

# Long-term plan of the LTTE

*Sunday Times 22.5.93*

During the past few years we have witnessed brutal assassinations of several key figures who had been directly involved in the North-East ethnic conflict, namely,

Ranasinghe Premadasa : in Colombo by suicide bomber

Ranjan Wijeratne - in Colombo by bomb blast

Lalith Athulathmudali - in Colombo by gunman

A. Amirthalingam (TULF) : in Colombo by gunman

Sam Thambimuttu (TULF) : in Colombo by gunman

Uma Maheswaran (PLOTE leader) : in Colombo by gunman

Clancy Fernando : in Colombo by suicide

bomber

Denzil Kobbekaduwa/Wijaya Wimalaratne : in Jaffna by bomb blast

Padmanaba and other EPRLF cadres : in India by gunmen

Rajiv Gandhi : in India by suicide bomber

Even now, "the Southerners" (people outside the North-East), are of the view that most of these assassinations could have been carried out by either the Government, the Opposition or the LTTE. While a lot has been said about rivalries amongst the political parties of the South, it may be prudent to look into the possibility of LTTE involvement in these kill-

ings in view of the following :

The LTTE is:

Lacking credibility with regard to statements made after ruthless killings (e.g. whom are we to blame for the massacres of innocent civilians in Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and the Eastern Province? And are we to just be satisfied with whatever the LTTE says?

Committed to a separate state, which is a very long-term objective (after all it has been fighting for more than 10 years with an invariable level of intensity)

Against the Provincial Council Elections and will be determined to influence the electioneer-

ing process (in the seven "southern" provinces), to show the rest of the world that PCs (created to appease the North-East) are discreditable

Losing international support\* (mainly India's) and needs an "ugly" incident (such as 1983 July) in the "South" which would be used to prop-up its lobbying efforts worldwide

Not able to maintain its "offensive" capabilities in the North-East and therefore requires badly-needed "breathing space" to re-group and re-arm

Planning very long-term (20 to 25 years down the road) in achieving its solemn objective of a

"separate state" and would like to weaken the "South" by eliminating all its would-be obstacles as and when it deems necessary.

The strategies of the "South" and the LTTE differ in one major aspect; the "South" is thinking in terms of a limited-overs cricket game - hit out, get out and blame everybody and everything - while the LTTE is more like playing a game of chess, making one move at a time while observing patiently the other side before planning its next "kill". It is truly a "long term thinking endeavour."

A.G. Nicholas  
Colombo 5