

# Chapter-V

## India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations in the Post-Civil War Years: Security Concerns before New Delhi

Map-4: India and Sri Lanka Geographical proximity



## **Chapter-V**

### **India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations in the Post-Civil War Years: Security Concerns before New Delhi**

#### **Introduction**

The National question in the state of Sri Lanka, even in the wake of the decline of the LTTE, carried a sense of uncertainty and suspicion, and even a feasible struggle of concern in the otherwise steady and durable multi-layered nexus between New Delhi and Colombo (Wedagedara, 2013: 66). In this section, I attempted to focus on the multi-agent dimensions<sup>1</sup> originated from the positional consideration and also seek to identify three significant dimensions and the role of one extra-regional power in Indo-Sri Lankan mutual cooperation i.e. the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL), the Government of India (GoI), Indian state of Tamil Nadu (TN), and the role of extra-regional power i.e. China.

The India and Sri Lankan mutual commercial relations evolved at an extraordinary degree during the post-civil war reconstruction (2009-2017). All over the years, Colombo had turned out to be a significant commercial and financial partner for New Delhi. With its strategic position in the Indian Ocean, it bears an important element of the security for India (Yogasundram, 2009: 274). As India's exportation sustained to blossom, the routes of Indian Ocean would have grown significance. Due to the importance of ocean-ways, New Delhi once again was bound to depend on the maritime security measures of the sea-roads of the Indian Ocean.

Owing to the political resolution of the civil-war in Sri Lanka, India played an intermediate role to make confirm the security and solidity of two ethno-national groups. The Indo-Sri

Lankan topographical closeness and ethno-cultural connections had been affecting the socio-political spheres of both states. The uneven conditions and political fragmentations of Sri Lanka were considered as the critical to the security of India. India, as a big brother of the region, would have to undertake the prime responsibility for maintenance of the peace and stability in the region.

### **The Sri Lankan Perspective to the Ethnic question**

In a distinctive of the stylishness of the rule of law, Rajapaksa furthermore endeavoured to involve the Tamil diaspora and he invited the foreign state (India and other external forces) to invest their plans and projects in the post-civil war reconstruction of the state. During the final phase of the civil war, not merely its chief leaders were assassinated and murdered by the armed forces, but it furthermore succeeded in enticing the condemnation of various internally displaced Tamils through its ruthless activities and actions. Although the *Tamil National Alliance (TNA)* continuously made an opinion and waterfall to form the Tamil demands for self-autonomy as well as sovereignty within the integrated state required to safeguard their self-respect and security system, the government effectively used the Tamil political representatives on the basis of the argument that particular constitutional arrangements for the Tamil people were needless in a nation-state of equivalent citizenship. Mr. Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, the Sri Lankan defence secretary, emphasized New Delhi's impact vis-a-vis Colombo. He specifically mentioned that (Wedagedara, 2013: 67):

*“(The) Indian factor is so important. That is one reason why we couldn't finish this (war) in 1987. ... There are many powerful countries in the world. But only India can influence any military operation in Sri Lanka because of various factors proximity with the country, powerful nation with a big military”.*

On 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009, The Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa delivered the post-war *Victory Speech* in the Sri Lankan Parliament and he insisted on the expansion of expectations about the seriousness of the Sri Lankan government to attain the political resolution and stabilising the conditions in the north-eastern areas of the island. Whereas opposing reports concerning the persuasive pressure exercised by New Delhi in the course of the civil-war, he requested New Delhi to perform the effective positive functions and to acquire enthusiastically required in the modernization of the parts exaggerated throughout the civil-war. On the other hand, he concentrated on the reintegration and restoration of people in the post-civil war state and wanted the involvement of India to be a part of emerging for manufacturing the trade and business in the state. Again, he entreated India to assist for the creation of jobs for the young-people, who would enjoy great opportunities here and now than under the LTTE, rebellious terrorism (Wedagedara, 67). Talking into consideration the gravity of the situation the GoSL recognised India's lawful and justifiable interests and concerns with regard to the welfare of the Tamils populations on the island and seemed to be sympathetic sensitivity towards India's concerns in relations to its external security.

After the elimination of the LTTE on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009, the President Rajapaksa presented a post-war victory statement in front of the Temple of the Tooth at Kandy in Sri Lanka named Sri Dalada Maligawa promising to nevermore permit the partition of the nation as homeland which was amalgamated after the downfall of disruptive secessionists (Wickramasinghe, 373). The LTTE competently had occupied and controlled the politics of Tamil for thirty-years in the north-eastern areas of Sri Lanka. This insurgence group was annihilated from the mainstream political power in the state.

With the beginning of Rajapaksa's another tenure in the Presidential office of the island in 2010 (re-election of Rajapaksa), the main concern of the preference seemed to undergo change.

In a conversation with the newspaper named *The Strait Times* on 18 March 2010, the President expressed that the most significant concerns of the common mass were their financial requirements and basic needs for their life in the society, and not the constitutional modifications and changes. Assessing a change from his aforementioned declarations, he did not mention and support the 13<sup>th</sup> constitutional rectifications as an original source of the political resolution of the conflict for nationality. Alternatively, he made an argument in contradiction of the support of federalism by stating that it was a squalid and unfair term that could not achieve the national goals and objectives in the nation-state of Sri Lanka. Depicting the federal pattern from the state of India, he mentioned that Sri Lanka would not reiterate the similar misapprehensions by decentralizing nation and law enforcement agency and power of the police sector to states or province (Wedagedara, 68). Rajapaksa, the then President of Sri Lanka, took the proposal to arrange the apparatus of the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) to encounter the ethno-national problem and make a political resolution.

The various dichotomies of views in the state and government might correspondingly point out the struggle for beneficial concern in its territorial boundary. For instance, in the post-civil war period, there was an expansion of the monopolisation of power, which was at loggerheads with the government's commitment to arriving at a hassle-free resolution to the national problem, highlighted for attaining the system of decentralizing power and empowering to the organizations. In this context, it worked out more reinforcement of the presidential administration vis-à-vis the assembly of the government by abolishing the restrictions on presidential tenure and similarly through the Constitutional Council founded under the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment (Wedagedara, 68).

On the other hand, the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment was proposed to make a connection between the presidential administration and the assembly of the government, with a view to developing the

responsibility and fair transparency of the decision-making process in the island (M.A. Sumanitharan's Speech...). This tendency gave preference to the solidification of the monopoly of authority at the centre, which did not prefer to promote the devolution of power which incorporated the qualitative change in both the organisational structure of the governance and the approaches and way of thinking of the politicians in the island.

### **The perspective of the Sinhalese nationalists**

The Ethno-national trends within the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)<sup>2</sup> and other national parties based on Sinhalese ideologies like the National Freedom Front (NFF)<sup>3</sup> and the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU)<sup>4</sup>, which promoted the ultra-national features of the administration and regime, were visibly opposed to any political resolution. From the very beginning, they were anti-India in their way of attitude. In the context of the post-civil war reconstruction, these nationalist forces in Sri Lanka put forth Sinhalese chauvinism with such a hostility that it would put up an impediment to any scheme to function in the direction of an executable political resolution. Eventually, the restrictions arranged by Sinhalese ultra-nationalism were tangible, the dominant authorities proceeded to allow for them the political support (Wedagedara, 68). In spite of the fact, Mahinda Rajapaksa, the leading politician of the decision-making system of the island, who was represented as the nationalist figure able to vanquish the rebellion group LTTE in Sri Lanka, arrested very steady political assistance equated to which the assistance base of nationalists like Wimal Weerawansa was moderately petty and not overwhelming. Consolidation of the nationalistic conversion had contracted the avenues for the substitute dialogue and discussion.

It is important to state that in May 2010, the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC)<sup>5</sup> was formed by the then Sri Lankan President, Rajapaksa for the restricted order of inspecting and informing on the phases between 21 February 2002 and 19 May 2009 with

respect to the exact problems. The issues and affairs duly probed and elicited were incorporated in the orders of the LLRC that prevailed during the aforementioned period of time (The Gazette of the Democratic...2010):

- (a) The events and conditions which led to the collapse and downfall of the cease-fire pact effectively functioned on 21 February 2002 and the series of incidents occurred subsequently up to the 19th of May, 2009;
- (b) Whether there was any individual, community or organization who directly or indirectly carried accountability in this consider;
- (c) The lessons we learned from those incidents and their connected concerned issues in order to assure that there would be no re-emergence;
- (d) The methods and techniques whereby compensation to any individual told upon by those incidents or their beneficiaries or their recipients, can be impressed;
- (e) The organisational administration and law-making restrained which required to be annexed in order to avert any reoccurrence of such apprehensions in the forthcoming, and to advocate more nationwide harmony and integrity which ensured the settlement and coordination among all ethnic communities, and to create to any further extent other related subjects that was investigated under the conditions of the Endorsement.

In September 2010 the LLRC recommended its temporary interim suggestions (The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist...2010):

- (i) The special apparatus should be formed to study the situation of longstanding prisoners on a case-by-case basis;
- (ii) To publish the list of detainees;

- (iii) To issue a discharge certificate to the unconfined prisoners so that they are not carried into detention another time;
- (iv) holds up in the legal measures and organization must be investigated;
- (v) To issue a transparent government policy statement that personal property would not be exercised for government-supported arrangements;
- (vi) To prevent the illegitimate militant groups and ensure them to be disarmed (great importance);
- (vii) To adopt the immediate plans and initiatives so that the people can interconnect with the government personnel and take the public documents in their language;
- (viii) To inspire the unrestricted movement on the A9 main-road; and
- (ix) To establish good synchronization and connectedness between government representatives and the security armies in stabilizing the civilian government and administrative functions.

The commission had given in to its statement on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 and encountered lots of critique on the problems of method, freedom, responsibility, and the deficiency of any apparatus for spectator safety in its accounts. Its decisions acquitted the Sri Lankan security forces of any accountability in the demise of citizens and left various queries unreciprocated (Report of the OHCHR...2015).

### **The Perspective of the Tamil Nadu Government after the Civil War**

The Tamil problem in Sri Lankan was an internal issue for Sri Lankan state with a worldwide spill-over effect but it was a responsive and sensitive matter for India due to the ethno-national intersections (of Tamils) between New Delhi and Colombo. In this way, there was a problem in the national and International frontiers (Wedagedara: 72). Tamil Nadu's geographical



proximity to Sri Lanka exercised a historical impression on the social order of the island, undoubtedly in the Tamil-speaking people of north-eastern areas. The closeness of the greater Tamil people crossways the maritime had contributed to the inconsistency whereby the Sinhalese people, the majority group within Sri Lanka, regarded themselves as a tormented marginal in the borderline area (Aliff, 2015: 324). Political parties in Tamil Nadu, to a remarkable degree, required the power to transfer sympathies of Tamil Nadu for its kinfolks populace to the policies of the Indian government. More than 70 million Tamil people in Tamil Nadu shared similar culture, community feelings and kinship with the Tamil people residing in Sri Lanka.

The political representatives of Tamil Nadu were the coalition partner of UPA-run Government of India (2004-2013). The alliance partnership was on condition that it had the capacity to determine the external policies of the central government towards Sri Lanka. The Tamil kinfolks linkage entrusted on the political leaders of Tamil Nadu who were obliged to the government and had the moral authority to influence the government of India to support the reason of the misery of Tamil population in Sri Lanka (Aliff: 324). This meant that India's strategies on the issues relating to Sri Lanka had to ponder over Tamil Nadu's probable responses to the effects such decisive outcomes might have on the Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

New Delhi had rapidly been losing reliable credibility at the domestic sphere and it developed aggravative irritations in its cooperation with the Indian state of Tamil Nadu alliance associates. In the post-civil war period, Sri Lanka's inactivity had its antagonistic consequence on the Tamil Nadu government and politics as well (Aliff: 324). The Sri Lankan Tamil problem was shifted to the political by-products in state of Tamil Nadu which acted a most important reappearance at the time of the general elections of Tamil Nadu, and the DMK, alliance with the congress political party in India agonized a simple thrashing.

The Tamil Nadu-Sri Lanka relation was especially in the wide-ranging extent of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka broadcasted by *The Hindu* under its national and global segments. The national problem in the state of Sri Lanka could be understood as an external issue as well as a national problem for India which was provoked and activated by the variation of political leadership depending on the aspiration of Tamil people. It is significant to mention that conditions in Tamil Nadu in 2011 remained easier to organise a movement as opposed to Colombo as well as Sri Lanka than on any other problem in the state of Tamil Nadu (Wedagedara, 72). It was a controversial and sensitive problem, which had been an excuse enough for the political leaders to continue the political movement and use the sentiments as the political weapon.

Furthermore, the disquiet of the Tamils condition in Sri Lanka had grown up since 2011 when the AIADMK party came back to the power in Tamil Nadu under the leadership of Jayalalithaa who assumed the position of Chief Minister in Tamil Nadu state. In the context of the development of the AIDMK, the Tamil Nadu state government advocated the government of India to extend its pressure on the Sri Lankan government in a series of problems, including antagonistic violence and the constant harsh situations faced by Tamil people in the north-eastern areas of the island (Aliff, 2015: 325). It did not allow the Sri Lankan armed training in the state of Tamil Nadu and even did not give green signal to exhibit sportsmanship by the sporting unit. The Tamil Nadu politicians as well as the leading politicians of Congress party, were opposed to Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, for joining the *Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)* meeting in Colombo on 15-17 November 2013 (CHOGM: DMK's pressure...). For this reason, the Tamil Nadu political leaders alleged Colombo on account of the human rights violations of the Tamils organised by the Sri Lankan military forces. Manmohan Singh decided not to attend the meeting owing to the regional political coercion and significance of India's regional sensitivities which denoted a questioning

on the solid external policy of India. In particular, the emotions of the Tamil people in Tamil Nadu performed a significant function in India's foreign strategy towards Sri Lanka in connection with the Sri Lankan Tamil populace. The regional imputes and regional political parties like DMK, AIADMK in Tamil Nadu became a significant factor for determining the Indo-Sri Lankan relations as well as foreign policies of India.

In contrast to several assertions, the Tamil problem in the state of Sri Lanka was not meaningful enough to influence the voting political policies of India. Nonetheless, various parties in politics raised the problem with an opinion to accomplish the political advantage. For instance, even Sonia Gandhi, influential Congress leader, elevated the Tamil problem of Sri Lanka and she looked forward to the necessity of the constitutional revisions throughout the period of the elections of state in April, 2011. Merely, it did not indicate that the Tamil problem had affected the consequence of the voting systems. Consequently, it was quite misleading to attribute the downfall of the DMK in 2011 due to their incapability to reduce the humanitarian crisis in the mainstream political system of Sri Lankan state in 2009 (Wedagedara, 72). In an article "*The Ethnic Question in India-Sri Lanka Relations in the Post-LTTE Phase*", Amali Wedagedara, renowned writer, pointed out that as one of the gradually emerging states in India, Tamil Nadu's political system was influenced further by more significant problems of everyday life, like the high-prices of necessary goods for food, cost of surviving, favouritism and dishonesty, than by the Sri Lankan civil war and Tamil national problem.

In these views, it was not possible to find an exact relation between the downfall of the Congress party in the 2011 voting election and the Tamil problem of Sri Lanka, yet the Tamil problem had occupied a significant score in the general voting negotiations. The organisational failure of the national Congress in Tamil Nadu after the 1960s was relatively provoked by the lack of local political leadership and absence of the integrity within the party-system. But Tamil

Nadu's activists put forward the argument that the antipathy of the Tamil inhabitants concerning India's approach towards Colombo in 2009 was a significant cause for its absolute breakdown in the 2011 wide-ranging voting systems. The explicit view stands propped by Wedagedara's idea of general election of India. She argued that the national Congress did not achieve to protect a sole municipality while the BJP, a peripheral political unit in Tamil Nadu, achieved to save a couple of municipality chairs. Some activists argued that the only absence of a noticeable reason and outcome did not exclude the importance of the problem (Wedagedara, 72). They made an argument that it was doubtful that the party system in Tamil Nadu would look-alike to take a coalition with the National Congress. All thought that a coalition with the National Congress had been a definite way for failure and downfall.

When the AIADMK came to power under the leadership of Jayalalithaa in 2011, the Indo-Sri Lanka reckoning was perplexed and byzantine. During this time, the political differences between the Congress and the AIADMK promoted a negative and indecisive effect on the conditions in the state of Sri Lanka. It is significant to mention that the LTTE, a guerrilla group and a banned unit, which was prohibited in India, had stopped being proactive in obliterating the legitimate and social difficulties for asserting the Tamil reason amenably in Tamil Nadu. Furthermore, there had been a resurgence of compassion for the anguish of Sri Lankan Tamils under the Sinhalese patronage regime since 2009. The context that the condition of the Sri Lankan Tamils stood unhappy and dreadful in spite of the elimination of the LTTE which aimed at attaining the autonomy of culture and separate state. It had begun to influence the Tamil intellectuals and academicians in Tamil Nadu, and it was only an issue of time before people begin intensifying it and find an extensive significance (Wedagedara, 72). In this context, it was an issue of Indian external strategy and the Sri Lankan national problem that might really highlight the aspect which fuelled the negotiation between centre-state relationships. For instance, in June 2011, no sooner had Jayalalithaa ascended to the throne of Tamil Nadu than

she became instrumental in rendering Indo-Sri Lankan ties complex by means of the approval of a resolution that entreated the centre to ratify the financial approvals on Sri Lanka. As a result, she emerged as the leader of a non-alliance party.

Several anti-Sri Lankan activities occurred in Tamil Nadu during 2012 and 2013. It is significant to state that the Tamil Nadu extremists attacked the Sri Lankan 180 pilgrims and travellers who came to visit the Velakkanni at Poornima church in Trichy in September 2012 (Thalpawila, 2014). On the other hand, two more events happened in Tanjavur and Chennai where Tamil national activists assailed and maltreated two Buddhist Monastics in Tamil Nadu. Simultaneously, Mihin Lanka commercial airline headquarters and the Maha Bodi wayfarer centre in Egmore (2012) were assaulted in the place of Chennai, India (Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa...2012). The Sri Lankan football league from the academic institution arrived for a match competition in Chennai but they were forced to send back to Colombo by the then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa. Owing to growing in a various number of violent events, the GOSL issued an order to the traveling advisor not to give the permission to visit the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and requested the Sri Lankan pilgrims not to visit the Indian state of Tamil Nadu until further order or statement of the GOSL (Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa ...2012).

During the visit of Rajapaksha in India, some protest movements occurred in the various parts of Tamil Nadu. In September 2012, Mahinda Rajapaksa, the President of Sri Lanka visited New Delhi, to pay homage at Sanchi Stupa and likewise laid the foundation stepping-stone of the University of Buddhist Studies in Sanchi (Sri Lanka President begins...2013). On that juncture, Vaiko, MDMK general secretary reached at Nagpur with his political followers on the highway to Sanchi and lodged a complaint and arranged a movement against Sri Lankan President due to his ruthless steps against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka (Wedagedara, 72).

In the post-civil war period, Rajapaksa, the Sri Lankan President including his family travelled to Bodh Gaya temple in the state of Bihar to devote worship and respect to the celebrated Buddhist temple-Mahabodhi in February 2013. When he reached the place of worship, there remained some anti-Sri Lankan activists who shouted with catchword at the place of worship. In the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, DMK under the leadership of Karunanidhi, did not support the Rajapaksa's visit and he flagged off the *black-flags* in the convoy and objected to Chennai (Sri Lanka President begins...2013). The activists intended their objection to allege war criminalities and civil right abuse on Tamil people in the island. Therefore, mainstream political parties in the state of Tamil Nadu performed a significant function concerning the anti-Sri Lanka protests in India.

Furthermore, these two decisive solutions were made at that period when the troika (Nirupama Rao, Foreign Secretary, Sivsankar Menon, National Security advisor and Pradeep Kumar, Defence Secretary) paid an official visit to Colombo as well as Sri Lanka. Such clamours made uncomfortable the central government; subsequently they conducted an enormous disturbance in the Sri Lankan media and amongst the Sinhalese proponents. Jayalalithaa's one more claim that India must consider the frequent attacks and assaults on fishermen of Tamil Nadu made by Sri Lankan Navy as an active action of violence and must make a more powerful attitude in contradiction of Colombo instead of avoiding the problem as a national question. It was another factor of her effort to use the Sri Lankan problem as a political apparatus. As Jayalalithaa was not a partner of the Congress alliance, it provided her terrific negotiating for power with the government of India. The influential leader of the conventional politics in the state of Tamil Nadu like Jayalalithaa and Karunanidhi accentuated the significant implications of Sri Lankan Tamil's national problems which were included and counted in their election manifesto and political-statement to extend to the common people.

J. Jayalalithaa took the two decisive solutions which were adopted and passed (2015) by the State Assembly of Tamil Nadu in opposition to the Colombo in this regard (Wedagedara, 73). Jayalalithaa made an argument in the State Assembly before affecting the decision. She contended that the US had projected the internal investigation or review by Sri Lanka at the UNHRC and that it remained in contradiction of usual justice. She demanded that India must attempt to bring about a robust resolution at the UNHRC accompanied by the US looking for a worldwide inquiry contradicting those who started the violation of civil rights of human beings and conflict criminalities in breaking to the universal policies and resolutions (War Crimes in Sri Lanka...). It was certainly a change in conflict of M. Karunanidhi, to focus his inaptitude in 2009 in the general perception of the Tamil population, instead of the effect of India's strategy on Colombo. Therefore, the Tamil problem of Sri Lanka remained one of the several significant problems in state politics.

In spite of this, they had not thus much united under the specific banner. Remarkably, some political analysts in India made a statement that such revolutionary activities marked the politicisation of the non-political assemblage. The genesis of their enlistment demonstrated a qualitative change in the post-2009 situation. It was fuelling and it would be motivated to take a serious note of what formulated these occurrences. On the other hand, the state-wide organisation claiming forgiveness for the sentenced in the Rajiv Gandhi murder event had formed an implied supporting for the Tamil reason. The reinforcement of past descriptions on the IPKF, the Sri Lankan national crisis and India's strategies towards Sri Lanka withstood and restarted the commemoration of the breakdown of India to avert the cost of human beings in Sri Lankan civil warfare. An unaltered condition in Sri Lanka would allow-for more provocation to these abilities to voice (Wedagedara, 73). The revitalization of sympathetic consideration for the Tamil reason in the state of Sri Lanka and popular mobility of looking for the justice and legitimacy for Sri Lankan Tamils might stimulate the political leaders in Tamil Nadu to reconsider their politics of outspending one another. The complications of Tamil

to endure ethnically and diplomatically were pertinent. The BJP's acceptance of the Tamil reason exemplified how the untraditional supporters of the Tamil question might make an effort to project the resurgence of sympathetic consideration for the Sri Lankan Tamils to their basic benefits and opportunities.

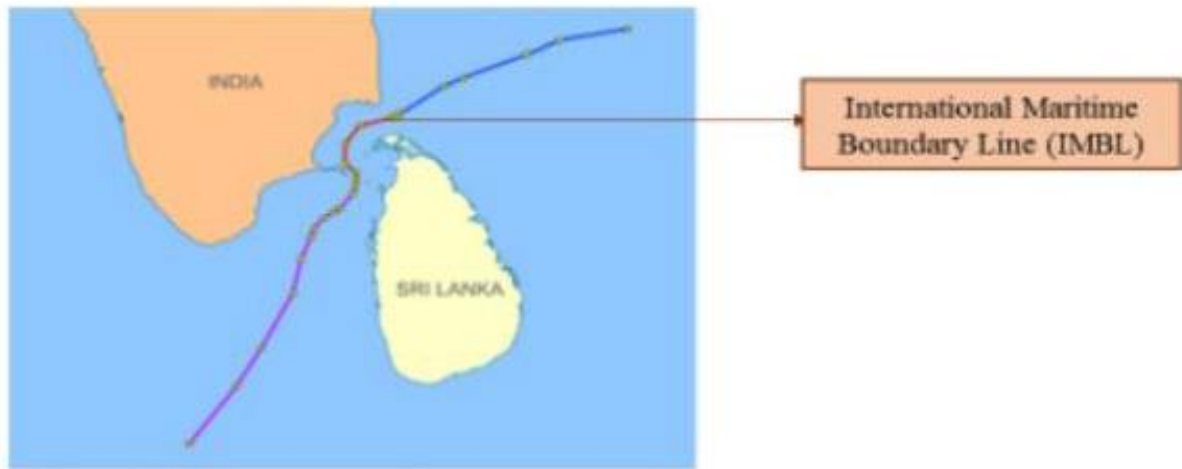
### **India's perspective and response to the ethnic question**

On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008, both New Delhi and Colombo made a contract for cooperative experimentation which intended to achieve quality production in the dualistic states. The memorandum of understanding (MoU), another aspect of relations, was contracted between the *Tea Research Association (TRA)* of India and the *Tea Research Institute of Sri Lanka*. This remained the initial contract between the two states, both contesting each other in tea export in the global commercial place (Sultana: 337).

Basil Rajapaksa, senior advisor and MP of Sri Lanka, paid a conspicuous visit to New Delhi as a special diplomat of President Mahinda Rajapaksa sustaining in the attention of the humanitarian and living proportions of the fishermen problem. On 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2008, the leading persons of both states decided to interrupt the pragmatic measures to manage and take care of the bonafide fisherman of India and Sri Lanka getting across the *International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)* in the Indian Ocean (Report of Government of India...2008).



**Map-5: International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)**



**International Maritime Boundary Line**

**India-Sri Lanka Maritime boundary agreements,**  
[https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c2/India-Sri\\_Lanka\\_maritime\\_boundary.svg/2000px-India-Sri\\_Lanka\\_maritime\\_boundary.svg.png&imgrefurl](https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c2/India-Sri_Lanka_maritime_boundary.svg/2000px-India-Sri_Lanka_maritime_boundary.svg.png&imgrefurl) [Accessed on-17/01/2017]

Pranab Mukherjee, Indian Foreign Minister, officially paid a visit to Colombo and he also considered the cooperative relations on 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2009. His negotiations covered the whole scope of bilateral cooperative relations and regional problems of common good and benefits. Furthermore, he also stated about India's interests and concerned for the security, and wellbeing of the citizens with Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa. M. K. Narayanan, *the Indian Foreign Secretary and National Security Advisor* paid an official visit to the Sri Lanka to express the alarms of the Indian Government on the developing condition in Northern Sri Lanka, particularly at the causatives agonized by the Tamil citizens as an outcome of the armed actions on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 (Sultana, 2011: 339). In a telephonic discussion with Rajapaksa, Sri Lankan President and Pranab Mukherjee, the then Indian External Minister reinforced that the revolutionary struggle by the LTTE came to the culmination and Velupillai Prabhakaran, LTTE chief, was killed on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The LTTE rendered instantly the finest facilities to the

Tamils by setting them free from their trick and laying down of arms in Sri Lanka (Report of ICRC... 2009).

New Delhi was constantly advocating the peaceful resolution of the political conflict within the structure of unified Sri Lanka, a representative decentralization policy, the defensive establishment of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and the necessity for an organized discussion with the Tamil political associations and other participants to attain a long-term political resolution. Furthermore, the Indian government stimulated the planned discourse apparatus to function in the direction of a political resolution which provoked the beginning of the discourse between the TNA<sup>6</sup> and GoSL from January 2011 (Wedagedara, 68). The position of Indian was reviewed in the shared declaration delivered by the ministers of the external affairs (S. M. Krishna of India and G. L. Peiris, Sri Lanka) of equal states in May 2011 requesting for the decentralization of power, developing upon the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment and immediate taking away of emergency rules, inquiries into the accusations of civil rights violations, establishment of stability in the warfare zones of the island.

After the annihilation of the LTTE as a pro-Tamil insurgence assemblage, the role of India had noticeably changed from being an anti-insurgency associate to the rebuilding and expansion supporter of Sri Lanka in the new phase of geopolitical formation (Aliff, 2015). Wimal Weerawansa, a Sri Lankan Minister, was a representative of Sinhalese ethnic groups and criticised the statement made by S. M. Krishna, Minister of External Affairs, India. Weerawansa also demanded that inquiries regarding the exploitation of human rights must be started from the period of Indian military actions in Sri Lanka. It is noteworthy that the troika (Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao, National Security advisor Sivsankar Menon, and Defence Secretary Pradeep Kumar) tried to ensure not to advocate the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment as a suitable

compute opinion throughout its official visit to Colombo in June 2009. Menon unequivocally pointed out:

*“Our goal is an (political) arrangement; the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment is their amendment, not our amendment .... We did the India-Sri Lanka agreement. Now if they think they want to do better than the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment let them do it”.*

As Shyam Saran, the former Indian foreign secretary put it (Wedagedara, 70):

*“it overall Indian policy is focused on maintaining trust and gaining the confidence of the Rajapaksa government which in return allows India to engage in the ethnic issue. Moreover, India also seeks to emphasise the strong alienation of Tamils”.*

During 2009-2011, the government of India provided economic assistance and humanitarian support to resolve the ethnic issues. In 2010, India decided to assist the grant US\$ 27.5 million for the post-civil war rebuilding plans in northern-eastern area of the island (Ministry of Finance and Planning...2010). In the context of post-civil war reconstruction of the island, the government of India took some developmental policies for the reconstruction of the war-affected areas like Jaffna socio-cultural institution, the renovation of Duraiyappa sports ground and its Playing field, reconstruction of the Jaffna Research Organization of Palmyra Development Board, funding for improving the health attention services in Kilinochchi and Mulaitivu, progress of industrial and business region, providing fishing tools, farming equipment, automobiles, and allied developmental schemes (Thalpawila, 2014).

### **Role of Extra-Regional Power (China)**

It is significant to mention the role of China exercising its power on the island as extra-regional power. China's entrance to the South Asian periphery brought the new dimensional concern for India. During the manifestation of the ethnic struggle in July 1983, President Jayewardene

pursued the military help from the responsive external states to encounter the increasing ethnic crisis in the nation state. Originally, Jayewardene made an effort to keep out India in the national crisis of Sri Lanka (Behera, 2000: 551). The Jayewardene government stimulated to get the affirmation from different states like China and other powers to exclude India's interference in the nationality problem of Sri Lanka. In this context, the outside powers realised that this was the occasion to attain the tactical move and diplomatic foot-poundal on the island.

Jayewardene, the President of Sri Lanka, had his particular explanations for inviting the outside forces (Behera, 2000: 552): *first*, he frightened the penetration of India and consequently he sought the extraneous troops to protect his nation state; the second argument perhaps was that Jayewardene concerned that aspects within the military force might turn against him and that external military forces could help him to defend country from the possible national threat. In this development, the outside forces or external states started manipulating the domestic developments on the island in their benefits.

China's connection in the ethnic conflict of Sri Lanka was mainly due to the concerns of Indian involvement and interposition. China had deeply been concentrating on the importance of the geostrategic position of the Indian Ocean which maintained the maritime transportations and connected the South and East Asian states. Therefore, its alliance with Sri Lanka was the comfortable expansion in this regard. In addition to the political support, Sri Lankan President Jayewardene was in a friendly way welcomed at Beijing in 1984. At that time, Beijing also put up for sale numerous Patrol Crafts and some weapons and missiles to government of Sri Lanka. In 1984, Sri Lanka received two Shanghai II class crafts from China to quick strike and attack against opponents. Another time in 1986, China sold six Y-12 Transport airplanes (Behera, 552). Instead of providing the Chinese military assistance to Sri Lanka, most scholars thought that weapons auctions of China would be considered as threat to the national security of India.

Because, the geo-strategic position of the island was of enormous significance to China for imposing any probable harm and perilous threat to India.

Subsequently, New Delhi was doubtful about Beijing's investments in Sri Lanka and China's intention of investment policy since the 1980s in South Asian regions was a serious concern for India. India's concern was from its uncertainty that China was trying to encompass and made an effort to encompass India (Sri Lanka Vital for China...). In addition to a foothold in Colombo, China keenly sought to get hold of the Indian Ocean which connected the commercial channel with Pakistan and many extents of Central Asia, now a portion of China's *Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI<sup>7</sup>)*.

In the context of an attempt to achieve the opportunities in the Indian Ocean, the Government of China supported the Sri Lankan government in fighting against the LTTE and backed to eliminate the rebellious group in the territory of the island. Beijing strengthened its financial relations with Colombo since 2005 when Rajapaksa was elected as the President of Sri Lanka. Between 2006 and 2008, the developmental support and assistance of China to Colombo quintupled, took the place of Japan as the maximum vital donor state. In 2007, Beijing made a pact on the *Establishment of Friendship City Relationship* with Colombo to extend the Hambantota seaport development on the Southern coastal ranges, which was too the electoral constituency and the home-district of Mahendra Rajapaksa, the then President of the island. This pact was important because China was confident to increase its influence in the region of the Indian Ocean through the agreement (Reddy, 2007). The government of China poured its investments in a coal power station, set up a particular financial zone, and was entitled to inspect the highlights for oil in the Mannar Gulf.

Progressively, China became essential to Sri Lanka. Beijing had been providing military hardware to Colombo during the final year of civil war. Significantly, China had performed

the most important role of a catalyst in bringing about post-civil war Sri Lanka's structural development (Sri Lanka Rejects US claims...). The government of Sri Lanka had originally (2008) requested India to build the Hambantota Seaport on the island and had given the assurance to New Delhi that Sri Lanka will not allow and tolerate any foreign activities or the functions of Chinese armed forces in the areas of Hambantota harbour. But the government of India did not accept the Sri Lankan request (Singh, 2018: 4). So obviously, the Sri Lankan Government requested China to assist in the development in the Hambantota port of Sri Lanka. Beijing eagerly felt indebted in this regard and then started the structural functions on this seaport in 2008.

Beijing accepted the occasion to make constructive activities on the Hambantota seaport which was territorially good positioned and linked the southern portion of the island to the prominent maritime networks. The most important attraction was considered for the location of the harbour and Beijing expected that china might be benefited by the establishment of this plan. In addition, China realised that the investment on the seaport will reduce and diminish the dependence on the maritime transportation paths and increase the main position in the area of the Indian Ocean. In this regard, the government of China invested \$1.5 billion to construct the seaport in Sri Lanka (Wagner, 2016). The government of Sri Lanka remained very serious about India's monetary involvement and as consequence, eagerly received great assistance from China, mostly since the Western contributors retreated after the re-election of Rajapaksa in 2010 as the President of Sri Lanka.

In 2013, Xi Jinping, President of China, projected the majestic global enterprise called One Belt One Road (OBOR<sup>8</sup>) which was promoted by China as a win-win prospect for everybody. The OBOR scheme had been a gigantic communicative network of sea channels and terrestrial ways across the lots of states in the South-east Asian region. This arrangement would affect

4.4 billion persons among dozens of states (A Scary Glimpse...). In order to help the business and free flow of the people, China had declared foremost investment strategies across the world for the development of the communicative structures. Sri Lanka had been a vital portion of this impressive project for China. Although Colombo was trying to refund the \$8 billion debt from China, the Chinese Government had exposed its concentration in investing more \$24 billion under the OBOR project (Singh, 2018). Ravi Karunanayake, the then Sri Lanka Foreign Minister, had opposed the decision of the Sri Lankan Government to join the OBOR project. He argued that (Singh, 2018): *“We are a small country and our foreign policy is, friends with all, enemies with none”*.

The focal point of controversy and dispute was that China’s footmark on the island had expanded into the Tamil-dominated regions of the island where the Influence of India in the mentioned areas of Sri Lanka had been the robust and deepest. Beijing mounted the pressure on Colombo to introduce the northern areas for the reconstructions. Chinese’s occurrence into the areas of strong Indian influence on the island had been worrying because its role in the northern areas might cause India’s uncertainty. However, the Sri Lanka government regarded these progresses from a different viewpoint. John Gooneratne, (Rtd.) Sri Lankan diplomat, stated (Ramachandran, 2018):

*“The Diplomat that From the Sri Lankan point of view there is no problem for Chinese assistance in Tamil areas. China had no preference in that respect and the government is not separating the country into Tamil-areas, Sinhalese-areas, and Muslim-areas in its foreign-assisted reconstruction work”*.

New Delhi concerned about the role of China’s reconstructive schemes in the Northern areas of the Island. Such worries occurred in 2014 when China launched the submarines at Colombo port two-times despite India rearing fears (Ramachandran, 2018).

In 2016, Ranil Wickremesinghe, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, stated in Parliament that the particular amount of the loan was not clear and mysterious. The reports suggested that Sri Lanka's external debt developed from 36 percent of GDP in 2010 to 94 percent in 2015. Sri Lanka allocated 95 percent of all public revenues for its loan and required the help from IMF a \$1.5 billion bailout due to repay the debt (Roy Chowdhury, 2016). There were various projects in which China financed in post-civil war Sri Lanka. Beijing invested \$ 1 billion for the betterment of the *Hambantota Development Zone*, made the financial support of the \$ 1.5 billion to reconstruct the *Colombo Port City plan*, which especially aimed at drawing \$ 13 billion in terms of financial project in the subsequent 20 ages and decided to invest \$ 1.35 billion to restructure the *Norochcholai Coal Power Plant project* in Sri Lanka (Ramachandran, 2018). Certainly, it was the Hambantota plan which attracted the highest consideration worldwide because it exposed the negative aspects of China's aspiring belts and road ventures. In 2017, Sri Lanka handed over the seaport to China on a 99-year agreement or tenancy.

Thus, the Chinese government started to pay new consideration to the Sri Lankan government under the rule of Xi Jinping, President of China. Sri Lanka accepted the scheme of the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) which was proposed by China, especially with permitting Sri Lanka a significant centre in the MSR project (Singh, 2018: 3-4). Sri Lanka invited Xi Jinping on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary of Sri Lanka. On this occasion, Xi Jinping stated that he gave special emphasis on the high-label of consideration to improve the China-Sri Lanka bilateral cooperation and he was enthusiastic to make intensive efforts with Colombo under the administration of Sirisena, the President of Sri Lanka. The objectives of China-Sri Lankan diplomatic relations and their collaborative partnership were based on the several principles like (India-Sri Lanka ties...): (i) joint support (ii) the long-standing relationship (iii) to keep attaining the better progress in the interests of the two states and its peoples.



The growing affection between China and Sri Lanka formed India's concerns particularly in the background of Chinese contributions and connectivity in the construction of infrastructure schemes of the island which fuelled the diplomatic implications in the national sphere as well as in the region. The seaports of Hambantota and Colombo harbours would harmfully affect the tactical interests of India. In this connection, some important problems are specified as follow (Singh, 2018: 4): (a) Strategic Context; (b) Hambantota Harbour; (c) Colombo Harbour; (d) Military Assistance; (e) Chinese Project; (f) One Belt One Road (OBOR) in Indian Ocean.

The China-Sri Lankan bilateral trade and business relations were constantly increasing and it was found that their mutual trade-business value was about 4.4 billion dollars in 2017. In this respect, the two main obstacles in the means of concluding the agreement were: *first*, the claim to review the conditions in ten years, as Sri Lanka required to be capable of revisiting the circumstances under the FTA in a period which was not satisfactorily appropriate to Beijing; and *second*, China wanted a zero price treaty of around 90 percent of the commodities exchanged between the two states, even though Sri Lanka intended this to apply about fifty percent of the commodities (China Trade Pact Talks...).

Sri Lanka's pursuit of tactical development in areas of the Indian Ocean made an effort to find out the possible role for itself in the South Asian shorelines. The Hambantota and Colombo Ports had unpleasantly affected India's tactical benefits and diplomatic interests. These alarms stimulated India to become more robust after the founding of the submarines of China at the Colombo Seaport on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014. Though the Rajapaksa's administration claimed that the seaport was being habitually utilised by several states for landing and supplying of the fleets and submarines ships, the growing various Chinese vessels visited the harbour (De Silva, 2017). The increasing Chinese vessels in the Sri Lankan seaport raised the alarm of fears amongst the Indian tactical specialists.

In this framework, New Delhi defensibly realised that this tendency would affect its longstanding security benefits, and understood that the growing Chinese tendency in the Sri Lankan seaport was in encroachment of Indo-Sri Lankan accord (1987) which was held on conditions that both states would not give to permission their docks or harbours to be used for the actions which might be harmful to the harmony, and national Security. The government of China had invested profoundly in the post-civil war reconstruction of Sri Lanka like monetary support and assistance for the establishment of airfields, road and rail networks, and seaports. The expansion policy of China on the island had unsettled and worried India which conventionally maintained the strongest financial share of Sri Lanka comprised of 21 million populations. New Delhi considered the importance of Trincomalee seaport as a planned position in the nationwide security of India.

The seaport did not produce adequate traffic and profits and subsequently, the Sri Lankan Government was incapable of repaying the debt taken from China. As a consequence, the Sri Lankan government was compelled to make an agreement and signed a 99-year lease with the government of China undertaking transport corporation. The Sri Lanka government congruently encompassed leasing out about 15000 acres of lands in the adjoining industrial area to the *China Merchants Port Holdings (CM Port)* as per agreement which was held and signed on July 29, 2017 (*How China got Sri Lanka...*). on the other hand, China had similarly projected to construct a *Special Economic Zone (SEZ)* adjacent to the harbour, which might assist in improving the activities at the harbour. In this context, Sri Lankan agriculturalists were complaining against the agreement as well (Singh, 2018: 5). Also, the fishermen were opposing the agreement.

The Colombo Harbour had been geo-strategically and economically significant from the viewpoint of India, as Indian corporations used this seaport to upload goods from big ships and

then send it to India by small vessels or boats. It is important to state that a major portion (approximately seventy percent) of Indian ships used the Colombo Seaport to transport the goods. Due to the importance of the seaport, the Government of China was financing greatly in the Colombo harbour and surrounding zones and most of the previous schemes were being redeveloped and reopened. The Sri Lankan Government and the China Harbour Construction Company (Pvt) Ltd took the initiative to establish the Colombo Seaport City for the monetary, uptown and entertaining centre in the regional section of the Indian Ocean (Singh: 7). China *Communications Construction Company Limited (CCCC)* financed to construct the Colombo Port City which was the biggest scheme between China and Sri Lanka in 2017. This Port City was proposed by China to establish the Belt and Road Inventiveness and this project can be considered as the 21st Century Maritime Silk-Road. This route as an extension of the China-Pakistan economic corridor was Chinese tactical creativity to intensify the investment and promote the collaboration between China and Pakistan. On the other hand, the building of the Port City will correspondingly generate the employment prospects for the residential citizens. It was estimated that a total of 83,000 workers will be engaged for the completion of the project (Sri Lanka, China...). Ranil Wickremesinghe, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, published an article in China Daily and he stated that the Sri Lanka-China supplying and industrialized sector will change the state of Sri Lanka into a central trade transaction and supplying centre which attracted enormous investment funds to the Hambantota region.

Maithripala Sirisena, President of Sri Lanka, expressed thanks to the government of China for rendering the military assistance to Colombo in 2017. He emphasized his belief about the China's constant training assistance for the military and combat forces in Sri Lanka. According to him, the two states may effectively become heir to various pacts and promises. He expressed that these pacts will not do any kind of detriment to the national security, arrogance, and sovereign power of state of Sri Lanka. During this time, Chang Wanguan, *Minister of Defense*

and State Councillor of China, paid an official visit to Sri Lanka and expressed that China's purpose was to maintain the longstanding co-operative relations with the government of Sri Lanka. He reminded that China had maintained the strategic and diplomatic relations with Sri Lankan government for sixty years (Sri Lanka Thanks China...). There were two rounds of the *Defense Cooperation Dialogue* (DCD) between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of China. The first-round negotiation of China-Sri Lankan DCD was arranged on and from 10/10/2015 to 12/10/2015 at Beijing in China. Also, the second-round negotiation was extended on and from 12/10/2016 to 15/10/2016 at Beijing in China. This negotiation was held under the leadership of Hettiarachchi who was the Defense Secretary of Sri Lanka. The then Deputy Chief of Joint Staff Department of China's Central Military Commission (CMC), Admiral Sun Jianguo, took the participation in this discourse. After the completion of this dialogue of DCD, the defense assistance and support encompassed several sophisticated high-level connections like armed support, training prospects, the relationship between security think chambers, intelligence assistance, and involvement of co-operative military training. These negotiations were attained two different ways; *firstly*, the assistance of Chinese Yuan-120 million (2.6 billion) for the infrastructural development and *secondly*, providing the *Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV)* to Sri Lanka (China to Provide...).

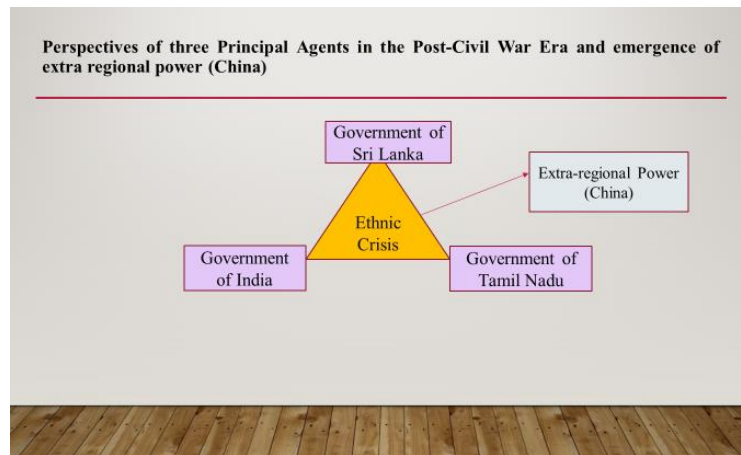
During the rule of the Rajapaksa government (2005-2015) in Sri Lanka, the government of China signed several numbers of agreements for several infrastructure schemes. Owing to the extensive civil-war, Sri Lanka was in dire need of support for development, which China promised to provide with its investments. Dr. Lakmini Gamage, renowned writer of History, Ruhuna University, Sri Lanka, in the post-civil war period, Colombo had received China's assistance and welcomed the financial investments of China due to an awful necessity of assistance and loan for development. By 2017, the *Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)* of China increased 35 percent of the overall FDI in Sri Lanka. Afterward, as per the report,

approximately 200,000 Chinese visitors paid a visit to Sri Lanka in 2017 (Sri Lanka Attracts...). In May 2018, the Western Development Ministry made an agreement with the China Petroleum Pipeline Engineering (CPPE) to establish the underground channels in Sri Lanka. The completion target of this scheme has been 2020. On the other hand, the Government of China also sanctioned the loan of one billion dollar for the first phase to construct the highway connecting from Colombo to Kandy (China Clears...).

It is important to note that the Bank of China decided to open its first divisional branch in Colombo on March 29, 2018. All over the inaugural observance, Ranil Wickremesinghe, Sri Lankan Prime Minister, itemized that (Bank of China Opens...):

*“The Bank of China is opening (its branch in Sri Lanka) at a time when Colombo city is transforming into a megapolis.”*

According to him, the Bank of China had a vital role to perform its functions in assisting this state by strengthening the internal trade and commerce while similarly being able to draw further investments of China into the state. Tilak Marapana, the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, paid a visit to Wang Yi, his Chinese corresponding item in Beijing, the capital city of China, on October 30, 2017. Throughout this official visit of Wang Yi emphasized the significance of OBOR for this cooperative relationship and congruently traced out the five regions for shared collaboration. These encompassed intensifying of conventional relationship and political belief, collaboration on most important schemes, traditional commerce, and cooperative venture-capital, marine and naval partnership, and cooperative interactions among the people of both states. Consequently, the fraternal association between China and Sri Lanka extreme apprehension and interest to New Delhi, particularly from its nationwide security viewpoint.



In this regard, Professor Sabyasachi Basu Roychowdhury, renowned author of Political Science, put forward very pertinent statement in the Anandabazar Patrika (25<sup>th</sup> November 2019) that Sri Lanka had been greatly influenced by China during the Rajapaksa's reign. At that time, Sri Lanka got into the terrain of China. Subsequently, India's concern was accentuated by the arrival of China's warship and submarine in the seaport of Sri Lanka. Therefore, India made fervent effort to lesion the impact of China on this southern neighbouring country. It kept India in anxiety for posing menace and threat to its internal security.

## **Dynamics of Indo-Sri Lanka Relations**

In June 2009, Mahinda Rajapaksha, President of Sri Lanka, paid the official visit to India. During his visit, he sought to enhance the co-operative relations with India. These relations were also strengthened when Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Sing, announced that India was prepared to support Sri Lanka for the restoration of war convicts. India tried to reconstruct the mutual relations through several manners. New Delhi decided to propound the economic support for several schemes in the apprehended zones of Sri Lankan state. In this background, Indian Government had supplied the emergency allocation of medications, provisional housing, and strengthened and steered the monetary support for the war-pretended ranges with

the venture about \$110 million (Thalpawila, 2014). India prolonged its collaboration with the support of US \$ 800 million for the rebuilding infrastructure of railways-routes and supported approximately about the US \$ 200 million for the powerhouse project. P. B. Jayasundar, Treasury Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, Government of Sri Lanka, supposed it to be a 20-year credit at an unconditional amount having the lowest rate of interest. About US\$ 250 million in funding had congruently the accessible in the sustenance of housing progress in the north and east zones of Sri Lanka (Bisht, 2010).

Sri Lanka's trade and business export development had mostly been under policies of the ISFTA<sup>9</sup>, while the export policies of India had kept on habitually outside of the ISFTA. In the statistical average, over 70 percent of exportations of Sri Lanka to India remained under the purview of ISFTA, whereas India's transportations to Sri Lanka under the ISFTA amounted to merely about 25 percent. Sri Lanka exported in a large amount of 4000 goods lines to the marketplace of India on the basis of being non-taxable. The significant feature of the development of exports under the pact was the larger production divergence, which occurred as a corollary of the FTA. The Most important transport from Sri Lanka as per policies of the ISFTA comprises: article of furniture, clothing, MDF panels, crystal flagons, dealing with meat foods, domestic fowl nourishment, protected supports and cable system, jug cool-box, inflated tires, roofing tile and ceramic goods, elastic handbags, electrical-boards & inclusions, mechanical equipment, food arrangements and spices etc (Report of Consulate General of Sri Lanka... 2018). According to Professor Mahesh Senanayake, Professor of Political Science, University of Colombo, the overall products and goods transported by Sri Lanka to India correspondingly improved after the FTA. While India was a notable powerhouse importation even before the FTA, it did not demonstrate a most important export marketplace. India and Sri Lanka had been enjoying a radiant and increasing financial and business enterprise, with symmetrical trade rising quickly since the FTA.

**Table-8: Trade between Sri Lanka and India (2000-2017) (Value in US\$ Millions)**

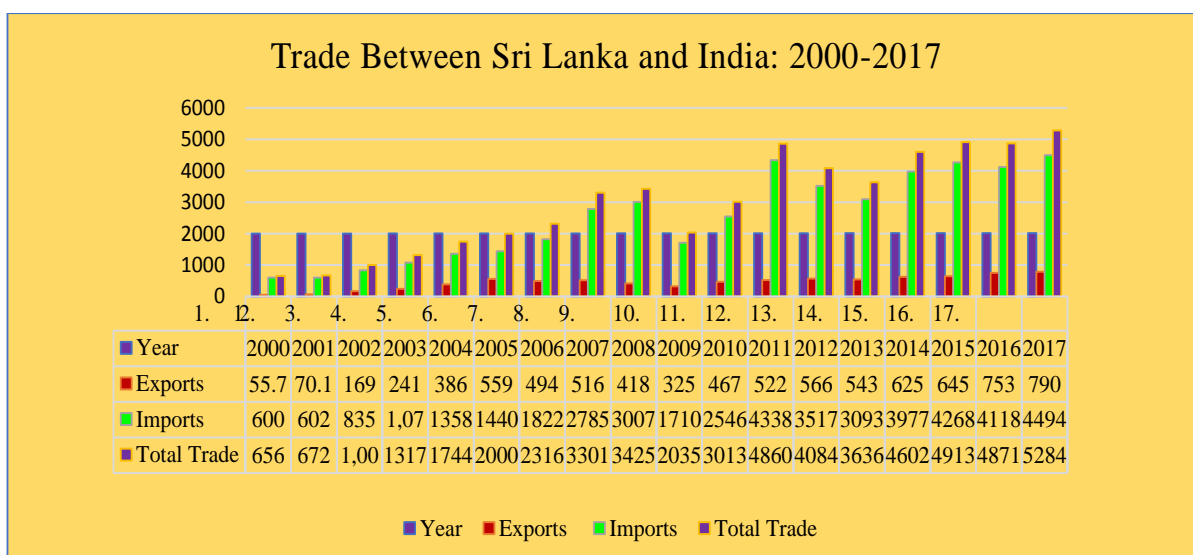
Sl. No.	Year	Exports	Imports	Total Trade
1.	2000	55.65	600.12	655.77
2	2001	70.12	601.50	671.62
3	2002	168.86	834.70	1,003.56
4	2003	241.14	1,076.17	1317.31
5	2004	385.50	1358.01	1743.51
6	2005	559.26	1440.41	1999.67
7.	2006	494.06	1822.07	2316.13
8	2007	516.40	2785.04	3301.44
9.	2008	418.08	3006.93	3425.01
10.	2009	324.87	1709.93	2034.8
11.	2010	466.60	2546.23	3012.83
12	2011	521.65	4338.04	4859.69
13.	2012	566.37	3517.23	4083.60
14.	2013	543.37	3092.67	3636.04
15.	2014	625	3977	4602
16.	2015	645	4268	4913
17.	2016	753	4118.25	4871.25
18.	2017	790	4494	5284

**Sri Lanka Customs, Consulate General of Sri Lanka**

<http://www.mumbai.mission.gov.lk/index.php/trade/indo-lanka-trade-relations>

[Accessed on- 04/11/2019].





India as an influential and leading state in the South Asian region decided to encompass the new economic support for promoting several schemes in post-civil-war modernization (2010) of the state of Sri Lanka. In this context, during 2010, the entire monetary support was laid down by the government of India for the rebuilding of the post-civil-war society of Sri Lanka. The approximate grant and loan were about 483.9 million dollars (Ministry of Finance and Planning...2010: 243). India was another main contributor amongst the external contributors. India acquired several supportive creativities for the development of the state of Sri Lanka.

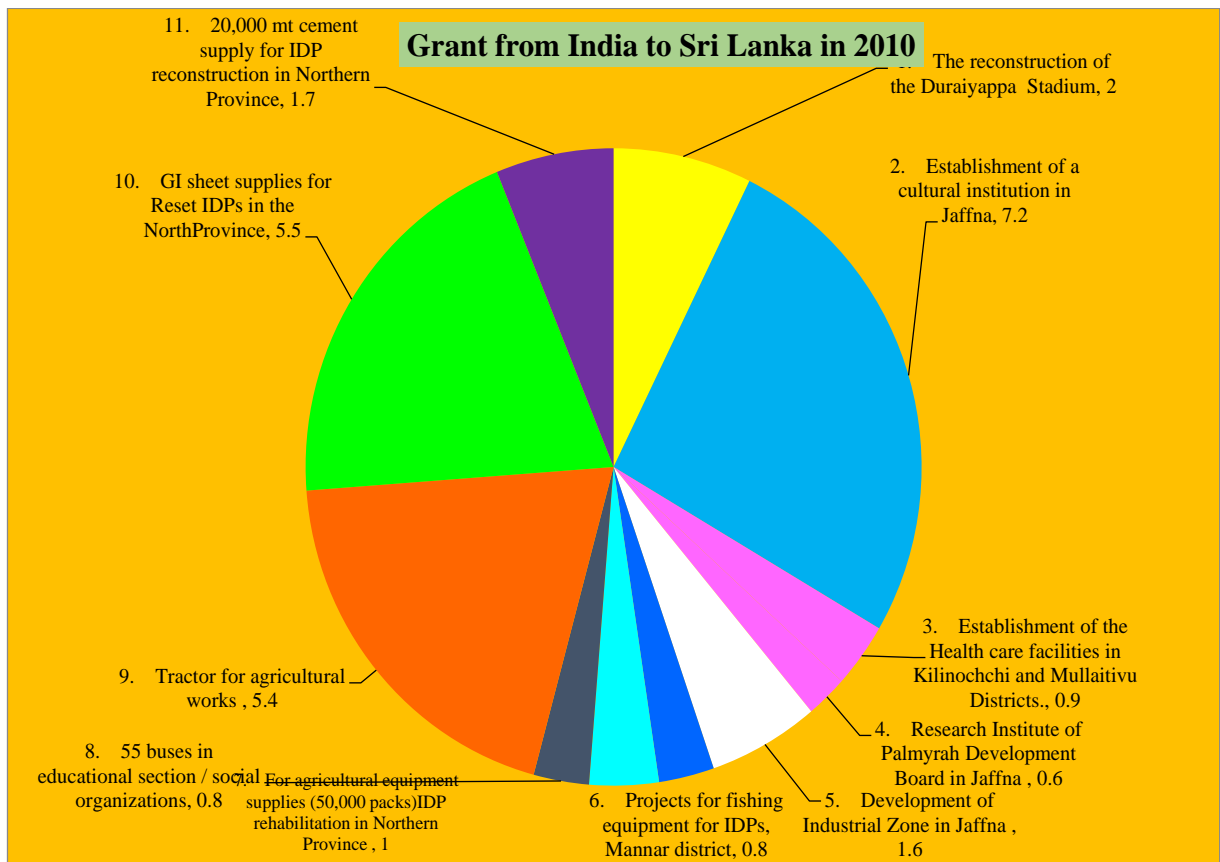
**Table-9: List of Approved Project in 2010(USD Million) assisted by India in the Post-Civil War reconstruction of Sri Lanka**

Sl. No	Name of Project	Grant	Loan	Total
1.	<i>The reconstruction of the Duraiyappa Stadium</i>	2.0	-	2.0
2.	<i>Establishment of a cultural institution in Jaffna</i>	7.2		
3.	<i>Establishment of the Health care facilities in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts.</i>	0.9		

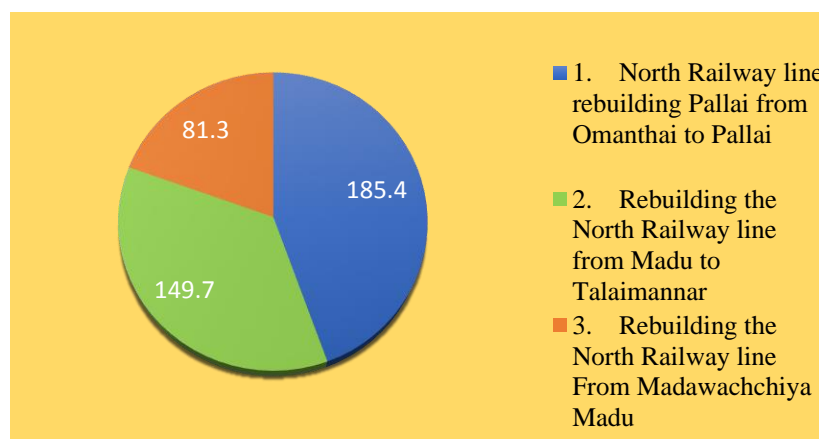
<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Name of Project</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Loan</b>	<b>Total</b>
4.	<i>Research Institute of Palmyrah Development Board in Jaffna</i>	0.6		
5.	<i>Development of Industrial Zone in Jaffna</i>	1.6		
6.	<i>Projects for fishing equipment for IDPs, Mannar district</i>	0.8		
7.	<i>For agricultural equipment supplies (50,000 packs) IDP rehabilitation in Northern Province</i>	1.0		
8.	<i>55 buses in educational section / social organizations</i>	0.8		
9.	<i>Tractor for agricultural works</i>	5.4		
10.	<i>GI sheet supplies for Reset IDPs in the North Province</i>	5.5		
11.	<i>20,000 Mt cement supply for IDP reconstruction in Northern Province</i>	1.7		
12.	<i>North Railway line rebuilding Pallai from Omanthai to Pallai</i>		185.4	185.4
13.	<i>Rebuilding the North Railway line from Madu to Talaimannar</i>		149.7	149.7
14.	<i>Rebuilding the North Railway line From Madawachchiya Madu</i>		81.3	81.3

*Ministry of Finance and Planning, Sri Lanka, (Annual Report, 2010: 243)*  
<http://www.treasury.gov.lk/publications/annual-report> [Accessed on- 18/09/2018]

The following figure give detail about the grant provided by India to Sri Lanka in 2010



**Loan from India to Sri Lanka in 2010**



Apart from this, New Delhi decided to extend the financial assistance of 416.4 million dollars to Sri Lanka to reconstruct the Railways infrastructure from Omantahi to Pallai and from Madovakkheya to Talaimannar in 2010. In this context, New Delhi decided to implement the housing scheme which might provide 50,000 residential houses to bring back the north-eastern

family units. This scheme taken by the government of India was one of the major financial supports for the external state. It was estimated that the whole expenditure cost for this scheme was about the US \$ 270 million. New Delhi took one more significant progressive plan of the coal scheme in Sampur of the Eastern area of Sri Lanka (Ministry of Finance and Planning... 2010: 275).

In 2015 in the course of the official visit of Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, he handed over the 27,000 new homes to the people in Jaffna who turned out to be displaced and were suffering from the problems of civil war. These houses were built with Indian economic assistance (PM Modi Hands over...). In the context of the post-civil war period, India tried to maintain co-operative relations through the infrastructural development of the new railway system from Trincomalee to Medawachchiya in Sri Lanka, projected to be about \$300 million (India Wants to Construct...). On the other hand, India assured to build the 50,000 houses that would be provided to the IDPs families in the North-Eastern areas of Sri Lanka and out of which approximately 46,000 houses were accomplished for them. The structure of 4,000 houses was at this time (2015) started in the farmstead area in Central and Uva regions (India to Assist Sri Lanka...). India was additionally functioning towards restructuring the infrastructure of the railways' system from Omanthai to Pallai in Sri Lanka. These formed a part of the 800 million dollars credit-line which was rendered to Colombo by New Delhi (Singh, 2018: 14).

Both states agreed to sign a MoU in 2017 (Sri Lanka and India to Sign...): (a) to establish a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plant on the coastline of Colombo and to bring about the solar-power (50 MW which would be extendable up to 100 MW) plant at Sampur in Trincomalee; (b) India's support to the upgraded practice of natural gas in state of Sri Lanka; (c) Shared investment in the petroleum division and joint venture for the development of highways and

infrastructure of transport; (d) The projected shared scheme to improve the oil-chamber storing capacity which would be made by the shared undertaking of the Indian Oil Corporation and Ceylon Petroleum Corporation in Trincomalee, the tactically situated seaport city on the east coast of the island.

Narendra Modi, Indian Prime Minister paid an official visit to the island to improve the supportive co-operation with the Sri Lankan government on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017. His two-day official-visit was an indication of durable co-operative relations between the two states. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to Colombo was taken into consideration to be apolitical. This official-visit stressed and accentuated on the following purposes:

- (i) To interact with Sri Lankan Buddhist otherworldly Researchers and theological doctrine;
- (ii) To pay a visit to the Seema Malaka at Gangaramayya place of worship;
- (iii) To bring into being the Dickoya multi-specialty hospital consists of 150 beds with the support of India. This hospital would be founded by the Indian assistance amount of 2.6 billion US dollars aided from the government of India;
- (iv) To bring-down the Buddhist place of worship to admire the holy place of Sri Dalada Maligawa in Kandy, Sri Lanka. It has been the world legacy place for worship;
- (v) To inaugurate the founding stepping-stone for the personnel of the Kandyan Dance in the International Buddhist Academy of Sri Lanka.





1. *PM Modi with Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena at Sri Lanka's iconic Buddhist Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy and offered floral prayers.*
2. *Image courtesy: Twitter.*

In the post-civil war reconstruction of Sri Lanka, India agreed to sign with Sri Lanka to offer a 318-million-dollar loan for railway division in 2017. India supported financial assistance to Sri Lankan four plans of credit of around 966 million dollars. The government of India made the help to Sri Lanka for the development and recovery of its railway infrastructure in the northern and southern areas of Sri Lanka for the upgraded services (India, Lanka Pact for...). New Delhi proposed to establish the shared project with Sri Lanka to operate and increase services at the unprofitable Mattala airport, which was closest to the Hambantota port. It was estimated that the starting or introductory investment was to be \$293 million, of which India planned to invest up to 70 percent during the 40-year lease. The Government of India assisted 2.5 billion dollars to the government of Sri Lanka for the development of airfields until 2017 (Singh, 2018: 14). It is significant that between the years 2015-2017 India's export values to Sri Lanka were 5.3 billion dollars and its significant values were \$743 million by 2015-2017. During the year of 2017, the total number of Sri Lankan refugees who had been carefully supervised and managed by India in the state of Tamil Nadu was about one lakh.

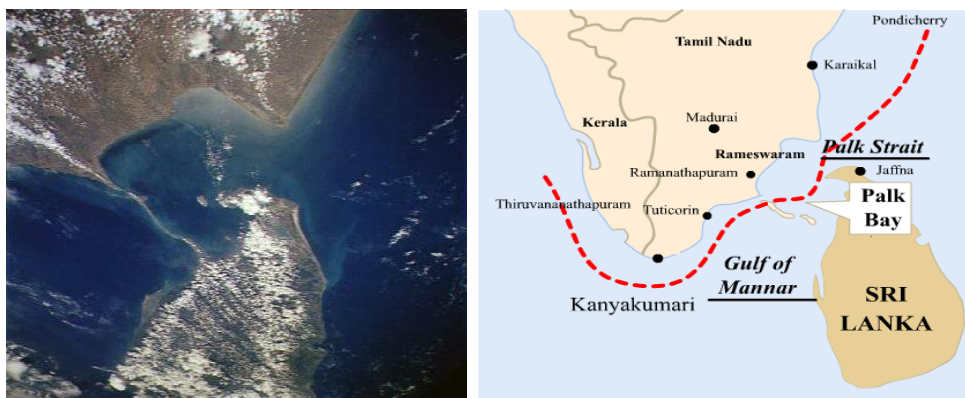
The government of India declared the economic support of 45.27 million dollars to assist Sri Lanka for the reconstruction of the Kankesanthurai (KKS) Seaport in the northern area to full-fledged business docks in January 2018 (PM Modi launches...). The nationwide emergency ambulance facility financed by the New Delhi was launched in

Sri Lanka on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2018. The overall price of this scheme was projected to be about \$22.8 million (Singh, 2018: 14).

**Revisit Palk Strait Fishing Dispute and Katchatheevu<sup>10</sup> Issue:** The controversy among the fisherman of South India and the Sri Lankan Merchant navy over the trawling rights extended and fostered a more exciting relationship between New Delhi and Colombo. The constrictive part of Palk Channel between India and Sri Lanka disconnected the two-nation states. According to V. Suryanarayan, this zone remained an uncertain area for a long period of time. Although the fisherman problem had been more increased at an extreme level, the Tamil Nadu government elevated the subject of Kachchaitivu Island in the Indian ocean. But India relinquished the landmass to the government of Sri Lanka in 1974 on the basis of the *Kachchaitivu Island Pact* (Suryanarayan, 2010: 6-8).

The fisherman of Tamil Nadu repeatedly entered the Sri Lankan seawaters and crossed the Palk Strait for fishing in the Indian ocean. This practice sustained a very extensive period of time. Throughout the civil-war in Sri Lanka, this zone was administered and regulated by the LTTE, but after the civil war, the Sri Lanka Navy (SLNAVY) captured and regulated the zone and it had extended the patrol to its most areas. The issue had become apparent since that time, due to numerous unlawful fishermen and their boats were arbitrarily detained and imprisoned by the merchant navy of Sri Lanka (Thalpawila, 2015: 11).

### Map-6: India-Sri Lanka Palk Strait and fishing disputes

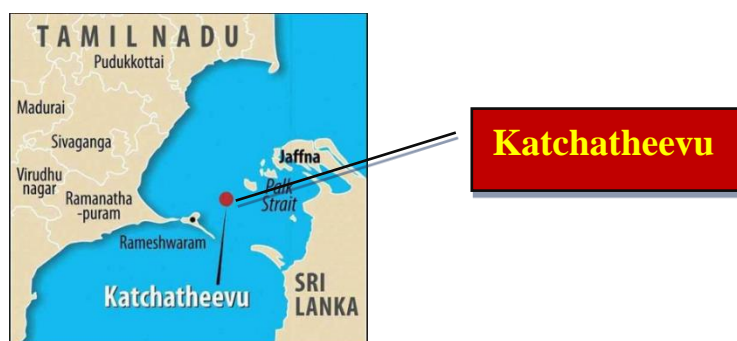


<https://thediplomat.com/2017/01/>

India-sri-lanka-revisit-palk-strait-fishing-dispute-in-ministerial-talks/ [Accessed on- 17/12/2018].

Katchatheevu was an estranged desert island reigned by the government of Sri Lanka. This island had been around 285 acres which located 17 km away from Rameshwaram, India. Also, conventionally India and Sri Lanka together were exercising this land in the ocean. During the British rule, this land was governed and administered by the monarchy of Ramnad zamindar in the Madras Presidency. The Indian government controlled and administered the Kachatheevu Island after the abolition of the Zamindari system in India (Bhasin, 2001).

### **Map-7: Katchatheevu issue**



<https://www.quora.com/Why-is-Katchatheevu-a-big-deal> [Accessed on- 13/12/2018]

In 1991, the Government of Tamil Nadu reported that the two hundred thirty-six (236) events occurred causing the destruction of 51 ships and there were fifty fishermen who were killed in the ocean seawater and moreover, 135 (One hundred thirty-five) fishermen were physically injured (Bhasin, 2001: 166). Consistently, the Tamil Nadu government reported between 1983 and 1991 that there were 236 happenings organised by the Sri Lankan military forces. This problem turned out to be a significant issue of the electoral political program in the state of Tamil Nadu. J. Jayalalithaa incessantly pressurised the central government to recapture the desert landmass from Sri Lanka. They anticipated to attain the fulfilment in the domestic political policies that forced the union government of India to challenge the government of Sri Lanka. Also, Colombo criticised and charged the fishermen of India for their penetration in the seawaters of Sri Lanka and blamed the government of India for dividing the LTTE trawling



boats for the penetration in the Indian ocean which was demarcated for the Sri Lankan seawaters. The Tamil Nadu had furthermore emphasized that the government of India might assume its control on the landmass from the government of Sri Lanka once more.

In this context, Jayaram Jayalalitha, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, made a file of an appeal in the Supreme Court of India to expedite the hearing of writ regarding the island and demanded to New Delhi that the island be recovered in 2008. In the post-civil-war phase, the Kachchativu problem became significant consideration by the anti-Sri Lankan political leaders in Tamil Nadu. In 2011, Jayalalithaa reaffirmed the Central Government of India to control the island and its surrounding parts due to the peak of the Indian fishermen problem (Thalpawila, 2015: 11). The legislative council of Tamil Nadu consistently accepted a definite solution in this regard in 2011. It is significant to mention that on 9th June 2011, the Legislative Assembly of Tamil Nadu adopted a wide-ranging strategy to establish the Revenue Division on the basis of the writ-petition or injunction of court order case (The Resolution Passed...).

India decided to inspire and instigate its fishermen to escape the exercise of bottommost trawling an untenable manner of angling that extensively captured oceanic natural life, resulting in the overfishing. The foreign Ministry of India made a message of its media statement 2017 that lowermost trawling would be categorised in a well-knit time bill method in a workable and attainable time framework. Sri Lanka had extremely voiced disquiets about the unlawful trawling and fishing by the Indian fishermen who intended to cross the territorial boundaries of the Palk Channel (Panda, 2017). The Sri Lankan armies frequently detained the Indian fishermen due to the cross of the *International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)* that fixed and underlined the boundaries between Indian and Sri Lankan seawaters in the Indian Ocean. The intelligence reports stated that India also imprisoned the fishermen of Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Parliamentarians were ready to argue for two bills regarding the problem. One bill was proposing the penalty charges for fishermen of India trapped fishing unlawfully in Sri Lankan seawaters and the other was the prohibition of the mechanical bottommost trawler. Sri Lankan Parliamentarians had not yet accepted the policy of penalty or fine, according to Mahinda Amaraweera, a member of the Sri Lankan Parliament. On the other hand, the clash between the two states was more complexed by internal political issues in India (Panda, 2017). The maximum number of Indian fishermen especially from the state of Tamil Nadu, trapped trawling unlawfully in Sri Lankan seawaters and they argued that the seawaters demanded by Sri Lanka had in history been enjoyed by the Indian Tamil fishermen (Indo-Sri Lanka Fishermen...2016).

Afterward such a reply to Sri Lankan seawaters in Colombo, when the problem was heightened, there was practically not anything to gratify the legislators of India. It was accused that the Indian government was not taking the initiative to protect the lives and requirements of the fishermen of India on the desert-island. In 2013, Karunanidhi, former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, produced an appeal to the Supreme Court in order to recover and control the island on the Indian ocean (Suryanarayan, 2013). But, constant issue of the island has not been determined. This event remained sub-judice as it required legal elucidation from the end of the Supreme Court of India. The unending controversies debate had intensified the controversies between fishermen and augmented the provincial boundary violation.

The Katchatheevu had been an unpopulated desert that India relinquished to Sri Lanka in 1974, and since 2009 Colombo declared this desert-island as the sacred land of Sri Lanka. Neither government formally upheld the disagreements regarding the position of the landmass, except Tamil political representatives remarkably the massively popular and enormously powerful and newly departed front-runner of the All India Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) J.

Jayalalithaa (Panda, 2017). For the Indian government, the management of fishing-related problems and controversies with the government Sri Lanka was an issue of affair in maintaining the national interest which fuelled and affected the policies of external strategy with center-state diplomatic attentions. Furthermore, the Katchatheevu problem also made the fishermen problem complicated between India and Sri Lanka in 2014.

In this situation, the Katchativu island problem concerned the mutual relations between the Central government of India and the government of Tamil Nadu. Jayalalithaa, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, put pressure to recapture and reconstruct the island. She had claimed from the Union government to ensure the right of trawling and fishing of Tamil Nadu fishermen in this oceanic area. Then again, the central government of India supposed in Madras High Court that the Katchativu problem made a further serious political dispute for Tamil Nadu than the resolute complications between New Delhi and Colombo (Kumar, 2014). The centre reported to the Madras high court replying to the PIL that Sri Lanka's sovereignty and control over the Katchatheevu island had been an established matter and Indian fisherman did not have any right to enjoy fishing occupations in the oceanic area (Thangavelu, 2016). Sri Lankan fishermen were mostly irritated for the reason that the hunt and searching under Indian fishermen were mostly banned in Sri Lanka. They had as well been blamed that if such performances of modern techniques used by the Indian fishermen for fishing in the oceanic area continued, the fishing stock in the oceanic level will rapidly be diminished to nothing (Sri Lanka Ministry of Fisheries... 2018). The tendency of this progressive expansion had some consequences that lead to the perilous threat to the oceanic ecosystem, ecological balance and fish supply.

It is significant to remark that both the countries would introduce the perfect and long-lasting trawling accessories and fix the fishing day of the week for Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen.

In this state of affairs, V. Suryanarayan remarked that special provisions could be constituted to safeguard the benefits of conventional fishermen for both the states. Oceanic properties should be exercised for the quality development of individuals in the littoral coastal zone. Tamils had adequate chances for the reciprocated co-operation of both the states in the overview of hypermedia vessels for sea fishing (Suryanarayan, 2014). Both Singh and Modi emphasised the significance of Indian external policy and they were interested to introduce the centralised diplomatic strategy of foreign policy. The new Sri Lankan government sought to strengthen the bilateral relations between India and Sri Lanka in the fishermen's glitches since 2015. This attempt was created to form the unity among the domestic shareholders (Ministry of External Affairs...2016).

In 2016, it was assessed that one-thousand (1,000) Indian fishermen were fishing at the boundary of Sri Lanka and they collected roughly 200,000 kilograms of sea fish in a daytime from this sideways (Klein, 2017). But then the constant decrease of Indian fisheries, fish availability or stocks and lowest trawling ships, had been a cause of pressure between New Delhi and Colombo. A proclamation published by the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Sri Lanka, in 2016 that Marine surveillance at ocean and satellite broadcasting images specified that roughly 500 to 1000 trawling boats from South-India cross the threshold of the seawaters in a day. They overlapped the intercontinental oceanic border mark with their self-determination and were fishing in these seawaters. They regularly used the trawl nets that extended into the deep down of the seawaters, and threatened the surroundings of the fish in the Ocean that violated the ecosystem of seawater and ecology of the Indian ocean (Thalpwila, 2015: 11).

In this regard, *A Joint Working Group (JWG<sup>11</sup>)* was formulated to grapple with the problem pertaining to the Indian fisherman who extruded in Sri Lankan seawaters, devising the means

of warding off the force in opposition to them on account of the operation of boats in a fraudulent way and the opportunity of expediting. The JWG encountered and reported the enduring problem of culminating the fisherman disputes. In 2017, Sushma Swaraj, Indian Foreign Minister, and Mangal Samarvedi, Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, shared their views concerning the fishery disputes. This dialogue accentuated probable actions to find out the perpetual solutions of the fisherman controversies of both the states in the Indian Ocean. Both states mutually acceded to the demand of discharging the fishermen in the confinement of others.

## **Conclusion**

In the post-civil war period, the Indo-Sri Lankan mutual relations were grounded on two significant assumptions: first was domestic politics of India and the party interests which had constantly sought to strengthen their alliance power with the dominant or national political party. During the civil-war period, the Tamil Nadu's political parties played a significant role, by urging the New Delhi to interfere in the activities of the Sri Lankan Tamil problem. On the other hand, the fisherman disputes in the Indian Ocean affected the party system of Tamil Nadu which fuelled the trends of relations.

The second assumption was that India as developing influential power in the Asian regional system nurtured its upcoming concerns and threats from extra-regional power i.e. China. China's expansion policy in the Asian region compelled New Delhi to take strong interests in encouraging solid mutual relations with Colombo. The geo-strategic position of Sri Lanka at the Indian Ocean area had been magnetising several major powers developing in or expressing into the area. In the globalisation period, the rising powerful states like India and China were attempting to reform the Asian area to improve their tactical advantages, with Colombo once more being implicated in the great game. In spite of this, identifying its intrinsic limits as a

minor state, Sri Lanka must follow a positive policy of multi-actor's involvement to understand its purposes of the external strategy. The support of India and China provided the Colombo government with significant patronage at the worldwide level, strengthening its development of activity and serving it to rebound global critique on the manner of the combat and the post-warfare circumstances. The present study thus draws on the theoretical analyses of the dynamics of relations dominating the national scenarios.