In reconstructing the concept of security from the perspective of human security, the individual person in civil society becomes the main referent. From the point of view of the individual, a wide array of threats and vulnerabilities which are perceived in his/her economic and socio-political environment set the parameters of his/her security. Many of these concerns may remain outside the traditional conception of national security which focused mainly on borders and territory. With the passage of time, partly in response to the critiques, some of the non-military issues, such as economic security, were later taken into consideration even in national security formulation. Nevertheless, the framework of reference in relation to the non-military aspects of security continued to be the state.

From the perspective of a poor farmer in the Moneragala District (in the dry zone), however, economic, social and environmental threats (i.e. droughts/floods) are far more important when it comes to his/her existence and well-being. Nevertheless, bringing the non-military dimension and focusing on the human aspect does not mean that the military and political dimensions of security are simply overlooked in the human security paradigm. It must be noted that military and political threats to the individual can be more direct and, at times, the whole survival of a person depends on dealing with such threats and vulnerabilities. To an internally displaced widow in Vavuniya (in the North), nothing is more desirable than peace and a violence-free environment. Accordingly, in the case of human security there is no predetermined hierarchical order of security concerns and priorities. The seriousness of security concerns in different sectors varies depending on the space, time and context.

When Sri Lanka's security problem is reconfigured from the human security perspective, different orders of threats and vulnerabilities are to be taken into consideration. In a country where social and political
life has been plagued by the ethnic conflict and secessionist conflicts for over twenty years, in addition to experiences of two armed insurrections in the south, no security audit can afford to ignore the military threats emanating from diverse sources to the unarmed individual in civil society. At the same time, how to deal with problems linked with economic deprivation and other non-military threats to one’s existence are also crucial in achieving a high degree of security. This chapter will, therefore, examine the ground realities of human security in relation to different sectors and prevailing human security practices. It will trace relevant institutional and legal frameworks that have a direct impact on human security as well as community and social practices towards the building of a high degree of human security in Sri Lanka.

During the first two decades after independence Sri Lanka was able to claim a high degree of human security in the region in terms of many indicators. The human security inventory of Sri Lanka must be understood against the background of its unique socio-economic milieu. One paradox in relation to the socio-economic development of Sri Lanka is its high Human Development Index (HDI) despite low income conditions. This is mainly an outcome of the commitment of successive regimes to social development. One of the conspicuous features of the socio-economic development of Sri Lanka since independence has been the allocation of resources for social welfare programmes. As pointed out by the former Director General, Department of National Planning, "Sri Lanka has been investing a significant part of its resources in social welfare programmes, particularly the food ration and stamps programmes, education and health services. These programmes accounted for 8.3 percent of GNP in the fifties, 10.7 percent in the sixties, 9.8 percent in the seventies and 6.5 percent in the eighties." However, economic achievements during the same period were not impressive at all and per capita GNP at constant prices increased annually only at a rate of 1.9 percent in the period 1950-60, that is to say, from Rs. 520 to Rs. 633. The terms of trade of the country also continuously deteriorated. As an inevitable outcome, the total external debt increased significantly. In 1970 external debt and debt service payments amounted to 18.3 per cent of the GDP and reached 81 percent in 1989 and 75.1 percent of the GDP in 1994. Along with these developments as well as because of the changed strategies of development after 1977, some of the welfare structures, mainly direct

food subsidies, were modified. Nevertheless, no government dares to completely dismantle the welfare structures for the sake of economic development goals. Assigning increasingly important roles to market forces while maintaining the basic social welfare safety net such as poverty alleviation programmes and other services such as free-education and health facilities, has now become strategy of all regimes irrespective of political colour. A policy regime that combines primacy of market forces in economic affairs and the continued role of the state in maintaining social welfare structures set the parameters for current human security conditions in Sri Lanka.

The other important factor that influenced the human security conditions is the ethnic conflict and the secessionist war. One of the main challenges confronted by the rulers of the country since 1948 has been how to guide and direct the post-colonial state-formation and nation-building process to embrace the multi-ethnic social reality of Sri Lanka. It was believed in the period from 1948 to 1956 that political democracy and liberal norms would provide the necessary ideological basis for the building of a post-colonial state and for national integration. After 1956, the initiatives aimed at restructuring the state were carried out in anti-colonial flanks, and not in the national integration framework. Strengthening of the state-sector with anti-colonial and socialist political fervour was the motto after 1956. As such, the colonial institutional structures that Sri Lanka inherited in 1948 evolved after 1956 in such a way that they further fragmented the Sri Lankan polity.

The failure of the Sri Lankan political process since independence and the inability of the state to evolve a harmonious multi-ethnic polity brought the question of national integration and the issue of restructuring the state to the forefront of political discourse. This failure contributed to alienate minority national groups from the system of power and governance, preparing the ground for separatist political tendencies with alternative state projects on ethnic grounds. The emergence of Tamil militant groups with the objective of achieving a separate state through armed struggle in the 1970s highlighted the gravity of the ethnic crisis. The prolonged armed confrontation between the state and the LTTE since 1984 further deepened the crisis of the state, making the establishment of integrated polity a high priority. In this context, the ethnic crisis and the secessionist war have set the parameters of the human security conditions. In view of the intensity, prevalence and multiplicity of the impact of the ethnic crisis and the secessionist war on human security conditions, the ethnic conflict in its all manifestations has become most the decisive factor that has generated human insecurity in contemporary Sri Lanka.
Generally speaking, human security inventory needs to be understood against the background of establishing viable safeguards against possible threats and vulnerabilities in different sectors. The role and the nature of the state is crucial in the analysis of threat and vulnerabilities because human security is irreversibly connected to the state. In order to understand the role of the Sri Lankan state in relation to human security in a broader analytical framework, the distinction between strong and weak states is very pertinent. It must be noted that this division refers to structural aspects of the state rather than normal power capabilities. Accordingly, Sri Lanka falls squarely within the weak state category in terms of its low degree of socio-political cohesion and attributes that are typical of a weak state. These attributes affect the state role as the source of security. On the other hand, when it resorts to coercive methods to maintain its authority, the threats emanating from the state to its citizens become the main source of insecurity. The crucial role of the state in ensuring/endangering human security is a fact; but the role of the wider range of other non-state actors must also be taken into any analysis because human security encompasses the economic, social and environmental sectors. All these sectors are interconnected. Economic security constitutes a very important aspect of human security and its linkages to other sectors of security are obvious. Poverty is the main source of threat in this regard and is an outcome of a number of factors and conditions. The state is only one among many players in the economic sphere. Sources of threats and nature of vulnerabilities also vary from sector to sector. Hence, human security practices and security-building mechanisms also differ from sector to sector.

In the first two decades after independence, human security conditions in Sri Lanka compared to those in many other countries in South and South East Asia were considered satisfactory. This picture began to change in the 1970s. Sharp deterioration of the human security condition in Sri Lanka has become the focus of global attention today. This situation has been caused mainly by the unresolved ethnic conflict and the human toll of the secessionist war. However, general deterioration of the human security conditions of Sri Lanka should be understood in relation to three inter-related developments that reflect the unfinished task, if not really the failure, of the post-colonial state-building process. First and fundamental is the failure of successive regimes in the post-independence Sri Lanka to achieve their development goals and to restructure economic relations with the economic power centres and the periphery, nationally and globally. The inevitable
outcome of this situation is the perpetuation of poverty structures and the gradual contraction of existing welfare and delivery mechanisms. The second and more decisive development that has had a profound impact on human security conditions is the ethnic crisis and the secessionist war. Thirdly, the expansion of the political domain in the administration paved the way for bad governance and gradual the collapse of the legitimacy of the structures of power and governance. All these factors have exerted an adverse impact on human security conditions in general. As a result, when Sri Lanka entered the new millennium, its human security situation had become a concern nationally and internationally. In the light of the emerging discourse and growing international concern, Sri Lankan government has become very sensitive to issues relating to human security conditions and has put a number of mechanisms in place. These mechanisms and practices cover almost all the sectors of human security - economic, social, political and environmental. In the light of the increasing concern and awareness on the part of the general public, non-state actors have also come forward to contribute to develop practices and make existing mechanisms viable in promoting human security conditions. It is against this backdrop that the sectoral level human security inventory should be understood.

5.1 POVERTY AND ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF HUMAN SECURITY

As multiple insecurities emanating from poverty constitute a key concern in human security projections, the point of departure of the human security audit is measuring and analysing poverty and evaluating modes of interventions to alleviate poverty. Poverty in Sri Lanka is naturally a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon. As Dileni Gunewardena writes "(T)he notion of poverty is deprivation that is experienced in multiple dimensions is uncontroversial. Conceptions of what these dimensions might have evolved over time from the purely economic to including education and health (social indicators, or indicators of human poverty) to much broader ideas that include social inclusion, empowerment of the powerless and voiceless (political) and vulnerability." It is important to note that perceptions of poverty are inevitably linked to particular socio-cultural perceptions. In determining how poverty is measured, what is measured and who would be regarded poor, Sri Lanka’s socio-cultural specificities must be taken into consideration. Without going into any definitional labyrinth, here we

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will define the poor as those who lack access to essential collective goods and services through poverty yardsticks that are definitely subjective.

It is generally considered that Sri Lanka's achievements since independence in reducing poverty have been inspiring and Sri Lanka has distinguished itself from other low-income countries by its impressive human development indicators. However, these island-wide general human development indicators hide regional and sectoral variations as well as the extent and intensity of poverty. Further, due to a host of reasons, poverty in the country has deepened and expanded since the 1970s. Absolute poverty is generally measured according to the ability of a household to afford a minimum set of consumption requirements. The Department of Census and Statistics (of the Government of Sri Lanka) assesses poverty using larger household income and expenditure surveys. In the technical report prepared by a consultative team, *Sri Lanka: A Framework for Poverty Reduction*, a different set of poverty lines have been calculated taking into account differences in sample size, commodity coverage and the assumed share of non-food spending in total expenditures. According to *A Framework for Poverty Reduction*, a food poverty line is first derived using the cost of a food bundle that satisfies a food energy requirement at given tastes and preferences. To this is added an amount equal to the average non-food consumption of those who can just afford to meet their food energy requirements. Twenty percent is added to the low poverty line to take into consideration the arbitrariness that necessarily exists when a poverty line is defined. For 1996/97, provisional estimates based on the Central Bank data gives the lower poverty line at Rs.860 per person per month and the higher poverty line at Rs.1032 per person per month. According to this consumption poverty yardstick, in 1996/97 between one-fifth to one third of the total population excluding the provinces of war-torn North and East will be classified as poor. In 2002, the population living below the poverty line of Rs. 1423 was only 19 percent. However, in 2004, a total of 1.9 million families benefited directly from the income supplementary programme (Samurdhi), representing about 41 percent of the population.

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4 Ibid.
5 According to the lower poverty line (at Rs.860 per person per month) 3.3 million out of 17.5 million of the total population, excluding the people in the North-East were classified as poor. According to the higher poverty line, I.E. Rs.1032 per person per month, 4.5 million people could be classified as poor. See, *Sri Lanka: A Framework for Poverty Reduction*, p. 5.
Poverty is not simply the inability to afford basic minimum consumption of goods. It is also lack of access to basic needs—education, health care, drinking water, safe dwelling. Therefore, just money-metric measurement of the consumption poverty yardstick does present the total gravity of the phenomenon of poverty. As Robert Chambers suggested, at least the three-dimensional concerns related to poverty must be identified—survival, security and self-respect. Amartya Sen defines poverty succinctly as capability deprivation. Capability deprivation curtails freedom of choice. He defines “poverty as not being able to do certain things: lacking capabilities to function or lacking the substantive freedom [a person] enjoys to lead the kind of life he or she values.” As poverty is both absolute as well as relative, poverty must be understood in the context of a particular socio-cultural milieu. From the human security perspective, a broader definition of poverty as capability deprivation bears more weight. Otherwise how to measure capability deprivation would be a complex exercise. What is required is to identify poverty social groups in terms of a different set of variables.

In identifying poverty structures in Sri Lanka, the consumption poverty yardstick should be supplemented by a capability deprivation criteria though there is a close co-relation between the two. As far as a strict money metric measure of consumption of poverty line employed to identify the poor is concerned, seven broad categories can be identified:

1. Small farmers: About 40 percent of the poor are small farmers. In view of the low productivity, farmers who cultivate less than 1 acre and who have no off-farm income are generally considered poor.

2. Workers and self-employed individuals living in remote, isolated areas.: Semi-subsistence agriculture is their dominant source of employment. Their economic activities are limited to their local vicinity.

3. Casual workers in mining and quarrying, construction, agriculture, petty trades and informal sector work: This category is marked by low wage rates and irregular employment. A very high level of poverty is recorded in this category.

4. Workers employed in costal fisheries: A large number of coastal fishermen do not own their own boats or other paraphernalia required for their trade. Many of them work for low daily wages.

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8 Quoted in Dileni Gunewardene, op.cit., p. 7.
5. **Workers employed in small, cottage industries:** Low productivity and low wages are common in the cottage industry sector. A considerable number of female casual workers are employed in this category.

6. **Petty traders:** Those who provide services to small and low-income markets fall in this section. Business for them tends to be irregular and their profit margins are thin. In many cases family members provide the labour.

7. **Craftspersons:** In general, wage-rates of craftpersons are high, but the demand is highly cyclical. Transitional poverty is very common and intense in this category as during the lean period of constructions, they fall into poverty.

Different poverty categories can be identified when capability deprivation is taken into account to determine the extent of poverty. Capability deprivation and access denial must be understood in a larger political and socio-cultural canvas as a structural process. The social exclusion of the marginalised groups of the society from economic, social and political full participation leads to economic and social deprivation. Social exclusion involves the denial of full realization of the rights of citizens relative to others. As Kalinga Tudor Silva points out “(I)n the European social sciences, the expanding theory of social exclusion has sought to understand structural linkages between poverty and a range of group identities, including ethnicity, race, immigrant status, gender and social class. The central argument of this theory is that certain people are excluded from opportunity structures in mainstream society on account of the structurally marginal position that is accorded to them by society. In other words, poverty and deprivation of such excluded social groups are not so much due to the operation of simple economic logic but rather due to the operation of a social logic whereby certain groups knowingly or unknowingly treated as outsiders or even outcasts.”

In line with the “Framework for Poverty Reduction,” six broad categories can be identified as the poor in terms of capability deprivation and social exclusion.

1. **Victims of Civil Conflict:** The social and economic cost of ethnic conflict has been enormous. The protracted conflict has displaced several hundred thousand families. The war between the Government forces and the LTTE has exposed many families,

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mainly in the North and the East, to violence, loss of life and
disability and forced them extended stay in welfare centres.

2. Estate Workers: The descendants of the indentured labourers
were brought to Sri Lanka from South India during British rule
to work in estates. All of them were granted Sri Lankan
citizenship in 1987. They still remain an ethnic enclave and one
essentially restricted to employment opportunities available in
the estates. The participation of their political leaders in the
government after 1977 did not result in any substantial change
in their economic and social status.

3. The Urban Ultra Poor: They are mainly slum and shanty
dwellers of Colombo and, to a lesser extent other cities. They
reportedly account for nearly 50 percent the total population
residing within Colombo city limits. “Congested inner-city
neighbourhoods characterised by deteriorated old buildings [are]
typically referred to as ‘slums’ while new communities forced on
encroached crown lands along rivers, canal banks, railway tracts
and beaches [are] known as shanties.”11 Prostitution, illicit
brewing of alcohol, drugs and organised crime with political
patronage are prevalent in these communities.

4. Squatter Settlers and Poor Fishing Communities: Squatter
settlements are the mostly marginalised peasant communities
found mainly in remote dry zone areas (such as Monaragala and
Hambantota Districts). The category of poor fishing community
is characterised by their segregation from surrounding
communities, partly because of their behaviour pattern and the
seasonal nature of their unemployment. In these communities,
as in the case of the urban poor, housing, sanitation and common
amenities are substandard. High vulnerability to environmental
hazards, physical isolation and poor access to services characterise
their life.

5. The Village Expansion Colonies: In order to solve the landless
problem of the villages, especially in the wet zone and up-
country, village expansion colonies have been established under
the Village Expansion Schemes. These settlers generally are of
the bottom of the village economic ladder. The land distributed
under the village expansion scheme of these colonies is often
barren or hilly.

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6. Social Outcasts: In Sri Lanka, there are no outcasts, except perhaps the remaining Rodiya community, in the real sense of the word. However, certain depressed caste communities are socially and economically isolated in many parts of the island. Education is the only avenue open for social advancement and 'liberation'. However, low access to resources and limited opportunities create serious impediments in their path.

It is also necessary to trace the regional dimension of poverty in order to grasp the nature of poverty in Sri Lanka. The regional dimension of poverty must be understood carefully. For example, according to the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (1995/96) of the Department of Census and Statistics, only 7 percent of the total poor are in the North-Central Province. At the same time 47 percent of households in that province are poor because it is a sparsely populated province.

Table 5.1: Incidence of Poverty at the Provincial Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Lower Poverty Line</th>
<th>Higher Poverty Line</th>
<th>Human Poverty Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-Western</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-Central</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uva</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabaragamuwa</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The district-wise variation is very striking. Consumption poverty incidence ranges from 10 percent in the Colombo District to 49 percent in the Moneragala District. In the following ten districts, consumption poverty levels are more than 50 percent higher than the Human poverty index level—Kalutara, Kandy, Matale, Galle, Matara, Kurunegala, Puttam, Anuradhapura, Moneragala, and Ratnapura.

The above tables do not cover the incidences of poverty in the North and the East. On account of the armed ethnic conflict, the poverty which is being experienced in the North and the East is quite different in dimension compared to that in other parts of the island. The plight of the North-East is lucidly portrayed in the *Sri Lanka: A Framework*
Table 5.2: Incidence of Poverty-District-Wise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Lower Poverty Line</th>
<th>Higher Poverty Line</th>
<th>Human Poverty Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colombo</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gampaha</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalutara</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matale</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuwara-Eliya</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalle</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matara</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hambantota</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puttalam</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anuradhapura</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polonnaruwa</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badulla</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moneragala</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratnapura</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kegalle</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


for Poverty Reduction: “(L)oss of civilian life, physical and psychological trauma, the horror of forced displacement, the disintegration of community social networks, forcible recruitment into terrorist organisations, constant fear and uncertainty and prolong dependence on relief are all facets of impoverishment in the North-East.”12 The situation in the North-East is discussed elsewhere in the chapter.

5.2 THE JANASAVIYA AND SAMURDHI AND PRACTICES IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

As has been pointed out earlier, since independence Sri Lanka has pursued a strategy for human development focusing on human capital development and resource transfer programmes through welfare programmes. The emphasis changed after 1977 with the introduction of the open economic package. Apparently, the focus after 1977 was on ‘growth now and re-distribution later.’ In 1977, the food subsidy

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(providing subsidised food ration to the entire people) accounted for 16 percent of the total government budget and 5 percent of the total GDP. The government decided to limit the food subsidy given earlier only to needy households and, in 1984, even the limited food ration scheme was replaced with food stamps. The nominal value of the food stamps allocated to different categories has not changed since the food stamp programme was introduced and in the prevailing inflationary economic environment the purchasing power of the food stamp income has declined sharply. The youth uprising in the late 1980s compelled the government to rethink this policy orientation. Many studies commissioned by the government and also by other agencies have traced the relationship between the social unrest and the frustration generated by the lack of economic security network.

Recognising the new approach to poverty alleviation, the Janasaviya Programme was launched in 1989. The Janasaviya Programme “aimed at reaching the poor by providing them with opportunities to engage in self-reliant economic activity. The main thrust of the programme was to transform the subsistence rural community into an entrepreneurial class.” The method adopted to improve the ‘quality’ and ‘dignity’ of the life of the poor was through the enhancement of their capability and capacities by providing food security to households during the two year period of operation. The Janasaviya beneficiaries (whose monthly family income should not exceed Rs.7700 at the time of screening) were entitled to a monthly income transfer of Rs. 2500 for a period of two years. The income transfer had two components: saving and consumption. The saving component was Rs.1042 per month and was deposited in the name of both the husband and wife in a savings pass book. The investment component was intended to enable the Janasaviya recipient to venture on a self-employment project which would generate adequate income to support them after two years of assistance from the Janasaviya programme. It was envisaged that the beneficiaries would have a minimum savings of Rs.25,000 at the end of the two year period as a guarantee to have access to the special credit scheme of the State Banks.

14 Ibid., p. 585.
16 The Treasury guaranteed long-term bond worth Rs.25,000 would yield an interest of 12% p.a. At the end of the period, however, the capital was not provided. Only a monthly payment of Rs.250 was paid to the beneficiary households.
The consumption component (Rs.1458) was used for purchasing consumer goods from a co-operative outlet in the village. In order to receive this benefit they were required to work for 20 days a month in productive activity or to engage in skill training.

The Janasaviya Programme was launched in two phases. In the first phase implemented in October 1989, 156,245 families spanning only 28 Assistant Government Agents' (AGA) divisions were covered. The second phase was launched in December 1990 and a total of 77,270 households were reached. The Janasaviya Trust Fund (JTF) was established with a view to providing necessary support services in creating productive activities among the poor.

With the Janasaviya programme, coupled with the midday school meal programme launched in the May 1989, marked a shift back to more direct state intervention to ensure the welfare safety net. Patricia Alailima argues that this was a major thrust in terms of social policy and “it sought to combine, for the first time, micro-level activities to improve the living standard of the poor and to ensure them a sustainable income level .... By 1994, 117 Divisions out of 290 were covered, benefiting a total of 2.7 million people.”

The Peoples' Alliance Government that came to power in 1995 replaced the Janasaviya programme with the Samurdhi programme. It was believed that certain shortcomings of the Janasaviya programme necessitated the restructuring of the welfare programme. In certain respects, it is an expansion and continuation of the Janasaviya programme with some revisions. The Samurdhi programme is the largest single welfare and poverty alleviation programme ever embarked on by the state, covering some 2.1 million households in the country. According to W.G. Mithrarratne, Director General of the Samurdhi Programme, three main development approaches are clearly visible within the Programme: welfare and safety net approach; rural development approach; and empowerment of the poor approach.

Under the ‘welfare’ component of the Samurdhi “poor families are identified through a socio economic survey. Families earning less than Rs. 1000/- per month are entitled to this relief. In addition, Janasavi recipients under the previous regime are paid a monthly allowance of Rs.250. In the current

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18 The functions of the JTF included assisting partner organisations in project planning, implementation and monitoring; financing of economically viable projects proposed by partner organisations; helping poor and malnourished children and pregnant and lactating mothers.
system, household income as well as the members in a household is taken into account. Accordingly, a family of two members and a family of one member get Rs. 200 and Rs. 100 respectively. Rs. 1000/- is paid only to absolute poor families.21 Under the social security component of the Samudthi Programme, a security fund has been created by deducting Rs. 25 from the subsidy provided for the poor. An insurance coverage is given under the scheme in selected situations—at death (Rs. 5000) child birth (Rs. 2000), marriage (Rs. 3000) and hospitalisation (a maximum of Rs. 1500 at Rs. 50 per day).

The activities under the community development approach consist of investment in economic and social infrastructure, agriculture, nutrition and small enterprises. In this regard, a Samurdhi Task Force (STF) was established under the Samurdhi Authority Act. In selecting the development project to be undertaken by the STF, priority was accorded to projects that could provide employment for the largest possible number such as building roads, culverts, irrigation and channels. The Samurdhi People’s Company Programme invested in a wide range of small-scale, productive ventures. These production units come under the purview of the Samurdhi General Union.

Another striking feature of the Samurdhi Programme is its effort to encourage savings and provide financial markets to serve the poor. Through over seventy thousand Samurdhi household groups and more than one thousand Samurdhi Bank Societies, it has encouraged savings. In addition to the over Rs. 5000 million compulsory savings, by the end of the millennium voluntary savings surpassed Rs. 1349 million. The Samurdhi Banks created and owned by poor communities grant loans on trust to ‘groups of five.’ Only the poor are entitled to loans. As at the end of 1999, loans totalling Rs. 944 million were granted to 206,898 projects. Repayment rates are quite high at approximately 100 percent.22

Two of the main issues of the Samurdhi Programme that came to surface after some years of experience are how to identify and target the deserving beneficiaries correctly and the exit mechanism. The Central Bank of Sri Lanka Annual Report 2002 observed that “The disputed system of identifying eligible beneficiaries, lack of proper entry and exit mechanism and political interference caused the Samurdhi programme to expand excessively beyond its long-term sustainability. Yet, a large number of eligible poor household remained outside the programme, while there were a large number of ineligible households

21 Ibid., p. 13.
22 Mithraratne, op. cit. p. 33.
in the programme." Further, it was observed that the programme does not assist some 40 percent of the poorest income quintile at all. The Welfare Benefit Act (WBA) enacted in 2002 was expected to limit the number of Samurdhi beneficiaries, enabling authorities to provide increased benefits to eligible households. In 2004, a total of 1.9 million families benefited directly from the income supplementary scheme of the Samurdhi Programme, representing 41 percent of the population. The population living below the poverty line (Rs. 1423) in 2002 was only 19 percent. This indicates the need for improving the targeting of social welfare programmes to benefit truly deserving households.

Despite all these shortcomings and limitations, the Janasaviya and Samurdhi programmes stand as very important and concerted steps towards alleviation of poverty. From the perspective of human security, reduction of vulnerability constitutes a key element of security. Vulnerability linked with poverty relates to risks, shocks and stresses. Human security of the poor corresponds to the security net vis-à-vis human catastrophic events such as major illness, family break-up, premature death of the main household earner or natural catastrophes such as draughts, crop failures, floods and other cyclical disasters. Without proper social protection, in the face of such challenges, the transitory poor plunge into the chronic poor. The empowerment of the poor to meet these risks is an essential aspect of human security.

5.3 POLITICAL AND GOVERNANCE ASPECT OF HUMAN SECURITY

The political dimension of human security is as important as the economic dimension. As discussed earlier, the political dimensions of human security encompasses a wide range of issues and concerns. It includes security against politically motivated direct physical threats of pain, injury and even death. In addition, institutional safeguards against undue seizure or destruction of property, and denial of access to work or resources are very important aspects of human security. Effective safeguards and mechanisms on which the individual and group could count on against unlawful imprisonment and denial of normal civil liberties are fundamental to ensuring a high degree of human security.

It is true that the main focus in human security approach is the individual citizen but the state relates to human security directly and

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indirectly. In view of the network of connections and contradictions between the political dimensions of human security and the role and the functions of the state, the issue of governance, good or bad, has direct relevance. Governance is a broad concept used in a variety of contexts; it is defined here as encompassing the form of the political regime, the process by which authority is exercised, the management of Sri Lanka’s economic and resources development and the capacity of the government to design, formulate, implement and deliver.

The discourse on good governance is relevant in any discussion of political dimensions of human security. UNDP believes that good governance can be measured and its report in 1995 developed complex indicators and indices for this purpose26 How to identify the main indicators is, however, a complex issue. Further, whether good governance as presented by these reports is a universal value or an imposition of political values from the ‘West’ are issues mooted in the non-Western part of the world. According to the UNDP, indices of good governance include:

1. Political legitimacy;
2. Freedom of association and participation;
3. Fair and reliable judicial system;
4. Bureaucratic (and financial) accountability;
5. Freedom of information and expression;
6. Efficient and effective public sector management;
7. Cooperation with institutions of civil society.

As far as the human security discourse is concerned, all these indices of good governance provide necessary safeguards against security threats and reduce vulnerability.

In Sri Lanka, endurance of a democratic political system despite all the challenges and, of course, with limitations is a remarkable aspect of its post-Independence history. The rule of law and the role of the Judiciary are as not as exemplary as they should be. But it has not yet deviated from accepted norms as is the case in many failed states. The institutional arrangements of the political system and practices of human security in Sri Lanka could be understood against this backdrop.

5.4 CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES

Chapter III of the Constitution of Sri Lanka guarantees to all persons a wide range of fundamental rights essential for human security: freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom from torture; the right to equality before the law and the right to equal protection from the law; and the freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention. Further, the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution have been made justiciable. Article 17 empowers any person whose rights are affected (or threatened to be affected) by executive or administrative action of the state to petition the Supreme Court of such violation of fundamental rights. In the exercise of its fundamental rights jurisdiction, the Supreme Court has the power to order the immediate release of persons detained without adequate jurisdiction, grant compensation to torture victims, and order appointment of persons to positions in the public service. Article 11 of the Constitution states that no person shall be subject to torture or to cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The fundamental right to protection from torture cannot be abridged, restricted or denied under any circumstance. An amendment to it would require a two-thirds majority in the Parliament as well as ratification by the people in a referendum. Article 13 (1) of the Constitution provides that no person shall be arrested except according to the procedure established by law. Any person arrested should be informed of the reason of the arrest. Article 13 (2) states that every person held in custody, detained and otherwise deprived of personal liberty shall be brought before the judge of the nearest competent court according to procedures established by law.

The right to freedom of thought, conscience and freedom of opinion and expression is guaranteed in the Constitution. Article 10 of the Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Article 14 (1) (e) guarantees the right to manifest one's religious belief either in public or private, and by oneself or in association with others. This is also an entrenched clause in the constitution. Article 15 (7), however restricts Article 14 (1) (e) in the interest of national security, public order and protection of public health or morality, or for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others. Article 14 (1) (a) of the constitution recognises the right to freedom of speech and expression, including

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27 In preparing this section the author used the report and the Supplementary Information Note prepared by the Sri Lankan delegation (the author was a member of the delegation) to the Hearing of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination held in July, 2001.
publication. This right may be restricted by Article 15 (2) in the interest of racial and religious harmony, or in relation to Parliamentary privilege, contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence. Further, the sixth amendment to the Constitution prohibits the support, promotion, encouragement or advocacy of a separate state within the territory of Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka is also a signatory to some 24 international human rights and anti-terrorist instruments. Presently Sri Lanka has also ratified over 39 International Labour Conventions 30 of which are currently in force. Sri Lanka has acceded to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CATOIDTP) in January 1994. Enabling legislation to give effect to Sri Lanka’s obligation under the Convention was passed by parliament in November 1994. CATOIDTP Act No 22 of 1994 strengthened the existing legal framework in which torture is prohibited. In 1997, Sri Lanka acceded to the Optional protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The accession to the Optional Protocol of the ICCPR has given an individual the opportunity to report any human right violations to the Human Rights Committee.

5.5 HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES AND MECHANISMS IN SRI LANKA

In addition to the Supreme Court, three other administrative mechanisms are also in place to strengthen the human rights situation and to provide redress to those whose right to freedom from discrimination has been violated: The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRC), The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman), and The Official Languages Commission.

The Human Rights Commission (HRS) was established by the Government in March 1997 as a permanent national institution to investigate any infringement of a fundamental right declared and recognised by the constitution. It is vested with monitoring, investigative and advisory powers in relation to human rights. There is expressed provision in the Human Rights Commission Act that minority communities should be represented in the Commission in appointing members to the HRC. The mandate of the HRC is mainly twofold: complaints based jurisdiction and proactive role. It is mandated to dispose grievances arising from action of an executive or administrative nature by the state and its agencies. This includes direct complaints as well as fundamental rights cases referred to the HRC by the Supreme
Court. Its proactive role covers a broad range of functions including the review of administrative procedures to ensure compliance with the constitutional guarantees of fundamental rights, advising the government in formulating legislative and administrative procedure for the furtherance of fundamental rights and ensuring that both existing and proposed legislation conforms to international human rights norms and Sri Lanka's obligations under the treaties and other international instruments and promotion of human rights awareness.

According to Section 15 (3) of the HRC Act, when an investigation conducted by the Commission discloses the infringement of a fundamental right, the Commission can only recommend to the appropriate authorities that a prosecution or other proceedings be instituted against the person/s infringing such fundamental rights. It may also refer the matter to any court having jurisdiction to hear and determine the case. The HRC Act contains provisions that all arrests and detentions under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and Emergency Regulations (ERs) are to be reported to the Commission. The HRC is vested with the power to monitor the welfare of the detainees by regular inspection of their places of detention. The Act envisages that the HRC may appoint subcommittees at provincial level to exercise certain powers which are delegated by the Commission. It presently has ten regional offices run by Coordinators (at Ampara, Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Badulla, Jaffna, Kalmunai, Kandy, Matara, Trincomalee and Vavuniya).

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration Act of 1981 established the office of Ombudsman. The Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration is intended to provide people of Sri Lanka with the right to be heard by an impartial and independent body in respect of any grievances regarding the infringement of a fundamental right or other injustices committed by a public officer or public body. In order to make the office of the Ombudsman more effective, in 1994 the Government enacted the Parliamentary Commissioner of Administration (Amendment) Act, No.26 of 1994. The amendment provides for complaints to be forwarded directly to the Ombudsman, and for him to report his determination directly to the head of the concerned institution and to the relevant minister. Provision has also been made for the Ombudsman to require the head of the concerned institution to notify him of the measures taken to give effect to the recommendations of the ombudsman within a specific time. However, if no appropriate action has been taken, what the Ombudsman can do is only to report it to both the President and the Parliament.
Despite all these constitutional and legal guarantees, the practical ground situation in Sri Lanka regarding human rights is different. On the one hand, constitutional provisions and legal enactments alone cannot ensure fundamental rights and human security. The political and administrative culture of the country should be geared to put into practice the provisions set forth by the constitution. Constitutional and other provisions can help set up institutional and legal frameworks; but the human rights practices of institutions and the behaviour of the people at large are determined by the political culture. The human right track record of Sri Lanka is not at all impressive. This situation should be understood against the background of the repeated armed uprisings in the South and the protracted war between the state and the LTTE.

The excesses of the government forces in countering the armed challenges confronted by the state, both in the South and the North-East, and the ferocity of the anti-state violence orchestrated by the JVP and the LTTE are key factors that have set the ground conditions of human security. The continuous exposure to violence for years has brutalised Sri Lankan society. The entire social fabric is bleeding. Its implication can be seen in every nook and corner of society. Violence is experienced every now and then in various forms in social life. It is mainly an outcome of the militarisation of society. Militarisation is a structural process and goes beyond the expansion of armed forces. It denotes spread of martial values in society and emphasises the use of force in conflict resolution even at the interpersonal level, and the enhanced influence and role of violence in the decision-making process.

Violence is really a property of force. A force is violent if it violates. The application of force to violate or disrupt political institutions and processes can be defined as political violence. The primary function of the state should be to ensure a violence-free society. It is really the raison d'etre of the state. It maintains its monopoly of 'organised violence' and will not come forward to share it with any other organisation within the state. As in the evolution of democratic political order and civil society, the state itself establishes limits and controls in exercising its monopoly of 'organised violence.' This would be the basis of 'civil society, and civil(ised)-political order. Politically, to realise a high degree of human security, a violence-free social and political order is essential. Presently, the violence that is plaguing the country can be divided into three groups: violence linked with the ethnic-conflict, violent linked

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and generated by the competition for political power, and organised crime, in most cases functioning with the help of political patronage.

Threats and vulnerabilities of political nature to human security cannot be reduced only through steps taken against the violation of fundamental rights by the executive or administrative action of the state. Militant groups such as the JVP in the 1986-89 period and the LTTE function outside the constitutional and legal framework. International human right protocols and conventions are applicable only to the state. In reality, human security is more threatened by non-state armed actors. The recruitment of child soldiers and forced conscription on the part of the LTTE are examples.

5.6 ETHNIC CONFLICT, THE WAR AND HUMAN SECURITY

In the present socio-political juncture the most important factor that determines human security conditions in Sri Lanka is the ethnic conflict and the secessionist war. The ethnic crisis is not simply a conflict between ethnic groups; it is more a manifestation of a crisis of the state which has failed to forge a hegemonic accommodation of 'other' ethnic groups in a multi-ethnic context. The ethnic crisis as experienced presently is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and its properties can be identified as

1. pervasive fear and mutual suspicion among different groups on the basis of their ethnic identity;
2. failure of the state to identify itself with all the ethnic groups within its territory;
3. rejection of the established organisational ideology of state and its institutional base by certain ethnic groups on ethnic grounds;
4. structural exclusion or alienation of ethnic groups from mainstream politics and policy-making process; and
5. presentation of alternative state projects on the basis of ethnicity.

The ethic crisis, depending on the responses of the state and reactions of ethnic groups and the conjuncture of forces involved with the crisis, may lead to direct conflict. A protracted separatist war represents really a higher stage of an ethnic conflict. What Sri Lanka is witnessing presently is this scenario.

One of the early signals of the looming ethnic conflict was ethnic riots. After the major Sinhala-Tamil ethnic riots in 1958, there were only sporadic tensions between two communities; but no major ethnic
riots against the Tamils occurred between 1958 and 1977. In August 1977, one month after the election victory of the UNP, widespread ethnic riots against the Tamils erupted in a large part of the country. More intense riots erupted in 1981 prompting India to express its concern. The July 1983 riots were a highly organised phenomenon and included even the murder of Tamil remand prisoners inside their cells. The real gravity of insecurity generated by ethnic riots can be understood in its true proportions only by the victims of the riots. The implications of ethnic riots on human security of the victims are manifold. First of all, in its acute form, the very physical existence of the victim is threatened by the ethnic riots. In Sri Lanka many lives have been lost due to ethnic riots. Secondly, attacks during riots are directed against the property of victims. As a result, riots destroy not only the accumulated wealth of victims but all their economic activities and economic security. Thirdly, riots lead to displacement of people. In the eight month period after the July 1983 ethnic riots, about 50,000 refugees sought asylum in India alone. Fourthly, the damage inflicted on the dignity of the people and the helplessness and humiliation experienced in the instance of riots blur all perceptions of security. Fear and suspicion pervade every aspect of social intercourse. Their implications go much deeper in the case of armed conflict. The UN Commission on Human Security observes that “Human security is concerned with violent conflict. For whatever form violent takes, whether terrorism or crime or war, violence unseats people’s security. More than 800,000 people a year lose their lives to lethal violence—and in 2000, nearly 16 million lived as refugees. The catastrophic effects of war persist for generations. The memory of conflict and loss lives on, affecting people’s ability to live together in peace.” At the same time, some of the socio-political implications of the ethnic crisis and the protracted armed ethno-political conflicts must also be noted:

1) psychological distancing among ethnic groups and deepening image of each other as the enemy;
2) physical separation of communities in their own localities;
3) exaggerated ethno-centrism in day-to-day social life;
4) entrapment of all ethnic groups within an ethnic syndrome and over-commitment to ethnic identities.

The ethnic conflict and the war have grave implications for the human security situation in Sri Lanka, particularly in the North-East.

First of all, deterioration in the general economic, social and physical conditions of the North-Eastern provinces over the past two decades is obvious. The contribution of these two provinces to the national GDP has fallen from 15 percent from 1980 to as little as 4 percent in 1997.

In addition to the general economic degradation, the direct impact of the war is visible in every aspect of social, economic and political life of the people in the North-East. Damage to private and public property has been extensive. Once vibrant and prosperous townships and neighbourhoods have now become rubble. Based on very limited information, the incidence of consumption poverty in the North-East is estimated to range between 25 to 55 percent of those still living in the area. As *A Framework for Poverty Reduction* observed, “Educational attainments have sharply declined, school drop rates are substantially higher than in other parts of the country and the prevalence of malnutrition is very high. Qualitative reports suggest that the income poverty, healthcare, education and economic conditions are far worse in areas wrecked by the civil conflict than in the other parts of the nation.”

The human toll of the war has been very high. It is estimated that over 60,000 lives have been lost. Further, a large number of persons have been injured, incapacitated and internally displaced. The total number of IDPs islandwide at the end of 2001 amounts to 707,177 (197,718 families). In Jaffna, almost 50 percent of the population have been displaced, and many people have migrated to other countries. “Many children are traumatised after living in camps for years, with over-crowding, inadequate shelter, water and food, sanitation and little access to health and educational services. The more vulnerable groups also include families headed by widows, families with disabled members, orphans and families with members suffering from psychological trauma.”

In terms of their origin, IDPs can be categorised into three groups: the Tamil IDPs who fled their homes due to the armed confrontation or who were forced to leave their ancestral homes with the expansion of High Security Zones (HSZ) by the government forces; Muslim IDPs who were forcefully evicted by the LTTE; and the Sinhalese IDPs (though small in numbers compared to the other two) in the North who fled from their villages in the face of LTTE threats and intimidations. In Ampara district in the East, over 40 percent of the 148,000 families were displaced. In Mannar, and Vavunia districts in the Wanni area 85-95 families were displaced. Displacement due to ethnic tension has been a recurrent phenomenon in the post-Independence history of Sri Lanka.

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31 Ibid., p. 15.
During the Sinhala-Tamil ethnic clashes in 1958, many people were displaced. In the period between 1977 and 1983 there were repeated ethnic riots in the South. Its culmination was the 1983 anti-Tamil riots. It caused the displacement of over 100,000 Tamils. Prior to 1983 all these displacements were mainly in the Sinhala majority areas and those affected were mainly Tamils. After 1985, however, a qualitatively different phase gradually unfolded and war related displacement originated mainly from the war-torn North and the East. A survey commissioned by UNHCR identified the underlying causes of recent (post-1985) displacement as—

1. fear of the Tamils because of the advance of the government security forces,
2. establishment of army camps leading to displacement,
3. movement of people living near army camps to avoid being caught in crossfire,
4. need to escape from sea and air attacks by the security forces
5. forceful expulsion of Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims by militants
6. ethnic tension between Muslims and Tamils leading to the displacement of both communities,
7. shortage of food and other essential items in the war zone.

Multi-faceted implications of the dislocation of families are profound and many aspects of their human security are under threat. Dislocation has contributed to loss of livelihood, severe stress and the breakdown of families and their socio-cultural unity. Many of them have been pushed down the poverty line as all their assets were lost and economic activities affected by the dislocation. The impact of the conflict on even those who were not displaced is also profound. As Stephen Ryan observes “Living through violent and protracted intercommunal conflict can lead to immobilism and negativism: a belief that little can be done to change the situation because constructive action is so difficult.... Alienation, hopelessness, resentment, and powerlessness may have profound impact on communities in conflict especially when it is combined with economic underdevelopment.”

32 During the 1958 communal tension, some Sinhalese in the North and North-Central province were affected. But comparatively numbers were small.
Table 5.3: Displaced People by Ethnic Group – April 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Sinhala</th>
<th>Tamil</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Province</td>
<td>1,190</td>
<td>693,161</td>
<td>1,563</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(80%)</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
<td>99.59%</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>0.013%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Province</td>
<td>2,456</td>
<td>32,954</td>
<td>6,593</td>
<td>1,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(05%)</td>
<td>05.7%</td>
<td>76.56%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>02.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border Districts</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>10,882</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(04%)</td>
<td>67.29%</td>
<td>01.89%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puttalam District</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>3,226</td>
<td>63,607</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(08%)</td>
<td>01.71%</td>
<td>04.73%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>6,220</td>
<td>8,478</td>
<td>9,627</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(03%)</td>
<td>25.24%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>39.06%</td>
<td>1.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34,881</td>
<td>738,490</td>
<td>92,272</td>
<td>1634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hasbullah, Balasundarampillai and Tudor Kalinga Silva. (p.26)

On the part of the Sri Lankan government, three state institutions were in operation, providing relief to IDPs in the period 1995-2001.

1. The Commissioner General of Essential Services (CGES)—mainly supplying food to the IDPs.
2. Resettlement and Rehabilitation Authority of the North (RRAN)—working towards resettlement or relocation of IDPs.
3. Rehabilitation of Persons, Properties and Industries Authority (REPPIA)—responsible for payment of compensation, rehabilitation and reintegration of IDPs into their new surrounding.

The Government provides essential food supplies for all internally displaced persons living in welfare centres (except for those welfare centres receiving World Food Programme (WFP) assistance). This food assistance takes the form of provision of dry rations or cash in lieu of dry rations. Representatives of WFP monitor food supplies to 'uncleared' areas. In addition, ICRC, UNHCR and many international NGOs have been working in the North-East to facilitate and co-ordinate relief work. The Resettlement and Rehabilitation Authority of the North has allocated Rs. 400 million for this relocation programme. This programme was closely monitored by the Presidential Secretariat.
Table 5.4: Food Items Sent to Northern Districts by CGES; 1995-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaffna</td>
<td>65,311</td>
<td>38,390</td>
<td>54,942</td>
<td>58,767</td>
<td>39,388</td>
<td>35,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilinochchi</td>
<td>3,977</td>
<td>18,439</td>
<td>13,939</td>
<td>13,059</td>
<td>6,452</td>
<td>5,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mullativu</td>
<td>2,457</td>
<td>16,136</td>
<td>11,948</td>
<td>12,732</td>
<td>9,857</td>
<td>8,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannar</td>
<td>4,813</td>
<td>9,623</td>
<td>7,343</td>
<td>4,656</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>4,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vavunia</td>
<td>8,092</td>
<td>4,492</td>
<td>1,146</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76,598</td>
<td>90,680</td>
<td>92,664</td>
<td>90,360</td>
<td>58,707</td>
<td>53,840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of the Commissioner General of Essential Services.

In the late 1990s, the Government launched a crash programme to relocate IDPs without waiting for their own area to be cleared for settlement. The objective was to provide better living conditions to displaced families staying for long periods with friends/relatives or in welfare centres. The resettlement programme was launched in 2001 in the districts of Jaffna, Mannar and Vavunia. However, because of the continuation of conflict it was not possible to go forward with resettlement activities. After a new wave of armed confrontation, resettlement schemes came to a standstill, even if not wiped out totally.

After the Ceasefire Agreement signed between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE in February 2002 after the United National Front Government assumed power, a more conducive environment for resettlement work was created. In June 2002, the Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation (Triple R) framework was launched formally. In fact, the groundwork of the Triple R programme had been laid down during the PA regime, with the set-up of a ‘Triple R’ planning committee in 2000. The objectives of the ‘Triple R’ process included ensuring that basic needs of people affected by conflict were met, rebuilding productive livelihood, and facilitation of reconciliation across ethnic lines. The co-ordinating structure of the Triple R framework process consisted of five levels:

1. National Co-ordinating Committee on Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation (NCCR)—Chairman, Secretary to the President or Prime Minister;
2. Provincial Co-ordinating Committee on RRR (PCCR)—Chairman, Governor, North-East Province;
3. District Co-ordinating Committee on RRR—Chairman Government;
4. Divisional Co-ordinating Committee on RRR—Chairman—Divisional Secretary;
5. The Village Rehabilitation Committee (VRC)—Chairman selected by the Committee.36

The NCCR is composed of representatives of 6 related Ministries, the North-East Provincial Council, multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors, UN agencies, ICRC, NGOs, the External Resources Department and the Peace Secretariat. The NCCR is expected to provide a “forum for a continuous dialogue with all key actors involved in triple R activities with a view to reaching consensus in issues of common interests” and to ensure that “uniform strategies, programmes, and procedures are adhered to by all stakeholders, that adequate financial resources are made available and that the overall humanitarian situation is regularly assessed.”37 The Office of the Commissioner General (OCG) was established to provide high-level organisational support for the Triple R work in conflict-affected areas. The Activities carried out by the OCG have been organised under the three main divisions: (a) strategic planning and mobilisation of resources; (b) implementation, co-ordination and capacity building; and (c) reconciliation and communication. The experience of the Triple R programme clearly reveals that there is a limit to all these programmes unless a durable peace returns to the country.

Table 5.5: Internally Displaced Families Resettled-District-Wise
(as at end of May 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaffna</td>
<td>44,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannar</td>
<td>3,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vavunia</td>
<td>4,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilinochchi</td>
<td>16,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mullaitivu</td>
<td>19,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trincomalee</td>
<td>2,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batticaloa</td>
<td>10,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ampara</td>
<td>2,623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104,636</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of the Commissioner General – Triple R.

37 Ibid.
Human security implications relating to the consequences of the ethnic crisis and the violent conflict (i.e. war) constitute only one aspect of the problem. The activities and strategies of the LTTE must also be taken into account in any human security audit in Sri Lanka. There are reports of severe human rights violations in areas controlled by the LTTE. The LTTE is known for recruiting child soldiers. Such recruitment has occurred from the very early days of their struggle, but not on a large scale initially. The recruitment of child soldiers by the LTTE became more institutionalised after 1990. Dr. Daya Somasundaram, Department of Psychiatry of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, observed in 2002 that “Child recruitment by Tamil Tigers was to become institutionalised after 1990. The Tigers themselves deny that they use child soldiers, but out of an estimated fighting force of 7000-10,000, as many as half may be women and 20-40 percent may be children. Tiger casualties show that most of the children are aged 14-18, while the younger ones are usually kept in reserve. But in large scale, mass attacks children may be used in greater numbers. In special units such as the Leopards children form an effective fighting force in difficult battles. Because of their age, immaturity, curiosity, and love for adventure children are susceptible to ‘Pied Piper’ enticement through a variety of psychological methods, Public display of war paraphernalia, funerals and posters of fallen heroes; speeches and videos, particularly in schools; and heroic melodious songs and stories all serve to draw out feelings of patriotism and create a compelling milieu, indeed, a martyr cult.”

In 1998, Olara Otunnu, the special representative of the UN Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, visited Sri Lanka. He was able to obtain commitments from the Government and the LTTE to proclaim ‘Children as Zone of Peace.’ The proposal, however, did not take off. The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) established after the ceasefire (CF) Agreement observed 556 ceasefire violations as of December 2002. Of this the LTTE was responsible for 502 while the Government was guilty of 54. The most common violations of the LTTE were the 313 cases of child recruitment. There were also 89 cases of abduction and 41 cases of harassment. The killing of political opponents/dissidents in and outside the area controlled by the LTTE has become characteristic of the LTTE. The strategy of using school children and unarmed civilians in the North and East as human shields

and mobilising them by playing on the wounded sentiments of national aspirations, thereby enticing them to be cannon fodder destroy their basic human right.

The Government's wide use of Emergency Regulations (gazette 873/12 of 4 November 1994 as amended) and the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) No.48 of 1979 (as amended) to combat terrorism is also a matter of serious concern for the rest of the world. When the PTA was created it was meant to be a temporary move to face the exigencies of the security situation but later on it became a permanent fixture with the prolongation of the armed conflict. Under section 16 of the PTA, confessions can be used as evidence if they are made to a police officer whose rank is Assistant Superintendent or above. Further, under the PTA a person may be detained for up to 18 months (renewable every 3 months), if there is reason to believe that he or she is concerned with any unlawful activity. Under Regulation 17 of the Emergency Regulations (ERs), the Secretary, Ministry of Defence can order the detention of a person for a period not exceeding three months at a time up to a maximum period of one year if he is satisfied on the basis of the evidence submitted to him that such an order is necessary. It is true that there are some safeguards against arbitrary arrests, detention and torture under the ERs and PTA (Regulation 18 (8), 18 (7), 19 (4), and 19(8)). They include, *inter alia*, that the arresting officer must issue a document informing the spouse, father, mother, or other close relative of the detainee of the arrest. The document must contain the name and rank of the arresting officer, the time and date of arrest, and the place the person will be detained or held in custody (Regulation 18 (8)). The reality, however, is that none of these safeguards are put into practice.

5.7 OTHER DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN SECURITY: SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

In view of their immediate and overwhelming impact, the concerns and threats related to the economic, political and ethno-political security issues discussed above tend to overshadow other social and environmental threats in the discourse of human security in Sri Lanka. In a country like Sri Lanka, environment resources offer a critical part of the livelihood of many. Especially, those who are poor and do not have direct access to power and authority are more vulnerable to environment-related threats to their security. This is true of the rural and the urban poor. Irrespective of the power they wield how habitable their environment is depends on their physical location. Therefore,
environmental security constitutes an important aspect of human security. The environmental dimension of human security encompasses a broad range of issues which include overpopulation, deforestation, soil erosion and siltation, land degradation, floods, droughts, storms, sea-level rise and pollution. The environmental component of human security has two interconnected segments – environmental protection and sound resource utilisation. In the final analysis, environmental security is itself a political issue. It directly relates to development strategies and the resource utilisation approach. The environmental dimension of human security has two aspects: first, how to face the environment-related direct and immediate threats (i.e. floods, droughts, cyclones, etc.) and secondly, how to minimise long term vulnerabilities emanating from environmental degradation. These two categories of threats and vulnerabilities require two types of strategies and policy framework to ensure a high degree of human security. The first involves knitting a socio-economic safety net to previous victims of environment-related direct threats from falling into chronic poverty. The second is a sound environment protection policy with long-term strategic goals. Environmental threats with the potential to erode the habitability of large parts of the landscape slowly and steadily compel us to consider the security problematic in far more broader terms concentrating on human security.

The impact of the steady decline of the living environment in urban and semi-urban areas in the last two decades in the face of increased population density is clearly evident. Inadequate sewage and sanitation infrastructure and waste disposal mechanism has now become a set characteristic in urban and semi-urban areas, especially in Colombo. This situation has made a large part of Colombo increasingly uninhabitable and is a cause of many public health problems. Piped water services are available only to 29 percent of the population but for them too the piped water supply suffers from low water pressure and poor water quality due to lack of distribution planning. As a result of incorrect house constructions, no provision for rainwater to recede and inadequate canal maintenance, flooding after heavy rain has become a normal annual feature of life in Colombo since 1992. That year, even areas that did not go under floods normally during the monsoons in Colombo were not spared. After the event, a newspaper editorial commented that "Thursdays night's deluge which brought ruin and misery to both rich and poor alike in and around Colombo had one positive feature: It would have physically awakened those responsible for town planning as water rose in their bed rooms in Colombo's suburbs"
and Cinnamon Gardens itself. If Thursday's deluge does not wake them up, nothing will. There was hardly a neighbourhood in Colombo that was spared of flood water."

The flood is just only the tip of the iceberg. In 1991, a survey carried out by the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority (NARESA) of Sri Lanka reported that "five major environmental conditions and trends will most likely constrain long-term sustainable welfare and growth in Sri Lanka: land and watershed degradation, loss of biological resources, contamination of ground and surface water, and pollution of the urban environment."

Historically, forests have been indispensable parts of the economic, social and cultural life of Sri Lanka. Forests, after all provided fruits, medicine, firewood, timber, fibre and fodder for livestock. Forests store water and conserve the soil and maintain its fertility. Land and water provide the lifeline of the people. With the progress of modernisation and the change of economic activities, the conventional practices of environmental conservation were gradually abandoned, creating serious strain on the ecological balance. Deforestation and unsustainable land use practices have steadily reduced the availability as well as the value of Sri Lanka's once abundant water resources. Presently, water-logging and salinity have contributed to significantly land degradation. It has been observed that "(A)gricultural practices cause high siltation rates in many Dry Zone tanks and upcountry reservoirs. Sedimentation of tanks, irrigation works and upcountry reservoirs result directly from soil loss in catchment areas." Uncontrolled sand mining in rivers, particularly mining at inappropriate locations, is a serious environmental problem. As far as air pollution is concerned, sulphur dioxide and ozone concentrations are rising gradually in the city of Colombo though they have not yet reached WHO threshold levels. The disposal of solid waste in an environmentally friendly manner is a key problem in Colombo and other major cities.

In the global and national context of the growing awareness of the need for an environment-friendly policy approach, conservation and rational management of the environment have now been recognised as a national priority in Sri Lanka. A wide range of policies, laws and regulations are available for this purpose, but as the Central Bank of Sri Lanka Annual Report-2000 admits, there have been some lapses

40 The Island, 7 June 1992.
42 Ibid., 273.
and weaknesses in enforcement. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources is responsible for formulating environmental policies at the national level. The Central Environmental Authority (CEA) established within the Ministry Framework functions as the regulatory authority. In addition to issuing ‘Environmental Protection Licenses’ for industries, the CEA is responsible for preparation of pollution control guidelines, monitoring activities and setting pollution control standards. It is also important to note that a large number of NGOs are also active in promoting awareness about damage to the environment. Sri Lanka has signed more than 30 environment-related international conventions and protocols involving various public sector institutions. It ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2002.

In the last decade several programmes aiming at conservation and management of the environment were launched. Under the Clean Air 2000 Action Plan, a national policy for air management was adopted in 2000 and vehicle emission standards, and fuel quality standards were gazetted. In order to prevent pollution to waterways the Environment Ministry, with the cooperation of relevant local government authorities launched a pilot project called the ‘Pavithra Ganga’ to keep water bodies clean. Consequently, a regular water quality reporting system was established for the Kelani river in 2001. In 2004, the National Wetland Policy and National Watershed Management Policy were prepared by the MENR and obtained Cabinet approval. As far as air pollution is concerned, there are two fixed ambient air quality monitoring stations to monitor parameters such as levels of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and ground-level ozone and suspended particulate matter (PM10). In 2002, Sri Lanka decided to phase out the use of leaded gasoline and to introduce unleaded gasoline with effect from June 2002. An Air Resources Management Centre (Air MAC) was established to address air pollution issues then. In 2004-05, the Air Resources Management Centre prepared ‘Cleaner Air Action Plan-2007’ and launched several programmes to improve public awareness about air pollution.

Finally, the environmental implications of the violent conflict in Sri Lanka must also be taken into consideration in any survey of the environmental dimension of Human security. The direct and indirect implications of the armed conflict on the environment are manifold and thorough research is required to evaluate the true proportions of the long-term environmental damage caused by the armed conflict.

Nevertheless, attention must be paid to four main aspects of the environmental problem. Firstly, a large chunk of fertile land area in the North-East has been devastated by land mines earthed by the LTTE and the Government forces. It will take quite some time even after the end of the war to clear the area completely of land mines. Secondly, a large forest area in the North-East had been cleared either for security reasons or as part of the military strategy. Thirdly, the environmental impact of mortars and shelling is very severe. As a result of shelling, a large land area in the North-East has become very exposed to many forms of environmental hazards and degradation. Finally, in certain areas where the population concentrates, excessive pressure on the available limited natural resources is very high. In particular, in areas where welfare centres are located, the impact of the excessive human pressure on ecological balance is clearly visible. Long-term planning is required to tackle these problems. In view of the ground situation, finding a sustainable solution to the ethnic problem and ending the armed conflict is a sine qua non for the implementation of any such action plan.