



The Impact Of The Tamil Ethnic Conflict On The Political-Economic Development Of Sri Lanka

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Abstract :

- Sri Lanka has undergone a dramatic transformation in recent years, from one of the most prosperous countries in South Asia to a bankrupt state. The ethnic cleansing of Tamil minorities is considered to be the main reason for the country's downfall. The Sri Lankan ethnic conflict goes back to the British colonial period, when the British actively encouraged the politicization of ethnicity by dividing the Ceylon society on communal lines. This policy led to the emergence of Sinhalese and Tamil nationalist movements, which competed for power and resources. After independence, the Sinhalese majority came to dominate the Sri Lankan government, and this led to a number of discriminatory policies that marginalized the Tamil minority. For example, the Sinhala Only Act made Sinhala the sole official language of Sri Lanka, which discriminated against Tamil speakers. The government also gave preferential treatment to Sinhalese in education and employment. These discriminatory policies led to a growing sense of grievance among the Tamil minority, and this eventually led to the outbreak of violence. The conflict reached a peak in the 1980s, when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched a violent campaign for an independent Tamil state. The LTTE was a well-organized and well-armed group, and they were able to inflict significant damage on the Sri Lankan government. The civil war between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government lasted for 26 years, and it ended in 2009 with the defeat of the LTTE. However, the conflict has had a lasting impact on the country, leaving a legacy of bitterness and mistrust between the Tamils and the Sinhalese. It is important to understand the underlying causes of the conflict in order to develop effective strategies for peacebuilding. This research paper explores the reasons behind the present downfall of Sri Lanka by examining the successive governments' policies that marginalized the most progressive minorities of the country. It also discusses the historical roots of the conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities, the political and economic factors that contributed to the conflict, and the long-term consequences of these policies. The research paper concludes by discussing the challenges and opportunities facing Sri Lanka as it seeks to build a more peaceful and prosperous future. It also discusses the role of the international community in supporting Sri Lanka's efforts to achieve peace and prosperity.

KEYWORDS: Sri Lankan Civil War, economic costs, peace and reconciliation, Economic growth, Uneven distribution, Development and reconstruction. Discrimination, Resentment, Land ownership, Education

Introduction:

Sri Lanka's recent trajectory has witnessed a profound transformation, transitioning from being one of South Asia's most prosperous nations to facing economic bankruptcy. Sri Lanka, once known as the "Treasure of the Indian Ocean," has been the site of much destruction and conflict and turned out to be the "Island of Despair". However, the destruction and conflict that has led to the ethnic cleansing of Tamil minorities are considered as the main reason for the downfall of 'hope of the Asia'. The Sri Lankan Ethnic War was a long and bloody conflict that had a devastating impact on the country. The war lasted for 26 years, from 1983 to 2009, and resulted in the deaths of an approaching seventy to eighty thousand people. The war also displaced hundreds of thousands of people and caused widespread economic damage.

The war was fought between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The LTTE was a militant organization that used violence to achieve its goal of an independent Tamil state in the north and east of Sri Lanka. The war was characterized by violence on both sides, including suicide bombings, massacres, and the use of child soldiers. The war ended in 2009 with the defeat of the LTTE. However, the underlying causes of the conflict remain unresolved, and there is still a risk of renewed violence. The economic and social costs of the war will also take many years to overcome. The economic costs of the Sri Lankan Civil War were significant. The war disrupted trade, led to increased defense spending, and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. These factors had a negative impact on the country's economy, and it will take many years for the country to recover.

Despite the challenges, there is hope for a brighter future for Sri Lanka. The country is slowly recovering, and there is a growing commitment to peace and reconciliation. With continued international support, Sri Lanka can overcome the legacy of the civil war and build a more prosperous and peaceful future for all its citizens.

Historical Overviews: Genesis of the modern conflict

The roots of the modern conflict between the Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka can be traced back to the British colonial rule, when the British actively encouraged the communal representation policy to divide the Ceylon society on communal lines in 1920. The Sinhalese majority government's discriminatory policies after independence further politicized ethnicity and created a sense of difference between the Tamil and Sinhalese communities. These policies, such as making Sinhala the sole official language, granting a special place to Buddhism, and resettling landless Sinhalese in Tamil-dominated areas, led to Tamil marginalization and domination of Sinhalese. This, in turn, gave rise to the Tamil demand for self-determination in north-eastern Sri Lanka. The conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils is a complex one, and there are many different perspectives on its origins and causes. However, it is clear that British colonial rule played a significant role in the development of the conflict. The communal representation policy that the British implemented helped to create a sense of difference between the two communities, and the discriminatory policies that the Sinhalese majority government implemented after independence further exacerbated these tensions. One of the key factors that have contributed to the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict is the politicization of ethnicity during British colonial rule. The British colonial government actively encouraged the communal representation policy, which divided the Ceylon society on communal lines. This policy led to the emergence of Sinhalese and Tamil nationalist movements, which competed for power and resources. After independence, the Sinhalese majority came to dominate the Sri Lankan government. This led to a number of discriminatory policies that marginalized the Tamil minority. For example, the Sinhala Only Act made Sinhala the sole official language of Sri Lanka, which discriminated against Tamil speakers. The government also gave preferential treatment to Sinhalese in education and employment. These discriminatory policies led to a growing sense of grievance among the Tamil minority. In 1972, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was formed to demand a separate Tamil state in the north and east of Sri Lanka. The TULF's campaign for self-determination led to an escalation of violence between the Tamils and the Sinhalese. The conflict reached a peak in the 1980s, when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched a violent campaign for an independent Tamil state. The LTTE was a well-organized and well-armed group, and they were able to inflict significant damage on the Sri Lankan government. The civil war between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government lasted for 26 years, and it ended in 2009 with the defeat of the LTTE. However, the conflict has had a lasting impact on the country. The war left a legacy of bitterness and mistrust between the Tamils and the Sinhalese, and it has made it difficult to achieve lasting peace.

Theoretical Context:

It is important to note that not all Sinhalese and Tamils agree with the portrayal of the conflict as a primordial one. Some argue that the conflict is more recent in origin, and that it is primarily the result of the discriminatory policies implemented by the Sinhalese majority government. Others argue that the conflict is rooted in the different historical and cultural experiences of the two communities. The conflict is often characterized as a primordial conflict, based on mutual distrust and violence spanning over more than two millennia. However, there are also more contextual approaches to understanding the conflict, which take into account the political and economic factors that have contributed to the rise of ethnic tensions. The primordialist approach to ethnic identity emphasizes the importance of descent and ascriptive group identities. This approach argues that ethnicity is a fixed, biological phenomenon that is rooted in people's sense of belonging to a particular group. In the context of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict, the primordialist approach can be used to understand the different ways that Sinhalese and Tamil nationalists view their own ethnic identity. Sinhalese nationalists believe that Sri Lanka has been a Sinhala Buddhist nation since ancient times, and that the Tamils are recent arrivals who have no legitimate claim to the land. Tamil nationalists, on the other hand, believe that Tamils have been in Sri Lanka for centuries and original inhabitants and that they have a right to self-determination. The Sinhala nationalist position is that pre-colonial Sri Lanka was a mono-ethnic and mono-religious Sinhala Buddhist state. They claim that the Sinhalese are descended from Aryan migrants from Bengal in the fifth century BC, and that their leader, Prince Vijaya, arrived in Sri Lanka at the same time as the death of the Buddha. They believe that the Buddha visited the island three times and consecrated it to his doctrine, and that he instructed Sakra, the chief of the gods, to safeguard Vijaya and ensure his supremacy in the land. As a result, Sri Lanka became the land of the Sinhalese and the land of Dharma, or Buddhist doctrine. The Sinhala nationalists believe that the survival of the Buddhist religion is dependent on the survival of the Sinhalese people. In contrast, the Tamil nationalist position is that the Tamils were the earliest occupants of Sri Lanka and that the entire island was ruled by Tamil kings even before the Christian era. They also claim that the Tamil language is the purest form of Dravidian and that the Saiva Siddhanta form of Hinduism has a special homeland in Sri Lanka. These claims have been used to justify the Tamil nationalist movement, which seeks to achieve self-determination for the Tamil people. However, there is no consensus on the historical accuracy of these claims. Some historians argue that the Tamils were not the earliest occupants of Sri Lanka, and that the Sinhalese were the original inhabitants. They also argue that the Tamil language is not the purest form of Dravidian, and that the Saiva Siddhanta form of Hinduism is not unique to Sri Lanka.

The primordial approach has been criticized for being too simplistic. They argue that ethnicity is not a fixed, biological phenomenon, but rather a socially constructed phenomenon that is shaped by the political, economic, and social context. However, the primordial approach can still be a useful tool for understanding the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. It can help to explain why the conflict is so intractable, and why it has been so difficult to find a peaceful solution. In addition to the primordial approach, there are other approaches to understanding ethnic identity. These include the situational approach, the instrumentalist approach, and the constructivist approach.

The situational approach emphasizes the importance of context in shaping ethnic identity. This approach argues that people's ethnic identity can change depending on the situation. For example, a person might identify as Sinhalese in one context, and as Sri Lankan in another context. The instrumentalist approach emphasizes the importance of power in shaping ethnic identity. This approach argues that people's ethnic identity can be used as a tool to achieve political or economic goals. For example, a political leader might use ethnic identity to mobilize support for their cause.

The constructivist approach emphasizes the importance of culture in shaping ethnic identity. This approach argues that ethnic identity is a product of social interaction and cultural transmission. For example, people learn about their ethnic identity from their parents, their community, and the media. The contextual approach to understanding ethnicity emphasizes the fluid and changing nature of ethnic identity. This approach argues that ethnicity is not a fixed or essentialist category, but rather a socially constructed phenomenon that is shaped by the political, economic, and social context.

According to the contextual approach, the categories of "Self" and "Other" are not fixed, but rather are constantly being renegotiated. This means that the way that people identify themselves and others can change over time, depending on the circumstances. The contextual approach also emphasizes the role of ideology and power in the construction of ethnic identity. This approach argues that cultural markers, such as language, religion, and dress, can be manipulated by ideologues and political leaders in order to mobilize support for their cause. The contextual approach is often seen as a more nuanced and sophisticated way of understanding ethnicity than the primordial approach. This approach is more likely to take into account the complex and changing nature of ethnic identity, and it is less likely to essentialize or essentialize ethnicity.

The divide between the two ethnic groups in Sri Lanka has been a major source of conflict for many years. This conflict has been fuelled by the political exploitation of ethnic and religious differences. The Sinhalese nationalist movement has sought to Sinhalaize Sri Lanka, while the Tamil nationalist movement has sought to Tamilize Sri Lanka.

The conflict has led to violence, displacement, and loss of life. It has also damaged the economy and hindered development. The two positions are fundamentally incompatible, and they have led to decades of conflict in Sri Lanka. The Sinhala nationalists believe that the Tamils are a threat to the Sinhalese and to the Buddhist religion, while the Tamil nationalists believe that they are being denied their basic rights as citizens of Sri Lanka.

Each of these approaches has its own strengths and weaknesses. The primordialist approach is simple and easy to understand, but it is also too simplistic. The situational approach is more complex, but it provides a more nuanced understanding of ethnic identity. The instrumentalist approach is useful for understanding how ethnic identity can be used for political or economic gain. The constructivist approach is useful for understanding how ethnic identity is shaped by culture.

The best approach for understanding ethnic identity depends on the specific context. In the case of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict, the primordialist approach can be a useful tool for understanding the different ways that Sinhalese and Tamil nationalists view their own ethnic identity. However, it is important to remember that ethnicity is a complex phenomenon, and that no single approach can fully explain it. Any ethno-national conflict is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes. The Sri Lankan ethnic conflict is no exception. These are just some of the factors that have contributed to the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. It is important to remember that no single factor can fully explain the conflict. The conflict is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes, and it will require a comprehensive approach to resolve it.

Political Factors:

The post-independence political system in Sri Lanka did not have a mechanism to protect the rights of minorities. After Sri Lanka gained independence from Britain in 1948, the new political system did not have enough safeguards to protect the rights of minorities. This led to discrimination against the Tamil minority, who made up about 13% of the population. The Tamils had enjoyed certain privileges under British rule, but they lost these privileges after independence. They were gradually marginalized in a state dominated by the Sinhalese majority. This was due to a number of factors, including language reform that made Sinhala the sole official language, university admission reform that discriminated against Tamils, the granting of special privileges to Buddhism (the religion of the Sinhalese), and the resettlement of landless Sinhalese in Tamil-dominated areas.

In the 1950s, Sinhalese nationalism became increasingly dominant in Sri Lanka. This was due to a number of factors, including the perceived economic and political dominance of the Tamil minority, and the desire to redress the imbalances created by British colonial rule. One of the most controversial policies of the Sinhalese-dominated government was the Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948. This act made it very difficult for Tamils to obtain citizenship, effectively disenfranchising them. The Ceylon Citizenship Act was a major point of contention between India and Sri Lanka. India argued that the act discriminated against Indian Tamils, who were citizens of India but had been living in Sri Lanka for generations. The dispute over the Ceylon Citizenship Act eventually led to India's direct involvement in the Sri Lankan Civil War in later years. The Sinhala Only Act of 1956, which replaced English with Sinhala as the official language of Sri Lanka, created fear among Tamil

ethnic groups that their linguistic, cultural, and economic interests would be threatened. The act was seen as a move by the Sinhalese majority to consolidate their power and marginalize the Tamil minority.

This fear was justified, as discrimination against Tamils continued throughout the 1960s as the Sinhalese-dominated government continued to pass discriminatory policies throughout the 1960s. In 1960, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike gave primacy to Buddhism as the state religion in Chapter Two of the new Constitution. This further alienated the Tamils, who are mostly Hindu. Tamils were also disenfranchised from government and other positions of authority. For example, in the state sector in 1949, 41% of government recruits were Tamil and 54% were Sinhalese. By 1963, this had changed to 7% Tamil and 92% Sinhalese. The discriminatory policies of the Sinhalese-dominated government led to a sense of marginalization and disenfranchisement among the Tamil minority.

During the 1970s, the infamous act of 'Policy of Standardization' which was initiated by Lankan government made it understandable in the mind of Tamil minority population that this act was nothing else than to discriminate them in the name of university education system to correct the disproportionate number of student from one group. They considered it as an act of discrimination on the basis of Tamil identity. The Sri Lankan government implemented a quota system in universities that restricted the number of Tamil students admitted. This discriminatory policy led to protests in form of *Satyagraha* and political demands from the Tamil community, who were represented by the Federal Party (FP). **Tamil interests and.** The fear of Tamil ethnic groups that the successive government of Sri Lanka would be hostile to their interest, forced them to protect their interest. In fact, these factors are mutually reinforcing as belligerent leaders stir up mass hostility and hostile masses prop up belligerent leaders and both together created a security dilemma. The 1970s saw an increase in Tamil calls for separation and increased militancy. This was due to a number of factors, including the discriminatory policies of the Sinhalese-dominated government, the rise of Tamil nationalism, and the emergence of Tamil militant groups. In 1972, four Tamil political parties formed the Tamil United Front (TUF) to campaign for parity status for the Tamil language. However, the TUF soon split over the issue of separatism, with some members supporting the idea of an independent Tamil state. In 1976, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was formed. The TULF was a more radical group that called for a separate Tamil state to be achieved constitutionally. However, the Sri Lankan government refused to negotiate with the TULF, and the group eventually turned to violence. A number of other Tamil militant groups also emerged in the 1970s, including the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO), the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS), the People's Liberation Organisation for Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF). These groups used violence to achieve their goal of an independent Tamil state. The violence escalated in the 1980s, and the Sri Lankan Civil War broke out in 1983. The war lasted for 25 years and resulted in the deaths of over 100,000 people. The separatist agitation went through several phases, according to K. M. deSilva. In the 1950s, it was peaceful. In the 1960s, it involved civil disobedience. In the 1970s, it turned to individual violence. And in the 1980s, it became a dangerous threat.

The motives of the conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils in Sri Lanka changed over time. Initially, the conflict was against the state, but it later became a war between the two ethnic groups over the domination of state politics. One group demanded secession from the state, while the other group sought to annihilate the first group with the active support of the state.

The exclusive nationalist ideology in Sri Lanka denied the country's multi-ethnic and multi-religious character and refused to accept the collective rights of minority groups. This led to a sense of Sinhalese domination and Tamil marginalization, which in turn gave rise to the Tamil demand for self-determination in north-eastern Sri Lanka.

Economic Factors :

The economic dimension of the conflict is a complex and multifaceted issue, but it is an important factor that needs to be addressed in order to achieve a lasting peace in Sri Lanka. The economic dimension of the conflict is often overlooked, but it is an important factor that contributed to the rise of violence and separatism. The Sinhalese majority government implemented a number of policies that discriminated against the Tamil minority, including making Sinhala the sole official language, giving primacy to Buddhism as the state religion,

and restricting Tamil numbers at the universities. These policies led to a sense of economic insecurity and marginalization among the Tamils, which in turn contributed to the rise of militant groups such as the LTTE. The Tamils have traditionally had a higher socio-economic status than the Sinhalese, due in part to their language skills and their role in the colonial administration. This led to resentment among the Sinhalese, who felt that they were being discriminated against.

Despite being affected by a long-running civil war, Sri Lanka's economic growth has been surprisingly strong. According to Shastri (2004) and the House of Commons (2009), the country averaged just over 5% growth between 1995 and 2008. However, this economic development has not been evenly distributed geographically. The main economic prosperity has been concentrated in the west of the country, particularly around the capital, Colombo, while the north and east of the island have lagged behind due to a lack of investment and the devastation caused by the war (Sarvananthan, 2008).

The end of the civil war in Sri Lanka has opened up opportunities for large-scale development and reconstruction in the north and east of the country. The government, with the help of foreign donors, has focused on a number of infrastructure projects, including two ports, a new airport, several power plants, roads, a railway, and urban development projects. However, these development and reconstruction efforts have been criticized for being top-down, with very little input from the local population. This has led to concerns that the benefits of these projects will not be evenly distributed and that the local population will not be able to participate in decision-making about their own future. Economic development and reconstruction can help to decrease the grievances of minority groups in war-torn areas, but it can also increase their sense of distress if it is not done in a way that is sensitive to their needs.

There are concerns that reconstruction projects in Sri Lanka are being carried out without sensitivity to potential conflicts. For example, some projects have been located in areas that are traditionally Tamil, but which are now being settled by Sinhalese people. This has led to fears that the government is trying to change the demographics of the area and that the Tamils will be further marginalized. There are also concerns that the reconstruction process is not being transparent or participatory.

The displacement of Tamils during the war has been used to clear land for large-scale development projects, such as the coal power plant in Trincomalee district. This lack of concern for the potential for conflict is due to a lack of coordination among donors and the unwillingness of key donors to make human rights and conflict sensitivity a condition for their support.

Asian powers like China play a significant role in post-war reconstruction and development in Sri Lanka, and have shown little interest in promoting conflict-sensitive development. Western donors who may be more interested in conflict prevention lack leverage, as their contributions are dwarfed by the resources provided by Asian development partners. The economic dimension of the conflict is still a major challenge in Sri Lanka today. The economic disparities between the Sinhalese and Tamils have been one of the major factors for present political & economic turmoil in Sri Lanka. It is important to address the economic grievances of the Tamil minority in order to build a lasting peace in Sri Lanka.

The Post -War opportunity for Political Reform and Peace Building :

Sri Lanka won the war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 2009, but achieving lasting peace remains a challenge. The underlying issues that led the LTTE to wage a violent campaign for Tamil self-determination have not been resolved. While the LTTE has been largely defeated in Sri Lanka, support for Tamil separatism remains strong among the Tamil diaspora, which was a major source of funding for the LTTE during the war.

The post-war context in Sri Lanka provides an opportunity for political reform. However, the government has missed several opportunities to implement reforms that would address the root causes of the conflict. The President has consolidated political power through a series of elections. This could have been used to implement reforms such as devolution of power and decentralization of the state. However, the President has instead strengthened the status quo and resisted reforms. There has been no political will to implement important constitutional amendments, such as the 17th amendment, which aimed to depoliticize institutions such as the Police and Election Commission. The 18th amendment, which

repealed the 17th amendment and allowed for the President to be re-elected for more than two terms, further centralized power and strengthened presidential control over the state. This lack of political will to reform has had a negative impact on Sri Lanka's peace process. The Tamil minority, which was the main victim of the conflict, feels that the government is not committed to addressing their concerns. This has led to a lack of trust in the government and has made it difficult to build a lasting peace. In order to achieve a lasting peace, the government of Sri Lanka needs to take steps to address the root causes of the conflict. This includes implementing reforms that would decentralize power and devolve power to the provinces. It also includes ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, have equal rights and opportunities. The government also needs to build trust with the Tamil minority. This can be done by taking steps to address their concerns, such as by investigating allegations of human rights abuses committed during the war. It is also important to ensure that the Tamil minority is represented in the government and in other decision-making bodies. Only by taking these steps can the government of Sri Lanka achieve a lasting peace.

The government of Sri Lanka has focused on reconstruction and economic development in the post-war period. This is understandable, as the country has been devastated by the conflict. However, it is important to remember that justice and reconciliation are also essential for sustainable peace. There is a risk that the government's focus on economic development will come at the expense of justice and reconciliation. This could lead to further resentment among the Tamil minority, and could ultimately undermine the peace process. It is important for the government of Sri Lanka to find a balance between reconstruction and economic development, on the one hand, and justice and reconciliation, on the other. Only by addressing all of these issues can Sri Lanka achieve lasting peace. The war is over, but the scars remain. The military remains a powerful force in Sri Lankan society, and there are concerns that demilitarization could lead to instability. However, it is also clear that the country cannot afford to maintain its current level of militarization indefinitely.

A delicate balance needs to be struck between security and development. The government needs to find ways to reduce the military's role in society while still ensuring that the country is safe from future threats. This will be a difficult task, but it is essential for Sri Lanka's long-term peace and prosperity. In many countries, a post-war context creates opportunities for a move towards further democratization. However, Sri Lanka appears to be consolidating a semi-authoritarian and highly centralized state. This is evident in the government's recent activities, which have been characterized by centralization, domination, and marginalization of minorities.

The reconstruction of war-torn areas is clearly necessary to alleviate the hardship experienced by the people in these areas. However, there is a great risk that these initiatives will serve to exacerbate or create conflict in Sri Lanka, rather than serve as a vehicle for building trust. This is because the reconstruction process is being carried out in a way that is insensitive to the needs of the local population and that further marginalizes minorities. For example, the government has been accused of resettling Sinhalese people in traditionally Tamil areas, which has led to fears that the government is trying to change the demographics of the area. Additionally, the reconstruction process has been criticized for being opaque and lacking in transparency. This has led to a sense of distrust and resentment among the Tamils.

If the government does not take steps to address these concerns, it risks further alienating the Tamils and making it more difficult to achieve lasting peace in Sri Lanka. The reconstruction process should be more transparent and participatory, and it should be sensitive to the needs of the local population. The government should also take steps to address the concerns of minorities and to ensure that they are not further marginalized. Only by addressing these concerns can the government hope to build trust and stability in Sri Lanka.

The Diaspora Engagement and question of Tamil Minority:

The ending of the war in Sri Lanka has had a significant impact on minority politics in the country. The political representation of the Tamil population remains an unsolved issue, and the weakening of Tamil parties in Sri Lanka stands in stark contrast to diaspora politics.

In the diaspora, there has been a strong engagement in the Tamil struggle for self-determination in Sri Lanka post-LTTE. This has included the establishment of a Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam, and referendums held in numerous diaspora countries confirming the Tamils' support for a separate state. However, this engagement does not necessarily match the limited room to maneuver and the more pragmatic stance of Tamils in Sri Lanka. The reasons for this discrepancy are complex. However, some factors that may contribute to it include the following: The diaspora is more likely to be supportive of radical or separatist solutions to the conflict, as they are not directly affected by the consequences of such solutions, the diaspora has more freedom to express its political views than Tamils in Sri Lanka, who are subject to government restrictions, the diaspora has more resources to support its political activities, such as funding and manpower. It is important to note that not all Tamils in the diaspora support the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam or the goal of a separate state. However, the fact that these initiatives have been able to gain significant support in the diaspora is indicative of the deep dissatisfaction that many Tamils feel with the current political situation in Sri Lanka. The future of minority politics in Sri Lanka is uncertain. However, it is clear that the ending of the war has not resolved the underlying issues that led to the conflict in the first place. If the government is serious about achieving lasting peace and reconciliation, it will need to address the concerns of the Tamil minority and find ways to give them a meaningful voice in the political process..

The International Influence

The conflict between the two groups transcended the boundaries of the state and became a theatre of international politics. Although the ethnic war ended in 2009, the issue of ethno-national discrimination remains and continues to affect the peace and development of Sri Lanka, as well as other countries in the region.

International influence in Sri Lanka's political arena is limited. Western powers, such as the United States and the European Union, have little leverage over the Sri Lankan government. India, which hosts a large Tamil minority, has also been raising concerns about devolution of power, but with little success. China, the country with the most economic clout, remains silent on political issues. This is due to a number of factors, including the following: Sri Lanka is a sovereign nation, and other countries have limited ability to dictate its internal affairs, the Sri Lankan government has been reluctant to engage with the international community on political issues, and has often accused the West of interfering in its internal affairs. The international community is divided on how to best deal with Sri Lanka, with some countries supporting a more hardline approach and others favouring a more conciliatory approach. As a result, the international community has been unable to exert significant pressure on the Sri Lankan government to address the concerns of the Tamil minority.

Sri Lanka has experienced relatively high economic growth rates in post war period, despite the protracted civil war that lasted from 1983 to 2009. However, this growth has been unevenly distributed, with the western part of the country, particularly around the capital, Colombo, benefiting the most. The north and east of the island, which were most affected by the war, have lagged behind. The end of the war has provided an opportunity for large-scale development and reconstruction initiatives in these areas. The government has focused on a number of large-scale infrastructure projects, including two ports, a new airport, and several power plants. These projects have been funded by foreign donors, such as the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. However, there have been concerns about the transparency and consultation of these development and reconstruction efforts. The central government has been accused of planning and carrying out these projects without adequate input from the local population. This has led to some resentment and dissatisfaction among local communities.

It is important for the government to ensure that future development and reconstruction efforts are more transparent and inclusive. This will help to build trust and support for these projects, and will make them more likely to be successful. The Sri Lankan ethnic conflict is a complex and challenging problem, but it is one that must be addressed if Sri Lanka is to achieve lasting peace and prosperity. There have been some efforts to address the conflict, but these have so far been met with mixed results. The future of Sri Lanka depends on how it addresses the Tamil ethnic conflict in a fair and just way. It is important to find a way to resolve the conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka. This will require a willingness on the part of both communities to compromise and to work together to find a solution that is acceptable to all.

Sri Lanka current Challenge and the Way Ahead:

Sri Lanka has made some progress in addressing the Tamil ethnic issue since the civil war ended, but economic hardship and decades of economic policies have created new challenges. The Sri Lankan government built a large and inefficient state sector, implemented generous social welfare programs that exceeded the country's means, maintained a large military, and undertook an elaborate series of postwar construction projects. As economic growth slowed, the government continued to borrow to finance these programs, leading to a large and unsustainable debt burden. The economic hardship forced the government to pursue policies that were hostile to the Tamil and Muslim communities. The security forces were used to intimidate and suppress human rights activists and the families of victims of enforced disappearances.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine exacerbated the economic crisis, leading to power outages and other hardships. The new government of Ranil Wickremesinghe has pledged to uphold human rights and address the economic crisis, but it remains to be seen whether the government will be able to overcome the challenges facing Sri Lanka.

The government has set up commissions to investigate the causes of the conflict and has made commitments to promote reconciliation between the Tamils and the Sinhalese. However, there is still much work to be done. In the decade after the end of the civil war, Sri Lanka made significant economic progress. The country recovered from the ravages of war and became an upper-middle-income nation. Tourism-based economy brought billions of dollars, many jobs, and middle class comforts. A hope was generated that the government was able to address these challenges and would benefit the people of Sri Lanka by creating a more peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable country. However, the euphoria of the post-war economic boom was short-lived. Sri Lanka had taken on a lot of debt in an effort to become another Singapore. The government built ambitious infrastructure projects, including ports, but many of these projects have stalled. The government also had hoped to attract private investment, but this has not happened. The country's enormous debt load, the pandemic and, most recently, the war in Europe have brought it to its knees.

Sri Lanka needs to initiate a new political and economic development model. The policies of ethnic marginalization, intimidation, Sinhala chauvinism, and political suppression have not worked, despite the euphoria of the Rajapaksa dynasty in the post-war period. From 2005 to 2015 and 2019 to 2022, Mahinda Rajapaksa and his family ruled the country with a popular mandate of Tamil and minority intimidation policies. From 2009 to 2019, there was a new light of hope. Sri Lanka saw a budget surplus and a good corpus of foreign reserves for the first time in 52 years of history. However, short-term euphoria and suppression policies will not work in the long run when crises erupt internationally and domestically. There is a need to promote policies that are inclusive and participatory. There have been some efforts to address the Tamil ethnic issue in Sri Lanka. The government has set up a number of commissions to investigate the causes of the conflict, and it has made some commitments to promote reconciliation between the Tamils and the Sinhalese. However, successive governments have not upheld their international commitments. This was one of the reasons why Sri Lanka faced a major economic crisis when it imposed restrictions on international borders. The countries that were asking for the upholding of human rights of citizens left Sri Lanka in droves. The Rajapaksa family, which prided itself on Sinhala dominance, was forced to flee the country by the majority population.

When the situation gets increasingly desperate. China — which in past years has bankrolled many of Sri Lanka's major infrastructure projects with loans — keeps its distance. China is known for its lenient lending policies, but it is not so lenient when borrowers cannot adhere to the repayment arrangement. Sri Lanka has borrowed heavily from China in recent years, and is now struggling to repay its debts. In 2014 and 2017, Sri Lanka requested Chinese support to restructure its debt, but both requests were denied. In 2022, as the economic crisis unfolded and Colombo defaulted on its debt, Beijing's response was lukewarm. China's reluctance to restructure Sri Lanka's debt is putting the country in a difficult position. Sri Lanka is facing a severe economic crisis.

India, a longtime ally, has already provided Sri Lanka with \$4 billion in credit and loans, which the country has already spent. Sri Lanka has asked Russian President Vladimir Putin for a credit line to buy fuel. Protesters stormed the president's residence in Colombo as President Gotabaya Rajapaksa went into hiding. The president fled the country. With the leadership of the nation in doubt, protesters surrounded the prime minister's residence in Colombo, where they were met with tear gas.

The economic crisis in Sri Lanka has had a devastating impact on the lives of millions of people. The shortages of essential goods, including fuel and medicines, have made it difficult for people to get by. The electricity cuts have disrupted businesses and schools. The spiraling price inflation has made it difficult for people to afford food and other necessities. And the desperate hardship has led to increased crime and violence. Women and girls have been particularly affected by the economic crisis. They are more likely to be poor and to lack access to basic resources. They are also more likely to be victims of violence and exploitation. The crisis has made it even more difficult for women and girls to meet their basic needs and to live in safety. The necessary economic reforms may initially hurt growth and poverty, but they are essential to correct the country's economic imbalances, regain access to international financial markets, and lay the foundation for sustainable growth. It is critical to mitigate the impact of these reforms on the poor and vulnerable during this time, and poverty reduction will require an increase in employment in industry and services and a recovery in real incomes. On the other hand, a credible reform program backed by financing from international partners could boost confidence and attract new capital inflows.

The Sri Lankan government is taking steps to address the crisis, including seeking assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), reducing government spending, raising taxes, and increasing exports. However, the outlook for the Sri Lankan economy is uncertain, and there are a number of risks to the recovery, including a slow debt restructuring process, limited external financing support, and a prolonged recovery from the scarring effects of the crisis. Sri Lanka's severe balance of payments crisis led to a default on its foreign debt of over US\$50 billion in April 2022. This triggered a crippling economic contraction and spiraling inflation. Sri Lanka, which defaulted on its \$51 billion external debt last year, is hoping that an International Monetary Fund (IMF) program will allow it to borrow again. However, the country has a history of indiscriminate borrowing, especially in the past 15 years. This has led to a situation where Sri Lanka's problem and its solution are eerily similar. The indiscriminate borrowing has led to a large debt burden, which has made it difficult for Sri Lanka to repay its creditors. This has resulted in a balance of payments crisis, which has made it difficult for Sri Lanka to import essential goods. The economic contraction and inflation have had a devastating impact on the Sri Lankan people, causing widespread hardship and poverty.

The balance of payments crisis was caused by a number of factors, including a large budget deficit, a decline in tourism revenue, and a sharp rise in fuel prices. The default on the foreign debt made it even more difficult for Sri Lanka to import essential goods, leading to shortages and price increases. The economic contraction and inflation have had a devastating impact on the Sri Lankan people, causing widespread hardship and poverty. The IMF program is seen as a way to help Sri Lanka address its debt crisis and get back on its feet. However, the IMF program will come with conditions, which may include austerity measures that could further hurt the Sri Lankan people. It is unclear whether Sri Lanka can break the cycle of indiscriminate borrowing and achieve sustainable economic growth. However, the IMF program is a necessary first step. If Sri Lanka can successfully implement the IMF program, it will be able to borrow again and start to rebuild its economy.

The Sri Lankan government is taking steps to address the crisis, but it is a daunting task. The government needs to find a way to restructure its debt, attract foreign investment, and increase exports. It also needs to address the underlying causes of the crisis, such as the large budget deficit and the decline in tourism revenue. The outlook for the Sri Lankan economy is uncertain, but there are some positive signs. The political situation has stabilized, and the new government is taking decisive action. India has also provided financial assistance. However, there are still a number of risks to the recovery, including a slow debt restructuring process, limited external financing support, and a prolonged recovery from the scarring effects of the crisis. The Sri Lankan people are facing a difficult time, but they are resilient. They have overcome challenges in the past, and they will overcome this crisis as well.

Conclusion :

The crisis in Sri Lanka is a reminder that no country is immune to economic and political shocks. It is also a reminder of the importance of good governance policies that promote equality, social justice, and sound economic policies. The international community has a role to play in helping countries recover from crises, but it is ultimately up to the countries themselves to implement the necessary reforms. The Sri Lankan government needs to take responsibility for its own future. The crisis in Sri Lanka is a reminder for other countries as well. If countries do not pursue inclusive policies, they are more likely to face similar crises in the future. They include. Countries that pursue inclusive policies are more likely to be resilient in the face of crises. They are also more likely to achieve sustainable development. Sri Lanka has experienced decades of unrest, violence, and uncertainty. The country has a long history of political instability. In recent past, Sri Lanka has been rocked by a number of major crises, including a civil war, several humanitarian disasters, and a constitutional coup. The Rajapaksas have been accused of corruption, cronyism, and human rights abuses. The Rajapaksa family may have exited the scene amidst this political and economic crisis, but it remains unclear what political formation might fill the void. Amid this unprecedented crisis, Sri Lankans' political activism has reawakened. In Sri Lanka, Political instability and economic collapse have devastated lives and livelihoods across the board and dealt with the heaviest blow to the most vulnerable and the poorest of the poor.

The crisis in Sri Lanka is a warning to other countries. It shows that even countries with strong economies can be vulnerable to economic and political shocks. It is important for all countries to have strong governance and sound economic policies in place in order to weather any storms that come their way. The international community can play a role in helping Sri Lanka recover from the current crisis, but it is ultimately up to the Sri Lankan government to implement the necessary reforms. The international community can play a role in supporting inclusive policies in developing countries. However, it is ultimately up to the countries themselves to implement these policies. Lankan people has to understand it is a critical moment of its history, whether they have to learn to accept diversity, plurality, inclusiveness, and democratic set up of contemporary principal of global society or perish it in divisiveness, majoritarianism and ethnic cleansing of one community against others.

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