

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

- 1. What is the political context of the electoral competition between SLFP and SLMC?**
- 2. Which party/parties won the 2004 and 2006 elections and which party/parties are now in power at local council, provincial and national levels (including the situation of the SLFP and SLMC)?**
- 3. If a supporter of the SLMC were attacked, could such a person expect the police to investigate and prosecute any offenders identified?**
- 4. Can you find any background and contact details for Mr M.S.M. Aslam?**
- 5. Anything else you feel might be relevant.**

RESPONSE

- 1. What is the political context of the electoral competition between SLFP and SLMC?**

The SLFP & the SLMC – the political context

The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) has a complicated electoral relationship with the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)¹. In the past the two have been parliamentary allies and in 1994 the SLMC's support of the SLFP-led coalition, the People's Alliance (PA), gave the PA a slim majority in the house, displacing the rule of the United National Party (UNP). The PA lost this slim majority when significant elements of the SLMC defected to the UNP in 2001. The situation was further complicated by a leadership rift in the SLMC which saw one of its electoral components, the National Unity Alliance (NUA), split from the SLMC to stay in alliance with the SLFP. The resulting 2001 legislative election ended as a victory for UNP-led United National Front who had the parliamentary support of the Rauff Hakeem-led

¹ There are a multitude of Sri Lankan political party acronyms. For convenience, a list of the more common political party and alliance acronyms is provided at the end of this response. A list including a brief summary of the major parties is also included as Attachment 55 (UK Home Office 2006, 'Country of Origin Information Report: Sri Lanka', UK Home Office website, October, pp. 215-220 - Attachment 55).

SLMC parliamentarians. The NUA parliamentarians, led by Ferial Ashraff, gave their support to the PA (which maintained control over the presidency though it had lost control of the house). The next legislative elections, in 2004, saw the SLFP take control of the house as leader of the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA). According to *The Political Handbook of the World 2005-2006*: “[f]or the April 2004 general election the SLMC...captur[ed] five parliamentary seats, while the NUA ran as a component of the UPFA, as did [a further splinter] the Muslim National Alliance (MNA). ...In May one SLMC MP defected to the UPFA, and three others did likewise in October, for which the three were named noncabinet ministers responsible for Rehabilitation and District Development in three Tamil districts. The SLMC leadership attempted to expel the three but was overruled by the Supreme Court”. Since this time it would appear that the SLMC leadership has itself decided to renew its support for the SLFP. In March 2006 it was reported that the SLMC had announced its willingness to support the SLFP-led government without formally joining the UPFA. According to *The Hindustan Times*, “the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), which is currently with the opposition, has decided to give ‘issue-based’ support to the government from outside. In effect, it is going to be an ally”. More recently, there have been reports from January 2007 that, after three years in the opposition, the SLMC is now moving to formally align itself with the SLFP-led UPFA government. (For a detailed overview of the history of the SLMC and its resultant components and splinter groups, see: Banks, A.S. & Muller, T.C. & Overstreet, N.R. (eds) 2006, *Political Handbook of the World: 2005-2006*, CQ Press, Washington D.C., p.1103-1105 – Attachment 1; for further information on the SLMC’s parliamentary support of the SLFP-led PA coalition, see: Schaffer, H.B. 1995, “The Sri Lankan Elections of 1994: The Chandrika Factor”, *Asian Survey*, vol. 35, no. 5, p.409 – Attachment 7; for information on the SLMC’s 2006 announcement that it will support the SLFP, see: Balachandran, P.K. 2006, ‘All for Tamils, nothing for Muslims?’, *Hindustan Times*, 13 March – Attachment 18; for information on the current negotiations between the SLMC and the government, see: Abeysinghe, H.M. 2007, ‘SLMC wants to strengthen Government – Rauf Hakeem’, *The Daily News*, 16 January <http://www.dailynews.lk/2001/pix/PrintPage.asp?REF=/2007/01/16/pol03.asp> – Accessed 22 January 2007 – Attachment 63; Bastians, D. 2007, ‘Govt. desperate to swell its ranks’, *The Nation*, 14 January <http://www.nation.lk/2007/01/14/inter.htm> – Accessed 22 January 2007 – Attachment 64.)

An overview of general source materials on the SLMC and its relationship with the SLFP appear below as background.

The SLMC & the SLFP – further background

The Political Handbook of the World 2005-2006 includes a summary of the SLMC, and its history with the SLFP. The summary notes that, even at times when the SLMC was supporting the SLFP in government, the two parties have been troubled by sometimes violent electoral rivalry:

Formed in 1980, the SLMC declared itself a political party...in December 1986 to represent Muslim interests in the negotiations for a political settlement of the Tamil question. The party won 17 seats in the North-Eastern Provincial Council balloting in November 1988... It obtained three legislative seats in February 1989, adding four more as a coalition partner of the PA in August 1994.

Following the January 25, 1999, North Western Provincial Council election, **the SLMC, objecting to the violence and intimidation allegedly committed by PA activists during the campaign, raised the possibility that it would sever its links to the alliance.** In August

2000 comments by SLFP minister A.H.M. Fowzie belittling the SLMC's importance to the PA led President Mohamed H.M. Ashraff to submit his resignation as ports minister, but the rift was patched at the end of the month. At the same time, the SLMC agreed to remain partnered with the PA for the October general election, although it decided to contest four districts separately. To broaden its appeal beyond its Muslim constituency, the party also decided to campaign as the National Unity Alliance (NUA). At the balloting the NUA won four seats in addition to those won under the PA banner.

Party founder Ashraff died in September 2000 in a helicopter crash. His widow, Ferial, was named to the cabinet announced after the October election, as was her party coleader, Rauff Hakeem. Hakeem soon supplanted Mrs. Ashraff within the SLMC, although she became the ostensible NUA leader.

On June 20, 2001, President Kumaratunga removed Hakeem from the cabinet, at which time he and six other SLMC members of Parliament abandoned the government, thereby costing it its legislative majority. Ashraff initially resigned her cabinet post but continued her support for the government. She resumed her ministerial position in early July, leaving the SLMC/NUA asunder. Following the December 2001 election, at which the SLMC won five seats, Hakeem negotiated a coalition agreement with the UNP and joined the new cabinet. Mrs. Ashraff's NUA had remained with the PA (Banks, A.S. & Muller, T.C. & Overstreet, N.R. (eds) 2006, *Political Handbook of the World: 2005-2006*, CQ Press, Washington D.C., p.1105 – Attachment 1).

The UNP and the SLFP have been the major parties since Sri Lanka's independence. An International Crisis Group (ICG) report on Sri Lanka, discussing the failure of the peace process, states that "[s]outhern politics has been dominated since 1948 by the two main parties, the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). They have rotated fairly regularly in power, and at several key points in Sri Lanka's political history, their political differences have ended attempts by government to produce a workable solution to the crisis. Mistrust and personal divisions remain deep-seated and account for political dynamics more than any significant policy differences" (International Crisis Group 2006, 'Sri Lanka: The failure of the peace process', ICG website, 28 November, p.14 http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/sri_lanka/124_sri_lanka_the_failure_of_the_peace_process.pdf – Accessed 29 November 2006 – Attachment 47).

According to the US Department of State's background notes on Sri Lanka for 2006, the two major political parties – the UNP and the SLFP – embrace democratic values, international nonalignment, and encouragement of Sinhalese culture. Past differences between the two on foreign and economic policy have narrowed, although the SLFP envisions a broader role for the state in general (US Department of State 2006, *Background Note: Sri Lanka*, October, p.6 – Attachment 2).

The general rule has become coalition politics, since neither the SLFP nor the UNP are able to gather parliamentary majorities. Parties such as the SLMC with a smaller but relatively solid vote base are thus very important allies and coalition partners. According to an article dated 1 November 2004, the block vote of the Muslims in Sri Lanka "has considerable leverage". It is stated in the article that "Muslims, who are the second largest minority after Tamils, form 7.5 percent of Sri Lanka's 19 million population, but their block vote has considerable leverage as majority Sinhalese votes are split down the middle between two parties". The SLMC has shifted allegiances a number of times and has been a factor in making or breaking a party's election prospects. As a result, they are sometimes dubbed the "king makers" in Parliament ('Angry Muslims quit peace panel and declare "war" on Sri

Lanka President' 2004, *Agence France-Presse*, 1 November – Attachment 9; Liyanaarachchi, C. 2003, 'US Plays Guardian to Sri Lanka's Forgotten Muslims', *OneWorld South Asia*, 15 December <http://southasia.oneworld.net/article/view/75239/1/> – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 3).

Prior to the formation of the SLMC, most politically-active Muslims belonged to the SLFP or the UNP ('Marhoom M. H. M. Ashraff: His Life & His Mission' (undated), archived Sri Lanka Muslim Congress website <http://web.archive.org/web/20040210161851/www.slmc.lk/ach.htm> – Accessed 19 January 2007 – Attachment 49).

An article in the *Hindustan Times*, discussing the roots of Muslim identity in Sri Lanka and the formation of the SLMC, states:

The 1980s saw the emergence of militant and intolerant Tamil nationalism, which insisted that the Muslims submerge their identity with the Tamils and support their struggle for an independent "Tamil Eelam" in the North and East.

It was in response to the objective conditions of the Muslims in the East and also to address the issues faced by the Muslim poor all over the island, that MHM Ashraff, a leading light of the East, formed the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) in the early 1980s.

The SLMC has support all over Sri Lanka, but it draws its electoral strength basically from the East, especially, South East (Balachandran, P.K. 2006, 'Roots of Muslim Identity in Sri Lanka', *Hindustan Times*, 27 March http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/7752_1660282.004100180006.htm – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 5).

A chapter on Sri Lankan Muslims in *Status of Minorities in South Asia* states that:

Politically Muslims have been passive so as to reap maximum benefits from the state. The electoral competition of Sri Lanka and the concentration of Muslims in certain areas made them a valuable vote bank to the Sinhalese parties (both the United National Party and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party). But, with the formation of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) through mosque federations in 1980, their political loyalty shifted inwards. Under the leadership of M.H.M Asharaff the Muslims ably expressed their long-neglected needs and aspirations. They gradually emerged from political supporters to political partners (Mishra, N. & Singh, S.K. 2002, *Status of Minorities in South Asia*, Authorspress, Delhi, p.16 – Attachment 6).

In 1994 the SLFP, the main party in the PA coalition, returned to power for the first time in 17 years, defeating the UNP in the parliamentary and presidential elections. As an ally of the PA, the SLMC played a decisive factor in the parliamentary elections of August 1994, giving the coalition a narrow win of 50.7%. The PA leader Chandrika Kumaratunga was sworn in as prime minister on 19 August 1994 (Schaffer, H.B. 1995, "The Sri Lankan Elections of 1994: The Chandrika Factor", *Asian Survey*, vol. 35, no. 5, p.409 – Attachment 7).

The SLMC's parliamentary support of the SLFP ended in 2001 when the SLMC's leader, Rauff Hakeem, was dismissed from his cabinet portfolio by the SLFP's leader, President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga. The sacking "precipitat[ed] a split in the SLMC with seven MPs going with the dismissed Mr Rauf Hakeem and the other four remaining with the ruling alliance" ('A President's coup' 2001, *The Tribune*, 13 July

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2001/20010713/edit.htm#2> – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 44).

An issue paper, published after the Danish Immigration Service (DIS) and the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada undertook a fact finding mission to Sri Lanka in 2001, reports on the then current political situation:

In July 2001, the *Sri Lanka Monitor* reported that **the ruling People's Alliance coalition had lost its parliamentary majority in July 2001 following the defection from its ranks of some members of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress.** After this, President Kumaratunga prorogued parliament on 10 July for two months to prevent a non-confidence vote from taking place.

...On 10 October 2001, President Kumaratunga dissolved parliament to avoid another non-confidence vote, scheduling general elections for 5 December 2001. In these elections, the opposition United National Party (UNP) won 109 seats in parliament. **Lacking the necessary majority to form a government on its own, the UNP entered into a coalition with the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress,** and on 9 December 2001 the UNP leader, Ranil Wickramasinghe, was sworn in as prime minister (Danish Immigration Service (DIS) & the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada 2002, *Security and Human Rights Situation, Entry and Exit Procedures and Personal Documentation – Report on joint fact finding mission to Sri Lanka October 1-12 2001*, May, p.8 <http://www.unhcr.org/home/RSDCOI/3df9badbc.pdf> – Accessed 3 January 2007 – Attachment 8).

Subsequent reports offered a variety of explanations for the dismissal, reporting that Hakeem had fallen in disfavour on suspicion of having “signed an agreement with the UNP” and also that Hakeem had “derided the government as abjectly depending on his party for its survival”, accusing it of compromising the interests of “Tamil-speaking people” (‘Chandrika suspends Parliament’ 2001, *Sri Lanka Monitor*, July <http://brslproject.gn.apc.org/slmonitor/briefjul01/chand.html> – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 45; ‘A President’s coup’ 2001, *The Tribune*, 13 July <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2001/20010713/edit.htm#2> – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 44).

An editorial piece on the official website of the Government of Sri Lanka states that Rauf Hakeem:

was repeatedly not only making impossible demands and violating the underlying principle of unity of the coalition but also eroding the principle of collective responsibility as a Cabinet Minister. As pointed out by the President, Mr. Hakeem’s conduct was at variance with that of his predecessor in the SLMC, the late M. H. M. Ashraff who insisted on resolving his differences with the Government in a spirit of amicability.

At a time when national unity is the need of the hour, Mr. Hakeem has been accused of making communal demands, such as the need to carve out another district in the East on the basis of sectional interests (‘Sound rationale for dismissal’ 2001, The Official Website of the Government of Sri Lanka, 23 June http://www.priu.gov.lk/news_update/EditorialReviews/erev200106/20010623editorialreview.html – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 41).

SLFP & SLMC competition

According to an article dated 10 May 2001, the inclusion of the SLMC in the ruling alliance

had always been fraught with tensions. The article goes on to state that after the general elections in 2000:

anti-Muslim rhetoric went up another notch when the SLMC and its National Unity Alliance won 10 seats. With the PA dependent on these seats for its majority in parliament, the SLMC extracted a number of concessions as the price of its support. The SU, the JVP and the Buddhist hierarchy all seized on the opportunity to denounce the government for caving in to the minorities and vowed to carry out a campaign to “break the power of the Muslims” (Sunil, W.A. 2001, ‘Sri Lankan Muslims protest violent attacks by racist thugs’, World Socialist Web Site, 10 May http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/may2001/sri-m10_prn.shtml – Accessed 17 January 2005 – Attachment 4).

Ethnic tensions flared in May 2001 when a clash between Sinhalese and Muslims in the town of Mawanella left two Muslims dead after police fired upon a crowd. A PA minister was implicated in the incident which sparked the clashes. Large-scale demonstrations protesting the police action were held by Muslim communities in the Western and Central Provinces, with the unrest spreading to the Eastern Provinces. The SLMC demanded an immediate inquiry into the attacks, and issued a statement: “If this anti-Muslim trend is not arrested immediately, the SLMC...will lose its moral obligation to continue its support to the government”. Hakeem was dismissed from the Cabinet on 20 June 2001 (‘Religious violence spreads in Sri Lanka’ 2001, *BBC News*, 7 May http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1317415.stm – Accessed 19 January 2007 – Attachment 48; for more information on this incident, see Question 3).

The previously mentioned article dated 10 May 2001, claims that:

The chief culprits in generating the racist political climate are the government and the Colombo media, which routinely resort to Sinhala chauvinism to justify the ongoing war against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). These ethnic and religious antagonisms have been compounded by the country’s deepening economic and political crisis as well as the growing prominence of Sinhala extremist organisations such as the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) and Sinhala Urumaya (Sunil, W.A. 2001, ‘Sri Lankan Muslims protest violent attacks by racist thugs’, World Socialist Web Site, 10 May http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/may2001/sri-m10_prn.shtml – Accessed 17 January 2005 – Attachment 4).

The ICG report also states that “the two main Sinhalese political parties – the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and the United National Party (UNP)...often outbid each other in ethnic nationalist rhetoric.” Smaller parties such as the SLMC play a more moderate role in government, while others, such as the JVP, have taken up extreme stances, characterised by xenophobia and a militaristic approach to the ethnic conflict (International Crisis Group 2006, ‘Sri Lanka: The failure of the peace process’, ICG website, 28 November, p.2 & 15 http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/sri_lanka/124_sri_lanka_the_failure_of_the_peace_process.pdf – Accessed 29 November 2006 – Attachment 47).

Even when the parties were politically aligned, the relationship between SLMC and SLFP politicians and supporters was not necessarily harmonious. Various factions resented the concessions given to the SLMC in return for their crucial support. There was also rivalry between SLFP Muslims and the SLMC for political influence and positions (Sunil, W.A. 2001, ‘Sri Lankan Muslims protest violent attacks by racist thugs’, World Socialist Web Site, 10 May http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/may2001/sri-m10_prn.shtml – Accessed 17 January 2005 – Attachment 4).

A number of reports were found of clashes between SLMC supporters and SLFP (or PA or UPFA) supporters. No specific examples were found of attacks on SLMC supporters by SLFP or UPFA supporters in Panadura. It must be noted that it is sometimes difficult to determine the political party involved, as some reports only mention the UPFA or the PA (in both of which the SLFP was the leading party) or the UNF (of which the SLMC was a member). The SLMC also ran under the UNP banner in the 2006 local elections (see Attachment 43 for a list of alleged victims of election-related violence during these elections: 'Election Violence as at 25.03.2006' (undated), PAFFREL website http://www.paffrel.lk/pdf/local_gov_2006_by_incidents.pdf – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 43). A few of the SLMC/SLFP clashes are detailed below:

- An article dated 16 May 2006 reports, “The house of a Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) supporter and a former Provincial Council member, Sinnalebbe Mohammed Hanifa, was attacked with grenade Tuesday early morning around 3:30 a.m., Valaichenai Police said. A quarrel between SLMC supporters and the ruling United Peoples Freedom Alliance (UPFA) Muslim supporters engaged in local election campaign, ended in clash where the chief candidate of the UPFA alliance, M.H. Lebbe Hajjiar and two others were wounded Monday evening” (‘UPFA, SLMC supporters clash, grenade lobbed in Oddamavady’ 2006, TamilNet website, 16 May <http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=18156> – Accessed 19 January 2007 – Attachment 52).
- In 2004 *The Sri Lanka Monitor* reported that “SLMC supporter S Kaldeen’s body was found at Veeramunai in Amparai District on 17 March. Over 25 civilians were injured in clashes involving SLMC and UPFA supporters at Kalkudah on 17 March. SLMC’s Amir Ali says most injuries were caused by the Army. He accused the Army of supporting the UPFA” (‘Violence in the East’ 2004, *Sri Lanka Monitor*, January-March, <http://brcsproject.gn.apc.org/slmonitor/JanMar04/violence.html> – Accessed 19 January 2007 Attachment 50).
- During the national elections in 2004, the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) recorded a number of incidents between SLMC and UPFA supporters on election day (‘Final Report on Election-Related Violence: General Election 2nd April 2004’ (undated), CMEV website http://www.cpalanka.org/research_papers/CMEV_GE_2004_English.pdf – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 42):
 - In Batticaloa UPFA candidate Mr. Kazali complained to CMEV monitors that SLMC polling agents were intimidating his colleagues inside the polling stations at Al Noor Vidyalaya, Valaichchenai... Our monitor reported a tussle between supporters of SLMC and UPFA at the entrance to the station, and the Police had to disperse the crowd (p.41).
 - In Sammanthurai a number of clashes occurred between SLMC and UPFA supporters (pp.75-76).
- In December 2001 an article in *The Sunday Times* on the violent national elections included an incident in Gampola where an armed gang of PA supporters had attacked SLMC supporters shooting and injuring one person. The article also states: “Fears voiced by SLMC leader Rauff Hakeem that the PA might spill a lake of blood in the Kandy district on polling day, came horribly true when eleven of his unarmed

supporters from Madawala were shot dead at point blank range by alleged PA thugs in Katugastota” (Kamalendran, C. & De Silva, N. 2001, ‘People power to protect polls’, *The Sunday Times*, 9 December – Attachment 51; for more information on the Madawala incident see Question 3).

While some elections have been less violent than others, reports indicate that Sri Lanka regularly experiences a relatively high rate of election violence. Elections have, in the past, exacerbated already simmering ethno-political tensions on a local level (for example, the numerous violent offences committed by supporters of various political parties during the 2001 general elections). Also, as has been detailed, the changing allegiances of the SLMC have affected the election outcomes of political coalitions. These changing alliances have added to tensions between supporters of different political parties. Both the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) and PAFFREL (People’s Action for Free and Fair Elections) publish reports and/or statements regarding election-related violence during and after each election campaign, detailing the party affiliations of the perpetrators of offences. A number of these incidents have also occurred between SLMC supporters and those of other parties; and also SLFP supporters and those of other parties (for examples of the widespread electoral violence during the 2001 general elections, see: ‘Final Report on Election-Related Violence: General Election 2001 – 5th December 2001’ 2002, Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV), July http://www.cpalanka.org/research_papers/CMEV_General_Election_2001.pdf – Accessed 16 December 2002, pp. 1 & 76 – Attachment 65; for the 2004 general elections see: ‘Final Report on Election-Related Violence: General Election 2nd April 2004’ (undated), CMEV website http://www.cpalanka.org/research_papers/CMEV_GE_2004_English.pdf – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 42; for a more recent example of the SLFP clashing with another political party, see: ‘JVP says they are under SLFP attack’ 2006, *The Sunday Times*, 26 January <http://www.sundaytimes.lk/060326/news/11.html> – Accessed 19 January 2007 – Attachment 53).

In a CMEV Interim Report during the 2004 provincial elections, of the main contesting parties, the UPFA is cited as the alleged perpetrator of violence in 201 (51.41 %) incidents. The UNF is cited as the alleged perpetrator in 134 (34.27%) incidents of violence (‘Provincial Council Elections – July 2004, Interim Report’ (undated), CMEV website, p.2 http://www.cpalanka.org/research_papers/Interim_Report_July_2004.pdf – Accessed 19 January 2007 – Attachment 54).

Reginald Cooray & M.S.M. Aslam

Reginald Cooray (SLFP/UPFA) is the Chief Minister of the Western Province Provincial Council and Minister of Finance, Planning, Law and Order, Local Government, Provincial Administration, Education and Transport, Employment, Cultural and Art Affairs (‘Chief Minister’s of the Western Province Provincial Council’ (undated), Western Province Provincial Council website <http://www.wpc.gov.lk/Council-Secretariat-09.html> – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 17).

Mr Aslam (SLMC) is also a Western Province Councillor (see Question 4). Both men were listed as the first preferential candidates for their respective parties in the Kalutara Administrative District in the provincial council elections of 2004 (‘Provincial Council Election Results – 2004’ (undated), Sri Lanka Department of Elections official website http://www.lanka.net/slelections/past_election/2004Provincial.pdf – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 25).

No information was found in relation to rivalry between Mr Aslam and Mr Cooray or their supporters in 2004. In 2005, Cooray resigned as Chief Minister in the wake of a no confidence motion moved against him by the UNP backed by the JVP, accusing him of corrupt practices and financial irregularities. He was reinstated two weeks later after 61 members, including the four SLMC members on the council (including Aslam), submitted affidavits asking for his reappointment (Kumarasinghe, U., Gamage, A. & Malawaraarachchi, B. 2005, 'Western Provincial Council suspended: President appoints independent committee to probe allegations', *Daily News*, 27 April <http://www.dailynews.lk/2005/04/27/pol01.htm> – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 27; 'Cooray comes back in chaotic somersault' 2005, *LankaNewspapers*, 2 July <http://www.lankanewspapers.com/news/2005/7/2488.html> – Accessed 22 January 2007 – Attachment 57; 'UNP divided over Cooray rescue' 2005, *LankaNewspapers*, 8 July <http://www.lankanewspapers.com/news/2005/7/2571.html> – Accessed 22 January 2007 – Attachment 56).

2. Which party/parties won the 2004 and 2006 elections and which party/parties are now in power at local council, provincial and national levels (including the situation of the SLFP and SLMC)?

The current Sri Lankan President, Mahinda Rajapakse, and the Prime Minister, Ratnasiri Wickremanayake, are members of the SLFP ('Sri Lanka Freedom Party' 2006, Wikipedia², updated 17 December http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sri_Lanka_Freedom_Party – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 12).

National government 2001-2006

In December 2001, the UNP assumed power, led by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe. Chandrika Kumaratunga of the SLFP remained as President. In November of 2003, President Kumaratunga suddenly took control of three key ministries, triggering a serious cohabitation crisis. In January 2004, the SLFP and the JVP formed a political grouping known as the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA). In February, President Kumaratunga dissolved Parliament and called for fresh elections. In these elections, which took place in April 2004, the UPFA received 45% of the vote, with the UNP receiving 37% of the vote (US Department of State 2006, *Background Note: Sri Lanka*, October – Attachment 2).

The SLMC, as a member of the UNF, stood some of its candidates under the UNP, while others ran alone in the East (UK Home Office 2006, 'Country of Origin Information Report: Sri Lanka', UK Home Office website, October, p. 219 – Attachment 55).

In the Administrative District of Kalutara the UPFA gained six of the ten seats, the UNF three and the JHU one in the 2004 parliamentary elections. The SLMC did not field any independent candidates in the Kalutara district ('Parliamentary General Election – 2004: Final District Results, Kalutara District' (undated), Sri Lanka Department of Elections official website http://www.slelections.gov.lk/genaral/2004_results/kalutara.html – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 46).

While it did not win enough seats to command a majority in Parliament, the UPFA was able to form a government and appoint a cabinet headed by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa.

² Users should be aware that [Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia) is a Web-based free-content encyclopaedia which is written collaboratively by volunteers. Country Research recommends that users of Wikipedia familiarise themselves with the regulatory practices which Wikipedia employs as a preventative measure against vandalism, bias and inaccuracy.

Presidential elections were held in November 2005. Mahinda Rajapaksa became President, and Ratnasiri Wickramanayake became Prime Minister (US Department of State 2006, *Background Note: Sri Lanka*, October – Attachment 2).

Provincial Councils – 2004 elections

Under the 13th amendment to the constitution, passed in November 1987, extensive powers have been devolved to nine directly elected provincial councils with a view to meeting Tamil demands for greater autonomy. Elections were held in seven provinces in July 2004, and delivered significant gains to the ruling United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA). Polls in two provinces have yet to be scheduled, owing to the ethnic conflict ('Sri Lanka: Political Structure' 2006, *Economist Intelligence Unit*, 14 November – Attachment 16; for a brief summary of local government and provincial councils see 'Sri Lanka: Local Government' (undated), Encyclopaedia of the Nations website <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Asia-and-Oceania/Sri-Lanka-LOCAL-GOVERNMENT.html> – Accessed 22 January 2007 – Attachment 58).

In the Western Province (which includes Panadura), Reginald Cooray of the SLFP was appointed Chief Minister ('Chief Minister's of the Western Province Provincial Council' (undated), Western Province Provincial Council website <http://www.wpc.gov.lk/Council-Secretariat-09.html> – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 17).

Mr Aslam was also elected to the Council, as one of four SLMC councillors. Fifty-nine UPFA and thirty-nine UNP councillors were elected. The Democratic Unity Alliance and the Western People's Front made up the other two seats ('Provincial Council Election Results – 2004' (undated), Sri Lanka Department of Elections official website http://www.lanka.net/slelections/past_election/2004Provincial.pdf – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 25).

Local government – 2006 elections

Local Authority elections were held in 2006 in March and May. The local government consists of Municipal Councils, Urban Councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas (rural local authorities) ('Local Government in Asia and the Pacific: A Comparative Study – Country paper: Sri Lanka' (undated), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific website <http://www.unescap.org/huset/lgstudy/country/srilanka/srilanka.html> – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 33).

Panadura is in the Administrative district of Kalutara, where the UPFA also gathered the most votes ('All Island Summary of Results – Elections to Local Authorities 2006' (undated), Sri Lanka Department of Elections official website http://www.lanka.net/slelections/lauthorities/2006_results/allIsland.pdf – Accessed 16 January 2007 – Attachment 15).

From the available information it is unclear whether the SLMC fielded a candidate under the UNP banner in Panadura for the 2006 Local Authorities election. The SLMC did not field an independent candidate in Panadura. According to an article dated 17 February 2006:

...the SLMC yesterday decided to field its candidates under the UNP for the local councils all over the country including the North-East except the Kalmunai Municipal Council, Nintavur, Navidanweli and Muttur Pradeshiya Sabhas where the party is fielding candidates as an independent group.

This last minute decision was taken by the party high command after the Colombo District Court issued an enjoining order preventing it from handing over nomination lists under the SLMC symbol (Perera, Y. & Bandara, K. 2006, 'UNP loses Colombo before battle', *The Daily Mirror*, 17 February <http://www.dailymirror.lk/2006/02/17/front/01.asp> – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 14).

At the local council level the UPFA was the overall winner. An article dated 8 April 2006 states that:

Local government elections in Sri Lanka on March 30 have resulted in a clean sweep for the ruling United Peoples Freedom Alliance (UPFA). It was desperate to bolster its political position after its candidate, Mahinda Rajapakse, only narrowly won the presidential election last November. Nationally, the minority UPFA government holds power only with the support of two Sinhala extremist parties – the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) and Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU).

The UPFA secured control of 223 of the 266 local councils contested on the day. The opposition United National Party (UNP) came a dismal second, obtaining only 32 after holding virtually all local councils in the south of the island since the 2002 elections (Ratnayake, K. 2006, 'Local elections in Sri Lanka set stage for further political turmoil', World Socialist Web Site, 8 April <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2006/apr2006/sril-a08.shtml> – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 13).

3. If a supporter of the SLMC were attacked, could such a person expect the police to investigate and prosecute any offenders identified?

Protection for SLMC members

The US Department of State report on human rights practices in Sri Lanka for 2003 includes an account of the murder of twelve SLMC supporters in Madawela, allegedly at the behest of a PA (SLFP) candidate:

On election day in December 2001, 12 supporters of the Sri Lankan Muslim Congress were killed, allegedly by hired thugs of a PA candidate. Former PA Member of Parliament Anuruddha Ratwatte and his two sons were indicted for conspiring in the killings. In addition, 15 others, including security force personnel, were indicted for their alleged involvement in the murders. In June, Ratwatte and 14 others were granted bail by a 5-judge bench of the Supreme Court, setting aside the majority order of the High-Court-Trial-at-Bar (US Department of State 2004, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2003 – Sri Lanka*, February, Section 3 – Attachment 19; for an account of this event, see: Kamalendran, C. & De Silva, N. 2001, 'People power to protect polls', *The Sunday Times*, 9 December – Attachment 51).

In January 2006 the *BBC* further reported that the High Court in Sri Lanka had acquitted the former deputy defence minister and his two sons. The Colombo High Court acquitted eight accused including five Sri Lanka Army soldiers, while five other soldiers (former security guards of minister Ratwatte), were sentenced to death for the murders ('Ratwatte acquitted on murder case' 2006, *BBC News*, 20 January 2006 http://www.bbc.co.uk/sinhala/news/story/2006/01/060120_ratwatte.shtml – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 20).

An RRT Research Response completed in February 2005 looks at the situation of Muslims involved in politics in Sri Lanka, and discusses in detail the likelihood of discrimination on either political or religious grounds. This previous response is included as an attachment

(RRT Country Research 2005, Research Response LKA23512, 1 February 2005 – Attachment 24).

Muslims and the police

The US Department of State report on religious freedom in Sri Lanka for 2002 refers to the Muslim community in Mawanella (80kms NW of Colombo) protesting over police inaction after a Muslim cashier had been attacked by Sinhalese men in April 2001. It is stated in the report that:

In April 2001, three Sinhalese men attacked a Muslim cashier. The Muslim community in Mawanella protested police inaction during and after the attack. In response, approximately 2,000 Sinhalese, including Buddhist monks, rioted in the Muslim section of town and confronted the Muslim protesters. Two Muslims were killed, and a number of buildings and vehicles were destroyed. The Muslim community throughout the western portion of the country staged a number of protests claiming the police did nothing to prevent the riot. Some of the protests resulted in direct clashes between the Muslim and Sinhalese communities. The police investigation of these incidents remains open, but no one has been arrested in connection with the violence (US Department of State 2002, *International Religious Freedom Report 2002 – Sri Lanka*, October, Section III – Attachment 40).

An article dated 10 May 2001 on the World Socialist Web Site provides a detailed account of the above-mentioned incident and subsequent demonstrations by Muslims, which resulted in a curfew being imposed on Colombo. The article refers to comments by a local resident that those who attacked the Muslim cashier were connected to a PA minister and that “local politicians, police and thugs were attempting to deliberately pit Sinhalese against Muslims” (Sunil, W.A. 2001, ‘Sri Lankan Muslims protest violent attacks by racist thugs’, World Socialist Web Site, 10 May http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/may2001/sri-m10_prn.shtml – Accessed 17 January 2005 – Attachment 4).

According to an article in *The Sunday Times*, it was alleged that “[d]espite complaints to the Police in the area little or no action had been taken against the heavily-armed gang which received full protection from the PA politician.” The article also quotes SLMC leader, Rauf Hakeem, who said that “the trouble had erupted due to police apathy and inaction resulting from political pressure or patronage”. An SLMC report to the President requested the transfer of police officers from the Mawanella police station. The US Department of State report on religious freedom in Sri Lanka for 2003 states that the superintendent of police had been recently transferred and arrests were then made by police (‘Who set Mawanella aflame?’ 2001, *The Sunday Times*, 6 May – Attachment 59; ‘Report Submitted By SLMC to the President’ (undated), Sri Lanka Muslim Congress official website (sourced from the Internet Archive website, as at 10 February 2004) <http://web.archive.org/web/20040107230901/www.slmc.lk/news/newsb.htm> – Accessed 22 January 2007 – Attachment 60; US Department of State 2003, *International Religious Freedom Report 2003 – Sri Lanka*, December, Section III – Attachment 66).

The available information does not indicate whether the accused PA minister, Mahipala Herath, was investigated in the subsequent inquiry into the riot. However, although a no-confidence motion against him was tabled in Parliament for his alleged role in the incident, he is again mentioned as Chief Minister of Sabaragamuwa Province in an article dated 27 April 2005 (‘President’s prorogation gambit’ 2001, *The Sunday Times*, 15 July Attachment 61; Kumarasinghe, U., Gamage, A. & Malawaraarachchi, B. 2005, ‘Western Provincial Council suspended: President appoints independent committee to probe allegations’, *Daily*

News, 27 April <http://www.dailynews.lk/2005/04/27/pol01.htm> – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 27).

Police violence in Panadura

The US Department of State report on human rights practices in Sri Lanka for 2005 mentions a few examples of police violence (non election related) in the police station of Panadura:

On March 25, in Kalutara District, two police officers from the Panadura police station beat Nallawarige Sandasirilal Fernando unconscious while trying to arrest his brother. On March 28, Fernando died in a local hospital. Authorities indicted two police officers, but at year's end the officers remained on duty.

...the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) reported that on May 19, Hevana Hennadige Priyadarshana Fernando was kicked and beaten at the Panadura police station in Kalutara District. Fernando was later released on bail, and the magistrate was informed of the torture incident. At year's end no charges were filed against the officers responsible for torturing Fernando, although the original charges against Fernando remained (US Department of State 2006, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005 – Sri Lanka*, 8 March, Section 1 – Attachment 22).

Police and election violence

Despite some efforts to change the fact, the politicisation of the police force in Sri Lanka is an ongoing problem. The available information indicates that whether a person is investigated and/or prosecuted by police for a politically related crime has often depended on the political parties involved, the level of power of local politicians, and the independence of the local police. In 2003 DFAT stated that “the operation of the police forces in Sri Lanka is often politicised...there have been recent reports of political figures interfering in police activities”. Earlier, in 2001, DFAT stated: “Recent (very public) failures of police to respond to complaints are partly attributable to weaknesses of enforcement mechanisms but sometimes also linked to corruption or political pressure. There is a degree of politicisation of the police force in Sri Lanka. For example, during elections, police have been known to be used by the ruling party for political purposes and to turn a blind eye to acts of political violence against opposition parties” (DIMA Country Information Service 2003, *Country Information Report No. 97/03 – Persecution because of political affiliations* (sourced from DFAT advice of 23 July 2003), 25 July – Attachment 35; DIMA Country Information Service 2001, *Country Information Report No. 243/01 – Sinha Kodi Vyaparaya* (sourced from DFAT advice of 20 August 2001), 24 August – Attachment 36).

While the establishment of the independent National Police Commission (NPC) appears to have improved the situation somewhat for the 2004 parliamentary and the 2005 presidential elections, the improvements have been short-lived. During the local elections in 2006 the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) again expressed concerns regarding police bias and inaction during the election campaign and on election day:

Reports of Police inaction received, particularly from Chilaw and Nawalapitiya, are viewed by CMEV as a major area of concern, in terms of the conduct of a free and fair election, now and in the future. The high standards demonstrated by the Police during the General elections of 2004 and the Presidential elections of November 2005 were widely attributed to the establishment of the National Police Commission. CMEV strongly feels that if these standards are to be maintained and the independence and professionalism of the Police service is to be affirmed, the reconstitution of the Constitutional Council and the appointing of the independent Commissions including the Police Commission are of vital importance ('Media Communiqué on Election-related Violence: Local Government Elections' 2006, Centre for

Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) website, 30 March
http://www.cpalanka.org/cmev_30th_Mar_2006_3.html – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 23).

PAFFREL (People's Action for Free and Fair Elections) also expressed similar concerns:

The Independent Police Commission which is important to perform police functions with efficiency and free of undue influences, has become inactive from last year, viz. from 26.11.2005. We have received complaints to the effect that the intervention of the police is inadequate in controlling some acts of violence ('The Local Government Election 2006 Second Interim Report' PAFFREL website, 16 February-26 March
http://www.paffrel.lk/local_gov_election.htm – Accessed 11 January 2007 – Attachment 62.

The National Police Commission

The National Police Commission (NPC) was created in 2001 under the 17th Amendment to the Constitution of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (the Constitution) for the acknowledged reason of depoliticising the police force ('State-Sponsored Violence in Sri Lanka' 2003, Sri Lanka Legal Reforms and Human Rights – Vol. 01, No. 04, November
http://srilanka.ahrchk.net/legal_reform/mainfile.php/0104/35/?print=yes – Accessed 11 January 2007 – Attachment 37). Discussing the NPC, Pinto-Jayawardena of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative says:

the interventions of the NPC in preventing politically motivated transfers of police officers prior to elections and its recent interdictions of police officers found culpable in rights violations, is to its credit. Such initiatives will however be short-lived unless the necessary support by the Government as well as the Office of the Inspector General of Police is forthcoming. Currently, this is notably lacking (Pinto-Jayawardena, K. 2005, 'The National Police Commission in Sri Lanka: Squandering a Golden Opportunity', *CHRI Newsletter*, vol. 12, no. 4, Winter 2005
http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/publications/nl/newsletter_winter_2005/article9.htm – Accessed 22 December 2006 – Attachment 21).

In relation to the current situation of the police force and the NPC, the latest US Department of State report on human rights practices in Sri Lanka (2005) states:

Following the November 17 presidential election, the government eliminated the Ministry of Internal Security and placed control of the 66-thousand-member police force, which includes the 6-thousand member paramilitary Special Task Force, under the Ministry of Defense. Senior officials in the police force handle complaints against the police, as does the civilian-staffed National Police Commission (NPC).

...The NPC, composed entirely of civilians, was authorized to appoint, promote, transfer, discipline, and dismiss all police officers, except for the inspector general of police. The NPC also has the power to establish procedures to investigate public complaints against the police. In practice, however, the NPC devolved responsibility for discipline of less senior police officers to the inspector... On November 22, the three-year term of the NPC lapsed. By year's end the government had not appointed new commissioners to the NPC (US Department of State 2006, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005 – Sri Lanka*, 8 March, Section 1 – Attachment 22).

An RRT Research Response prepared in December 2005 provides a number of articles dealing with the politicisation of the police force in Sri Lanka (RRT Country Research 2005, Research Response LKA17718, 16 December – Attachment 34).

4. Can you find any background and contact details for Mr M.S.M. Aslam?

A search of the available information found very little in the way of background or contact details for Mr M.S.M Aslam. The SLMC website – <http://www.slmc.lk> – is “coming soon”. A search of the previous SLMC website (last updated on 10 February 2004 – accessed through the Internet Archive database) did not reveal any mention of Mr Aslam.

- In the 2004 Provincial elections, Mr Aslam Mohamed Salim Mohamed is listed as the first preferential candidate for the SLMC in the relevant district of Kalutara (‘Provincial Council Election Results – 2004’ (undated), Sri Lanka Department of Elections official website http://www.lanka.net/slections/past_election/2004Provincial.pdf – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 25).
- He is mentioned as a First Council Member of The Western Province Provincial Council on the Council’s official website and as a Western Province Councillor in various newspaper articles (‘First Council members’ (undated), Western Province Provincial Council website <http://www.wpc.gov.lk/Council-Secretariat-fourth-council-members.html> – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 26; Kumarasinghe, U., Gamage, A. & Malawaraarachchi, B. 2005, ‘Western Provincial Council suspended: President appoints independent committee to probe allegations’, *Daily News*, 27 April <http://www.dailynews.lk/2005/04/27/pol01.htm> – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 27; Krishnaswamy, P. 2004, ‘PC elections soon’, *Sunday Observer*, 18 January <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2004/01/18/pol02.html> – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 28).
- MSM Aslam is also mentioned as having been elected General Treasurer of the SLMC in March 2006 (‘Muslim Congress elects politburo’ 2006, Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization website, 22 March <http://www.telo.org/March2006.htm> – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 29).

The Sri Lankan Department of Elections Official Website lists contact details for the secretary of SLMC (‘Political Parties’ 2006, Sri Lankan Department of Elections Official Website, February <http://www.lanka.net/slections/parties.html> – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 30).

5. Anything else you feel might be relevant.

Muslims in Sri Lanka

The Muslim population is widely dispersed throughout the country, with the largest percentage living in the east. At the time of the 2001 census, Muslims constituted 8.94 per cent of the Kalutara Administrative District [which includes Panadura] (‘Population by Religion according to District and Sector’, Census of Population and Housing 2001, Sri Lankan Department of Census and Statistics website http://www.statistics.gov.lk/census2001/population/ds_div/t001b.htm – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 11).

In researching the question of the situation and treatment of Tamil-speaking Muslims, particularly in Colombo, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada compiled the following background information:

Muslims are believed to constitute between seven and eight per cent of Sri Lanka's total population (Annual Report on International Religious Freedom Sept. 2000; Danish Refugee Council May 2000; Daily News 8 July 1998; UNHCR June 2001). Most are "Sri Lankan Moors," the Tamil-speaking descendants of Arab or Indian Muslim traders who came to the island while it was under Portuguese rule (Niven et al. Oct. 1999). Sri Lanka is also home to smaller groups of "Malays," Malay-speaking Muslims whose ancestors came with the Dutch from Java, and "Indian Moors," who are "more recent Muslim arrivals from Indian or Pakistan" (ibid.). Almost all of Sri Lanka's Muslims are "Sunnis, with a small minority of Shi'as including members of the Borah community" (UNHCR June 2001, p. 33) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2001, LKA37591.E – *Sri Lanka: Update to LKA27504.E of 4 September 1997 on the situation and treatment of Tamil-speaking Muslims, particularly in Colombo (September 1997-August 2001)*, 31 August – Attachment 10).

The previously mentioned ICG report comments on the difficult position of the Muslim communities in Sri Lanka's conflict, and states that "Muslims have a bitter joke about their role in the conflict: 'It's like a football match. One side is the LTTE, the other is the government. We Muslims are the football'" (International Crisis Group 2006, 'Sri Lanka: The failure of the peace process', ICG website, 28 November http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/sri_lanka/124_sri_lanka_the_failure_of_the_peace_process.pdf – Accessed 29 November 2006 – Attachment 47).

Current Conflict

The conflict in Sri Lanka has seen an intense escalation of violence over the last year. According to the *BBC*, "At least 2,000 people – troops, Tamil Tiger rebels and Tamil, Sinhalese and Muslim civilians – were killed in the first nine months of 2006, the government and truce monitors say" ('Quick guide: Sri Lanka' 2006, *BBC News*, 24 October http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6065646.stm – Accessed 9 January 2007 – Attachment 31).

A DIMA Country Information and Protection Support (CIPS) Section analysis of the Hotham mission report in October 2006 notes that a state of emergency has been in place since August 2005, and that the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) is over. The paper also includes details on the current situation of Muslims in Sri Lanka. This document is supplied as Attachment 32 (Country Information and Protection Support (CIPS) Section, Onshore Protection Branch of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2006, 'Analysis of Hotham Mission Report into Situation in Sri Lanka', 6 December – Attachment 32).

Acronyms of main political organisations

The UPFA is the current governing alliance. Formed to contest the April 2004 parliamentary elections, the UPFA grew out of the former People's Alliance (PA). Ratnasiri Wickremanayake, Sri Lanka's current prime minister is the president of the UPFA.

- UPFA (United People's Freedom Alliance)
 - SLFP (Sri Lanka Freedom Party (*Sri Lanka Nidahas Pakshaya*))
 - SLMP (Sri Lanka People's Party (*Sri Lanka Mahajana Pakshaya*))
 - CPSL (Communist Party of Sri Lanka)

- DUNLF (Democratic United National Lalith Front)
- LSSP (*Lanka Sama Samaja Party* (Lanka Equal Society Party))
- UNF (United National Front)
 - UNP (United National Party (*Eksath Jathika Pakshaya*))
 - CWC (Ceylon Workers' Congress)
- TNA (Tamil National Alliance (*Illankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi*, literally in English: Sri Lanka Tamil Government Party))
 - ACTC (All Ceylon Tamil Congress)
 - EPRLF (Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (*Suresh*))
 - TELO (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization)
 - TULF (Tamil United Liberation Front (formerly the Federal Party))
- JVP (People's Liberation Front, *Janatha Vimukthi Perumuna*) (Note: At the time of the April 2004 election, the JVP was part of the UPFA)
- SLMC (Sri Lanka Muslim Congress)
- UPF (Up-Country People's Front)
- EPDP (Eelam People's Democratic Party)
- JHU (National Heritage Party, *Jathika Hela Urumaya*)

Other political parties:

Akhila Illankai Tamil United Front (AITUK)

Ceylon Democratic Unity Alliance (CDUA)

Citizen's Front (*Puravesi Peramuna*, PP)

Democratic People's Liberation Front (DPLF)

Democratic Workers Congress (DWC)

Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF)

Eelavar Democratic Front

Eksath Lanka Podujana Pakshaya

Jathika Sangwardhena Peramuna (JSP)

Liberal Party

Muslim United Liberation Front (MULF)

National Liberation People's Party (also *Desha Vimukthi Janatha Pakshaya*)

National People's Party (NPP)

National Unity Alliance (NUA)

New Equal Society Party (*Nava Sama Samaja Pakshaya*, NSSP)

People's United Front (*Mahajana Eksath Peramuna*, MEP)

Ruhuna Janatha Party (RJP)

Sinhalese Freedom Front (*Singhalaye Nithahas Peramuna*, SNP)

Socialist Equality Party (SEP)

Sons of the Soil Party (*Sinhalaya Mahasammatha Bhoomiputra Pakshaya*, SMBP)

Sri Lanka Muslim Katchi (SLMK)

Sri Lanka National Front (SLNF)

Sri Lanka Progressive Front (SLPF)

Swarajya (SR)

United Muslim People's Alliance (UMPA)

United Socialist Party (USP)

(Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2006, *Country Fact Sheet: Sri Lanka*, September, Section 3 http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/publications/index_e.htm?docid=304&cid=133&sec=CH03 – Accessed 22 January 2007 – Attachment 38; 'Sri Lanka: Political Structure' 2006, *Economist Intelligence Unit*, 14 November – Attachment 16; 'Sri Lanka' 2006, *CIA World Factbook*, updated 19 December <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ce.html> – Accessed 12 January 2007 – Attachment 39).

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