

## The Political Geography of Ampara District of Sri Lanka: A Comparative Study of Pre and Post-War Scenario

MIM Kaleel<sup>1</sup> and A Sarjoon<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** Amparai district is one of the contested districts in the context of political geography in Sri Lanka. There were number of geographic and political motivations behind the creation of Amparai district, dividing the southern parts of the Batticaloa district in 1961. From the inception, the district has been getting popular for in the context of the conduct of territorial politics, land issues, ethnic politics and civil war and displacement. On the history, there were number of examples for consensus on the socio, economic, political and cultural activities among the different ethnic groups rather than considering the above mentioned ground or context. However, the intense of ethnic conflict and civil war made different ethnic communities to think and act on ethnically, politically and territorially. Then elements of political geography, land use, resources distribution, political representation, socio-cultural and economic development, borders and local governance, and administration became popular issues in the district. They played vital roles in determining the ethnic relations, development of the district in the discourse of civil war and peace process. The war against terrorism and the defeat of the LTTE and the regaining of the LTTE controlled areas in the Eastern and the Northern provinces paved the ways for normalcy in the every day life of people and promoting development and prosperity of the country in number of ways. At the same time the war victory, in another way paved the ways for ethno-nationalism and majority consensus on politics. The parties which are undermined and marginalized are the minorities. The post-war scenario posed number of geo-political questions over the minorities where they are living with majority community. Mostly, in the Eastern province, there are number of changes going in the context of political geography. This research would like to pay special attention on pre-war and post war contexts of the political geography of Amparai district and their changing dynamics and impacts in the discourse of post war development and peace building in Sri Lanka. This research is a critical study based on comparative analysis. The information and data gathered from the desk analysis and field survey (interviews, questionnaire survey) have been used for the arguments for and against.

**Key words:** Political Geography, Land Use and Demarcation, Majority Domination, and Social Harmony.

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\* To whom correspondence should be addressed : [kaleelmim@yahoo.com](mailto:kaleelmim@yahoo.com)

1 Department of Social Sciences, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

2 Department of Political Science, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya