

Will Tigers strike again?

LTTE's assassination squads have been drawn from its intelligence wing. Interestingly, LTTE's Chief of Intelligence, Pottu Amman, reports directly to Velupillai Prabhakaran, the leader of the LTTE. Pottu Amman, unlike the other commanders does not sit in the Central Committee of the LTTE and is therefore not answerable to other LTTE leaders.

By virtue of the LTTE's intelligence structure, almost all the assassinations conducted have been planned and executed either by the Jaffna Command or by the Amparai/Batticaloa Command. The most important assassinations have been that of Rajiv Gandhi and Ranasinghe Premadasa, both personally directed by Pottu Amman and masterminded by Prabhakaran.

The other key political assassinations were those of Lalith Athulathmudali, Ranjan Wijeratne, Appapillai Amirthalingam and Sam Thambimuttu. Sam was killed by a hit team sent from the Beruit Base in Batticaloa. All the other assassinations except Amirthalingam's was planned in Jaffna. Amirthalingam's assassination was planned in the Mulativu jungles where the famous One-Four base complex is located.

The death of Vetuvolu Yogeswaran along with Amirthalingam's was unexpected. Yogeswaran was not on the hit list and his death was not caused by one of the LTTE assassin's

but by the team of bodyguards who responded to the attack. It is believed that the LTTE wanted the more radical Yogeswaran to take over the TULF from the grip of Amirthalingam who had by that time become an Indophile.

Interestingly, Thambimuttu's and Amirthalingam's murders were when the IPKF was still in Sri Lanka.

The LTTE developed till about 1995 as a militant organisation. But in 1986, the LTTE leadership realized the importance of a political wing and therefore mooted the Popular Front of Liberation Tigers (PFLP).

Thereafter, the LTTE has been politically sensitive to four elements. (1) To bilateral politics — Sri Lanka's position vis-a-vis India. (2) To regional geopolitics — Sri Lanka's pro-US and European stand, its relationship with Israel, Pakistan, PR of China and India's relationship with the USSR. (3) To Indian politics, particularly the inter and the intra relationship of political parties in Tamil Nadu with New Delhi (4) To Sri Lankan politics — Government and Opposition parties, including the Underground JVP.

The relationship of the LTTE firstly with M. G. Ramachandran, M. Karunanidhi and with Jayalalitha Jayaram is of deep significance for LTTE survival. Aware of this, the LTTE has constantly urged directly and indirectly to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister that "if they cannot support us, at least they

should be neutral."

With Ramachandran's demise despite the fact that Karunanidhi was Ramachandran's arch foe, did not prevent neither Karunanidhi nor the LTTE from befriending each other. It was a friendship of convenience, very similar to the type of friendship the LTTE had with some of the other militant groups before declaring war against them, and subsequently to the alliance they had with the Premadasa administration during the IPKF period.

One must not forget that the LTTE has had old friends too. The Dra-

simha Rao not to extend the ban on the LTTE. The pro-LTTE bureaucrats are now towing the line that Rajiv Gandhi was not assassinated by the main LTTE body, but by some renegades.

They give the fascinating excuse that the LTTE would achieve nothing by killing Gandhi. The truth is far from it: Had the LTTE not liquidated Gandhi, India would have inducted the IPKF back to Sri Lanka. The Indo-Lanka accord was Gandhi's design and had he lived, he would have ensured that the LTTE or any force that opposed the

gomic and political programmes also to isolated the common Tamil man from the LTTE by developing the Eastern Province and the border areas.

For the LTTE, Premadasa was their main threat. They were aware that killing Premadasa will create a national successor Lalith Athulathmudali. This prompted them to assassinate Lalith before they liquidated Premadasa. Their deaths have created a great void in southern politics. Two of Sri Lanka's most capable men were killed during that week depriving the Sinhala Community of a strong leadership. Once again the LTTE had achieved their objective. The LTTE prevented the fall of Jaffna and weakened the southern leadership.

While the politicians of the south are quarrelling, the LTTE leadership may be planning its next target. A group of committed and dedicated LTTE leaders could be focusing their time and energy in assessing predicting and relating, what is happening in the south. All the time, they are analysing, "if we make this more, or if we knock so and so off, what will happen."

There are many politicians both in the Government and Opposition whose removal from the political scene could upset all political strategies and plans of the powerful political parties before and after the elections.

Thus the vital question is will the Tigers strike again and if so whom?

by Agni

vida Kazhagam of Veeramani and Individuals like Ramamoorthy Nedumaran and Gopalasamy have been great friends of the LTTE. Not only have they spent their time campaigning and lobbying for the LTTE both openly and secretly but also given them homes as safe houses for the LTTE. The LTTE has of course rewarded them, by presenting printing presses, gifted gold bars and even registered businesses under their names.

Not only has the LTTE befriended South Indian Tamil politicians but also many northern Indian politicians ironically even those in the Congress party of the Gandhi's and the Nehru's.

Recently, many of them have appealed on behalf of the LTTE to the Prime Minister Nara-

Accord of 1987 was vanquished.

The Rajiv Gandhi killing itself is a clear indication that the LTTE does not kill for no reason. The LTTE targets politicians on careful assessments. Had the LTTE not killed R. Premadasa what would have been the implications. When the LTTE killed R. Premadasa, the Sri Lanka. Premadasa was forcing the Army to conduct operations. Premadasa was no different from Ranjan Wijeratne.

The difference was that Wijeratne was vocal while militarily Premadasa worked behind the doors.

He insisted that they strike Jaffna, the heartland of the LTTE from

where the LTTE derives their maximum support. Premadasa had intelligently developed eco-