

(The history, negotiations, abrogation of pacts, military operations, etc)

Severe Aerial bombing, artillery shelling by various governments in the island of Sri Lanka have caused massive human disaster and property damage in the Tamil homeland)

1505 The Portuguese arrived in Ceylon during the existence of three sovereign kingdoms, one Tamil Kingdom in Jaffna, and two Sinhala Kingdoms in Kotte and Kandy.

The island was divided into three kingdoms, a Tamil kingdom in the North East, the Kandy kingdom of the highlands and the Kotte kingdom situated in the South.

1619 Tamil sovereignty ended in June when the **Portuguese defeated the Tamil King**, and the Jaffna Kingdom became a Colony of the Portuguese.

1658 The Dutch arrived in Ceylon and the Jaffna Kingdom became a Dutch Colony.



Dutch 1658 - ceylon

1795 The British arrived in Ceylon and the Jaffna Kingdom became a British Colony.

1802 Ceylon became a British Crown Colony.

1833 For the first time in over 2,500 years of its recorded history, **the entire island of Ceylon was brought under a single administration** based on the recommendations of the **Colebrook-Cameron Report**.

1862 Tamils from Southern India were brought as labourers to work in the tea plantations in the hill country by the British. During the same period Tamil labourers from South India were taken to work in the sugar cane plantations in South Africa, Mauritius and in many other British colonies.

1885 Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan Tamil leader called for increased representation in Legislative council for Tamils.

1915 In June, **Sinhala Buddhist-Muslim riots in Ceylon. Riots spread from the central province to the western and northwestern provinces.**

There were heavy casualties amongst the Muslims. According to available records, 36 Muslims were killed and 205 Muslims were injured and raped. Nearly 85 mosques were damaged and more than 4,075 Muslim-owned shops were looted by the Sinhala rioters.

1919 The Ceylon National Congress (CNC), the first full-fledged "Nationalist" political party was formed by a celebrated Tamil, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam.

1921 Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam **quitted the CNC, denouncing it as a party** representing mainly a section of the Sinhalese.

1927-1931 Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan and Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam had talks with Sinhala leaders when the **Donoughmore Commission** announced its recommendations in 1927. The talks ended in a failure as the Sinhala leaders ignored the aspirations of the Tamils.

1944 The first Tamil political party, “All Ceylon Tamil Congress-ACTC” was founded by G. G. Ponnambalam to champion the cause of the Tamils against Sinhala Buddhist domination.

1947 The United National Party (UNP) was formed.

The first constitution of Ceylon was adopted by an Order in Council rather than by a Constituent Assembly. It was known as the (Lord) “**Soulbury Constitution**” which remained in force until 1972.

1948 The British left Ceylon independence was granted to “Ceylon” and the power to govern Ceylon was handed over to the Sinhalese who were numerically superior.

After the stringent 15 November **1948 Citizenship Act** and the laws of disenfranchisement were enacted and adopted, the Tamils of Indian origin Tamils in the hill country (plantation Tamils) were deprived of selecting their representatives to the Parliament. **More than a million plantation Tamil workers were rendered stateless.**

1948-1950 The Government launched massive **Sinhala colonisation** schemes in the Eastern province. Gal oya in Batticaloa, Allai and Kathalai in Trincomalee were colonised under pretexts of development.

1949 Dissension with the “Tamil Congress” party led to the formation of the “**Tamil Federal Party**” (FP) under the leadership of S. J. V. Chelvanayagam.

1951 The first convention of the Federal Party was held and it was unanimously decided to campaign for a federal structure of governance with regional autonomy for Tamils living in North and East.

S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike broke away from UNP and forms the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP).

1956 The United National Party-UNP was ousted from power in the general elections by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), which swept the island with a wave of Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism with strong anti-Tamil overtones.

On 14 June S. W. R. D. Bandaranayake **father of President Chandrika Kumaratunga** proclaimed the “**Sinhala Only Act**” which made the Sinhala language the only official language of Ceylon.

The peaceful Satyagraha campaign staged by the Tamils to protest against the “Sinhala Only Act” at the Galle Face Green, in front of the Parliament in Colombo was brutally savaged by Sinhalese thugs with the connivance of government. The outbreak of **first anti-Tamil riots** in the island. More than 150 Tamils were burnt or hacked to death and million rupees worth of properties belonging to Tamils were looted and destroyed. [<More>](#)

1957 Soon after the “Sinhala Only Act” was passed in Parliament, talks were initiated between the Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and the Federal Party leader S. J. V. Chelvanayagam.

On 26 July an agreement known as “**Banda Chelva**” pact was signed between Bandaranayake and Chevanayagam. This agreement was based on a quasi federal system devolving certain powers to the Tamils in the North East provinces.

Within a week of signing the “**Banda-Chelva**” pact, it was unilaterally abrogated by the Prime Minister Bandaranaike due to vehement protests staged by the UNP, Buddhist clergy and SLFP. J R Jeyawardena of United National Party-UNP undertook a march to Kandy in protest against this pact.

1958 **Anti-Tamil pogrom** broke out in the island. Many Tamils were massacred and million of rupees worth of properties belonging to the Tamils were looted and destroyed. [<More>](#)

On 25 May, in the government sugar-cane plantation at Polonnaruwa and Hingurakgoda, the Sinhala thugs assaulted the Tamil labourers remorselessly. The Sinhala thugs set fire to the sugar canes

and burnt or hacked to death 500 Tamils in Polonnaruwa and Hingurakgoda. Violence spread to the Southern part of the island wherever the Tamils live.

1959 The Prime Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike **was assassinated by a Buddhist monk.**

1960 Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike, widow of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and **mother of President Chandrika Kumaratunge**, swore in as the Prime Minister.

1961 A non-violent civil disobedience campaign was launched by the Federal Party.

The government reacted violently by sending Police and military forces to Jaffna to suppress the agitation. Anti-Tamil pogrom broke out in areas where Sinhalese were in a majority, killing hundreds of Tamils and rendering thousands homeless.

1964 **The Srimavo-Shashtri pact was signed for the repatriation of the Tamil people of Indian origin to whom citizenship was denied and disenfranchised through the 1948 Citizenship Act. They lived in the island for over 115 years.**

1965 Dudley Senanayake leader of the UNP formed the government with the **help of the Federal Party** and other parties.

Talks were held between the Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake and S. J. V. Chelvanayagam.

On 24 March, an **agreement** known as **"Dudley-Chelva"** Pact was signed between Dudley Senanayake and S. J. V. Chelvanayagam.

The agreement was abandoned without being implemented due to opposition from the SLFP, the Buddhist clergy, and UNP backbenchers.

1967 The Janata Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP-People's Liberation Front) was formed.

1970 Mrs Bandaranaike became the Prime Minister, as the United Front (a coalition of SLFP and other Sinhala leftist parties) gained a **two-third majority in the Parliament.**

1971 Armed revolution by the Janata Vimukthi Peramuna was suppressed by Srimavo Bandaranayake. Thousands of Sinhala JVP youths were killed.

Talks were held between various Tamils leaders and Srimavo Bandaranayake on constitutional amendments.

No agreement was reached but the Sinhala leaders went ahead undeterred with their republican constitution amending the minimum safeguards granted to Tamils by the earlier constitution.

1972 Ceylon became a "Republic" on 22 May and Ceylon was officially renamed as the **"Republic of SRI LANKA"**

The United Front government enacted a Sinhala-Supremacist **"Republican Constitution"** for the country, which made Buddhism the state religion.

Formation of Tamil United Front (TUF) comprising Federal Party led by, S. J. V. Chelvanayagam, Tamil Congress (TC) led by GG Ponnambalam, and Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) led by Savariamoorthy Thondaman.

State discrimination against Tamil students' admission to Universities reached the peak with the introduction of **"Standardisation"**. University admission based on merit was abandoned deliberately to stop Tamil students entering Universities.

A youth group comprising self-sacrificing and disciplined youths named **Tamil New Tigers (TNT)** was formed by Mr. V. Pirabakaran to fight for the right to self-determination of the Tamils in the North East.

1974 On 10 January, Sinhalese Police unleashed an unprovoked violent attack on those attending the prestigious **"4th Tamil Research Conference"** in Jaffna, leaving **nine innocent civilians dead.**

1975 On 5 May the Tamil New Tigers -TNT was renamed as **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam LTTE**. Mr. V. Pirabakaran was named the Chairman and military commander of the LTTE.

1976 On 14 May, the Tamil United Front -TUF was renamed as Tamil United Liberation Front-TULF. The TULF passed the "Vaddukkoddai resolution" **pledging to restore a free, sovereign, secular, socialist state of Tamil Eelam based on the right to self-determination, and also to safeguard the very existence of the Tamil nation in the island.**

1977 In July, Tamil United Liberation Front-TULF, contested and won overwhelmingly at the Parliamentary election giving them a mandate to establish the "Right to Self-determination" of Tamil Eelam in the North East. J. R. Jeyewardena of UNP became the Prime Minister, with a five-sixth majority in the Parliament. The TULF became the major opposition party in the parliament.

Talks took place between Prime Minister J.R. Jayawardena and the Tamil United Liberation Front. No agreement was reached. **Anti-Tamil pogrom** occurred immediately after elections in the areas where Sinhalese were in the majority killing hundreds of Tamils. [<More>](#)

1978 A New Constitution was enacted and J.R. Jeyawardena became **first Executive President** of the country. The phrase "Republic of Sri Lanka" was rephrased as "**Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**"

Sri Lankan security forces started perpetrating their dreadful atrocities against Tamil youths. Counter activities of Tamil militant organisations were also on the increase.

1979 The government enacted the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), **banning the Tamil militant organisations. On 11 July, the Jaffna peninsula was brought effectively** under martial law **under Public Security ordinance.** Anti-Tamil pogrom **broke out in the island. Many Tamils were killed and properties belonging to Tamils were looted and destroyed.**

1980 Several Tamil youths were arbitrarily killed by the Sri Lankan security forces, Police and Army.

1981 In June, another **anti-Tamil pogrom** was unleashed. Increased military repression in the North. **The Jaffna Public Library was burnt down** by the Sri Lankan armed forces, allegedly under the direction of two senior government ministers, Gamini Dissanayake and Cyril Matthew. **95,000 volumes** of books including numerous culturally important and irreplaceable manuscripts and the buildings were totally destroyed by arson. The Jaffna city market, the office of the Tamils daily newspaper "Eelanadu", the office of the political party TULF, etc were burnt down by the Sri Lanka security forces.

An anti-Tamil pogrom broke out in the island. Many Tamils were killed and looting of the Tamils properties were widespread. [<More>](#)

1982 Government sponsored a **Sinhala settlement** in the Tamil populated Mullaitivu.

1983 **Major anti-Tamil pogrom** took place in July all over the island with the buoyed up support of the government. During the four days riots, more than **6,000 Tamils were killed and over 250,000 were rendered refugees.** Thousands of Tamils fled the country and went to India and to Western countries. Billions rupees worth of Tamils properties was looted and destroyed by the Sinhala rioters.

Between 27-28 July, **fifty-three Tamil political prisoners were massacred** inside the walls of the Welikadai prison in Colombo by the Sinhala inmates. The government masterminded this massacre and the Sinhala attackers were released from the prison and were rewarded with houses and properties in the Sinhala settlements in the Tamil homeland.

Hundreds of youths joined the LTTE movement and the TULF Members of Parliament sought asylum in India.

J. R. Jeyawardena's government enacts the **6th amendment** to the constitution and rejected the right to self-determination of the Tamil people in the island **on 8th August.** This amendment outlawed the mandate voted by the Tamils in 1977 general election. The Sixth amendment and the

Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1979 along with the Emergency Law provisions became the instruments through which repression was unleashed on the Tamil people.

1984 At the beginning of **EELAM WAR-I**. Tamils living in the North East were lynched, arrested, tortured and killed. Women and many men disappeared. Sri Lankan Air Force bombers dropped lethal **napalm bombs** in residential areas causing severe loss and damage to the Tamil people and to their properties.

1985 Talks mediated by India took place in Thimbu, the capital of Bhutan, between the LTTE including other Tamil parties and the J. R. Jeyawardena's government. Two rounds of direct negotiations were held in July-August and on 17th September.

All Tamil parties worked out four cardinal principles as the basis for the negotiation, which are today known as the **"Thimpu principles"**. The Sri Lankan government's reluctance to devolve powers and its refusal to recognise the Thimbu principles as the basis for the talk resulted in the abrupt premature termination of the negotiation. **No agreement was reached.**

1985-1987 State repression and counter attacks intensified in the North East resulting in all-out war between the Sri Lankan state and the LTTE. LTTE effectively **took control of the Jaffna peninsula** and other Northern areas.

Thousands of Tamils were killed as fighting turned brutal. Non-combatants were systematically targeted by the Sri Lanka Police, Army, Navy, Air force and Special Task Force-STF.

1986 In November, talks between the LTTE representatives and President J. R. Jeyawardena took place through the mediation of the Indian Prime minister in Bangalore, India.

LTTE Leader Pirabakaran and advisor Dr. Anton Balasingham participated in the talk.

Talks ended in a failure. J. R. Jeyawardena refused to recognise the right to self-determination and the homeland of the Tamils.

1987 An economic embargo was imposed by the Sri Lankan government on the Jaffna peninsula. Sri Lankan government launched a military operation named "Operation Liberation" to recapture the Jaffna peninsula. Sri Lanka's two army brigades launched an offensive in the early hours on the 26th May in Vadamarachchi. The operation continued for five days.

On the 29th July 1987, a peace accord known as **"Indo-Lanka"** pact was signed between Sri Lanka and India. Even though this accord purported to bring an end to the island's ethnic crisis, it was signed by India and Sri Lanka without any consultation with LTTE and the Tamils of the North East of the Island.

Tens of thousands of Indian troops known as "Indian Peace Keeping Force" (IPKF) arrived in North East. Later this force was named by the Tamils and civil society as the "Innocent Public Killing Force" (IPKF).

The Sinhala nationalist Janatha Vimukthi Perumna (JVP) vigorously opposed the "Indo-Lanka" pact.

The LTTE's first public meeting was held in Suthumalai on 4 August 1987. The LTTE Leader Mr. Pirabakaran's speech in this meeting became known as the **"Suthumalai Declaration"**.

On 5th August, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam -LTTE and other militant groups **surrendered their arms to the Indian army.**

On 3rd October, seventeen LTTE members, including two leaders, were intercepted at sea near the coastal waters of Point Pedro, by the Sri Lankan Navy and were held at the Pallaly military base. This was a violation of the cease-fire as an amnesty had been given to the militant groups in the "Indo-Lanka" accord. When the Sri Lanka army attempted to forcibly transport them by air to Colombo, all seventeen simultaneously bit cyanide capsules. Twelve died on the spot and five survived.

On 10th October, the Indian Peace Keeping Force-IPKF which came to maintain peace in the North East, started attacking the Tamils in the North East killing more than six thousand (6000) civilians, torturing, raping innumerable women, looting billions of rupees worth of jewellery. Fighting started between the IPKF and the LTTE.

- 1988** The leader of the United Socialist Alliance (USA), Vijaya Kumaratunge, **husband of President Chandrika Kumaratunga**, was assassinated allegedly by the members of Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna-JVP. Ironically JVP are present allies of President Chandrika. Ranasinghe Premadasa of the United National Party won the Presidential election.
- 1989** Talks between the LTTE the President Premadasa took place in Colombo. LTTE's chief negotiator Dr. Anton Balasingham, Mrs Adel Balasingham and many other LTTE high-level leaders took part in the talks.

While in negotiation with the LTTE, Sri Lanka President Premadasa demanded the Indian government to withdraw the Indian troops from Sri Lanka. The Up-rising of Janatha Vimukthi Perumuna (JVP) was suppressed by the government and the JVP leader, Rohana Wijeweera and many others were killed.

The LTTE formed a political party and named it as People Front of the Liberation Tigers (PFLT). The LTTE was preparing to participate in the Elections to demonstrate the peoples' support to the LTTE.

12 August, the PFLT representative attended the All Party Conference as an "Observer". Twenty six political parties participated in this conference in Colombo.

- 1990 In March, the IPKF withdrew from the island of Sri Lanka.**

As soon as the Indian Army left the island, **President Premadasa started changing his tactics** and kept on dragging on the issues negotiated with the LTTE. For example LTTE participation in an election to demonstrate the support of the people was systematically avoided. Premadasa was preparing for a military victory over the LTTE. **Talks ended in a failure.**

At the beginning of **EELAM WAR II**. Hostilities broke out again between the Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE. Economic blockade was imposed causing severe shortage of food and medicine in the North.

On the 10th September, 185 Tamil civilians were butchered by the Sri Lankan army at the Saththurukondan Army camp in the Batticaloa district. Tamils from Saththurukondan, Panichchaiyady, Kokkuvil, Pillaiyaraddy were the victims of the massacre.

- 1991** Tamils in the North East were subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, torture, rape, summary executions and massacres. Properties of the Tamils worth million of rupees were destroyed in aerial bombardments and artillery shelling. Military operation '**JAYASHAKTI**' was launched to expand the Pallaly army camp and the airfield. In **September**, military operation code named '**SEA BREEZE**' was launched in Mullaitivu.

Military operation '**THRIVIDHA BALAYA**' was launched during the operation on the old Dutch Fort in the heart of Jaffna town. The military operation '**BALAVEGAYA - I**' was the largest military operation conducted at that time. '**AKUNUPAHARA**' was launched in the Niththikaikulam area and military operation '**BALAVEGAYA - II**' was launched in the Jaffna peninsula.

On 12th June, 82 Tamils were massacred in the village of Kokaddicholai, Mahiladi Theevu and Muthalai Kuddah in the Batticaloa district. More than 400 houses were looted and burnt by the Sri Lanka army

- 1992** On 9th August, 32 Tamils were killed in the village of Mailanthannai in Batticaloa district. Most of the victims were hacked to death by the Sri Lanka army.

- 1993** President Premadasa was killed in a bomb explosion at a May Day rally in Colombo. The then Prime Minister D.B. Wijetunge assumed Presidency. The then cabinet minister Ranil Wickremasinghe became the Prime Minister.

- 1994** The People's Alliance led by Chandrika Kumaratunge won the Parliamentary elections with the pledge to "end the war and bring peace". **The LTTE unilaterally announced a temporary ceasefire** to welcome the change of government.

Talks between the LTTE and the PA government led by President Chandrika Kumaratunga commenced in Jaffna. Kumaratunge won the Presidential election. LTTE chief negotiator Dr. Anton Balasingham, and many other LTTE high-level leaders participated in the talks.

- 1995** On 5 January, the Government of Sri Lanka (**President Chandrika**) and the LTTE (**Leader V. Pirabahakaran**) **signed an agreement for cessation of hostilities**. The Government announced lifting of the economic embargo on some items only on paper, but the embargo continued. Later Chandrika government argued that there was no such thing as an economic embargo in the Tamil region. This was considered by civil society and the international humanitarian organisations as an "Utter lie with hidden agenda".

The PA was not at all interested in a negotiated political settlement to the bloody ethnic conflict. The PA government was preparing for a military assault on the LTTE. In order to buy time they were sending non-governmental officials for talks with LTTE and were dragging on the promise to lift the economic embargo.

The LTTE gave a two-week ultimatum in March to the government to implement what they had promised to the civilians. This ultimatum was later extended by another three weeks until April 19th. **Talks ended in failure.**

Government launched a major offensive in July in several parts of the Jaffna peninsula after imposing a press censorship. This was the beginning of **EELAM WAR-III**.

On the 9th July, military operation '**OPERATION LEAP FORWARD**' was launched from Pallaly, Tellipallai and Mathagal towards Alaveddy, Sandilipay and Vaddukoddai.

On the same day, St. Peters church at Navalay which was functioning as a temporary refugee camp for displaced people from the battle zone was bombed by Sri Lankan Air force killing 165 civilians, including many women and children.

On the 1st October, military operation '**THUNDER**' was launched in Vasavillan, Pathameni, Atchuvelli and Puttur.

On the 22nd September, Sri Lankan Air force bombed a school at Nagarkovil in Vadamardchi, killing 25 school children among the 71 killed on the spot.

On 17th October military operation 'RIVIRESA-I' was launched in the Valikamam area of the Jaffna peninsula. Most of the people had fled Valikamam during this military operation. The Sri Lanka army captured Valigamam and Jaffna city and this resulted in more than 500,000 civilians fleeing to LTTE controlled Vadamardchi, Thenmaradchi divisions of the peninsula and to Vanni. On the 30th October, Jaffna remained a "ghost town" sans people.

- 1995** On the morning of 15th November, the **NGO Forum took place at Bentota Beach Hotel**, in Bentota, in the South of Sri Lanka. Both foreign and local NGO representatives participated in this forum, which was designed to improve cooperation between local and international NGOs in the effort to promote equitable development. The forum meeting was disrupted by anti-NGO demonstrators.

Three journalists were nearly hammered to death by members of the crowd, which congregated outside the Bentota hotel! They smashed a car and attempted to throw a journalist into the river. The police authorities made no effort to prevent the assault or to rescue the victims. It was alleged that certain government politicians were behind the anti-NGO demonstration. The organisers of the NGO forum decided to shift the venue to the capital, Colombo.

On 16th November, the NGO Forum re-convened in the **morning** at a conference hall in **Ratmalana**, a suburb south of Colombo. The conference attendees, several of whom had been questioned by police officers at their hotel the previous night, once again became nervous. Just as the Forum was beginning its work, police officers arrived to "request" the Forum to suspend its

proceedings, claiming that the meeting was illegal! The meeting was dissolved and all attendees dispersed.

In the **afternoon** of the 16th November, the Forum's international Core Group and the Sri Lanka Working Group convened an emergency meeting at an NGO's office in Colombo to discuss their concerns regarding the disrupting of the NGO Forum in two different locations. Unfortunately this meeting, too, was disrupted when an angry crowd, made aware of the venue by radio news broadcast, converged on the site. It was evident that the discussions could not continue there either.

- 1996** Human rights violations by the army, including rape and disappearances increased in the Jaffna peninsula. This fact was brought to light by the revelation made of the rape and murder of Krishanthi Kumaraswamy, a Tamil schoolgirl. The girl's mother, brother and a neighbour were also murdered when they went to the army camp, inquiring about the fate of the girl.

The LTTE **released 16 Sinhala fishermen** captured earlier, as a gesture of good will for Christmas-New Year. During the month of April-May, the **2nd and 3rd Stages of Operation 'RIVIRESA'** were launched in Thenamarachchi and Vadamarachchi in the Jaffna peninsula. In September, the military operation **'SATHJAYA'** was launched in Kilinochchi and Paranthan areas.

- 1997** Sri Lankan forces began another major offensive in the Northern town of Vavuniya. In February, operation **'EDIBALA'** was launched in Mannar. In May, the longest and the largest military operation **"JAYSIKURU"** was launched in Vanni. Operation **"RIVIBALA"** was launched by the Army (53 and 55 Divisions) in Oddusudan town and along Nedunkerny Oddusudan Road.

On the 25th September, 38 NGOs serving in several parts of Batticaloa district, were ordered by Government of Sri Lanka to cease all their humanitarian operations. This immediately followed a government order **banning NGOs** from assisting people in the areas of Batticaloa.

- 1998** Sri Lankan armed forces shelled the residential area Karuvakeni. Medical embargo to the North-East continued. Sri Lankan Kfir bombers bombarded the towns. The Jaffna Teaching Hospital was on the verge of shutting down its surgical wards owing to the short supply of items. Two Catholic priests were killed by bombs dropped by Sri Lankan Kfir planes. The Sri Lankan army shot and hacked to death many Tamil civilians.

On the 5th July, it was revealed in High Court, Colombo by the former Army Lance Corporal that that "hundreds of men and women arrested by the army in Jaffna were killed and **buried in Chemmani**.

1999 OPERATION RANAGOSA

- Stage I** Military operation commenced in early March in Mundumurippu, Iranai, Illuppaikkulam and Puwarasankulam areas.
- Stage II** The military operation was launched (53 and 55 Divisions) in mid March 1999 in Madu and Palamppiddi areas.
- Stage III** Military operation was launched in early May 1999 in Periyamadu and south west of Chiraddikulam.
- Stage IV** Military operation was launched on mid June 1999 in Papamodai, Vedithalathivu and Welimarandmadu areas.

OPERATION RIVIKIRANA 1 & II

Military operation **'RIVIKIRANA I & II'** were launched in Ariyalai, Thanakillappu and Kaithaddy. Military operation **'KINIHEERA I'** was launched by 51,52,53 and 55 Divisions along the Thanakillappu-Chava Road. Military Operation **'KINIHEERA II'** was launched in Kaithaddy, Nunavil, Thanakillappu and Ariyalai.

OPERATION KINIHEERA III/IV

Military operation **'KINIHEERA III and IV'** was launched in Sarasalai, Puthur, Maduvil South and Nunavil East.

- 2000** On the 5th January, Human Rights Defender **Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam** was assassinated allegedly by the PA (Chandrika's) government's hirelings.

The Norwegian government came forward to facilitate peace talks between LTTE and the Chandrika government. The Norwegian chief facilitator Mr. Eric Solheim was shuttling between LTTE and the government. The Norwegian chief facilitator had meetings with LTTE Chief negotiator Dr. Anton Balasingham in London as well with LTTE Leader Mr. V. Pirabakaran in the Vanni. He also had meetings with other political leaders in Sri Lanka.

2001 Sinhala Muslims riots broke out on 2nd May in Mawanella, between Colombo and Kandy. Two Muslims were killed and Muslim- owned shops and houses were set on fire by the Sinhala rioters. On the following Friday Muslim worshippers at a Mosque in Colombo, demonstrated against the violence against Muslims in Mawanella.

There were also Sinhala-Muslim riots in Muttur in Trincomalee following the Mawanella incidents. Many shops in Muttur were razed to the ground.

The LTTE have announced unilateral **cease-fires many a time. One lasted for four months.** President Chandrika's government refused to reciprocate the cease-fire declared by the LTTE and opted to continue with its military agenda.

The Minister of foreign affairs Lakshman Kadirgamar accused the Norwegian peace envoy Mr. Eric Solheim of giving too much consolation to the Tamils and sidelined him, out of personal dislike for Eric Solheim. On the 7th June, Kadirgamar insisted that the Norwegian government must remove Mr. Eric Solheim from the peace mediation. This brought the mediation to a stalemate.

The Tamil political parties formed a front known as the "Tamil National Alliance (TNA)" and contested the Parliament elections in the North East on the 5th December 2001 and won in 16 electorates. **TNA's Election manifesto.**

In December, the UNP government headed by the Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe came into power with the mandate for peace and negotiations with LTTE. The LTTE declared a **one month cease-fire** and it was renewed. The government also declared one month cease-fire and renewed it.

2002 LTTE released 10 prisoners of war as a gesture of good will for peace.

The Norwegian government re-activated its peace role. The Norwegian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen and Mr. Eric Solheim met with the LTTE chief negotiator Dr. Anton Balasingham in London and the Prime Minister and other ministers in Sri Lanka.

On 21 February, an historic **agreement, a "Memorandum of Understanding"** was signed between Mr. V. Pirabakaran, the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam LTTE, and the Sri Lanka Prime Minister Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe. This MOU was worked out under the facilitation of the Norwegian government.