

The LTTE Revives Its US Network

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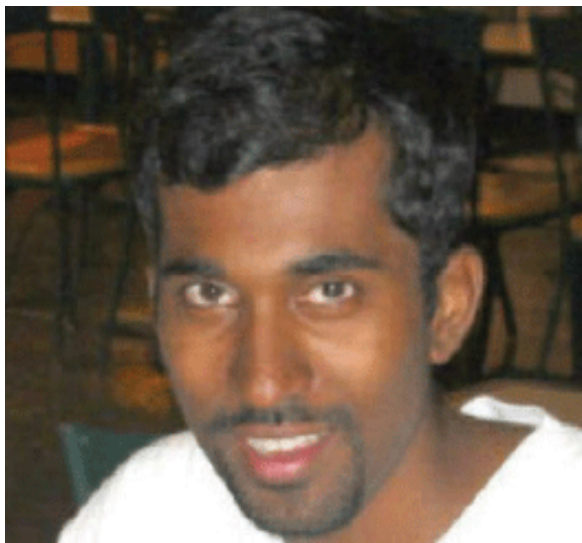
Former US fundraiser for LTTE Danton Thurairajah and LTTE activist David Poopalapillai in Canada engaging in lobbying

The LTTE's US network crippled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2006 is being reorganized by both remnant and emerging leaders. The most prominent among them is V. Rudrakumaran, the son of a former Mayor of Jaffna. Today, Rudrakumaran runs the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE), one of the four factions of the LTTE. Until recently the TGTE had limited success in the US but now with external resources, Rudrakumaran is reorganizing its activities both within and outside the US. The TGTE has also started to openly display the photograph of Prabhakaran and the Tiger flag.

Using New York and New Jersey as its main platforms, the TGTE is not only reviving the LTTE in the US, but also in Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Although the TGTE is constrained from operating openly in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, it has built and is attempting to build cells in Tamil Nadu, Mauritius, South Africa and a few other countries where it has cultivated supporters and sympathizers.

Although the LTTE had no respect for human rights and massacred Sinhalese and Muslims, it is ironic that the main platform upon which the TGTE lobbies US Senators, Congressmen and officials is 'human rights'. The TGTE is planning a series of 'human rights' meetings in the US and overseas to network with human rights bodies.

After the LTTE in Sri Lanka was militarily defeated and its leadership eliminated in May 2009, the TGTE was created by the then newly appointed LTTE leader Selvarasa Pathmanathan alias KP and the LTTE legal advisor at the time Rudrakumaran. KP was the chief of procurement of the LTTE responsible for buying and transporting weapons illegally for the LTTE. Working with KP until the latter's arrest and deportation to Sri Lanka on August 5, 2009, Rudrakumaran relied on the LTTE network and



Suresh Sriskandarajah alias Waterloo Suresh

its overseas associates to create a committee for the formation of the Provisional Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (PTGTE).

Meanwhile Rudrakumaran appointed an Advisory Committee of LTTE supporters and sympathizers namely Francis Boyle (USA), Joseph Chandrakantham (Canada), Nagalingam Jeyalingam (USA), Jeyaprakash Jeyalingam (USA), Karen Parker (USA), Palaniappan Ramasamy (Malaysia), Peter Schalk (Sweden), Sivanendran Seevanayagam (Australia), Nadarajah Sriskandarajah (Sweden), Muttucumaraswamy Sornarajah (UK) and Amuthu Louis Vasanthakumar (UK). Although many of them are no longer with the LTTE, a few continue to support the revival of the Tigers.

Under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373, both the TGTE and its leader Rudrakumaran are listed as terrorist entities and persons. In the next review, other TGTE leaders engaged in the revival of the LTTE are likely to be listed therein. With the announcement of the listing, Rudrakumaran and the TGTE lost considerable support from the Tamil community as they did not want their names on a terrorist listing that would hinder their travel and banking activities.

According to testimonies provided by detained LTTE leaders and operatives who cooperated with the US, Rudrakumaran was a prominent member of the LTTE network and engaged in propaganda, fund raising and other support activities. Rudrakumaran approached several Tamils for support in the US to revive his network including Aravinth Sugunesh, Asok Ponnambalam, Dany T. Padigalingam, Gerald R. Francis, Dr Janarthan Kirupanantham, Jeyaprakash Jeyalingam, Malathi Varatharajah, Dr Siva Karunakaran, Subha Francis, Subha Suntharalingam, Thavendra Rajah, Dr Vellupillai Kamalanathan and Dr Yoga Navayogarajah. Although most of them have distanced themselves from Rudrakumaran and the TGTE, a few remain committed to the LTTE

The revival of the LTTE network

After a hiatus of nearly a decade since the FBI targetted the LTTE network in the US, LTTE activists in the US, their supporters and sympathizers have reappeared in a series of front organizations. Other than the TGTE, they staff Tamils for Obama, the United States Tamil Political Action Council (USTPAC) and Tamils Against Genocide. The LTTE US network is infiltrating several other groups including Illankai Tamil Sangam, Federation of Tamil Associations of North America (FeTNA) and Tamil Nadu Foundation. The TGTE is also working closely with several organizations overseas, notably the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) in Toronto.



V. Rudrakumaran

After its US network was disrupted by the FBI, the LTTE in North America maintained a low key presence and organized and operated through five cells which gradually crystallized into organizations. The lobbying of politicians and bureaucrats in the US was revived by Dr Elias Jeyarajah, President of the United States Tamil Political Action Council (USTPAC) and Grace Pushparani Williams through the K Street lobby firm CJR.

To motivate US politicians to make statements supportive of their position, the Jeyarajah family gave US\$ 10,965 to the Obama and Clinton campaigns in 2008. Dr Jeyarajah also personally donated US\$ 1,565 to the Obama campaign, US\$ 1,500 to the Clinton campaign and US\$ 500 to the North Carolina Democratic Party. On the pretext of being against the defunct LTTE, and calling for LTTE atrocities to be investigated, they have also attempted to garner the support of Samantha Powers, Richard Boucher, Susan Rice, Robert Blake, Patricia Butenis and other US officials to act against Sri Lanka

The LTTE US network

After the LTTE was designated as a foreign terrorist organization in the US on October 8, 1997, the Tigers started to operate through a series of fronts including the World Tamil Coordinating Committee, Tamil Rehabilitation Organization and the Illankai Tamil Sangam, etc.

“The LTTE network in the US was the largest terrorist network on US soil placed under surveillance by its government before the terrorist attacks by Al Qaida on September 11, 2001.”

The FBI since 2000 and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement after 2002, targetted the LTTE when they realized that the Tigers were raising funds and procuring supplies, engaging in drug trafficking and human smuggling, and even attempting to bribe US officials to delist the LTTE from its list of designated foreign terrorist groups. In addition to paying US officials to procure classified information, the LTTE also flew Congressman Danny Davis (D) from Chicago, Illinois to the Wannai to meet the LTTE leadership.

After patiently infiltrating and collecting intelligence on LTTE activities in the US for several years, the FBI working in collaboration with their partners began dismantling the US based network in 2005. After arresting the directing figures, the US government charged, tried and sentenced the most significant LTTE leaders and operatives, both US and foreign nationals.

The FBI investigations discovered that the LTTE wanted radio towers, missile-launchers, AK-47s, night-vision goggles and software to design submarines and warships. The US government charged 13 Sri Lankans, domiciled in Canada and the United States with multiple crimes, including conspiracy to provide material support and resources to a designated terrorist group. The LTTE's material support consisted of the procurement of military equipment, communications devices and other technology, fundraising and money laundering through front charitable organizations, and a myriad other criminal activities, including conspiracy to bribe public officials, attempting to obtain classified information and money laundering, among other crimes.

The US indictment

The US government initially charged Suresh Sriskandarajah, also known as 'Waterloo Suresh'; Namasivaya Viswanathan; Tirukumaran Sinnathamby; Thirukumaran Sivasubramaniam; Murugesu Vinayagamoorthy also known as 'Dr Moorthy' and 'Vinayagamoorthy Murugesu'; Vijayshanthar Patapanathan, also known as 'Chandru'; Nachimuthu Socrates and Ramanan Mylvaganam for "knowingly and intentionally conspiring to provide material support and resources to a foreign terrorist organization... Murugesu Vinayagamoorthy, Vijayshanthar Patapanathan and Nachimuthu Socrates did knowingly and intentionally conspire to bribe public officials," the US indictment stated. See <http://gaming.typepad.com/files/usa-v.-fnu-lnu.pdf> for full text of the US indictment in the US District Court, New York.

The indictment further added: "The LTTE relies heavily upon supporters in the United States, Europe, Canada, Australia and elsewhere to raise and launder money, acquire intelligence, purchase technology and military arms and equipment, and improperly influence elected politicians and other government officials".

The designation of the LTTE by the US as a terrorist organization significantly hindered the LTTE's propaganda campaign to portray itself as a legitimate 'Liberation' movement for the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. However, rather than abandoning their terror tactics, suicide bombings targetting innocent civilians, assassinations of political figures and the forced conscription of children as child soldiers, etc., the LTTE attempted to alter its image in the international community.

The LTTE attempted to bribe its way off the foreign terrorist organization list, resorted to secret fundraising through front charitable organizations in the US, and relied upon supporters in the United States. The Tigers used US-based email accounts to acquire operational equipment and technological knowhow from illegal dealers and unsuspecting North American companies, the indictment stated.

The LTTE network in the US was guided by Velupillai Prabhakaran, chief of LTTE intelligence Shanmugalingam Sivashankar alias Pottu Amman, and the head of the LTTE international secretariat Castro. The Indonesia-based deputy chief of LTTE procurement Pratheepan Thavarasa was “the principal liaison between Prabhakaran and other LTTE leadership and LTTE supporters in North America, Europe and Asia, and is actively involved in procuring operational equipment from around the world,” the indictment noted. Thavarasa worked with Dr Murugesu Vinayagamoorthy (Dr Moorthy); the latter was sent to the US to facilitate projects and served as an intermediary between LTTE supporters in the United States, Europe and elsewhere and the Sri Lankan LTTE leadership.

According to the indictment, Dr Moorthy, Chandru and Socrates, worked with Viswanathan and Father Jegath Gasperaj and “resorted to bribery to persuade purported US State Department officials to remove the LTTE from the foreign terrorist organization (FTO) list, disclose classified intelligence about the LTTE and enable the defendants to travel freely to and from the United States”.

Socrates, Viswanathan and Father Gasperaj are of Indian origin and not Sri Lankan Tamils. Viswanathan and Father Gasperaj are located in Tamil Nadu and both fugitives are engaged in LTTE support activities there. While being sought by the US, Father Gasperaj worked with Kanimozhi, the daughter of the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu M. Karunanidhi and his third wife Rajathi Ammal.

Another key LTTE supporter of the US network that relocated to Canada is Danton Thurairajah. Under LTTE US branch leader Karunakaran and head of finance Chandru, Danton Thurairajah engaged in terrorist fundraising activities. According to testimony, Danton Thurairajah relocated to Canada in 2005 to continue his LTTE activities. In Canada, he joined the Canadian Tamil Congress which was also designated as a terrorist entity in March 2014.

CTC sponsored gala dinner

On November 20, 2013, Danton Thurairajah sent an email addressed to: Dear Canadian Tamil Congress Members, Supporters and Friends; The Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) warmly invites you to attend our seventh Annual Gala Dinner at the Hilton Toronto / Markham Suites Conference Centre. The dinner, which takes place on Saturday, January 18, 2014, will be attended by many business leaders and influential community members.

The evening program features Tamil Canadian arts, concerns, culture and achievements and highlights our traditional ‘Thai Pongal’ theme.” The email added: “With chapters across the country, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) serves as a voice of Tamil Canadians on the municipal, provincial, federal and international levels. CTC engages with many non-Tamil community organizations to raise awareness about the plight of Tamils. In addition, CTC promotes the interests of Tamil Canadians on a wide range of critical issues and works to build a stronger and vibrant community within Canada’s multicultural mosaic.

Your participation and support is vital in strengthening our community’s voice and reach in Canada and throughout the world in the months and years to come”. The email also stated the amounts charged to participate in the event.

The email was signed off by Danton Thurairajah, Executive Director, Canadian Tamil Congress, demonstrating that while US action was effective it had displaced the threat to Canada. Today, the US LTTE and Canadian LTTE networks have re-linked. Considering their origins and current plans to revive the LTTE, it is very likely that the US and Canadian governments will target these emerging networks soon.

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