

The accused, the charges, the verdict

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THE Special Investigation Team of the Central Bureau of Investigation charge-sheeted 41 persons in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case. Of these, three are absconding and could not be tried; 12 others died, and the charges against them abated; the remaining 26 stood trial at the Designated Court at Poonamallee, near Chennai. In his judgment delivered on January 28, 1998, the Designated Judge, V. Navaneetham, pronounced all 26 guilty under Section 120-B (conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code read with Section 302 (murder) of the IPC and provisions of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act.

V. Prabakaran: LTTE chief; Ordered the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and designed the criminal conspiracy to execute it; Absconding, and declared a Proclaimed Offender. Not tried.

Pottu Amman alias Shanmughanathan Sivasankaran: Intelligence chief of the LTTE; Designed the conspiracy along with Prabakaran; Absconding, and declared a Proclaimed Offender. Not tried.

Akila: Deputy Chief of the LTTE Women's Intelligence Wing; Along with Prabakaran and Pottu Amman, she planned and arranged to execute the assassination plot; Absconding, and declared a Proclaimed Offender. Not tried.

Sivarajan alias Packiachandaran alias Raghuvaran: Member of the LTTE Intelligence Wing who led the LTTE squad that assassinated Rajiv Gandhi; The nine-member squad reached Kodiakkarai in Tamil Nadu from the Jaffna peninsula on May 1, 1991; Committed suicide when cornered at Konanakunte, near Bangalore, on August 19, 1991.

Dhanu alias Anbu alias Kalaivani: The member of the assassination squad who was the "human bomb" at Sriperumbudur; Died in the blast on May 21, 1991.

Subha alias Nithya: LTTE woman member entrusted with executing the assassination plan along with Dhanu; Committed suicide along with Sivarajan at Konanakunte on August 19, 1991.

Suresh Master, Amman, "Driver" Anna and **Jamuna** alias Jameela: All members of the assassination team who worked in various capacities; Committed suicide along with Sivarajan and Subha at Konanakunte on August 19, 1991.

Dixon alias Kishore: An LTTE cadre who infiltrated into Tamil Nadu clandestinely and was closely associated with Sivarajan; Committed suicide when he was cornered by the police in his Coimbatore hideout in July 29, 1991.

S. Haribabu: An Indian national and an LTTE sympathiser who photographed Rajiv Gandhi's assassination for the LTTE; Died in the blast on May 21, 1991.

Nehru alias Nero alias Gokul: A member of the LTTE who came with eight other members of the killer squad led by Sivarajan; He handled the group's wireless transmission; Committed suicide along with Sivarajan and Subha at Konanakunte on August 19, 1991.

N. Shanmugam alias Jayaraj: An Indian national and a smuggler who operated at Kodiakkarai on the Tamil Nadu coast; He provided vital assistance to the LTTE assassination squad after it arrived in India; Committed suicide on July 20, 1991 after escaping from custody.

Tiruchi Santhan alias Gundu Santhan: An LTTE member who was in charge of the political wing of the organisation in Tamil Nadu; After the assassination, he harboured Sivarajan, Subha and Nehru, helped them evade arrest and attempted to send them safely out of India to Jaffna; Consumed cyanide after his hideout at Navalpattu in Tiruchi was surrounded by the SIT.



S. Nalini: An Indian national and the wife of LTTE member Murugan; she accompanied Sivarajan, Dhanu, Subha and photographer S. Haribabu to the assassination site; Convicted on 16 counts of murder, and sentenced to death by hanging.



Chinna Santhan alias T. Suthentharraraja alias Santhan: A member of the LTTE Intelligence Wing; one of the nine members of the killer squad sent to India by Pottu Amman; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



Murugan: A Sri Lankan Tamil and an LTTE Intelligence Wing cadre; He acted as a conduit between Sivarajan and Nalini's family, and carried letters from Dhanu and Subha for Pottu Amman and Akila, which were recovered by the SIT; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



Shankar (far left) alias Koneswaran, **D. Vijayanandan** (second left) alias Hariayya and **B. Ruban** (left) alias Suresh: members of the LTTE assassination squad; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



S. Kanagasabapathy (far left) alias Radhaayya and **Athirai** (left) alias Chandralekha: Kanagasabapathy, in his late seventies, and Chandralekha went to New Delhi to look for a safehouse for the LTTE assassination squad; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



Top Row: **B. Robert Payas** (far left), **S. Jayakumar** (second left), **J. Shanthi** (left);
Bottom Row: **S. Vijayan** (far left), **V. Selvaluxmi** (second left) and **S. Baskaran** (left): Sri Lankan Tamils sent to Tamil Nadu by the LTTE for the specific task of aiding the conspiracy. Shanthi is Jayakumar's wife, Selvaluxmi is Vijayan's wife and Baskaran's daughter; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



Shanmugavadivelu alias Thambi Anna: A Sri Lankan LTTE supporter, Shanmugavadivelu was assigned the task of keeping funds given by Sivarajan for use by the assassination team; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



P. Ravichandran (far left) alias Ravi alias Pragasam and **Suseendran** (left) alias Mahesh: Indian nationals who went to Sri Lanka illegally and were trained by the LTTE and sent back to India to aid the assassination team; They also harboured Sivarajan and Subha; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



G. Perarivalan alias Arivu: An Indian national, he assisted Murugan and Sivarajan in the planning and execution of the conspiracy; he bought two battery cells on Sivarajan's instructions and gave them to him; these were used by Dhanu in her belt bomb; he bought a battery for operating an illegal wireless set. Convicted and sentenced to death for criminal conspiracy and murder.



Irumborai alias S. Duraisingam: An Indian national, he visited Jaffna illegally and assisted Sivarajan, Subha, Nehru and others in the conspiracy by carrying important messages between the conspirators; He helped Sivarajan move from place to place after the assassination; Convicted and sentenced to death for criminal conspiracy and murder.



S. Bhagyanathan, S. Padma and Subha Sundaram alias A. Sundaram: Bhagyanathan is Nalini's brother, and Padma their mother; Subha Sundaram was a family friend; Bhagyanathan and Padma, along with Nalini, harboured some members of the assassination team; after the assassination, Subha Sundaram made efforts to retrieve Haribabu's camera from the scene of the crime and advised Haribabu's father to destroy Haribabu's belongings; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



K. Dhanasekharan alias Raju: He provided the petrol tanker in the empty hull of which Sivarajan, Subha and Nehru escaped from Chennai to Bangalore after the assassination; Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



N. Rajasuriya (far left) alias Rangan and **T. Vigneswaran** (left) alias Vicky: Sri Lankan Tamils who illegally infiltrated India and provided assistance to the LTTE assassination squad. Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.



J. Ranganath: An Indian national and an LTTE sympathiser, he harboured Sivarajan and Subha at his house in Puttanahalli in Bangalore after the assassination and later helped them to move to Konanakunte. Convicted and sentenced to death for murder and criminal conspiracy.