesh in 1971.<sup>36</sup>

However, there is strong evidence that plans for armed intervention were drawn up. Professor Shelton Kodikara, a renowned expert on Indo-Sri Lankan relations, expressed the opinion in an interview that an invasion in July 1983 was certainly prepared for and

---

<sup>34</sup> Indira Gandhi, quoted in V. Dutt, *India's Foreign Policy*, (New Delhi, Vani), p. 323.

<sup>35</sup> Wilson, n. 12, pp. 178-186.

<sup>36</sup> M. Rahman, *Emergence of a New Nation in a multi-polar World Bangladesh*, (Washington D.C., University Press of America), pp. 136-7.

that several Tamil Nadu MPs lobbied Indira Gandhi and made speeches in the Lok Sabha in support of armed intervention.<sup>37</sup> The reaction to Indian interests in the riots from the Sri Lankan press was highly critical.

Simultaneously, Indira Gandhi also expressed her commitment to the preservation of the unity of Sri Lanka and its territorial integrity, as it was in India's interest that 'balkanization' of Sri Lanka should not occur. Furthermore in the Lok Sabha, on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1983, she said that other countries 'acknowledged India's special interest in the whole matter', thus understanding its role as regional hegemon.<sup>38</sup>

Though Sri Lanka at this juncture denied any overtures being made to foreign powers, President Jayawardene's brother Hector was dispatched in early August as an emissary to India, where Ms. Gandhi took the opportunity of offering him India's 'good offices' in dialogue and mediation expressing a commitment to a negotiated solution to the situation.<sup>39</sup> This marked commencement of 'shuttle diplomacy' between India and Sri Lanka, with a series of envoys appointed for this purpose.

President Jayawardene exemplified his insecurity by stating. "If India by some chance even decided to invade us, we will fight and may

---

<sup>37</sup> S. Kodikara, (ed.), Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987, (Colombo, University of Colombo International Relations Programme, 1992), p. 11.

<sup>38</sup> D. Hagerty "India's Regional Security Doctrine", *Asian Survey*, April 1991, Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 358-60.

<sup>39</sup> H. Nissanka, Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy: A study in Non-Alignment, (New Delhi, Vikas, 1984), p. 356.

be lose, but with dignity. Then we will go into exile and come back to our country later".<sup>40</sup>

### **(b) Military Training and Assistance to Tamil Separatists**

When one attempts to address the contention of 'Indian Fear', one needs to also assess the ground realities as the basis for this fear and one crucial question that needs examination is the issue of military training and assistance to the Sri Lankan Tamils.

President Jayawardene complained to Mrs. Gandhi about the alleged training of separatist groups in Tamil Nadu. Infact, a former US military intelligence analyst Thomas A. Marks, pointed to "a massive body of evidence", gained from captured insurgents, which supported the view that India, through RAW was arming and training Sri Lankan Tamil guerillas.

....as early as May 1982, interrogations of captured insurgents involved demonstrate, RAW became involved in a program of training Tamil guerillas in sabotage and intelligence gathering, especially techniques for reporting back on ship movements and Western port calls at Trincomalee.<sup>41</sup>

Infact, Rohan Gunaratna, a Sri Lankan born fellow at the centre for the study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, said in an interview, that in the 1983-87 period, "more than 20,000 Tamil militants were based in India". He said "the first and second batch of training was provided by the Indian Foreign

---

<sup>40</sup> Muni, n. 6, p. 325.

<sup>41</sup> *Daily News*, 6 July, 1987.



Intelligence Agency, the Research and Analysis Wing, in Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh at two Indian military facilities. After that with the expertise these groups gained, they set up their own training camps in South India". The reasons were basically strategic and South India had become a sanctuary from which Tamil guerillas were operating with impunity.

It has been argued that however much the Indian political leadership might deny the existence of Sri Lankan Tamil training camps in South India and however much Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi might affirm their support for the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka, the nagging feeling persisted in Sri Lankan political circles in the South that India was propping up Tamil terrorists, and directing Tamil separatists, for the purpose of advancing its own interests in the region.

### **(c) Sri Lanka: In the Shadow of Indian Elephant**

The objective is to delineate the case for how a regional power like India, impinges on the security sensitivities of a small neighbour Sri Lanka. One would study the two pronged approach of India, both of negotiations and intervention, coupled with dynamics of regime change and internal political forces.

After the assassination of Indira Gandhi in December 1984, there was renewed confidence in Sri Lanka that relations between the two

states under the new Prime Minister would improve. Relations had certainly reached a nadir in March and April 1984.<sup>42</sup>

Rajiv Gandhi stated his intentions in October 1985: 'We have to build a confidence in the small countries of the region that we do not wish any Indian hegemony to spread'<sup>43</sup>. Thus, Sri Lanka interpreted such statements to mean that relations had entered a more cordial, less interventionist phase.

A new phase in the negotiations was reached when, at a summit meeting held in New Delhi in June, 1985, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayewardene arrived at an understanding which recognized the Indian interest in Sri Lanka's crisis, the necessity for India's involvements in its solution, as well as the need for a political solution acceptable to the Tamils and the Sinhalese people. One of the key elements of the accord was India's commitment to the view that all possible steps must be taken to end violence by all sides. This entailed India's acceptance of the responsibility for ensuring the cessation of all terrorist activities carried out from Indian soil against Sri Lanka until a formula for a political solution was reached by the Sri Lanka government during a three month period of a moratorium on hostilities.

The moratorium on violence came into effect on June 18, 1985. In July and August 1985, two conferences attended by the Government of Sri Lanka, representatives of the TULF, and of five militant groups

---

<sup>42</sup> S.D. Muni, , 'Indo-Sri Lankan Relations and Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict', in K.M. de Silva and R. May (eds.) Internationalisation of Ethnic Conflict, (London, ICES/Pinter, 1991), p. 120.

<sup>43</sup> R. Thomas, Indian Security Policy, (Princeton, N.J. Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 14.

then sojourning in Tamil Nadu, were arranged through the good offices of the Government of India in Thimpu, Bhutan with a view to finding a way out of the deadlock in Sinhala-Tamil relations. But these did not result in agreement.

The Tamil groups considered that the devolution of power at the district level national units within the framework of the unitary state of Sri Lanka proposed by the Sri Lanka delegation fell far short of their expectations. In July 1985 they had themselves put forward "four principles" as their own minimum demand. These concerned:

- (a) Recognition of Tamil as a distinct nationality.
- (b) Recognition of an identified Tamil homeland.
- (c) The right of self-determination of the Tamil people.
- (d) The right to full citizenship of all Tamils living in Sri Lanka.

The Government of Sri Lanka considered that recognition of the first three principles would be tantamount to recognition of Eelam itself, while the fourth encroached upon the interests of Indian Tamils who had their own leadership in Sri Lanka, and who did not support the demand for a separate state.

Thus there was disagreement on fundamentals between the contending sides at Thimpu. The six Tamil groups walked out of the second Thimpu conference in August alleging violations of the ceasefire by Sri Lanka's security forces. By the end of 1986, though much progress had been made in clearing divergences and misconceptions in the respective positions of the governments of India and Sri Lanka, the

recalcitrance of the militant groups was holding up an agreed solution of the devolution of power. In this context the Sri Lanka government decided to step up its military offensive in Jaffna and India began urging Sri Lanka to halt operations so as to facilitate the political process. In the early month of 1987 events quickly moved to a crisis.<sup>44</sup>

Infact the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka reached a new phase when the government imposed an economic and communication blockade on the Jaffna peninsula in January 1987. This followed the breakdown of talks and the rejection of the 19 December proposals. It was also thought that the LTTE were on the verge of unilateral declaration of independence on the Jaffna Peninsula.<sup>45</sup>

As the situation deteriorated, India issued a demarche, suspending its 'good offices' on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 1987. As fighting intensified in the Jaffna peninsula, the Sri Lankan government launched 'operation liberation' on 16 May 1987. The aim of the operation was to destroy LTTE bases. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran announced on 2 May 1987 that he would allocate \$3.2 million to help the Tamil 'Freedom Fighters' in Sri Lanka.<sup>46</sup>

M.G. Ramachandran sent a telex to Rajiv Gandhi on 28 May 1987 expressing fears that thousands of civilians would be killed 'at the hands of the Sri Lankan Army'<sup>47</sup>. As a result of this lobbying, the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Narain Dutt Tiwari, warned the Sri Lankan government of the consequences of continued action, strongly

---

<sup>44</sup> *The Indian news* (Washington DC), 6 April 1987.

<sup>45</sup> de Silva, n. 11, p. 89.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90.

<sup>47</sup> M.G. Ramachandran, cited in Anon, 'India condemns Anti-Terrorist Thrust in Jaffna', *Lanka Guardian*, Colombo, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1 June 1987, p. 3.

condemning the 'massive assault... against the entire civilian population of Jaffna'<sup>48</sup>.

The Sri Lankan government did halt 'operation liberation'. On 1<sup>st</sup> June, India's High commissioner in Sri Lanka, J.N. Dixit, informed the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, S. Hameed, that India proposed to send 'urgently needed relief' by sea to Jaffna, commencing on 3 June 1987. In a note to Hameed, Dixit expressed the 'humanitarian consideration' of the Indian Government for the people of Jaffna, in which it was claimed that 'operation liberation' was a 'fight to the finish' which had been concealed from the world by an information embargo.<sup>49</sup>

The Sri Lankan government denied Indian allegation, arguing that the situation had been deliberately exacerbated by 'the patronage of separatist terrorism by the state of Tamil Nadu, a constituent of the Republic of India'<sup>50</sup>. This was a clear reference to India's role in training and arming Tamil militants.

A flotilla of nineteen boats carrying food and medicine headed towards Sri Lankan territorial waters on 3 June 1987 at 6 pm. It was turned back, but the following day, the Indian air force Para dropped twenty five tons of food over the Jaffna Peninsula.<sup>51</sup>

This event demonstrated to Jayewardene, the limitations of Sri Lankan political autonomy and his geopolitical isolation, as the airdrops of 'humanitarian aid' did not receive international approval. This in turn underlined India's undisputed role as the regional

---

<sup>48</sup> Ramachandran, n. 47, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> de Silva, n. 11, p.4.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

hegemon. This process culminated in the signing of the July 1987 peace accord.

**(d) The Peace Accord of 1987: India Extracted Concessions**

What has been termed the 1987 Indo-Lanka peace accord consisted of three parts:

- The Agreement
- “An Annexure to the Agreement”
- Letters of Exchange between President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi

All signed on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1987. While the agreement related to proposals for a solutions of Sri Lanka’s ethnic problem, the “annexure” laid down the procedures to be adopted in regard to elections to provincial councils, surrender of arms by the militants and monitoring the cessation of hostilities. The letters pertained to issues of security and foreign policy which had no bearing on the ethnic problem. What was significant about the Indo-Lanka Agreement of July 1987 was the manner in which, by one stroke of pen, Sri Lanka was squarely brought into the Indian security fold under its terms where no commitment impinging on security had existed in paper in the dyadic relationship before.

The new security commitments are all included in the letters of exchange which accompanied the agreement, not in the agreement proper, and are to the following effect.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Kodikara, n. 3, pp. 56-57.

1. The two countries “will reach an early understanding about the relevance and employment of foreign military and intelligence personnel with a view to ensure that such presences will not prejudice Indo-Sri Lanka relations”.
2. Trincomalee or any other port in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India’s interests.
3. Restoration and operation of a Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm will be undertaken as a joint venture between India and Sri Lanka.
4. Sri Lanka’s agreements with foreign broadcasting organizations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them in Sri Lanka are used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military or intelligence purpose.

India’s own reciprocal obligations under the letters were to deport Sri Lankan citizens found to be engaged in terrorist activities or advocating separatism or secessionism and to provide training facilities and military supplies for Sri Lankan Security forces.

Importantly, by listing out wide ranging obligations, the agreement envisaged a participant role for India in the conflict. The letters exchanged between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayewardene clearly spelt out the extent to which Sri Lanka addressed India’s concern. And so the argument that India, a regional power, coerced a strife torn small country to make extensive unilateral security concessions and offered its military help to the Sri Lankan Army with a

view to restricting the islands external defence contacts.<sup>53</sup> The arrangement was seen as a demonstration of India's desire for regional hegemony, subjecting Sri Lanka to be a country dependent on India for its security and survival.<sup>54</sup> It was for this reason that some Sinhalese hard liners argued that by conceding to India's security demands, Sri Lanka compromised on its independence and sovereignty.

And so definitely there are strong reasons to believe that India's main objective in signing the agreement was strategic, that the letters contained the essential strategic goals of India's policy towards Sri Lanka and that the proposals to the resolution of the ethnic crisis contained in the text of the agreement and the annexure were in fact, subsidiary objectives, from the Indian view.

The Indo-Lanka Peace Accord of 1987 failed in its main objective of bringing about peace and normalcy in Sri Lanka. Views about its continued validity are divergent in India and Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka the Accord is viewed as a "dead letter" and the Government of Sri Lanka initiated moves, which has also now been stayed, to replace it with a new friendship treaty.

It however needs to be underlined that apart from structural infirmities, the agreement sought to accomplish too many complex things within a short period. One cannot understand why India did agree to such a timeframe for the implementation of some of the provisions such as cessation of hostilities (within 48 hrs of the signing

---

<sup>53</sup> P. Sahadevan, "Security of Sri Lanka, Concern, Approaches and Alternatives" in Dipankar Banerjee (ed.), *Security in South Asia*, (New Delhi, Manas, 1999), pp. 205-17.

<sup>54</sup> It is worth quoting the SLFP Leader Sirimavo Bandarnaike, who said that "Indians have achieved much more than they dreamed of achieving" and Sri Lanka became "an Indian protectorate" through the agreement. *The Telegraph* (Calcutta), 7 August 1987.



of the agreement), surrendering of arms by the Tamil militants and the withdrawal of the Sri Lankan Security forces to the barracks (within 72 hours of the cessation of hostilities) and finalization of residual devolution of powers to the provincial council (within six weeks). The most crucial and significant was the commitment to send an Indian-Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to implement the agreement. The IPKF operation turned out to be a thankless job.<sup>55</sup>

More than 1200 soldiers were killed and about 2500 injured.<sup>56</sup> India spent more than \$180 million on the operation. The LTTE also suffered a heavy loss. Above all several hundreds of civilians were dead or injured in the IPKF-LTTE war.

India protected Sri Lanka's national interest at its own heavy cost, but the Sinhalese refused to acknowledge and appreciate its sacrifice. Instead, the Premadasa Government successfully used all unceremonious means to send the IPKF off the island, the most notorious way was arming of the LTTE against the IPKF and normalization of relations with the LTTE leadership by holding peace talks during May 1989-June 1990. After the withdrawal of IPKF in March 1990, there has been a drastic change in India's stance on the ethnic conflict.

## **CONCLUSION**

To conclude one can argue that Sri Lanka, a small state in the South Asian Security Complex has its own set of insecurities vis-a-vis

---

<sup>55</sup> P. Sahadevan, "India and Sri Lanka: A Changing Relationship", *Dialogue*, Vol. 5, No. 3, January-March 2004, p. 152.

<sup>56</sup> J. Rettie, 'Hundreds killed in Tiger Attack', *Lanka Guardian*, London, 12 November 1993, p. 13.

the bigger power India. One can discuss that 'India factor' in the eighties was a cause of great strategic divergence. The factor for this strategic divergence can be located in Sri Lanka's strategic location, and also in the account of its historical memories. But these are basically built in factors which got operationalized, when India assumed a new role as direct participant in the ethnic conflict. Sri Lanka's sense of insecurity was heightened, when India articulated its concerns for Tamils and also provided military training and assistance to them. The Indo-Sri Lanka accord accentuated the fear of 'India factor' further as India did extract concessions from a strife torn country, though definitely under the umbrella of mutual cooperation and reciprocity. The crux basically is that India was a prime factor in Sri Lanka's insecurity in the specified period.

**INDIA AS A FACTOR IN "SECURITY" OF SRI LANKA**

**INTRODUCTION**

South Asia has been aptly called an arena where member states feed on each others fears.<sup>1</sup> While the cold war was certainly a factor in creating such an atmosphere, local factors particularly religious and ethnic differences and the way they are reinforced by resource issues, have been more important. Analysts argued in favour of more harmonious regional structures since the cold war is ended.

Sri Lanka which had witnessed severe security crisis in the mid eighties, with the 'India Factor' in its negative dimensions dominating the strategic thinking, has had significant shifts in its approach towards security. Many factors including a qualitative shift in India's attitude towards the neighbours, changes that have taken place within these countries; and political and economic change taking place at the global level, have all together contributed to this.

**CHANGES AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL**

The break up of the Soviet Union and the end of cold war have brought about profound change in international and regional power equations leading to the transformation of the geo-strategic environment of South Asia.

---

<sup>1</sup> Rajni Kothari and R.K. Srivastava, "Regional Co-operation in South Asia", in Evelyne Blamont (ed.), Regional Cooperation and Peace, (International Social Science Centre of UNESCO, 1984), p. 66.

The characteristic of this change could be summed up as follows:

- (a) While the United State has emerged as the most important power in the world, this unipolarity will be tempered with multi-polar impulses and assertions of Japan, European Union, China, Russia and hopefully India.
- (b) Economic considerations and developmental imperatives have become a matter of high priority in public consciousness.
- (c) Globalisation has made territorial countries and nation-states fluid. The flow of ideas, people and goods is freer.
- (d) Rapid strides in technology, particularly information technology, are eroding the traditional concept of the nation state. And at the same time, these technologies are becoming the most substantive ingredients of national power.
- (e) Compared to other regimes of the world, South Asia is an area of tension and conflict. Situation in Afghanistan, hostility between Bhutan and Nepal and the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, all have caused implications for India. Moreover, India and Pakistan which have become defacto nuclear weapon states, has heightened tension as well as focused on the importance of strategic environment in the South Asian region.
- (f) As regards India, in the post cold war, one could characterize its foreign policy as on a move towards more reticence and non-interference in the affairs of the nearby states. There has also

been growing realization that instead of getting locked into the region, India should look beyond it. Though definitely earlier concerns do not necessarily get completely negated they do diminish in importance. And so for India's smaller neighbours like Sri Lanka, the new regional environment has provided the right condition for the improvement of relations.<sup>2</sup>

### **THE 'INDIA FACTOR' AS A SOURCE OF SECURITY: 1990-2003**

The 1990s were marked by three clear trends in India's bilateral relations with its neighbours. First, regular high level meetings between leaders and senior officials took place, signifying the importance and seriousness attributed to bilateral relations. In some instances, such interactions have been institutionalized to provide permanence and continuity.

Second, India has focused on resolving major bilateral issues to build an environment of trust, and it has been successful in some of these.

Third, both India and neighbours have emphasized on the economic aspect of the relationship despite there being differences on other issues. The economic emphasis is aimed to harness the resource potential of the countries jointly through bilateral means, as well as sub-regionally and regionally..

---

<sup>2</sup> *The Hindu*, March 1995.

The objective here is that with reference to Sri Lanka, one would now attempt to evolve a conceptual framework to understand the positive role of the Indian factor. One would assess it in terms of:

- (A) Shift in India's attitude towards its smaller neighbours
- (B) The positive economic stimulus
- (C) Strategic linkages by way of enhanced defence cooperation
- (D) Dynamics of regime change in India and Sri Lanka

**(A) SHIFT IN INDIA'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ITS SMALLER NEIGHBOUR**

With reference to Sri Lanka, the withdrawal of the IPKF in March 1990 brought an end to India's direct involvement in Sri Lanka, and led to a new phase in Indo-Sri Lanka relations. India expressed its concerns at the outbreak of hostilities between the LTTE and Sri Lankan armed forces, which had resulted in civilian suffering and casualties. This had also led to an influx of refugees into Tamil Nadu. The Government of India was of the view that only a negotiated political settlement that takes into account the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Tamils could bring lasting peace to the Island. India clearly stated that the political settlement must be finally arrived at between the government and Tamils of Sri Lanka.

India's current stand on the ethnic conflict is characterized by its non-involvement, and at the same time, continued interest in the conflict:<sup>3</sup>

- India is fully supportive of the legitimate, political, social, economic and cultural aspirations of Tamils of Sri Lanka. However, India opposes the LTTE's violent and terrorist campaigns to achieve these aspirations. India would be supportive of initiatives for resolving the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka through a political dialogue.
- While refusing to play any direct role in the conflict, India is supportive of the peace process. Departing from its traditional stand against external involvement in South Asia, India has extended its whole hearted support for the Norwegian facilitation of the peace process.
- India is of the view that any compromise achieved should be within the framework of the unity and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.
- The LTTE remains a banned terrorist organisation in India and its chief V. Prabhakaran is wanted for trial in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case. Despite the fact that the LTTE is ostracised, the Indian government seeks a political solution to the ethnic conflict through sustained negotiations.

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.meaindia.nic.in>

India's new policy of non-intervention in the ethnic conflict has also contributed to removing the cultivated fear complex of Sri Lanka. The leadership and the people in 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 islands security.

**(B) THE POSITIVE ECONOMIC STIMULUS**

With the aim of diversifying Indo-Sri Lanka bilateral relations to the widest extent possible, particularly in the commercial, economic, industrial, scientific, technical and cultural fields, it was agreed to upgrade the Joint Economic Commission to the Joint Commission at the foreign ministers level.<sup>4</sup> An agreement was also signed in July 1991 to establish an Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Commission. Its sub commission included those on trade, investment and finance, and science and technology.<sup>5</sup>

The year 1992 saw expanding cooperation in various fields between India and Sri Lanka. Especially significant were the increasing contact between the business communities of the two countries as illustrated by the convening of the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Business Council in Delhi in March 1992, after a lapse of 11 years and participation of over 100 business delegates from India in the EXPO'92 held in Colombo in November 1992.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Annual Report, 1990-91, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, pp. 1-3.

<sup>5</sup> Annual Report, 1991-92, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, pp. 4-5.

<sup>6</sup> Annual Report, 1992-93, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, pp. 16-17.



The year 1993 also saw active interaction between India and Sri Lanka in economic, commercial and technical areas. The meetings of the sub-commission on science and technology, and on social, educational, and cultural matters were held in Delhi. The Joint Business council also met in Colombo.<sup>7</sup> In the following year many economic activities took place between India and Sri Lanka.<sup>8</sup>

In 1994, the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Commission meeting was held in New Delhi. Its decisions included; reduction in tariffs on select items of export interests to Sri Lanka such as ceramic tiles, glycerine, graphite and rubber, extension of a new line of dollar denominated credit, permission to the Bank of Ceylon to open a branch in Madras; and enhanced seat capacity for airlines. Further, India's interest in broadening economic relation with Sri Lanka resulted in two delegations from the Confederation of Indian Industries visiting Sri Lanka in March and October 1994. A joint task force was also set up to identify and follow up implementation of specific proposals.<sup>9</sup>

In 1995, President Kumaratunga visited India and as a result, the friendly ties between the two countries were further cemented. The Sri Lankan government sought tariff concessions and greater investment from India as part of efforts to reduce the trade imbalance. A credit line of US\$30 million was extended to Sri Lanka and an announcement was made granting reductions in custom duties and 18 items of export to Sri Lanka. During the visit, various issues were

---

<sup>7</sup> Annual Report, 1993-94, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, pp. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup> Annual Report, 1994-95, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, pp. 1-4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 7.

discussed, including problems pertaining to fisherman from both countries straying into each other's territorial waters. In this context, it was decided that both sides would avoid incidents of violence.<sup>10</sup>

So there was already a favourable atmosphere created by the time the Gujral Doctrine was spelt out. The economic aspect of the relations with its neighbours, as has been seen, was already in focus. This is not to say that there were no differences. The important aspect is that in spite of the differences, clear positive movement was evident and the economic aspect of the relations could get started.

In Sri Lanka, the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) and later the coming to power of Chandrika Kumaratunga, provided a fresh start for the establishment of mutually beneficial relations. As part of the process on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1998, India and Sri Lanka signed a landmark agreement to establish a bilateral free trade area to promote economic cooperation which became operational in March 2000. The Free Trade Agreements (FTA) was expected to spur Indo-Sri Lankan bilateral relations and Sri Lankan exports to India.

In June 2002, India offered a credit line of \$100 million to Sri Lanka. It was meant for purchasing capital goods, consumer services and food items from India. Importantly, in June 2002, the Indian Oil Corporation and the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation signed a MOU under which the former is allowed to engage in retail oil trade in the

---

<sup>10</sup> Annual Report, 1995-96, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, pp. 6-7.

island as well as to manage and operate, on a long lease, the Trincomalee Oil Tanks.<sup>11</sup>

Because of the positive developments under these agreements, both the countries have agreed to begin negotiations on a comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) by 2004.

### **(C) ENHANCED DEFENCE COOPERATION**

There is growing defence cooperation between India and Sri Lanka.<sup>12</sup> This was unthinkable some two decades ago. India supplies military hardwares, shares intelligence information with the Sri Lankan navy to contain the LTTE's activities in the Palk Strait and provide training to the Sri Lankan armed forces.

As far as security issues are concerned, both the countries have agreed to enhance defence cooperation which would include also consultations between the defence chiefs of the two countries.

Also boosting the Indo-Lanka relations were close military ties in intelligence sharing. Increased cooperation got manifested in the activities of Indian Navy and Coast Guard. Despite earlier Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes pro-LTTE stance, the Indian Navy has been helping the Sri Lankan armed forces in locating and destroying suspected LTTE vessels. In the coastal areas, patrolling was stepped up to prevent the possible infiltration of Sri Lankan Tamil militant groups in the guise of refugees.

---

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.meaindia.nic.in>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

Reciprocal trade relations and evolving bilateral security linkages have helped in bringing India and Sri Lanka closer to each other.

**(D) THE POSITIVE STIMULUS: DYNAMICS OF REGIME CHANGE IN INDIA AND SRI LANKA**

The Indian Prime Minister V.P. Singh, in a statement, said that in dealing with Sri Lankan problems, "the whole spirit should be one of trust and cooperation and of joint endeavour in the mutual fulfilment of obligations", keeping in view "safety and security of all communities in the North Eastern province of Sri Lanka"<sup>13</sup>.

The statement is important, because it revealed the policy changes brought about by V.P. Singh's National Front Government. There has been a conscious and positive effort to improve relations with small neighbours especially with Sri Lanka. In fact it was during V.P. Singh's regime that the last batch of the IPKF was withdrawn. Thus, Premadasa's demand in this context was amicably met. The attitude of V.P. Singh Government that the Tamil guerilla groups would not be allowed to operate from Indian soil and that New Delhi would take suitable steps to promote the interest of Sri Lankan Tamils, within the framework of a united and integrated country, was lauded in the island country.

Though the V.P. Singh government hardly had any time to address itself to problems concerning Sri Lanka, it made its good intentions quite clearly known.

---

<sup>13</sup> *Asian Recorder*, December 7-8, 1990.

The Foreign Minister of the Chandra Shekhar government however spelt out quite unequivocally the principles which would guide India's policy towards Sri Lanka, in an address to the Parliaments consultative committee on External Affairs. The four parameters which would guide India's dealing with Sri Lanka, he said, were:<sup>14</sup>

- (1) India will not be a party to a process of political disintegration of Sri Lanka.
- (2) India will not allow foreign forces to interfere in Sri Lanka.
- (3) India's armed forces will not be sent again to Sri Lanka.
- (4) Indian territory will not be allowed to be used as a base for terrorist activities directed against Sri Lanka.<sup>15</sup>

The regime change in India did not go unnoticed by the major political parties in Sri Lanka. In one of the newspaper of Sri Lanka, there appeared an editorial entitled, "A weak head and powerful tail"<sup>16</sup>. There was a mention that new PM of India would be a captive of Rajiv Gandhi's Congress. Sri Lanka held a considered view that the Janata Dal Government was not capable of taking any solid stand on improving relations between the two countries because it faced many domestic problems. But the Indian government took some initiatives. It sent a delegation to Colombo to strengthen relation between the two countries. A joint communiqué, issued after the talks, said that a

---

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.meaindia.gov.in>

<sup>15</sup> *Daily News*, 17 Dec. 1990.

<sup>16</sup> *The Sun*, October 19, 1990.

solution to Sri Lanka's vexed ethnic problem was to be more cordial, reciprocal and on the basis of equality of states.<sup>17</sup>

The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and the anti – LTTE sentiment that had followed together with the changed world scenario called for an immediate need to mend Sri Lanka – India relations, which to a great extent, remained hostage to the Tamil Tigers.

With change of power at the centre, and coming in of P.V. Narsimha Rao, there had basically been a sober realization on the part of both India and Sri Lanka that they must steer bilateral relationship away from the contentious issue of ethnic conflict in the Island. It was his stated opinion that India and Sri Lanka have a mutuality of interest in the defence of independence and security of the countries in the region. It was his contention that for obvious geopolitical reasons Sri Lanka can not remain unmindful of India's national security interest. Any future modus vivendi must involve a closer cooperation between the two neighbours.<sup>18</sup>

Basically the Sri Lankan obsession with India's alleged "big brother" attitude is considerably diminished despite Premdasa's earlier rejection of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement and his rhetoric about India. Unlike the Premdasa regime, the People's Alliance (PA) government 1994 under Chandrika Kumartunga has adopted a broad based approach towards security. As a pragmatic approach and the foremost foreign policy task, Kumaratunga has made concerted efforts to

---

<sup>17</sup> *The Times of India* (New Delhi), January 31, 1991.

<sup>18</sup> *The Statesman*, July 7, 1991.

cultivate India by recognizing its “uniquely central and pivotal position” in the region.<sup>19</sup> Foreign Affairs Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar articulated Sri Lanka’s new approach towards India, when he appreciated the latter’s desire for a better understanding of its security needs and sensitivities by its neighbours, and acknowledged the benefits which the region can accrue from its economic preponderance and centrality. India’s special concern, whenever expressed, about Tamil interests and welfare in Sri Lanka is not to be considered as an interference; rather its legitimate desire for a political settlement of the ethnic conflict is not viewed any more with concern in Colombo. Seeking military cooperation with extra regional powers is considered futile. There is also a growing realization that a carefully designed regional policy, with due considerations to India’s security sensitivities, will be in the interest of Sri Lanka.<sup>20</sup> India has been well appreciative of Sri Lanka’s approach towards regional security, and Colombo is pleased with New Delhi present stand on the ethnic conflict.

When the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led coalition government came to power in 1998, there was skepticism that the principles spelt out by the earlier government would not be followed. Though the relations began on a doubtful note, with India conducting the nuclear tests and neighbours doubting India’s intentions, later the relations have been conducted in a positive note. Many specific events clearly point towards this understanding. It is in the context of growing

---

<sup>19</sup> [www.meaindia.nic.in](http://www.meaindia.nic.in)

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

bilateral understanding and cordiality that Sri Lanka's prompt endorsement of India's decision to conduct nuclear tests in May 1998 should be viewed. By this stand, the People's Alliance (PA) government has sought to ensure India's continued support to its war against the LTTE and non-involvement, in the spirit of the Gujral Doctrine, in the ethnic conflict. Not only these, the growing economic interaction between the two countries and their undeclared naval cooperation in containing Tamil militant activities have a definite and positive impact on the island's security.

### **THE LIMITATIONS OF INDIAN ROLE: THE POSITIVE INDIAN STIMULUS PUT TO TEST**

#### **The 2000 Military Crisis in Jaffna**

India's policy towards Sri Lanka was put to test following the crisis in the island nation in April 2000. The event which took place during this specified period, indicate the manner in which domestic politics in both Sri Lanka and India have influenced their respective foreign policies. The sequence of events in the specified period (mid April 2000-end May 2000), help understanding the nature of responses originating from both New Delhi and Colombo and reasons for the same.

The battle for Jaffna has two important dimensions – the symbolic and psychological, on the one hand, and military on the other. Though both are related, the first passively holds a special significance which is much important than the second – Jaffna is the most



important psychological symbol of the Sri Lankan ethnic crisis.<sup>21</sup> Given the symbolism attached to Jaffna, whichever side gains control over it is perceived to be in advantageous position.

If the LTTE gains control over Jaffna, it would boost the LTTE's image at home and abroad.<sup>22</sup> And given Jaffna's importance it is obvious that the tone and tenor of any peace negotiations would be significantly influenced by which side controls it.

It is in this backdrop that one needs to assess the Government's initial military reversals in the strategic Jaffna peninsula, and its attempt to seek external help.

The crisis brought international focus on the issue once again. Following what initially appeared to be a setback for the government forces in the Jaffna Peninsula, Sri Lanka sought 'assistance' from 'friendly countries' and pledged to continue its efforts at peace talks with the LTTE through a Norwegian initiative. Interestingly, following the government's initial military reversals in the strategic Jaffna peninsula, the nationalistic groups in Sri Lanka who had opposed the presence of the Indian army during 1987-1990 in the country, were now calling for its return to help stop the LTTE's advance. They held that if any country should intervene in Sri Lanka, it should be India.<sup>23</sup>

As far as the assistance from India is concerned, President Kumartunga's interview to an Indian Daily, indicates that Sri Lanka

---

<sup>21</sup> *India Today*, May 22, 2000.

<sup>22</sup> Jaffna a symbol of Eelam War, *The Hindu*, May 14, 2000.

<sup>23</sup> "Sri Lankan Army seeks military hardware", *The Hindu*, April 30, 2000.

had asked for some urgent military assistance which India had refused.<sup>24</sup> While Sri Lanka is reported to have asked for military assistance in terms of equipment and manpower, the exact mandate of such help and the long term implications of such assistance has not been discussed and spelt out clearly.

### **ASSESSING INDIA'S RESPONSE: CAUTION AND CONCERN**

#### **Caution:**

India's initial reaction to the military reversals faced by the Sri Lankan government in April was a firm ruling out of military intervention. Definitely this stand followed from the bitter experience of the 1980s when Indian troops were on the ground in Sri Lanka.

India's cautious approach is reflected on two counts. Firstly by refusing military intervention, and secondly, by trying not to hurt the sentiments of the Tamil population – later India stated that it would play the role of a mediator only if asked to do so by both the Kumaratunga government and the LTTE. Sri Lanka is reported to have been happy with the stand taken by India. Norway which is playing the key role of a facilitator between Sri Lankan government and LTTE has agreed to keep India informed of the negotiations between two warring sides.<sup>25</sup>

What gets reflected, is that there is a clear acknowledgment of the reality that India is the most critical external element in the

---

<sup>24</sup> *The Hindu*, May 24, 2000.

<sup>25</sup> "Multilateral talk on Sri Lanka crisis begin here today", *The Economic Times*, May 11, 2000.

resolution of the internal conflict in Sri Lanka and that Indian offer of mediation and Norwegian offer of facilitation need not be seen as contradictory. It is stated that India should not exclude the possibility of having support from the international community so long as it is in consonance with the national interest of India and Sri Lanka and serves the genuine interests of Sri Lanka Tamils.<sup>26</sup>

While India decided not to intervene militarily, it took other measures to safeguard its own security, which were also aimed at indirectly assisting the Sri Lankan government

- The Indian navy and coast guard intensified their vigil in the coastal areas.
- A joint patrolling had also been planned to prevent smuggling of petroleum products, medicines and life saving drugs to Sri Lanka from the coastal villages of Ramanathapuram which would be of assistance to the LTTE.<sup>27</sup>
- Such steps were aimed to boost the morale of the Sri Lankan forces in the peninsula. Thus the aim was to have a positive psychological impact which would show on the battlefield in military forms.<sup>28</sup>
- There were reports on intelligence sharing with the Sri Lankan forces. Besides there was intensified surveillance by the navy

---

<sup>26</sup> *The Hindu*, May 11, 2000.

<sup>27</sup> *The Hindu*, May 13, 2000.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

and coast guard along the Tamil Nadu coast which was carried out under 'operation pasha'.

### **Concern**

Though India ruled out military intervention, it stated that it was ready to render humanitarian assistance if and when sought<sup>29</sup>. On the nature of humanitarian assistance it was stated that India was ready to evacuate the besieged Sri Lankan forces in the Jaffna peninsula. Humanitarian aid would also include supply of food, clothes and medicines if Colombo specifically asked for it.<sup>30</sup> It had been spelt out that assistance could take the form of equipment and intelligence and stop short of direct intervention.<sup>31</sup>

By using the term 'humanitarian assistance', the Indian government was definitely giving the Sri Lankan government some space to react appropriately as the situation demanded without taking a rigid stand.

Official reactions of India clearly indicate that India is committed to a sovereign, united and multi ethnic Sri Lanka where all minorities, especially, Tamils, could live with dignity and without fear. This was in consonance with India's own national interest too. The establishment of a separate Tamil Eelam would have a detrimental impact on India's own fight against separatist elements who do not respect the territorial integrity of India. Prime Minister Vajpayee clarified that India was not

---

<sup>29</sup> "PM calls all party meet on Lanka", *The Hindustan Times*, May 7, 2000.

<sup>30</sup> "India reaffirms policy", *The Hindu*, May 4, 2000.

<sup>31</sup> "Indian consensus on Sri Lanka", *The Hindu*, May 10, 2000.

for a separate Eelam and there was no question of recognizing such a state.<sup>32</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

If India's reactions are seen in the backdrop of the policy adopted by it in the nineties, one could argue, that India's policy comprises three main elements.

First, a conscious endeavour to adopt a non-intrusive approach towards the ethnic problem. India favours a negotiated political solution to the problem.

Secondly, improving and strengthening bilateral relations in all fields of mutual interest especially in the economic sector.

Thirdly, in the multilateral interest, increased co-operation with the government of Sri Lanka in a positive and pragmatic basis, with a thrust in economic areas.

India has maintained that the devolution package announced by the Sri Lanka government forms a reasonable basis for negotiations towards achieving this settlement. This was key policy of India that has been appreciated by many, including Sri Lanka.<sup>33</sup>

Given the background of the bitter suspicious which marked the bilateral relations in the 1980s', it was this specific non-intrusive policy enunciated in the nineties, which enabled to build the trust between the two countries. The Kumaratunga government on its part had

---

<sup>32</sup> Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Official Interest site, <meadev.gov.in>

<sup>33</sup> S.D. Muni, Pangs of Proximity – India and Sri Lanka's Ethnic Crisis (New Delhi, Sage 1993), p. 55.

maintained that the ethnic crisis was an internal matter of the nation and her government did not fear any threat from India. Infact when the Sri Lankan government military waged a war against the LTTE in 1995, its Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar opined that the silver lining in the present crisis was the close understanding and rapport between Sri Lanka and India. He said, "We are keeping them fully informed"<sup>34</sup>.

---

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.meaindia.gov.in>

## CHAPTER V

---

### CONCLUSION

One can argue that the concept of 'regional subsystem' and 'security complex' provides a basic framework for study, and helps make further analysis on small state security. In this context it can be argued that to understand small state security, one needs to direct enquiry in the direction of threats to small state security – a process which helps in establishing intrinsic linkages between small state and given security complex.

South Asia as a region provides a clear example of a security complex. The heart of this complex is the rivalry between India and Pakistan, though for the present study, the focus has been on the less powerful small states, which are linked to the complex for geographical reasons. What binds the South Asian security complex together is the dominant role of local issues and relations in defining the national security priorities of the states within it.

It is in this context that one attempts to understand, the security sensitivities of the smaller states of South Asia, and how India as a bigger power, impinges on their security concerns. The focus of study in this context has been on Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives in general and Sri Lanka in particular.

For this purpose one attempts to understand, the concept of regional subsystem and also define South Asia as a regional

subsystem. Here one focuses on its basic attributes of asymmetry and Indian centrality, and one can discern, how these impinge on the security concerns of smaller states of South Asia.

In this context it can be argued that with Bangladesh and Nepal, the security arena has encompassed the dynamics of both negative and positive dimensions of 'India Factor', but with Bhutan and Maldives it is marked more by the positive stimulus of 'India factor'. The crux of the matter is that South Asia is a clear case of 'security complex' and the neighbourhood defines the case for 'small state' complex.

Sri Lanka as a small state, provides an interesting arena to study the dynamics of 'India factor' both in its negative and positive spheres. The negative dimensions of "India factor" in the security of Sri Lanka could be located by understanding, the dynamics of locational determinism, the historical context, and the specific reasons for divergence in the eighties marked by the ethnic crisis in 1983. Since one attempts to study the reasons for strategic divergence, one takes note of the context under which Sri Lanka attempted to manoeuvre its security concerns. One can underline the fact that Sri Lanka did attempt to seek a global security umbrella and in this direction also accommodated certain strategic interests of the other countries. At the same times, the eighties provided the context for India to become a direct factor in Sri Lanka's security. The ethnic conflict had ramifications not only for Sri Lanka's security but also for India in terms of spill over effect, and also for its role as a regional power. An



analysis of Indian attitude and support to Tamil cause, military training and assistance to Tamil separatists, the Peace Accord of 1987, explains how strategic divergence in the eighties questioned the autonomy of the smaller state, Sri Lanka, to pursue independent domestic and foreign policies, within the larger framework of the geopolitical context in which states operate.

However, it is further seen that Sri Lanka which had witnessed severe security crisis in the mid eighties, with the 'India factor' in its negative dimensions, dominating the strategic thinking, has had significant shift in its approach towards security. Many factors including a qualitative shift in India's attitude towards the neighbours, changes taking place within these countries; and political and economic changes taking place at the global level-all have all contributed to this.

As regards India, in this context it could be argued that in the post-cold war era, its foreign policy is marked by reticences and non-interference in the affairs of the nearby states. There is firm commitment on the part of India to mitigate the impact of asymmetry. This is manifested in India's enhanced defence and economic cooperation with Sri Lanka. Though definitely earlier concerns do not get necessarily negated they do diminish in importance. At the same time, on the part of Sri Lanka, there has been acknowledgement of the security needs and sensitivities of its bigger neighbour, along with

acknowledgment of the benefits which the region can accrue from its economic preponderance and centrality.

India's new policy of non-intervention in the ethnic conflict has also contributed to removing the cultivated fear complex of Sri Lanka. Infact the leadership and the people in the Island have changed their mindset and thinking about India. Infact India is considered as an asset rather than a threat to the island's security.

The existence of positive stimulus cannot be denied, though definitely this was put to test in the year 2000, in the Battle for Jaffna. The sequence of events in the specified period demonstrate India's firm commitment to its policy of non-involvement and non-interference. At the same time, it also reflects how India continues to be a critical factor in Sri Lanka's strategic thinking.

In an attempt to delineate broad theoretical argument in this context, one can argue that the two hypotheses put to test does get established. By examining the relevant events, one can discern that the relative autonomy of Sri Lanka does get constrained and influenced by India, which is the larger power in the regional framework. Secondly, the South Asian regional subsystem is marked by asymmetry in terms of power relations, India at the pivot, which definitely tends to create insecurity in the minds of smaller states.

What can be further argued is, for the case of small states, the mode of articulations of interests and strategic concerns by ruling elite also play a dominant role in the formulation of security vision. Secondly

the dominant power in the security complex, does attempt to restrict the role of extra regional actors in the subsystem. Thirdly, though security concerns are largely marked by basic continuity in terms of regional subsystem realities like historical memories and the geopolitical context, at the same time, changes in the global strategic environment does play its role in bringing about a change in regional strategic environment, which in turn influences the big Power/small state dynamics. The end of cold war, and the ushering in of forces of globalization, has not only forged new economic linkages, but also provided the changed context, where threats to small states in terms of military dimensions of security have undergone a qualitative change.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **PRIMARY SOURCES**

Annual Reports, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 1990-2003.

Government of Sri Lanka Press Release, joint communique of Government of Sri Lanka and Government of India, 18 September 1989.

Ministry of External Affairs, Foreign Affairs Record, 1987, Vol. 32, No. 7, July 1987.

### **SECONDARY SOURCES**

#### **BOOKS**

Bahadur, Kalim; Muni, S.D. and Phadnis, Urmila (eds.), Domestic Conflicts in South Asia, (New Delhi, South Asian Publishers, 1986).

Bhasin, A.S., (ed.), India-Bangladesh Relations, 1971-1994, (Delhi, Siba Exim Pvt. Ltd., 1996).

\_\_\_\_\_, Nepal's Relations with India and China, (Delhi, Siba Exim, 1997).

Blamont, Evelyne (ed.), Regional Cooperation and Peace, (International Social Science Centre of UNESCO, 1984).

Bose, Sumantra, States, Nations, Sovereignty: Sri Lanka, India and the Tamil Eelam Movement, (New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1991).

Bullion, Alan J., India, Sri Lanka and Tamil Crisis, 1976-1994: An International Perspective, (London, Pinter Publishers, 1995).

Buzan, Barry, People states and fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations, (London, Harvester Press, 1983).

Chari, P.R. (ed.), Perspectives on National Security in South Asia: In search of a New Paradigm, (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 1999).

Chaudhary, Rahul Roy, Sea Power and Indian Security, (London, Brassey's, 1995).

Cheram, R. et. al. (eds.), A Decade of Conflict – Sri Lanka, 1983-93, (Amsterdam, South Asian Bureau, 1993).

Clay, John and Ross, Thomas E., (eds.), Buffer States in World Politics, (Boulder CO, 1986).

Clelland, M. C, Theory and International System, (New York: Macmillan, 1966).

Damodaran, A. and Bajpai, (eds.), Indian Foreign Policy: The Indira Gandhi Years, (London, Sangam, 1991).

de Silva, K.M. and May R. (eds.), Internationalisation of Ethnic Conflict, (London, ICES/Pinter, 1991).

de Silva, K.M., Regional Powers and Small State Security, (John Hopkins University Press, London, 1995).

\_\_\_\_\_, Sri Lanka: A history, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Dixit J.N., Liberation and Beyond – Indo Bangladesh Relations, (New Delhi, Konark, 1999).

\_\_\_\_\_, Assignment Colombo, (New Delhi, Konark Publishers, 1998).

Farmer, B.H., Ceylon: A Divided Nation, (oxford, 1962).

Feld, W.J. and Boyd, G. (eds.), Comparative Regional Systems (New York, Pergamon, 1980).

Grover, Verinder (ed.), Encyclopedia of SAARC Nations, Nepal, Vol. 5 (New Delhi, Deep and Deep, 1997).

Gujral, I.K., A Foreign Policy of India, (External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 1998).

Gunaratna, Rohan, Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka: The Role of India's Intelligence Agencies, (Colombo, South Asian Network on Conflict Research, 1993).

Gunatilleke, Godfrey, Negotiations for the Resolution of the Ethnic Conflict, (Colombo, Marga Institute, 2001).

Hafiz, Abdul M., Khan Rob A., (ed.), Security of Small States, (Dhaka, 1987).

Handel Michael, Weak States in the International System, (London, 1981).

Harden, Shiela (ed.), Small is Dangerous, (London, 1985).

Harrison, Selig S., (eds.), Superpower Rivalry in the Indian Ocean: Indian and American Perspectives, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1989).

Hoole, Rajan; Somasundram, Daya; Sritharan, K. and Thiranagama, Rajani, The Broken Palmyra: The Tamil Crisis in Sri Lanka, An Inside Account, (Claremont, Sri Lanka Studies Institute, 1990).

Jackson, R.H., Quasi states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990).

Jakobson, Max, The Diplomacy of the Winter War, (Cambridge, 1961).

Jayasekera, P.V.J. (ed), Security Dilemma of a Small State (New Delhi, 1992).

Jennings, Ivor, The Commonwealth in Asia, (London, 1953).

Jones, Lynn, Sean M. and Miller Steven E., (eds.), Global Dangers, Changing Dimensions of International Security, (Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press, 1995).

Kabir, M.G. and Hasan, S., Issues and challenges facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy, (Peoples Press, Dhaka, 1983).

Kadian, Rajesh, India's Sri Lanka Fiasco: Peace Keepers at War, (New Delhi, Vision Books, 1990).

Karp, R.C. (ed.); Security without Nuclear Weapons? Diffusing Perspectives on Non-nuclear Security, (London, Oxford University Press ISIPRI, 1992).

Kelstrup, Movten and Lemaitre, Pierre, Identity, Migration and New Security Agenda in Europe, (London, 1993).

Kodikara, S. (ed.), Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987, (Colombo, University of Colombo International Relations Programme, 1992).

\_\_\_\_\_, Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka, (Delhi, Chanakya Publications, 1982).

Kohli, Manorama, From Dependency to Independence: A Study of Indo-Bhutan Relations (Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1988).

Lab, Kapileshwar, India and Bhutan (New Delhi, Sindhu Publications Ltd., 1974).

Lewis, J.P. and Kallab, V. (eds.), Development Strategies Reconsidered, (New Brunswick, 1986).

Majumdar, Kannchanmoy, Political Relations Between India and Nepal (New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1973).

Manikkalingam, Ram, Prudently Negotiating a Moral Peaces, (Colombo, Social Scientists Associations, 1994).

Mathisen, Trygve, The Functions of Small States in the Strategies of the Great Powers, (OSLO, 1971).

Muni, S.D., Pangs of Proximity-India and Sri Lanka's Ethnic Crisis, (New Delhi, Sage, 1993).

Murthy, Padmaja, Managing Suspicious: Understanding India's relations with Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, (New Delhi, Knowledge World, 2000).

Nissanka H., Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy: A study in Non-Alignment, (New Delhi, Vikas, 1984).

Panikkar, K.M., India and Indian Ocean: An Essay on Influence of Power on Indian History, (London, Allen and Unwin, 1995).

Poulouse, T. (ed.), Indian Ocean Power Rivalry, (New Delhi, International Publications Service, 1974).

Ramakant, A., Nepal, China and India Relations, (New Delhi, Vikas Publication, 1976).

Rapaport, Jacques et al., Small States and Territories: Status and Problems. A Study by United Nations Institute for Training and Research (New York, ARNO Press, 1971).

Robinson, Francis (ed.), The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Rose, L. and Sisson, R., War and Secession: India, Pakistan and Creation of Bangladesh, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1990).



- Rothstein, Robert L., Alliances and Small Powers, (New York, 1968).
- Russett, Bruce M., International Regions and the International System (Chicago, Rand McNally, 1967).
- Singh, Depinder, The IPKF in Sri Lanka, (New Delhi, Trishul Publications, 1992).
- Sivanayagam, S., Sri Lanka: 10 years of Jayewardene Rule, (Madras, Tamil Information and Research Unit, 1987).
- Stephenson M. Carolyn (ed.), Alternative Methods for International Security, (Washington DC, 1982).
- Suriyakumaran, Canaganayagam, The Anguish of "83": Sri Lanka's Ethnic Crisis and the Way Out, 1983-1990, (Colombo, K.V.G. de Silva, 1990).
- Svecies, V.V., Small National Survival, (New York, 1970).
- Thapliyal, Sangeeta Mutual Security, The Case of India-Nepal (New Delhi, Lancer 1998).
- Thomas, R., Indian Security Policy, (Princeton, N.J. Princeton University Press, 1986).
- University History of Ceylon, Vol. I, part I (Colombo, Ceyon University Press, 1960).
- Vaidik, V.P., Ethnic Crisis in Sri Lanka: India's Options, (New Delhi, National Publishing House, 1986).
- Verma, Ravi, India's Role in the Emergence of Contemporary Bhutan, (Delhi, Capital Publishing House, 1988).
- Vital, David, The Inequality of State, (Oxford, 1967).

Vital, David, The Survival of small States: Studies in Small Power/Great Power Conflict, (London, 1971).

Wilson, A.J., The Break up of Sri Lanka: The Sinhalese-Tamil Conflict, (London, Murst, 1988).

## **ARTICLES**

Ahmed, Imtiaz, "Post Nationalist South Asia", *Himal*, Vol. 9, No. 5, July 96, pp. 10-14.

Anon, "India condemns Anti-Terrorist Thrust in Jaffna", *Lanka Guardian*, Colombo, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1 June 1987, p. 3.

Austin, Dennis, "Sri Lanka: The Cost of Failure- A review article", *Round Table*, No. 335, July 1995, pp. 361-69.

Banerjee, Arun Kumar, "Sri Lanka imbroglio: A Historical Perspective", *World Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 2, December 1994, pp. 54-60.

Bhatty, "Great Powers and South Asia", *Regional Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 4, Autumn 1995, pp. 3-27.

Brecher, Michael, "International Relations and Asian Studies: The Subordinate State System of Southern Asia", *World Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1963, pp. 278-88.

Bullion, Alan, "War Eclipses Peace in Sri Lanka", *World Today*, Vol. 51, No. 12, December 1995, pp. 227-229.

Chaddha, Maya, "Ethnicity, State and Nation: Difering Perspective", *World Affairs*, Vol. 4, No. 3, July-September 2000, pp. 98-109.

Chaturvedi, Sanjay, "Common Security: Geopolitics, Development, South Asia and Indian Ocean", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1998, pp. 701-24.

Chaudhary, Ishpaq, Illahi, "Security challenge of South Asian Countries in the coming decade, An Overview", *BISS Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 2000, pp. 36-53.

Chaudhary, Rahul Roy, "India's Security Policy", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 19, No. 2, May 1996, pp. 183-94.

Cohen, Stephen P., "India's Regional Impact", *Seminar*, Vol. 401, January 1993, p. 69-74.

Das, Suranjan, "Regional Security through Constructive Bilateralism: Prospects for South Asian Stability", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 35, No. 9, December 2000, pp. 49-59.

de Silva, K.M., "Sri Lanka Conflict-India: Intermediary as actor", *Lanka Guardian*, Vol. 18, No. 2, June 1, 1995, pp. 3-5.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Sri Lanka Crisis pt 4 India moves in", *Lanka Guardian*, Vol. 18, No. 4, July 1, 1995, pp. 9-12.

Dibb, Paul, "Asia's Insecurity", *Survival*, Vol. 41, No. 3, 1999 (Autumn), pp. 5-20.

Ghose, Bipattaram, "India and the Ethnic Crisis in Sri Lanka", *India Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 1, January-March 1995, pp. 53-63.

Ghosh, Partha S., "Integrational problems in South Asia and Regional Security: A Politico-Anthropological Approach", *BISS Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 1992, pp. 367-82.

Gunaratna, Rohan, "Internationalisation of the Tamil Conflict (and its Implications)", *Journal of South Asian Studies*, Special Issue, Vol. 20, 1997, pp. 119-152.

Gupta, Aniruddha, "Issues in South Asia: Geopolitics or Geoeconomics", *International Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1, January-March 1997, pp. 15-24.

- Haas, Michael, "International Subsystems: Stability and Polarity", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 64, No. 1, 1970, pp. 116-32.
- Hagerty, D., "India's Regional Security Doctrine", *Asian Survey*, April 1991, Vol. 26, No. 4, pp. 358-60.
- Hennayake, S. "The Peace Accord and the Tamils in Sri Lanka", *Asian Survey*, April 1989, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 405.
- Iftekhharuzzaman, "Emerging Strategic Trends in South Asia", *BIISS Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1992, pp. 76-92.
- India and South Asia, *Current History*, Vol. 95, No. 600, April 1996, pp. 145-76.
- Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), *News Review on South Asia, December 1989*, New Delhi, 1989, p. 1080.
- Jetly, Nancy, "India and Sri Lanka", *World Focus*, Vol. 15, No. 11-12, November-December 1994, pp. 31-33.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "India's Security Challenge: Perspectives and Prospects", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 21, No. 9, December 97, pp. 23-46.
- Jha, N.N., "Relations with Sri Lanka", *World Focus*, Vol. 14, No. 11-12, November-December 1994, pp. 59-62.
- Kant, Rama, "Nepal's China Policy", *China Report*, Vol. 30, No. 2, April-June 1994, pp. 161-173.
- Keerawella, Gamini, "Sri Lanka in 1994 - A Mandate for Peace", *Strategic Digest*, Vol. 25, No. 9, September 1995, pp. 1220-24.
- Keohane, Robert O., " 'Lilliputians' Dilemma: Small States in International Politics", *International Organization*, Boston, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1969, pp. 265-295.
- Khan, Abdur, Rob, "Interfacing Traditional and non Traditional Security in South Asia", *BIISS Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 4, October 2001, pp. 463-94.

Kodikara, Shelton U., "Security of South Asia in the 1990's, International Change and Domestic Dimension", *BISS Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 2, April 1992, pp. 145-70.

Kotwal, Dinesh, "Instability Parameters in North-Eastern India", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 24, No. 1, April 2000, pp. 137-149.

Krishna, Sankaran, "India and Sri Lanka: a fatal convergence", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 15, No. 4, October-December 1992, pp. 267-281.

Kumar, Sushil, "Rethinking Security in South Asia", *International Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2, April-June 1999, pp. 91-110.

Lahiri, Dilip, "Formalising Restraint: The case of South Asia", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 23, No. 4, July 1999, pp. 563-99.

Malhotra, Inder, "India's Security and Neighbours", *World Focus*, Vol. 14, No. 11-12, November-December 1993, pp. 27-3.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Security Issues in Southern Asia", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 20, No. 2, May 1997, pp. 221-32.

Manchandra, Ritu, "Dialectics on Power: New recipe for broader security in South Asia", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 36, No. 31, August 2001, pp. 2981-83.

Mansingh, Surjit, "China-Bhutan Relations", *China Report*, Vol. 30, No. 2, April-June 1994, pp. 175-186.

Mehta, Ashok K., "War and Peace in Sri Lanka", *Aakrosh*, Vol. 5, No. 16, July 2002, pp. 44-58.

Misra, Amalendu, "On South Asian States and the State of Nations in South Asia", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 5, 1998, pp. 963-89.

Mohapatra, Srikant, "Sri Lanka: Threat Perception and Defence build up", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 15, No. 3, June 1992, pp. 239-62.

Moonesinghe, Mangala, "Tolerance and Peace in Sri Lanka", *Peace Initiatives*, Vol. 1, No. 3, November – December 1995, pp. 54-58.

Mukarji, Apratim, "Sri Lanka: Despair and Hope", *World Focus*, Vol. 21, No. 10-11, November-December 2000, pp. 41-43.

Muni, S.D., "South Asia in the Emerging World Order", *World Focus*, Vol. 16, No. 10-12, October-December 1995, pp. 46-48.

Panikkar, K.M., "The Strategic Problems of the Indian Ocean", *Indian Institute of International Affairs pamphlet*, September 1994, p. 19.

Pattnaik, Smruti S., "Bridging the Gap: Indo-Nepalese Relations after Koirala's Visit", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 24, No. 6, September 2000, pp. 1189-1194.

Pradhan, Pradyot, "Indian Security Environment in the 1990's: External Dimension", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 13, No. 6, September 1989, pp. 649-72.

Rettie J., "Hundreds killed in Tiger Attack", *Lanka Guardian*, London, 12 November 1993, p. 13.

Sahadevan, P., "Internationalisation of Ethnic Conflict in South Asia: A Conceptual Enquiry", *International Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 3, July-September 1998, pp. 317-42.

Sankaran, Krishna, "Producing Sri Lanka: J.R Jayawardene and Post Colonial Identity", *Alternatives*, Vol. 21, No. 3, July-September 1996, pp. 303-320.

Sardeshpande, S.C., "Intervention in Sri Lanka: Lessons", *Defence Today*, Vol. 1, No. 1, August 1993, pp. 80-86.

Security South Asia: A Symposium on advancing peace in subcontinent. *Seminar*, Vol. 517, September 2002, pp. 16-67 (Series of articles).

Singh, Jasjit, "Towards a Safer Asia: An Indian Perspective", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 23, No. 1, April 1999, pp. 5-14.

Soman, S.S., "Indo Bangladesh Relations", *Trishul*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Spring 1996, pp. 64-73.

Sreedhar, "An Anatomy of the Tricomalee Deal", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 1984, pp. 242-56.

Stobdan, P., "Regional Security issues in Central/South Asia and Potential for Cooperation", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 22, No. 10, January 1999, pp. 1561-76.

Suryanarayan, V., "India and the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka: A case study of third party mediation to resolve domestic conflicts", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 18, No. 3, June 1995, pp. 387-405.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Sri Lanka's Policy towards China: Legacy of the Past and Prospects for the Future", *China Report*, Vol. 30, No. 2, April-June 1994, pp. 203-214.

Thakur, Ramesh, "Normalising Sino-Indian Relations", *Pacific Review*, Vol. 4, 1999, p. 15.

Thapliyal, Sangeeta, "Nepal in India's Security Parameters", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 18, No. 9, January 1996, pp. 1193-1206.

Thomas, R., "The Armed Services and India's Defence Budget", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 20, 1980, pp. 280-97.

\_\_\_\_\_, "U.S. Transfers of Dual use Technologies", *Asian Survey*, 30, 1990, pp. 825-45.

Thompson, William R., "The Regional Subsystem", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 1, March 1973, pp. 89-117.

Waqif, Arif A., "Dimensions of regional cooperation in South Asia: A review of selected studies", *IASSI Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 1-2, July-Decemebrr 1994, pp. 140-152.

Wei, Wang Hong, "Sino-Nepali Relations in the 1980's", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 25, 1985, pp. 512-34.

Weick Hans-Georg, "India's Policy of Good Neighbourly Relations", *Aussen Politik*, Vol. 48, No. 3, 1997, pp. 291-300.

### **MAGAZINES & NEWSPAPER REPORTS**

Asian Recoder.

India Today.

The Daily News (Colombo).

The Economic and Political Weekly.

The Economic Times.

The Hindu.

The Hindustan Times.

The Island (Colombo).

The Statesman.

The Sun.

The Times of India.



## APPENDIX

**Here is the full text of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord.**

### **THE INDO-SRI LANKA ACCORD**

To establish peace and normalcy in Sri Lanka the president of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, his excellency Mr. J.R. Jayawardene, and the Prime Minister of The Republic of India, His Excellency Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, having met at Colombo on July 29, 1987,

Attaching utmost importance to nurturing, intensifying and strengthening the traditional friendship of Sri Lanka and India, and acknowledging the imperative need of resolving the ethnic problem of Sri Lanka, and the consequent violence, and for the safety, wellbeing and prosperity of people belonging to all communities of Sri Lanka, Have this day entered into the following agreement to fulfil this Objective.

In this context,

#### **1.1 desiring to preserve the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka,**

1.2 acknowledging that Sri Lanka is a "multi-ethnic and multi-lingual plural society" consisting, *inter-alia*, of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims (Moors) and Burgers,

1.3 recognising that each ethnic group has a distinct cultural and linguistic identity, which has to be carefully nurtured,

1.4 Also recognising that the northern and the eastern provinces have been areas of historical habitation of Sri Lankan Tamil speaking peoples, who have at all times hitherto lived together in this territory with other ethnic groups,

1.5 conscious of the necessity of strengthening the forces contributing to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, and preserving its character as a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious plural society in which all citizens can live in equality, safety and harmony, and prosper and fulfil their aspirations,

#### **2.RESOLVE THAT:**

2.1 Since the Government of Sri Lanka proposes to permit adjoining provinces to join to form one administrative unit and also by a referendum to separate as may be permitted to the northern and eastern provinces as outlined below:

2.2 During the period, which shall be considered an interim period (i.e. from the date of the elections to the provincial council, as specified in para 2.8 to the date of the referendum as specified in para 2.3), the northern and eastern provinces as now constituted, will form one administrative unit, having one elected provincial council. Such a unit will have one governor, one chief minister and one board of ministers.

2.3 There will be a referendum on or before 31st December 1988 to enable the people of the eastern province to decide whether:

a) The eastern province should remain linked with the northern province as one administrative unit, and continue to be governed together with the northern province as specified in para 2.2 or:

b) The eastern province should constitute a separate administrative unit having its own distinct provincial council with a separate governor, chief minister and board of ministers. The president may, at his discretion, decide to postpone such a referendum.

2.4 All persons, who have been displaced due to ethnic violence or other reasons, will have the right to vote in such a referendum. Necessary conditions to enable them to return to areas from where they were displaced will be created.

2.5 The referendum, when held, will be monitored by a committee headed by the chief Justice, a member appointed by the President, nominated by the government of Sri Lanka, and a member appointed by the president, nominated by the representatives of the Tamil speaking people of the eastern province.

2.6 A simple majority will be sufficient to determine the result of the referendum.

2.7 Meetings and other forms of propaganda, permissible within the laws of the country, will be allowed before the referendum.

2.8 Elections to provincial councils will be held within the next three months, in any event before 31st December 1987. Indian observers will be invited for elections to the provincial council of the north and east.

2.9 The emergency will be lifted in the eastern and northern provinces by Aug. 15, 1987. A cessation of hostilities will come into effect all over the island within 48 hours of signing of this agreement. All arms presently held by militant groups will be surrendered in accordance with an agreed procedure to authorities to be designated by the government of Sri Lanka.

Consequent to the cessation of hostilities and the surrender of arms by militant groups, the army and other security personnel will be confined to barracks in camps as on 25 May 1987. The process of surrendering arms and the confining of security personnel moving back to barracks shall be completed within 72 hours of the cessation of hostilities coming into effect.

2.10 The government of Sri Lanka will utilise for the purpose of law enforcement and maintenance of security in the northern and eastern provinces same organisations and mechanisms of government as are used in the rest of the country.

2.11 The President of Sri Lanka will grant a general amnesty to political and other prisoners now held in custody under The Prevention of Terrorism Act and other emergency laws, and to combatants, as well as to those persons accused, charged and/or convicted under these laws. The Government of Sri Lanka will make special efforts to rehabilitate militant youth with a view to bringing them back into the mainstream of national life. India will co-operate in the process.

2.12 The government of Sri Lanka will accept and abide by the above provisions and expect all others to do likewise.

2.13 If the framework for the resolutions is accepted, the Government of Sri Lanka will implement the relevant proposals forthwith.

2.14 The government of India will underwrite and guarantee the resolutions, and co-operate in the implementation of these proposals.

2.15 These proposals are conditional to an acceptance of the proposals negotiated from 4.5.1986 to 19.12.1986. Residual matters not finalised during the above negotiations shall be resolved between India and Sri Lanka within a period of six weeks of signing this agreement. These proposals are also conditional to the Government of India co-operating directly with the Government of Sri Lanka in their implementation.

2.16 These proposals are also conditional to the Government of India taking the following actions if any militant groups operating in Sri Lanka do not accept this framework of proposals for a settlement, namely,

a) India will take all necessary steps to ensure that Indian Territory is not used for activities prejudicial to the unity, integrity and security of Sri Lanka

b) The Indian navy/coast guard will cooperate with the Sri Lankan navy in preventing Tamil militant activities from affecting Sri Lanka.

c) In the event that the Government of Sri Lanka requests the Government of India to afford military assistance to implement these proposals the Government of India will co-operate by giving to the Government of Sri Lanka such military assistance as and when requested.

d) The Government of India will expedite repatriation from Sri Lanka of Indian citizens to India who are resident here, concurrently with the repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees from Tamil Nadu.

e) The Governments of Sri Lanka and India will co-operate in ensuring the physical security and safety of all communities inhabiting the northern and eastern provinces.

2.17 The government of Sri Lanka shall ensure free, full and fair participation of voters from all communities in the northern and eastern provinces in electoral processes envisaged in this agreement. The government of India will extend full co-operation to the government of Sri Lanka in this regard.

2.18 The official language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala. Tamil and English will also be official languages.

**3. This agreement and the Annexure thereto shall come into force upon signature.**

In witness whereof, we have set our hands and seals hereunto.

Done in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on this the twenty-ninth day of July of the year one thousand nine hundred and eighty seven, in duplicate, both texts being equally authentic.

***Junius Richard Jayawardene***

President of the Democratic of the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

***Rajiv Gandhi***

Prime Minister Republic of India

**ANNEXURE TO THE AGREEMENT**

1. His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India agree that the referendum mentioned in paragraph 2 and its sub- paragraphs of the agreement will be observed by a representative of the election Commission of India to be invited by His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka.

2. Similarly, both heads of Government agree that the elections to the provincial council mentioned in paragraph 2.8 of the agreement will be observed and all para-military personnel will be withdrawn from the eastern and northern provinces with a view to creating conditions conducive to fair elections to the council.

3. The President, in his discretion shall absorb such para-military forces, which came into being due to ethnic violence, into the regular security forces of Sri Lanka.

4. The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India agree that the Tamil militants shall surrender their arms to authorities agreed upon to be designated by the President of Sri Lanka. The surrender shall take place in the presence of one senior representative each of the Sri Lanka Red Cross and the Indian Red Cross.

5. The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India agree that a joint Indo-Sri Lankan observer group consisting of qualified representatives of the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of India would monitor the cessation of hostilities from 31 July 1987.

6. The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India also agree that in the terms of paragraph 2.14 and paragraph 2.16(c) of the agreement, an Indian peace keeping contingent may be invited by the President of Sri Lanka to guarantee and enforce the cessation of hostilities, if so required.

**EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA AND THE PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA.**

Excellency,

1. Conscious of the friendship between our two countries stretching over two millenia and more, and recognizing the importance of nurturing this traditional friendship, it is imperative that both Sri Lanka and India reaffirm the decision not to allow our respective territories to be used for activities prejudicial to each other's unity, territorial integrity and security.

2. In this spirit, you had, in the course of our discussions agreed to meet some of India's concerns as follows:

- i. Your Excellency and myself will reach an early understanding about the relevance and employment of foreign military and intelligence personnel with a view to ensuring that such presences will not prejudice Indo-Sri Lankan relations.
- ii. Trincomalee or any other ports in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests.
- iii. The work of resotoring and operating the Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm will be undertaken as a joint venture between India and Sri Lanka.
- iv. Sri Lanka's agreements with foreign broadcasting organizations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them in Sri Lanka

3. In the same spirit India will:

- i. deport all Sri Lankan citizens who are found to be engaging in terrorist activities or advocating separatism or secessionism.
- ii. provide training facilities and military supplies for Sri Lankan forces.

4. India and Sri Lanka have agreed to set up a joint consultative mechanism to continuously review matters of common concern in the light of the objectives stated in paragraph 1 and specifically to monitor the implementation of other matters contained in this letter.

5. Kindly confirm, Excellency, that the above correctly sets out the agreement reached between us.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

**Rajiv Gandhi**



Diss  
327.5405493  
Si646 In  
  
Th11434