

**India and the Battle
for Tamil Eelam
(Sri Lanka)**



Thanjai Nalankilli

India and the Battle for Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)

edited by
Thanjai Nalankilli

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Preface

(common to all 5 books)

There are 5 books from us on the "Battle for Tamil Eelam". Together they provide an overall perspective on the ongoing conflict between the Tamil minority and Sinhala majority in Sri Lanka.

Articles in these 5 books were originally published between 1997 and 2019, at various points in the history of the Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict/war. Date of original publication is provided below the author name in each article. Our articles provide snapshots of the situation in Sri Lanka between 1997 and 2019, and useful to anyone who wants to understand what happened in Sri Lanka in those fateful years.

We think that the conflict will continue in one form or another, for a separate country or for equal treatment within a federal country, until the minority Tamils feel they are not treated as second class citizens, not economically exploited and their language and culture are respected and protected.

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1. **Reason for India's Anti-Tamil Policies and Actions in the Sri Lankan Ethnic Conflict**

Thanjai Nalankilli

[First Published: May 2018]

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Flawed Reasons Debunked
3. Real Reason
4. Background
5. Multi-Ethnic India
6. Who Rules India?
7. Concluding Remarks

1. Introduction

India's policies and actions in the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict/war between the majority Sinhalese who control the government and the minority Tamils have been consistently anti-Tamil from the very beginning to the present (2018). It is puzzling to many international and even Indian analysts why Indian government is hostile to Tamil aspirations for their legitimate rights in Sri Lanka, especially in view of the fact that India has a Tamil population of approximately 60 million in Tamil Nadu State.

2. Flawed Reasons Debunked

Reasons given are as follows:

- 1) Once Tamil Eelam is independent, it will set out to liberate Tamil Nadu from India.
- 2) Once Tamil Eelam is independent, it will destabilize Tamil Nadu.
- 3) Once Tamil Eelam is independent, it would want to merge Tamil Nadu with it and create "Greater Tamil Eelam".
- 4) An independent Tamil Eelam would inspire the various minority nationalities in India to aspire for independence and India would breakup like the Soviet Union.
- 5) An independent Tamil Eelam is not in the national interest of India.

We have discussed these reasons in some depth and found them flawed [References 1, and Chapters 3-4 in this book].

3. Real Reason

If an independent Tamil Eelam is in the national and defense interests of India [Chapter 3], why is not India helping Sri Lankan Tamils get an independent country (as it did "Pakistani Bengalis" get an independent country Bangladesh)? India is not only not helping Tamils but it helps Sri Lankan government financially, militarily and diplomatically to make sure Tamils do not get an independent country. Why?

Tamil Eelam is not against the interest of India but India's rulers (Hindi politicians) think it is against their (Hindis') self-interest. To understand it and India's anti-Tamil Sri Lankan policy, one need to know some basic, seldom discussed, information about India.

4. Background

India's policies and actions in the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict/war between the majority Sinhalese who control the government and the minority Tamils have been consistently anti-Tamil from the very beginning to the present (2018). It is puzzling to many international and even Indian analysts why Indian government is hostile to Tamil aspirations for their legitimate rights in Sri Lanka, especially in view of the fact that India has a Tamil population of approximately 60 million in Tamil Nadu State. Tamils of India and Tamils of Sri Lanka are blood brothers and sisters; they are ethnically/racially the same and speak the same language. Tamils of Tamil Nadu have supported their blood brothers and sisters during the entire Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict/war in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately they could do very little to help them except to raise their voices against the injustice and then beg and plead to the Indian government to help Sri Lankan Tamils [Reference 2]. Indian government playbook is to say a few soothing words and making promises to people of Tamil Nadu but continue with its anti-Tamil policies. What is the reason?

5. Multi-Ethnic India

One should understand that India is not a single-nation country but a multi-national entity with dozens of languages, cultures and heritages with each group living in one or more states for thousands of years. There is no blood bond between the North and South, let alone differences within South and within North. There is no cultural unity between North and South. So, as the Sinhala-Tamil war continued in Sri Lanka, there is very little empathy in the north among the people or politicians except for a few human rights groups and individuals.

6. Who Rules India?

Who decides India's military and foreign policies? India is ruled by Hindi-belt politicians of North India; ministers from outside the Hindi belt have no influence if their views contradict Hindi politicians'. This is discussed in detail in Reference 3. Hindi people, politicians and the "elites" consider themselves the descendents of Aryans and South Indians consider themselves Dravidians. Where this racial theory is true or not is

immaterial as long as North and South Indians think so. It is within this context that you should analyze Indian government's anti-Tamil policies.

Tamil Nadu irks India's Hindu rulers by being at the forefront on the demand for devolution of power to states (thus reducing Hindi politicians' power over non-Hindi states) and opposing vehemently Hindi imposition and thus delaying Hindi politicians' cherished goal of making their mother tongue Hindi the business and governance language of all of India.

Not only Hindi and Tamil cultures and languages different, there are ancient rivalries and, even enmities that have come to fore in post-British India. Tamil is a living testimony contradicting Hindi elites' and Indian government's false claim that Sanskrit is the mother of all Indian languages. This irks Hindi elite and politicians and Indian government makes every effort to downplay and downgrade Tamil in the international arena [see Reference 4]. There is serious concern among some Tamil scholars that Tamil would become an useless language in India as Indian government is removing Tamil wherever it can in Tamil Nadu itself. There is a saying. "a language without an army is a dialect". An independent Tamil Eelam would be a safe haven for Tamil. Hindi politicians do not like that. For example, whatever happens to Bengali language in India, it would survive as a living language and accepted in the international arena because Bengalis have their country Bangladesh.

7. Concluding Remarks

To put it succinctly, independent Tamil Eelam is actually in the national interest of India [Chapter 3] but it not in the interest of India's rulers (the Hindis), as the Hindi elite see it. That is the reason for Indian government's anti-Tamil actions in Sri Lanka. It has nothing to do with country's national interest.

No one can rule India without the support of the Hindi-centric parties, currently Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress. These parties may differ on many issues but they have the same anti-Tamil policy on the Srilankan ethnic conflict.

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Free e-book available where you downloaded this book.

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2.

Professor Boyle: India is Guilty of "Complicity" in Sri Lankan Tamil Genocide

Thanjai Nalankilli

[First Published: August 2009]

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

1. Professor Boyle's Statement on Sri Lanka
2. Tamil Civilian Sufferings During and After the War
3. Is India an Evil Stepmother to Sri Lankan Tamils?

Abbreviations

GOSL - Government of Sri Lanka
IDP - Internally Displaced People
IMF - International Monetary Fund
LTTE - Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
UK - United Kingdom
UN - United Nations
UNHRC - UN Human Rights Council
UNSC - UN Security Council
USA - United States of America

1. Professor Boyle's Statement on Sri Lanka

Dr. Francis A. Boyle is Professor of International Law at the Illinois University College of Law in United States of America (USA). Professor Boyle is an expert on international law and in 1993 he was responsible for winning two World Court orders against Yugoslavia on the basis of the 1948 Genocide Convention; these orders relate to Yugoslavian actions during Bosnian war.

Professor Boyle issued a statement on May 12, 2009 outlining the legal framework for a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting to end the war in Sri Lanka between the army and minority Tamil fighters (LTTE). He was highly critical of the governments India, USA, United Kingdom (UK) and France, for their inaction to call for an emergency UN Security Council meeting. **Here are excerpts pertaining to India:**

"India has an obligation to bring this matter to the attention of the Security Council under U.N. Charter Article 35 and to demand an immediate, emergency meeting of the Security Council under its Rule of Procedure No. 3 in order to terminate the GOSL's genocide against the Tamils in Vanni. Failure by the Government of India to do so would only

render **India guilty of "complicity" in the GOSL's genocide** against the Tamils under Article III(e) of the 1948 Genocide Convention.

"Shall India--the Home of Gandhi--turn and look away from the Tamils in Sri Lanka as they are being exterminated by the GOSL without doing all in its power at both the Security Council and the International Court of Justice (as previously explained by this author) to save these Tamils for whom it serves as *parens patriae* under international law? Today the Tamils in Sri Lanka have now become Gandhi's Harijans. Yet so far the Government of India has treated the Tamils of Sri Lanka as if they were "untouchables." [Harijan - someone belonging to India's, so called, "lowest caste", also called untouchables; they were treated badly in India for a long time until very recently. *Parens patriae* is Latin for "parent of the nation".]

2. Tamil Civilian Sufferings During and After the War

India did not ask for an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council as Professor Boyle suggested, and the war ended on May 17, 2009. Taking stock of the final phase of the war, UN concluded that 7,000 civilians were killed and 16,700 wounded between January 20 and May 7, 2009. More died between May 7 and May 17. The British newspaper Times said that one thousand civilians were killed each day during the final phase of the war. It based this conclusion on aerial photographs, official documents, witness accounts and expert testimony.

After the war ended, some 300,000 Tamils from the war zone were put against their wish in barbed wire relief camps (internally displaced people's camps (IDP camps)). Some western reporters compared them to Nazi concentration camps. Journalists and international observers were barred from the camps, except during a few government-organized tours. Very limited access was given to relief agencies, although appalling sanitary conditions and shortage of food and medical help were reported. The Times (UK) reported 1400 deaths a week in these camps.

3. Is India an Evil Stepmother to Sri Lankan Tamils?

Professor Boyle called India the "*parens patriae*". Does India consider itself the parent of Sri Lankan Tamils because of the 60 million Tamil population in its southern most state of Tamil Nadu?

Not only did India not ask for an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council to end the war and thus save Tamil civilian lives, it led an effort in late May (May 26 and 27, 2009) to block a resolution in the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The resolution asked the Sri Lankan Government to give unfettered access to humanitarian agencies to IDP camps in which some 300,000 Tamil civilians were kept involuntarily after the war. Not only did India vote against the resolution but lead the effort, along with Brazil, Cuba and Pakistan to defeat the resolution. Thus Tamil civilians were denied relief from international agencies willing and able to help them. As we mentioned in the previous section, The Times newspaper (UK) reported 1400 deaths a

week in these camps. Many lives could have been saved if relief agencies were given unfettered access. Is this the action of a parent?

India again came to help Sri Lanka in July 2009. America and Britain opposed International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan to Sri Lanka in order to pressure Sri Lanka to allow more access to international humanitarian agencies to IDP camps. According to news reports, India supported Sri Lanka strongly and America withdrew its objection to the loan in view of India's position. The Sri Lankan newspaper Daily Mirror reported that India asked the visiting American Secretary of State Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton to support the IMF loan to Sri Lanka. Again India had come up against Tamil civilians getting adequate relief in IDP camps. Is this the action of a parent?

In spite of the sixty million Tamil population in India's southernmost state of Tamil Nadu, **India is neither a father nor a mother to Sri Lankan Tamils.** It is not even a good stepmother. It is an evil stepmother helping the majority Sinhalese oppress and suppress the minority Tamils. God help the Tamils of Sri Lanka.

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3.

An Independent Tamil Eelam is in the National Interest of India

Yashoda Reddy
Siva Reddy
Thanjai Nalankilli

[First Published: June 2000; Updated July 2018]

OUTLINE

Abbreviation

1. Banned Meetings, Removed Posters, Secret Decisions and a Dirty Secret
2. Background
3. India, Sri Lanka and the Tamil Minority in Sri Lanka
4. What is India's National Interest vis-a-vis the Sri Lankan Conflict
5. Possible Outcomes of the Sri Lankan Conflict
6. A Historical Perspective of India-Sri Lanka Relations
7. Assessment of each Possible Outcome of the Sri Lankan Conflict

Abbreviation

LTTE - Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

1. Banned Meetings, Removed Posters, Secret Decisions and a Dirty Secret

People have the right to speak up against government policies, even against foreign, military and defense policies. That is what demarcates a democracy from a dictatorship. In Nazi Germany, everyone had to support the Feuhrer's (Hitler's) foreign policy and military adventures. There was no room for dissenting voice or dissenting advice. A similar situation is in effect in India for now almost a decade vis-a-vis India's policy towards the Sri Lankan conflict. Anyone voicing dissent over Indian government's irrational phobia about an independent Tamil Eelam is called anti-Indian at best, harassed and arrested at worst. Even the most powerful politician in the state of Tamil Nadu fears to give unqualified support for Tamil Eelam; he has to double talk, issue clarifications, etc. etc., lest he be labeled anti-national and his elected state government dismissed by the Hindi region politicians who control the Indian Central Government.

Recently (in May 2000) a proposed public meeting in support of Tamil Eelam was banned in the small town of Chidhambaram, Tamil Nadu, and those who went to attend the meeting were arrested, claiming that the meeting would disturb the peace. How would a public meeting attended by a few thousand people in a small town disturb the peace? An anti-Tamil-Eelam politician demanded that a Cable Television Company be shut down for anti-national activities because it broadcast video clips of people gathering for the meeting.

While the few rabidly anti-Tamil-Eelam newspapers with mass circulation carry highly inflammatory editorials and articles against independence for Tamil Eelam, those who challenge these views are banned from organizing public meetings or post posters. Editors of smaller publications that print pro-Eelam articles are harassed by police.

An important foreign policy with respect to Sri Lanka is not allowed to be debated in public but decisions are being made by a few behind closed doors in secrecy and even some allied political leaders from Tamil Nadu are misled about the course of action being taken. Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee said that India would never recognize an independent Tamil Eelam and had set a course of secret military actions that would help the Sri Lankan military if it were to reach a point of collapse (hiding those actions from even some of the ruling-coalition allies from Tamil Nadu).

The Prime Minister said that Tamil Eelam would be against the national interest of India. He did not elaborate but his surrogates asserted that an independent Tamil Eelam would destabilize Tamil Nadu, destabilize India, create separatists aspirations in Tamil Nadu and throughout India and break up India. They would not allow any debate as to why and how a tiny nation (Tamil Eelam) in the neighboring island, with a population about one-hundredth of it, could do all this to the "regional superpower", that is India. As we noted before, a meeting organized to bring the counter point of view was banned; posters expressing the counter point of view were removed and those who put up the posters were arrested thus freeing the playing field for the few rabidly anti-Tamil-Eelam newspapers to spread their points of view without challenge. In this respect, in the context of Indian government's policy towards the Sri Lankan conflict, India resembles more like Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union where only views supporting the dictator's policies are allowed to be voiced.

We will establish in this article the irrationality of Indian government's decision to do all it can to prevent the creation of an independent Tamil Eelam, even if it were to be achieved with the blood and sweat of the people, with no help from India or others. If the publicly stated reasons for Indian government's phobia against Tamil Eelam are irrational, invalid and without basis, is there are unstated, dirty secret for Indian government's actions. Is it to hide this dirty secret that the Government of India makes every effort to muffle the voices that challenge the publicly stated reasons and expose the real reason to the public? This dirty secret is exposed in Chapter 1, where we established that the publicly stated reasons are irrational and without merit.

2. Background

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Those who are familiar with the Sri Lankan conflict may skip this section and go to Section 3.)

Sri Lanka is a small island nation south of India. The southern region of the island is occupied historically by Sinhalese, who claim that their ancestors came from Bihar, India. It would seem that there was no contact between the people who migrated to Sri Lanka and the people of Bihar after the migration. The languages (Bihari and Sinhalese) are

different though there may be a hidden common link. Biharis are now mostly Hindus while Sinhalese are mostly Buddhists. Their cultures are different.

The northern and eastern regions of the island are historically occupied by Tamils who are ethnically identical to south Indians, specifically Tamils of Tamil Nadu. There was constant interaction between Sri Lankan Tamils and the people of Tamil Nadu because they were separated only by the narrow Palk Straights which could easily be crossed in small boats. Their languages remain the same. Tamils in the island are principally Hindus with a good percentage of Muslims and Christians, the same as in Tamil Nadu. Their cultures are also similar.

In addition to the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils, there are also a very small percentage of Moors and Burghers. Moors are the descendents of Arab traders (and Arabs who married locally). They are of Muslim faith. Moors should not be confused with the Tamils who converted to Muslim faith. Burghers are the descendents of European colonists (and Europeans who married locally). They are Christians. Burghers should not be confused with Sinhalese or Tamils who converted to Christianity.

After successive European colonial rules, Britain gave independence to Sri Lanka in 1948. Because of their numerical majority in the Sri Lankan parliament, the Sinhalese systematically amended and rewrote the constitution and enacted laws that were discriminatory and oppressive to the minority. Peaceful protests by the Tamil minority were met with police brutality. Thousands of Tamils were also massacred in half-a-dozen race riots, some incited by the government and the Buddhist clergy and all passively watched by the police giving a free hand to the Sinhalese thugs to loot, torture, rape and murder Tamils in the thousands (in some cases police even participated in the orgy of violence against the Tamils). This led to the demand for a separate nation for the Tamil minority in their traditional homeland in the north and east. As democratic means failed (politicians supporting independence won almost all seats from the Tamil region) and government oppression continued, Tamils took to arms and thus the birth of armed freedom fighters. This gained momentum after the 1983 race riots, the worst ever. The LTTE emerged as the dominant fighting force challenging the Sri Lankan army. We will skip the various battles, successes and losses. India armed the LTTE first (1983-1987), tried unsuccessfully to disarm it after getting from the Sri Lankan government some concessions beneficial to India's security and interests (1987-1990), the armed conflict continues to this day.

3. India, Sri Lanka and the Tamil Minority

India has a special interest in Sri Lanka. Not only is the small island nation located just miles from its southeastern coast, the minority Tamils are ethnically identical to the Tamils of its southern state Tamil Nadu. We will not consider the close ethnic bond that exists between the Tamils of India and the Tamils of Sri Lanka in the following analysis because the Hindi belt politicians who essentially control the foreign and military policies of India do not much care about the sentiments India's Tamil population. So we will look at India's policy towards the Sri Lankan conflict from the point of view of what is good

for India as a whole without any regard to the special long-time ethnic bond that exist between southern India, especially Tamil Nadu, and the minority Tamils of Sri Lanka.

4. What is India's National Interest vis-a-vis the Sri Lankan Conflict

India has hostile, or at best, "non-friendly" relationship with every one of its northern neighbors. In case of a major war with any of its enemies, present or future, from far or near, it would not be surprising if all of them support India's enemy. They are prone to give landing facilities, docking facilities and other logistical support. It is in India's national interest not to have its only southern neighbor hostile to it either. India wanted to have Sri Lanka as a "client state" that depends on India and accepts India's dictate in foreign and military affairs. "After all, it is a tiny island nation next to the giant India", so thought Indian policy makers. But Sri Lankan leaders had their own mindset and thumped their nose at India from the very beginning as the British colonial rule ended in 1948. While officially nonaligned, India "leaned" towards the Soviet Union during cold war years. Like most small nations next to a giant and powerful neighbor, Sri Lanka distrusted and feared India. It needed some powerful friends, even if from far off, and thus leaned towards the United States of America. It also tilted towards India's archenemy in the north, Pakistan. During the 1991 India-Pakistan war over the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), Sri Lanka allowed Pakistan to refuel its Air Force planes on way from West Pakistan to East Pakistan in Sri Lanka; a clearly anti-Indian stance. India could not do anything about it.

The rise of armed Tamil fighters in Sri Lanka presented a golden opportunity to India. India armed and trained the fighters (1983-1987), not to help them achieve their goal of an independent Tamil Eelam but to put indirect pressure on Sri Lanka to give up its "unfriendly" stance towards India. It paid off. In 1987, in exchange for India calling off the Tamil fighters as if they were India's hired guns, Sri Lanka secretly granted extraordinary concessions to India, including Sri Lankan agreement not to give docking facilities at Trincomalee harbor to nations that India considered hostile. (What has it to do with the internal conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil minority is yet to be explained by the Indian government.) (The secret agreement was exposed by a newspaper.) When LTTE refused to lay down arms, India sent its army to forcefully disarm it (1987-1990). Unable to do it, Indian troops left Sri Lanka in 1990 and Sri Lanka unilaterally decided that its secret promises to India null and now foreign ships are welcome in Trincomalee harbor whether India approves of it or not. Sri Lanka also reneged on the other concessions it made to India in the secret 1987 agreement. India could not do much about it. It cannot annex Sri Lanka to India by military force. It would become an untouchable in the world community. Sri Lanka still maintains a fake friendly relationship with India because the Tamil freedom fighters (LTTE) are still strong and are capable of taking on the Sri Lankan army; Sri Lanka does not want India to help them in anyway or recognize an independent Tamil Eelam in the same way as it recognized Bangladesh in 1971. Keeping this background briefing in mind, what is in India's national interest vis-a-vis the Sri Lankan conflict?

5. Possible Outcomes of the Sri Lankan Conflict

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