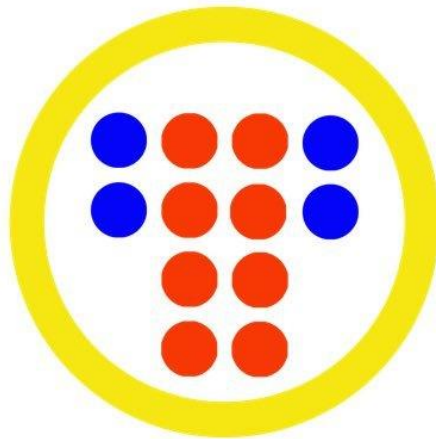


Land grab and cultural genocide of the Tamil home land in Sri Lanka

Prepared by



British Tamils Forum

June, 2016.

Land grab and cultural genocide of the Tamil land in Sri Lanka

1. Introduction.

Reliable field data obtained by BTF indicates that the land currently occupied by the Sri Lankan security forces in the North is 67,427 acres as of 01st of March 2016.

Under the previous government of Mahintha Rajapakse 69,992 acres of land was under occupation. Only 2,565.5 acres of land has been released since January 2015 by the new Sri Lankan regime. This constitutes only 3.6% of the total land currently occupied by the Sri Lankan military.

Above clearly shows the manipulation of data and deception on the part of the current Sri Lankan government, which came on a promise of change, in releasing the land occupied by its military. Several promises with specific deadlines by the current Sri Lankan president to release all unauthorised land acquisition by the military remains unfulfilled.

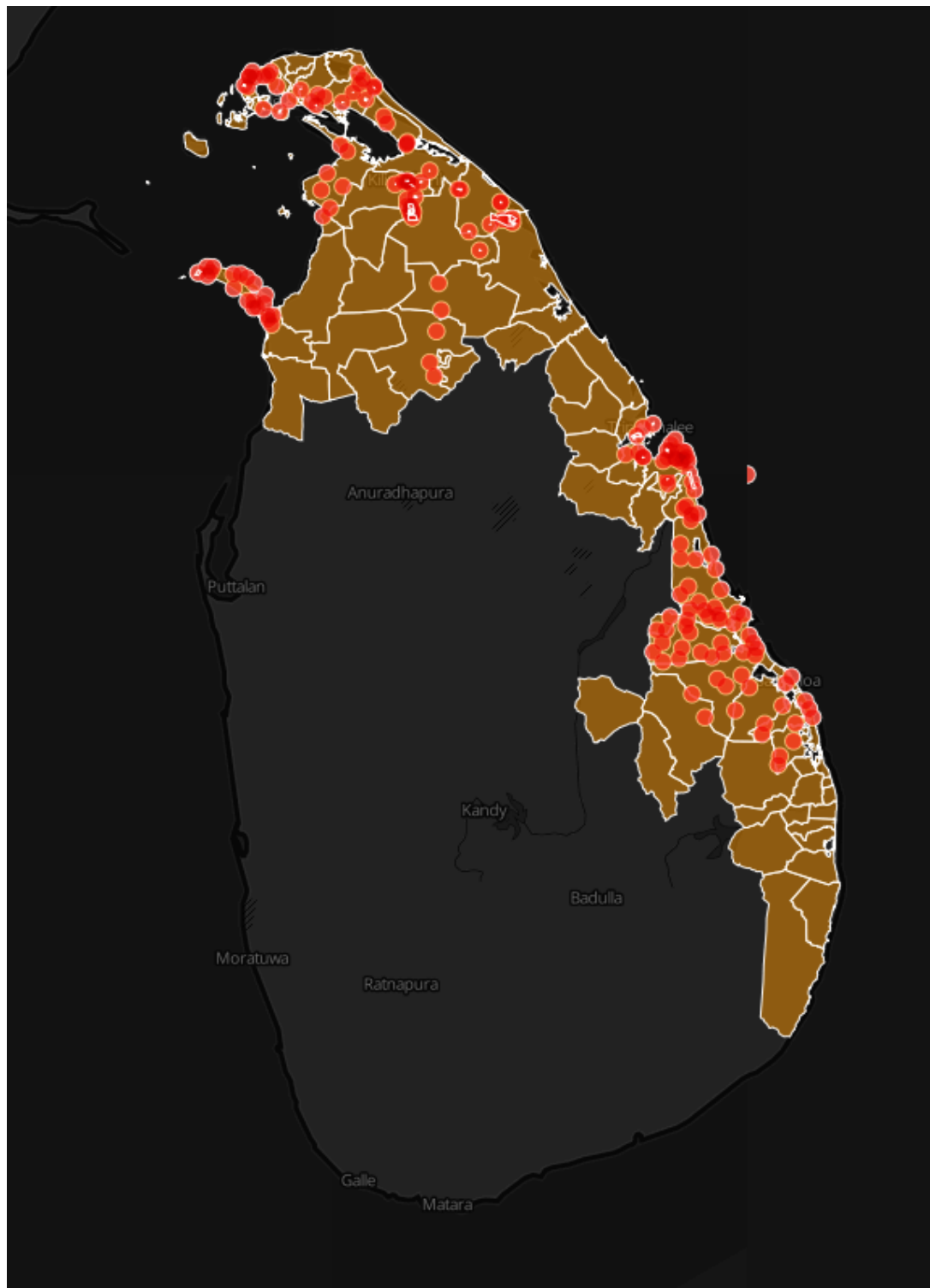
Apart from such land acquisition Sri Lankan military has been building Buddhist statues and temples illegally on private and government lands without any permission. This cultural genocide has not stopped even after the change of government. Sri Lankan military is carrying out its genocidal demographic change in the Tamil traditional homeland even under the present government. The current Sri Lankan regime has not stopped such activities and it is hoodwinking the international community with empty promises.

Following on line research based on google street maps and satellites images reveal the extent of land occupation and cultural colonisation in the Tamil homeland.

1.1 Land occupied by the Security forces in the North

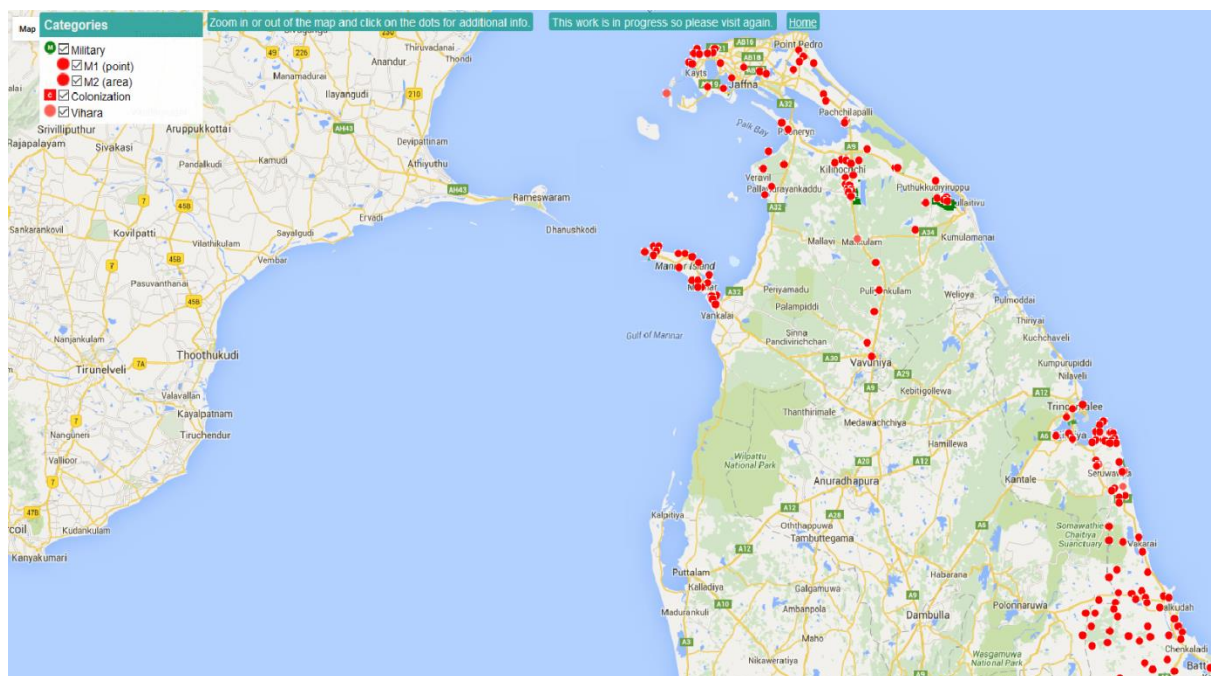
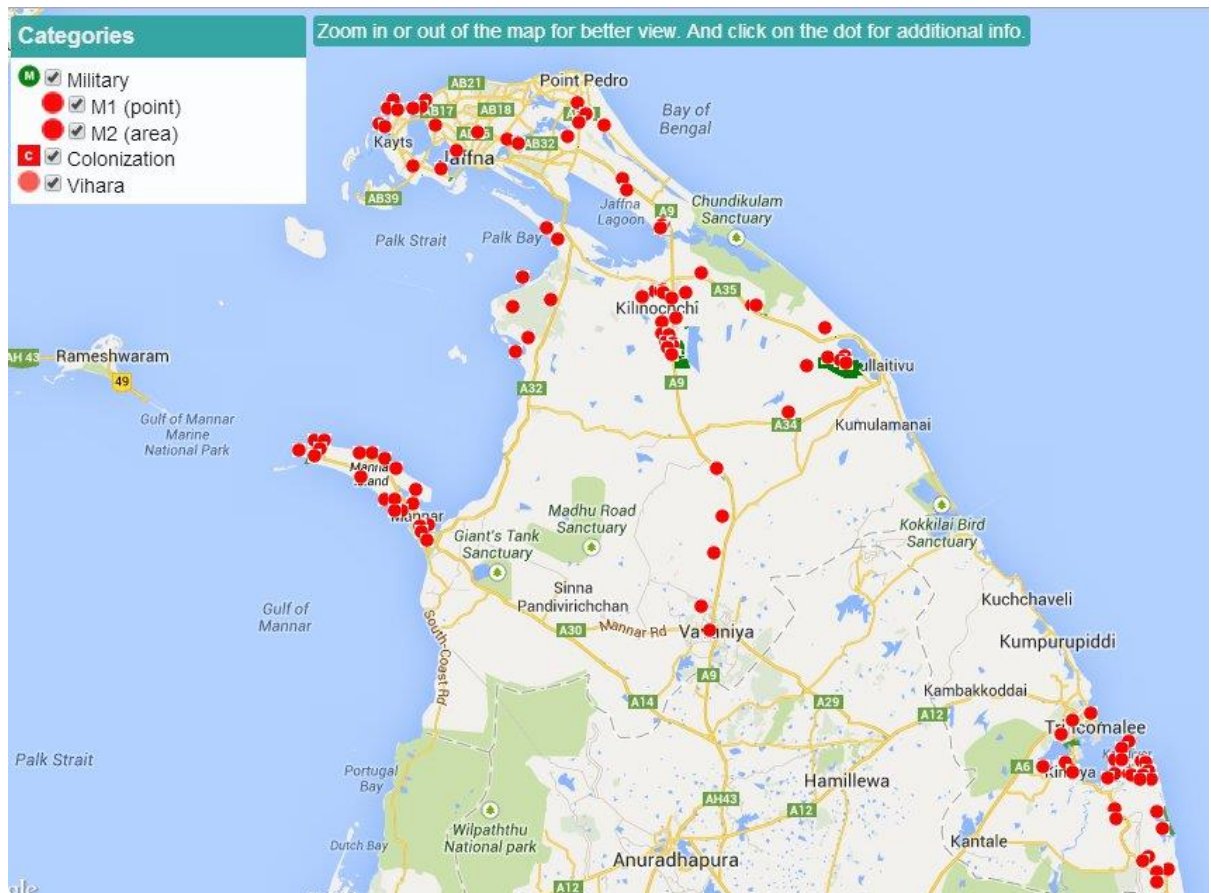
Updated on: 01/03/2016

DISTRICT	OCCUPIED IN 2015	RELEASED (after Jan 2015)	OCCUPIED IN 2016
MULLAITIVU	19,790	134	19,656
KILINOCHI	12,840	474	12,366
VAVUNIYA	23,778	14	23,764
JAFFNA	6,270	1,709.5	4,561
MANNAR	7,314	234	7,080
	69,992	2565.5	67,427



Sri Lanka Sinhala Militarization and Occupation of Tamil Lands

• Data taken in 2013



Source: <http://ustpac.org/reports/sinhalization/>

2. Institutionalised Cultural genocide - Research based on Google street map images.

While the Sri Lankan foreign ministry internationally continues to use the language of reconciliation, senior Sri Lankan politicians like the president and the prime minister continues to protect and promote the prominence given to Buddhism and the Sri Lankan armed forces have been promoted as protectors and enforcers of such a mono religious cultural identity on the Tamil population in the North and East.

This only reinforces and reflects the well-entrenched institutionalised Sinhala Buddhist nationalist views, which is at the root of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. Just over the last year, Sri Lanka saw the rise of the racist “Sinha Le” campaign. Buddhism in Sri Lanka is after all not just a religion but given the “foremost” place in the constitution which the state has a responsibility to “protect and foster.” In practice, this translates into a rejection of any attempt to prosecute the armed forces for mass atrocities, who are instead labelled by Sri Lanka’s president as war heroes seen to be protecting the Sinhala Buddhist state.

Above is contrary to all the promises given to the international community on reconciliation and is in conflict with what the Sri Lankan government agreed when its co-sponsored the UNHRC resolution on Sri Lanka.

2.1 Jaffna District

2.1.1 Jaffna District - Jaffna



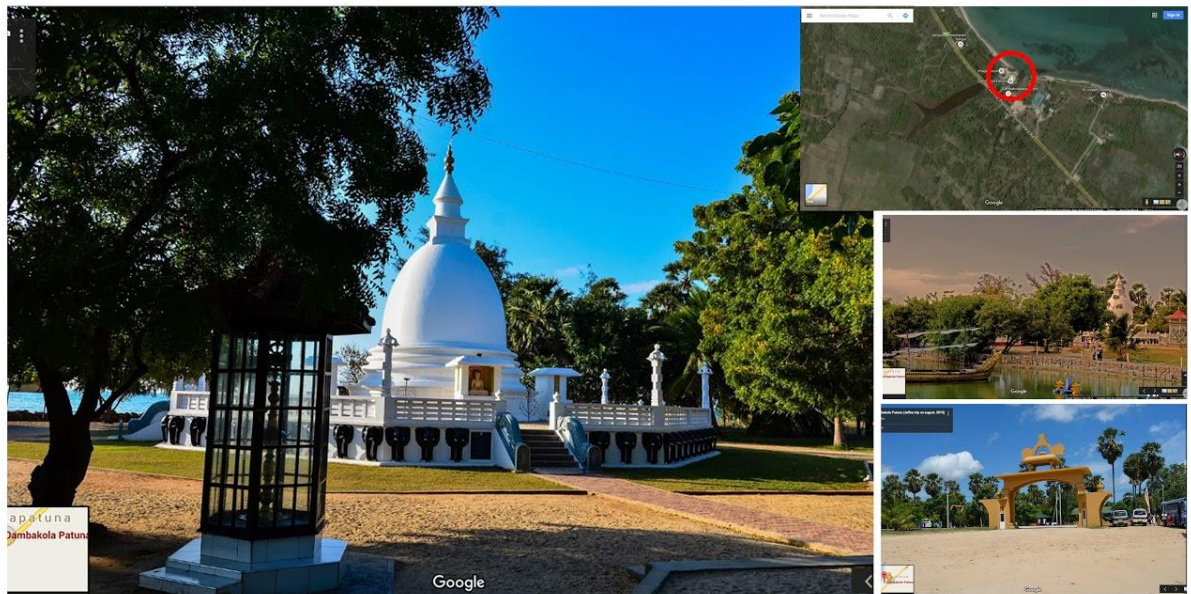
Jaffna
Stanly Road

2.1.2 Jaffna District - Chavakachcheri



Chavakachcheri
A9 Kandy - Jaffna Highway

2.1.3 Jaffna District- Mathakal.



Mathakal
Jaffna District



2.1.4 Jaffna District – Kantharodai.



Kantharodai Jaffna District

2.1.5 Jaffna District - Keerimalai Nakuleswaram.



**Keerimalai - Nakuleswaram
Jaffna District**

2.1.6 Jaffna District - Keerimalai - Nakuleswaram AB21 Road Jaffna District



Keerimalai - Nakuleswaram AB21 Road Jaffna District

2.1.7 Jaffna District - Navatkuli



Behind Railway Station

Navatkuli - Jaffna District

2.1.8 Jaffna District – Valikamam North



Valikamam North - Jaffna District

2.1.9 Jaffna District – Valvettithurai - Vadamarachchi



Valvettithurai
Jaffna District

2.2 Vavuniya district

2.2.1 Vavuniya district - kanakarayankulam



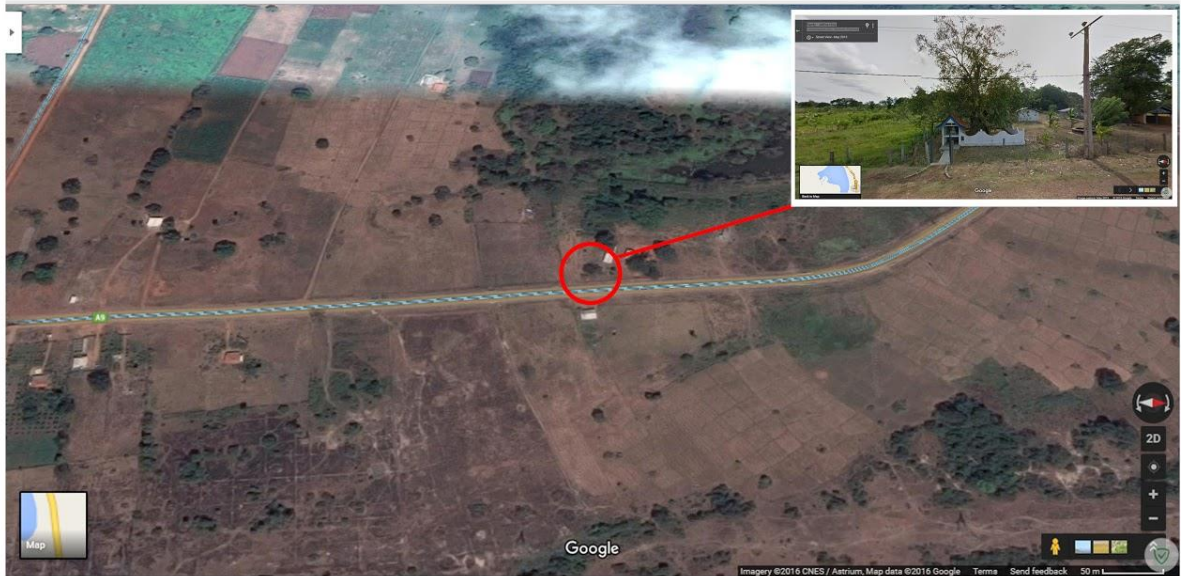
Kanakarayankulam

2.2.2 Vavuniya District – Kanakarayankulam A9 Kandy – Jaffna Highway



Kanakarayankulam

A9 Road Kandy - Jaffna Highway



Kanakarayankulam

A9 Road Kandy - Jaffna Highway

2.3 Kilinochi District

2.3.1 Kilinochi District - 65th Division 7th Artillery Army Camp



7th Artillery Army Base - Kilinochchi District

2.3.2 Kilinochi District – Anaivilunthan Army Camp



Anaivilunthan Army Camp
Vanneri Jayapuram Road

2.3.3 A9 - Kilinochi district- Iyakachchi Army Camp



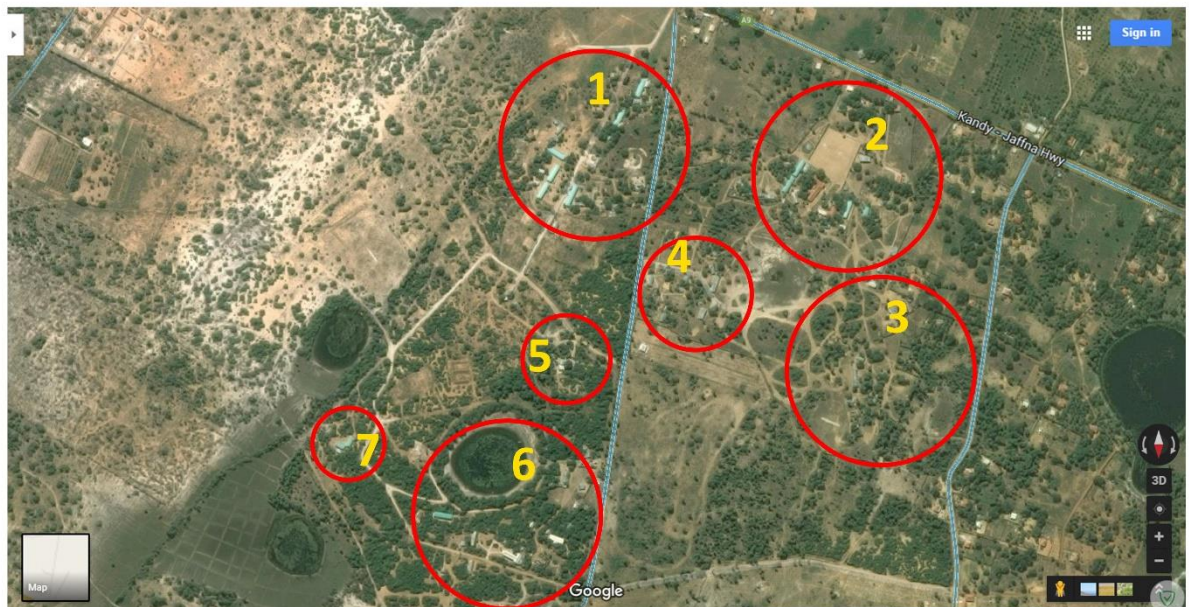
Iyakachchi Army Camp
A9 Kandy - Jaffna Highway

2.3.4 Kilinochi District – Kilinochi Town – A9 Kandy – Jaffna Highway



Kilinochchi
A9 - Kandy - Jaffna Highway

2.3.5 Kilinochi District – Iyakachchi Army Camps – A9 Kandy – Jaffna Highway



Iyakachchi Army Camps
A9 Kandy - Jaffna Highway

2.3.6 Kilinochi District – Kadiravil Kulam – Pooneryn Division



Kadiravil kulam - Pooneryn Division

2.3.4 Kilinochi District - Paranthan A9 Kandy – Jaffna Highway



Paranthan
A9 - Kandy - Jaffna Highway

2.3.5 Kilinochi District – Kandawalai – Paranthan Mullaitivu Road



Kandawalai
Paranthan - Mullaitivu Highway

2.3.6 Kilinochi District - Krishnapuram



Krishnapuram
Kilinochchi District

2.3.7 Kilinochi District – Pachchilapalli Army Camp A9 Kandy – Jaffna Highway



Pachchilaipalli Army Camp
A9 Kandy - Jaffna Highway



Pachchilaipalli
A9 Kandy - Jaffna Highway

2.4 Mullaitivu District

2.4.1 Mullaitivu District - Naayaru



Naayaru - Mullaitivu District

2.4.2 Mullaitivu District – Kokkilaai (Under Construction in Army Supervising)



Kokkilaai
Mullaitivu District

2.4.3 Mullaitivu District – Kokkilai Paranthan - Mullaitivu Road



Kokkilai
Mullaitivu - Kokkilai Road



Kokkilai
Mullaitivu - Kokkilai Road

2.4.4 Mullivaikkal –Mullaitivu district

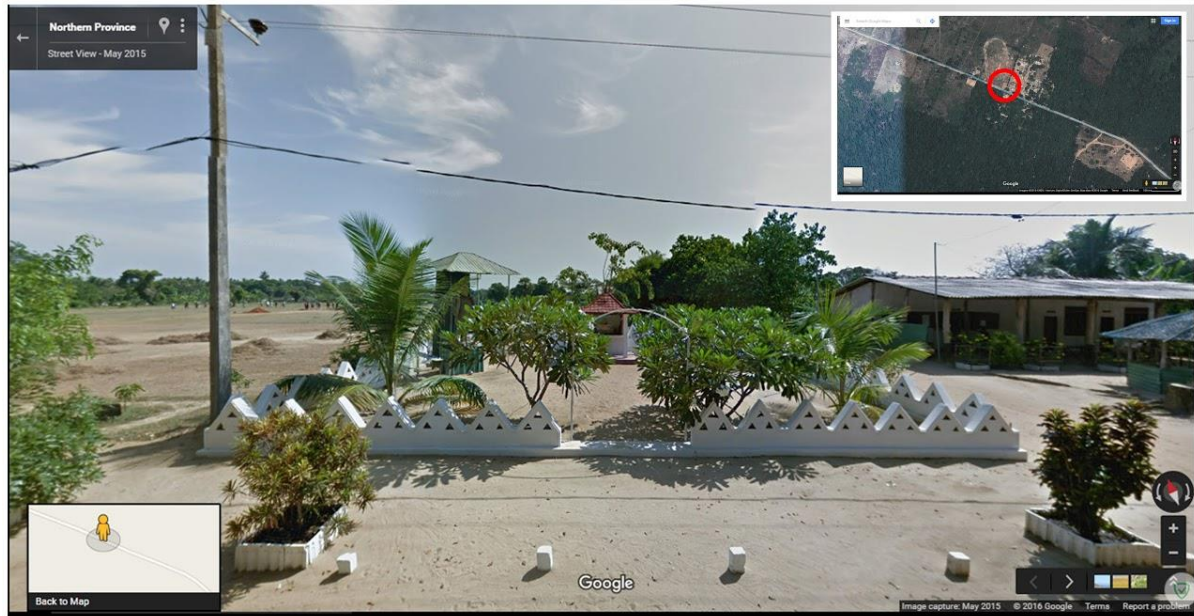


Mullivaikkal
Mullaitivu District



Mullivaikkal
Mullaitivu District

2.4.5 Puthukkudiyiruppu – Mullaitivu District



Puthukkudiyiruppu
Mullaitivu District



Puthukkudiyiruppu
Mullaitivu District

2.4.6 Vaduvakkal – Mullaitivu District



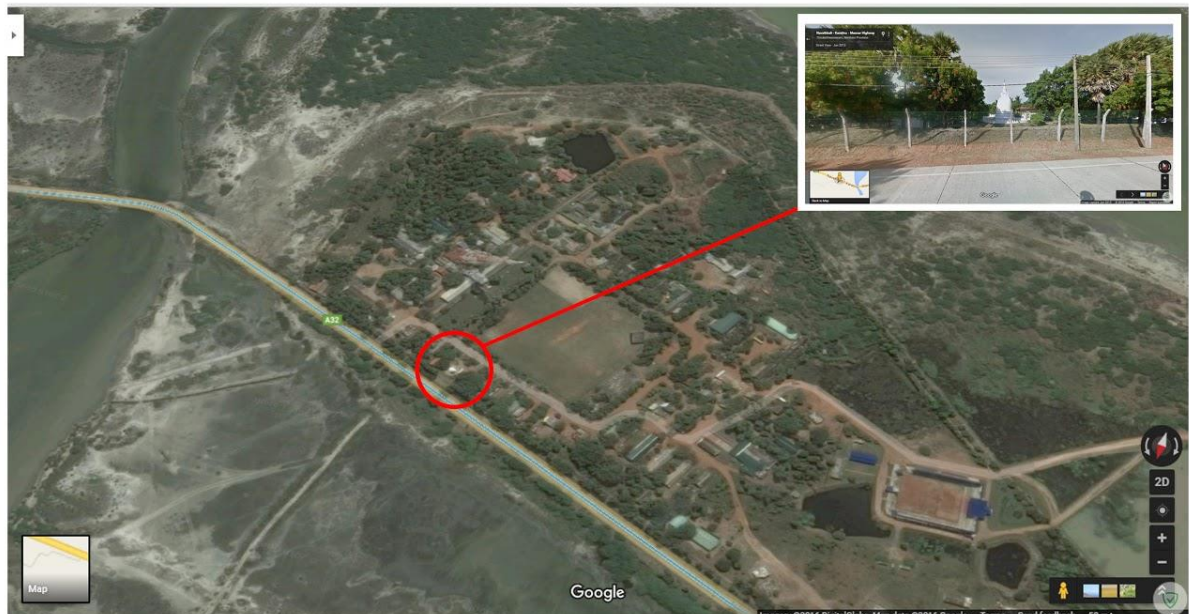
Vaduvakkal
Mullaitivu District



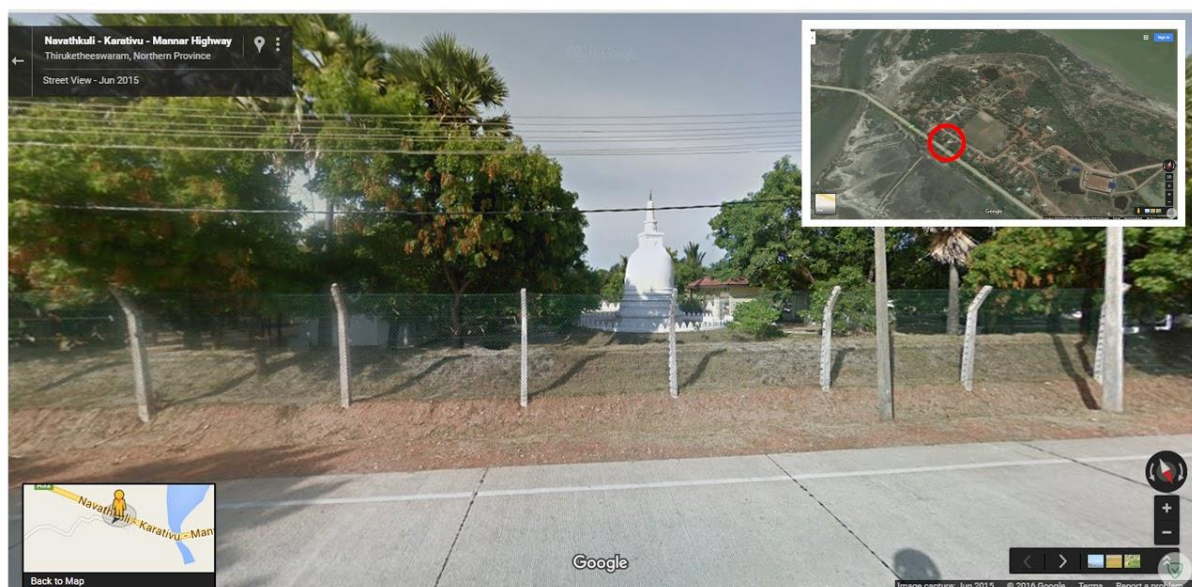
Vaduvakkal
Mullaitivu District

2.5 Mannar District

2.5.1 Navathkuli Karativu - Mannar Highway – Mannar District



Navathkuli - Karativu - Mannar Highway
Thirukketheeswaram



Navathkuli - Karativu - Mannar Highway
Thirukketheeswaram

2.5.2 Talaimannar – Medawachiya Talaimannar Highway – Mannar District



Talaimannar Medawachchiya - Talaimannar Highway



Thalaimannar - Mannar District



Talaimannar

Medawachchiya - Talaimannar Highway

2.5.3 Talaimannar Pier – Medawachchiya Talaimannar Highway – Mannar District



Talaimannar Pier

Medawachchiya - Talaimannar Highway



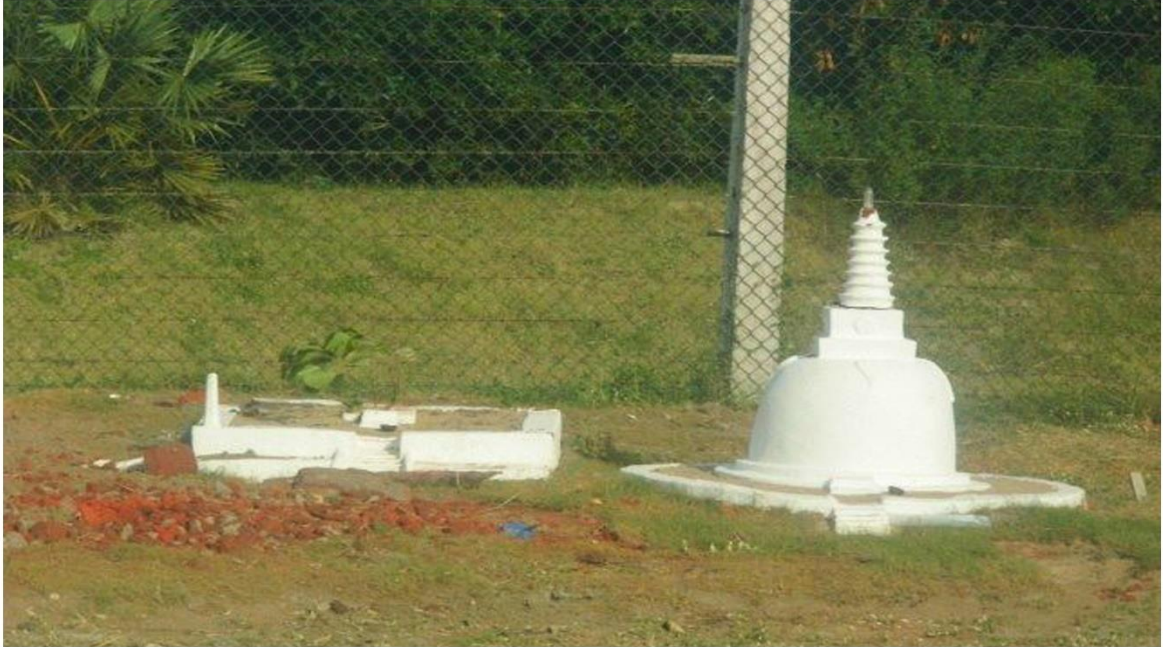
Talaimannar Pier

Medawachchiya - Talaimannar Highway



Thalaimannar Pier - Mannar District

2.5.4 Thallady – Front of army Camp – Mannar District



Front of Thalladi Army Camp - Mannar District

2.5.5 Mathoddam Thiruketheeswaram – Mannar district



Thirukketheeswaram
Mannar District

2.5.6 Murungan – Mannar district



Murungan Mannar District

2.5.7 Parayanaalankulam – Mannar district



Parayanaalankulam - Mannar District

2.5.8 Santhipuram – Mannar district



sri-suwarna-vimbaramaya-vihara

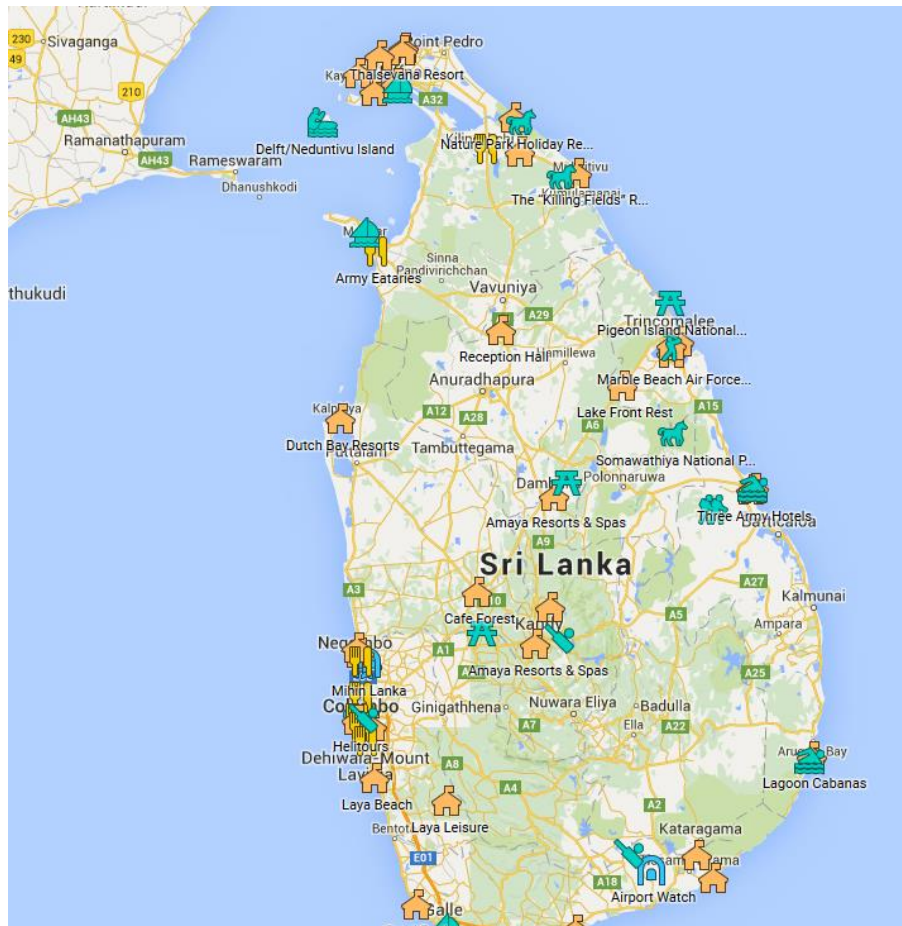
Santhipuram - Mannar District



sri-suwarna-vimbaramaya-vihara

Santhipuram - Mannar District

3 Business activities of the Sri Lankan military



Source: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=13keJRa3oVJsL5hxd3R7NQOuFpi8>

The army has expanded non-military activities and is engaged in large-scale property development, construction projects, and business ventures such as travel agencies, farming, holiday resorts, restaurants, and innumerable cafes that dot the highways in the northern and eastern provinces. The army officially runs luxury resorts and golf courses that have been erected on land seized from now internally displaced peoples. Tourists can book holidays at luxury beach resorts by calling numbers at the ministry of defence. These resorts and businesses are located on lands that were previously home to the local Tamil population, who were displaced by the war. They see no sign of return, despite numerous demands and petitions.

(Ref : (10) Guardian.com)

3.1 Marble Beach Air Force Resort - Boutique Hotel- Kinniya, Trincomale



3.2 Nature Park Holiday Resort- Chundikulam- Jaffna





3.3 Eagles' Golf Links – an 18-hole Golf course located close to the Trincomalee Harbour



3.4 Laya Waves' at Kalkudah



3.5 LAYA Air Travel Services and Air Travel Services (Pvt) Ltd

Selling air-tickets and foreign package holidays, concessionary airfares for locals on pilgrimage air ticketing and reservations, pilgrimage tours and foreign holiday packages world-wide hotel reservation, visa handling assistance, travel insurance.

3.6 Thalsevena resort- Kankeanthurai- High Security zone





3.7 Fort Hammenhiel Resort – Karainagar, Jaffna.



These restaurants hotels and resorts are run by the navy. They include: Weligambay Villas – Mirissa, Reception Hall – Ranminithenna and Poonewa, Club House – Uswetakeiyawa, Light House Galley – Colombo, Golf Link Hotel and Sober Island Resort – Trincomalee, Lagoon Cabanas – Panama, Fort Hammenhiel and Dambakolapatuna Rest – Jaffna, and Lake Front Rest – Kanthale. There are allegations that this has allowed the Light House Galley to circumvent taxes, licensing and other local regulations.

3.8 Lagoons Edge- Mullaitivu- Nanthikadal lagoon



ROUTE MAP TO LAGOON'S EDGE HOLIDAY BUNGALOW - SFHQ(MLT)



The Government of Sri Lanka built a series of triumphalist attractions on the site of the last battles of Sri Lanka's civil war. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed in this spot, and yet developments at the site demonstrate the extent to which their suffering is ignored and history re-written. The local "War museum" allows visitors to see a "terrorist swimming pool" and a crass war memorial adorned

with statues of celebrating soldiers. Yet all attempts by local residents to grieve for dead are brutally suppressed by the military. The Army run two hotels in the area, the Lagoon's Edge Resort & Nandikadal rest house. They also occupy much of the surrounding land. Meanwhile local residents are reduced to foraging through the belongings of the many people who died in the area, looking for valuables to resell.

Sources have revealed that not only has the military invaded the local business space but also issued threats to businesses engaged in similar fields to refrain from raising issues with their involvement or turn competitive with the businesses run by the Defence Ministry.

3.9 Road side Cafes and shops

Most of the roadside cafes along the A9 highway are owned and operated by the Army



Sri Lanka Army in vegetable retailing-pic: ft.lk



tailor shop opened up in front of their unit's headquarters, just outside Kilinochchi, northern Sri Lanka.

4 Conclusion

Above indicates the breath and depth of the Sri Lankan military's presence in the Tamil homeland and its project of cultural demographic change in the Tamil homeland. This land grab activity is continuing to date with out any stop under the present government. This shows that despite its rhetoric of reconciliation the current regime is complicit in the cultural genocide of the Tamil home land. The collection of data with regard to the demographic changes in the east is ongoing, and access to it is very difficult.

This project of accelerated Sinhailisation of the Tamil home land is the long term objective of the Sri Lankan military and the successive Sri Lankan governments to destroy the Tamil homeland and establish a mono ethnic identity throughout the island. This can only be stopped by removing the Sri Lankan military from the Tamil home land immediately.

Unless the international community or UN take immediate action to appoint permanent field monitoring units stationed in the Tamil homeland , this accelerated land occupation and cultural genocide will permanently change the demography of the Tamil homeland and will make the Tamil people destitute in their own homeland.

References.

- (1) <http://www.aaas.org/page/monitoring-change-sri-lankas-valikamam-high-security-zone-2009-2014>
- (2) <https://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=79&artid=37819>
- (3) <http://www.tamilguardian.com/article.asp?articleid=12143>
- (4) <http://www.tamilguardian.com/article.asp?articleid=10276>
- (5) <http://ustpac.org/reports/sinhalization/>
- (6) <https://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=38086>
- (7) Google street maps of Sri Lanka.
- (8) <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=13keJRa3oVJsL5hxd3R7NQOuFpi8>
- (9) <https://www.srilankacampaign.org/ethical-tourism/avoid/>
- (10) <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/may/28/sri-lanka-army-land-grabs-tamil-displacement-report-oakland-institute>

Appendix 1

Source: Ref 1. Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice (SLC), the Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

Valikamam High security zone

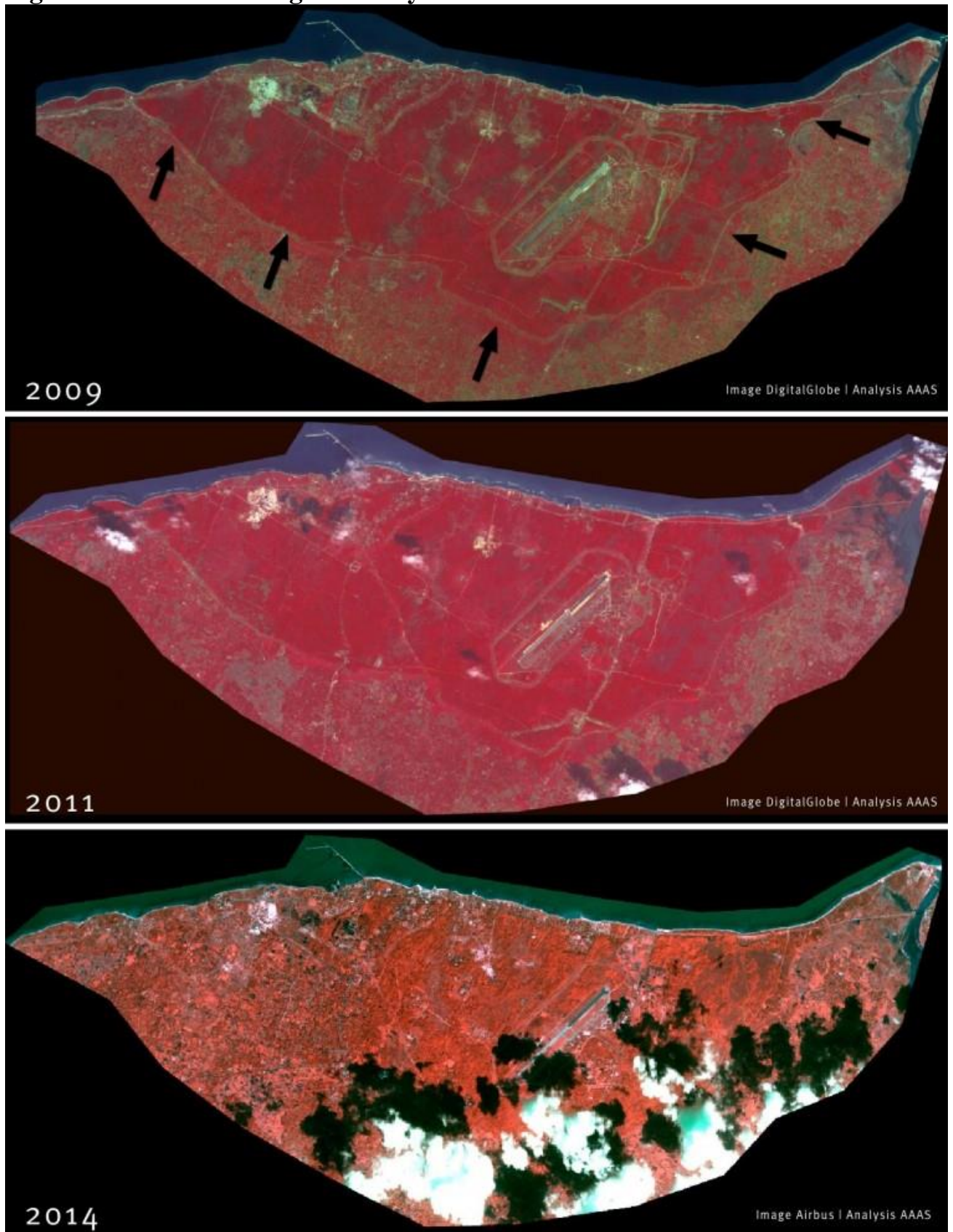
At the request of the Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice (SLC), the Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) acquired time series high-resolution satellite imagery of an area of Sri Lanka known as the Valikamam High Security Zone (HSZ) (Figure 1). The Sri Lankan government created a number of HSZs during the decades-long conflict with the Tamil Tigers, which ended in 2009. AAAS previously documented the human rights abuses that occurred at the end of the conflict, which culminated at the Civilian Safety Zone on the north eastern coast in May 2009.[1] The SLC requested the assistance of AAAS in undertaking an assessment of the Valikamam HSZ, to determine what changes have taken place in the military zone since the end of the conflict in 2009, as thousands of the residents of this area of the Jaffna Peninsula have not been able to resettle.

The Sri Lankan government is currently working to make the Valikamam HSZ and others permanent military cantonments.[2] The government has claimed that areas of the HSZ have been released for civilian use, but that an area of 6381 acres (25km²) is being retained for public use (Figure 2). What constitutes a public use has not been defined.[3] Human Rights groups, like SLC, are concerned about the actions of the military in these areas, as they move toward using these 'military' areas for non-military activities, such as farming and resort tourism.[4] Groups are increasingly concerned regarding the outcome of the situation, and petitions have been filed by many residents in an attempt to resettle.[5],[6]

Figure 1: Study Area



Figure 2: Valikamam High Security Zone



The border of the HSZ being retained by the Sri Lankan government is clearly seen in the first and second images (2009 and 2011) as a line (black arrows) separating the more heavily vegetated and less developed military zone from the areas surrounding it. By 2014, however, development has clearly occurred within the military zone.

The HSZ was occupied by civilians until a military campaign by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 1995 forced civilians to leave the area. According to the SLC, these people attempted to return to the Jaffna Peninsula, but the military had declared northernmost portion of the region a “high security zone.” In 2013, four years after the conflict ended, the government of Sri Lanka announced the intention of making this area a military cantonment, which would prevent the former residents of the area from ever returning to their former lands. SLC reports that civilians do not have access to the area.

2.1 Data and Methods

Due to lack of access to the area, AAAS undertook an assessment of the HSZ using high-resolution satellite images from three years spanning from the end of the 2009 conflict to the present: 2009, 2011, and 2014 (Table 1).

Table 1: Satellite imagery acquired

Date	Sensor	Image ID
12 May 2009	Quickbird-2	1010010009986D00
23 January 2011	GeoEye-1	1050410002CCFD00
19 February 2014	Pleiades	DS_PHR1B_201402140519379_FR1_PX_E080N09_0120_00484

Unfortunately, the 2014 image is extremely cloudy in the southern regions, obscuring much of the civilian lands adjacent to the HSZ. However, this image represented the most recent image available of the region at the time of the analysis.

2.2 Analysis

For each image date acquired, all structures within the HSZ were counted (Table 2). Structure counts were nearly constant between 2009 and 2011. However, there was a significant increase in structures between 2011 and 2014, with the total structure count rising by nearly 1,500 structures. The structure count includes all types of structures, including guard posts, military buildings, and individual, housing-sized structures. Not all structures present in 2009 were stable throughout the following two time periods, as some buildings were dismantled or overgrown by the surrounding tropical vegetation. This assessment counts all visible structures in each image independently from the other time periods.

Table 2: Structures within the High Security Zone^[7]

Year	Structures Observed
2009	3215
2011	3244
2014	4731

Between 2011 and 2014, the landscape in the western half of the military zone changed dramatically. As can be seen in the enumeration of results reported in Table 2, extreme growth in the number of structures was observed in the time period of 2011-2014 within the HSZ (Figure 3). Hundreds of new structures of various sizes were constructed during this time period.

Figure 3: Massive development of western HSZ

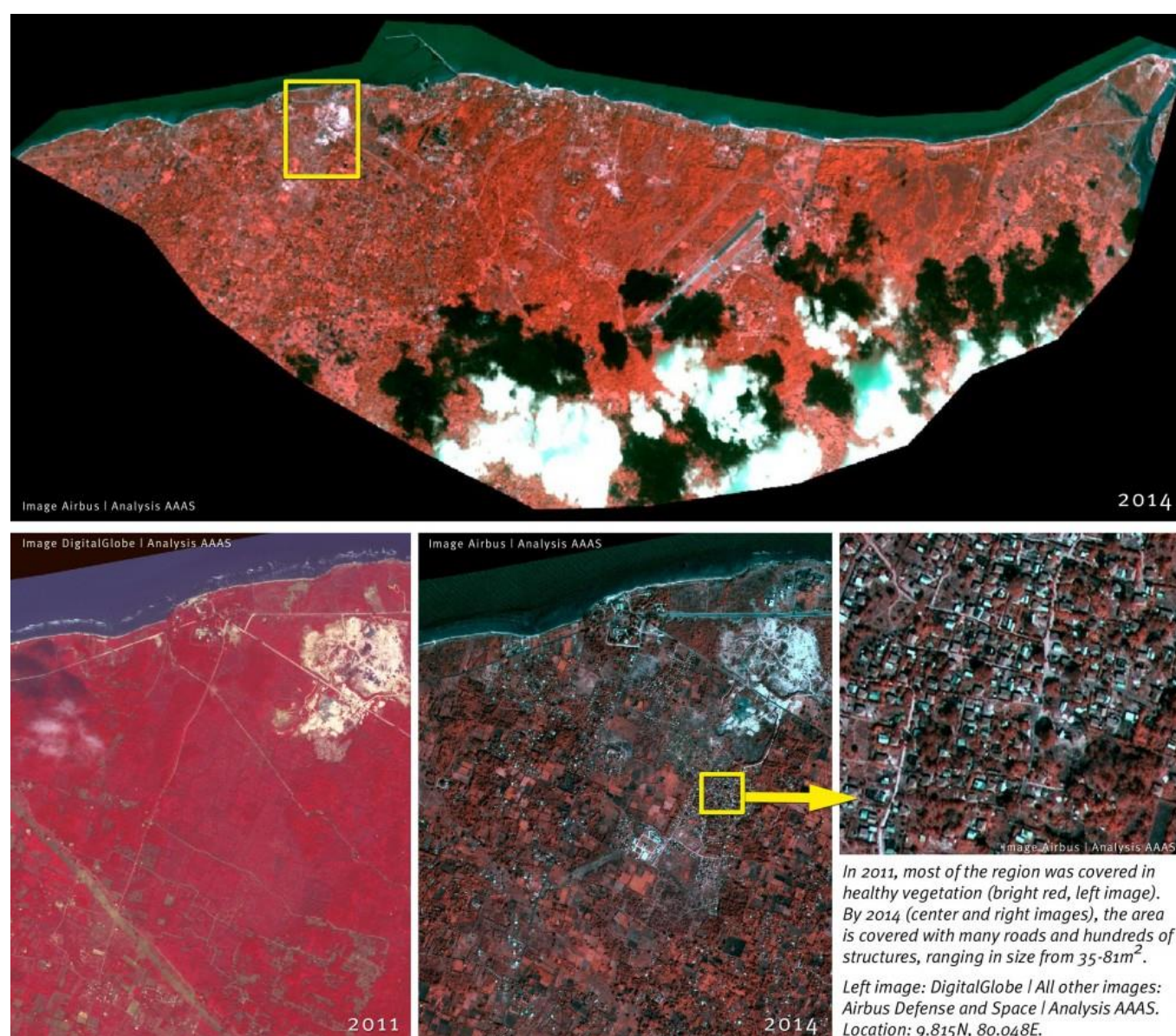


Figure 4: Development along HSZ boundary



In 2009 (top image), the HSZ border is clearly visible (red arrows). By 2014 (bottom image), the boundary has been obscured by the development of dozens of small structures and multiple new roads. Top image: DigitalGlobe/ Bottom Image: Airbus Defense and Space | Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.815N, 80.048756E.

In addition to the construction of hundreds of individual structures, several areas along the coast were developed, including several reported luxury resorts.^[8] While one of the resort developments along the coast could not be delineated from other large-scale developments, such as was seen in Figures 7 and 8, the Thalsevana Holiday Resort at Kaankeasan-thu'rai was identified. The Thalsevana Holiday Resort been highly touted by the Sri Lankan Military (Figures 5 and 6).^[9] As noted on the resort's website, "THALSEWANA HOLIDAY RESORT

functioning under the Security Forces Headquarters – Jaffna provides you an ideal venue to make your holiday perfect and memorable.” The resort’s website even contains a Google Earth map marking its location.^[10]

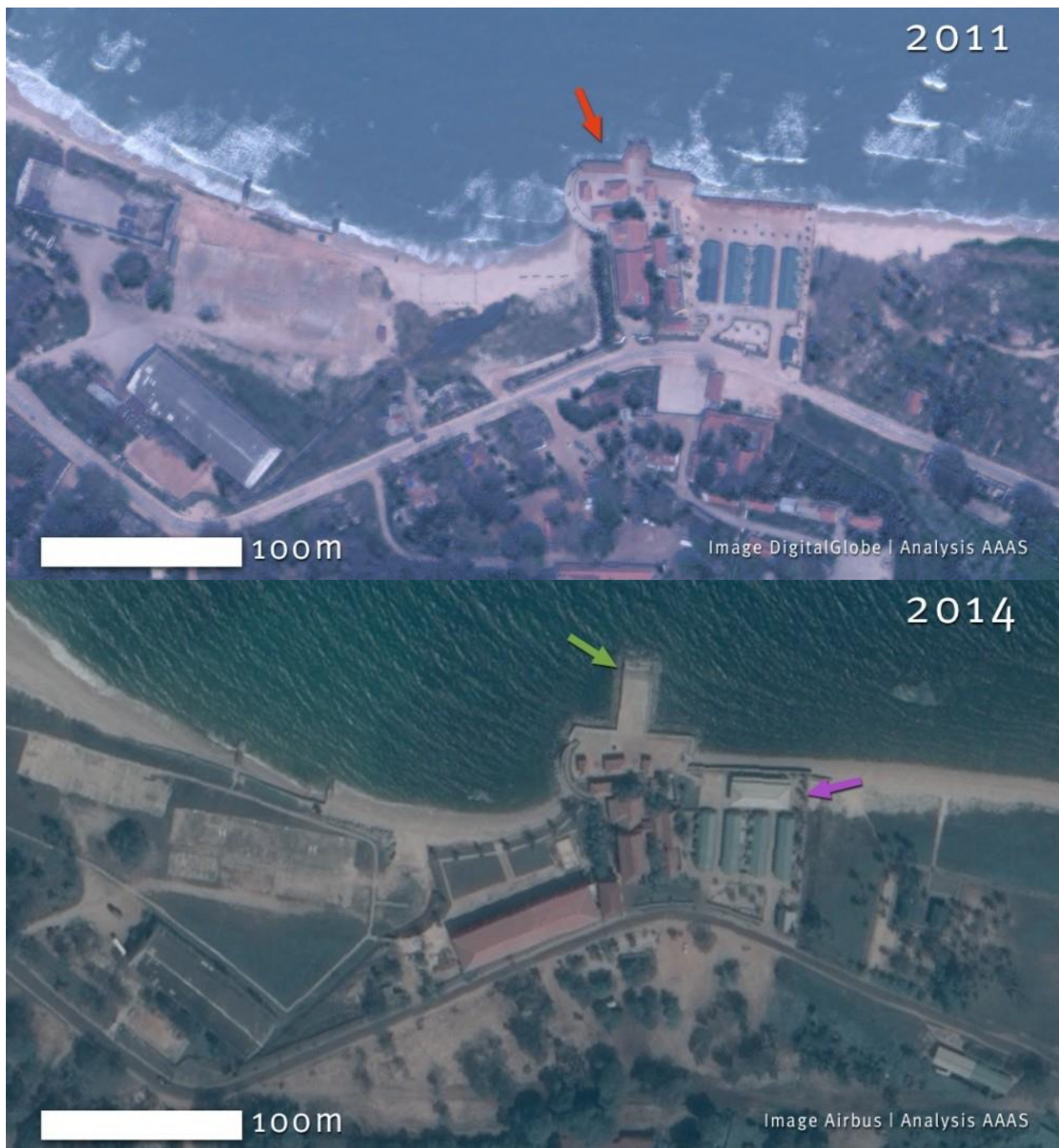
Figure 5: Thalsevana Holiday Resort



Source: http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20101003_02

Figure 6: Thalsevana Holiday Resort development



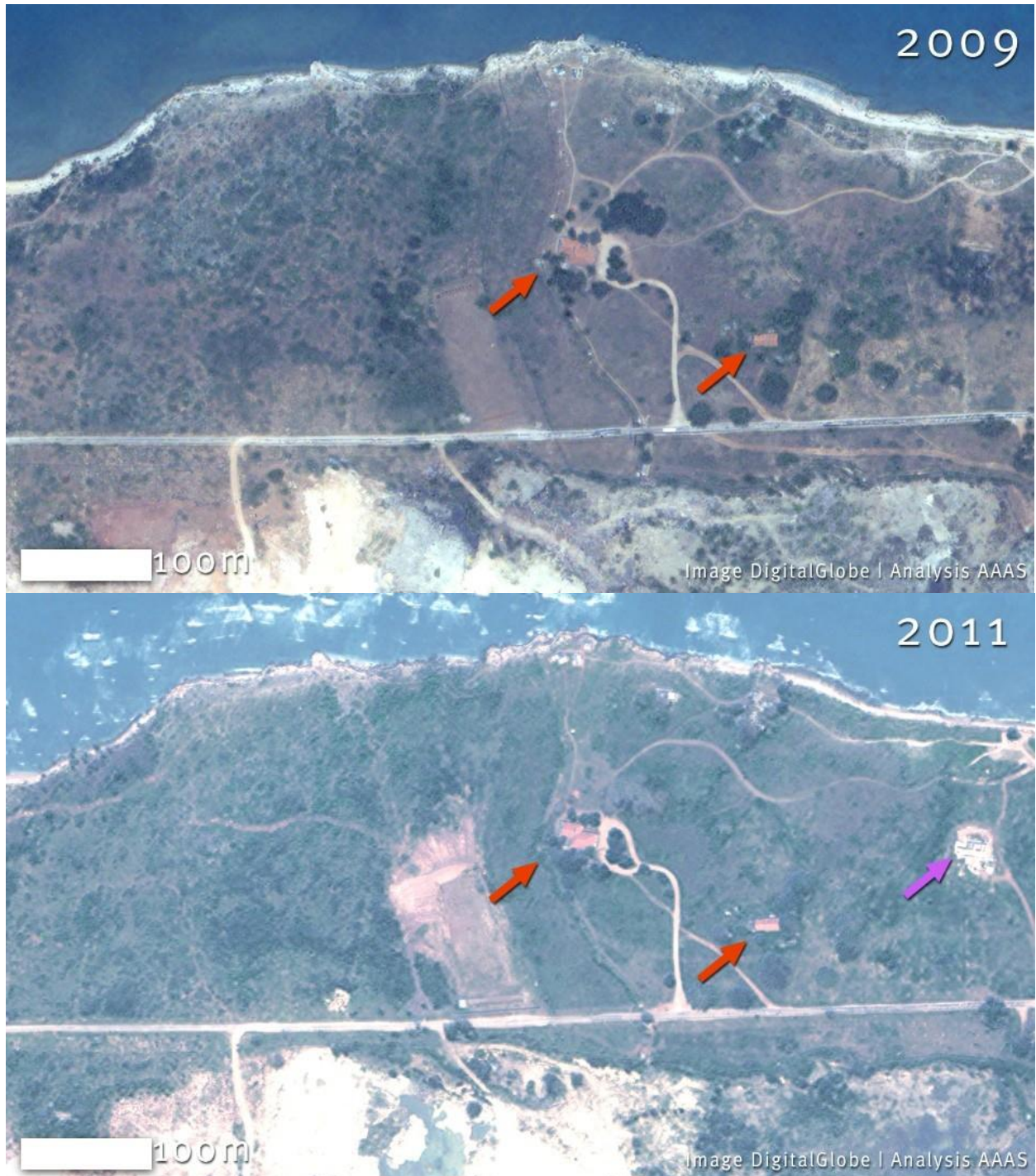


In 2009, the main building of the Thalsevana Resort is already constructed (pink arrow), while additional buildings are under construction (blue arrow), and numerous shipping containers are seen adjacent to the site (yellow arrows). By 2011, the buildings previously under construction have been completed, and an area along the beach is being built out into the ocean (red arrow). Finally, by 2014, one additional large building has been added to the site (purple arrow) along with several smaller buildings, and the expansion into the ocean has continued (green arrow). Top and middle images: DigitalGlobe/ Bottom Image: Airbus Defense and Space / Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.815N, 80.048756E.

At another location, less than 3km from Thalsevana, another large complex of buildings was constructed between 2011 and 2014 (Figure 7). In the first image, from 2009, only two large buildings are visible in the area, the larger measuring approximately 440m² and the smaller

approximately 165m². In 2011, in the eastern portion of the image, a large building is seen under construction. Finally, by 2014, numerous large structures have been built, ranging from 440m² to 1,600m².

Figure 7: Large complex constructed between 2011-2014

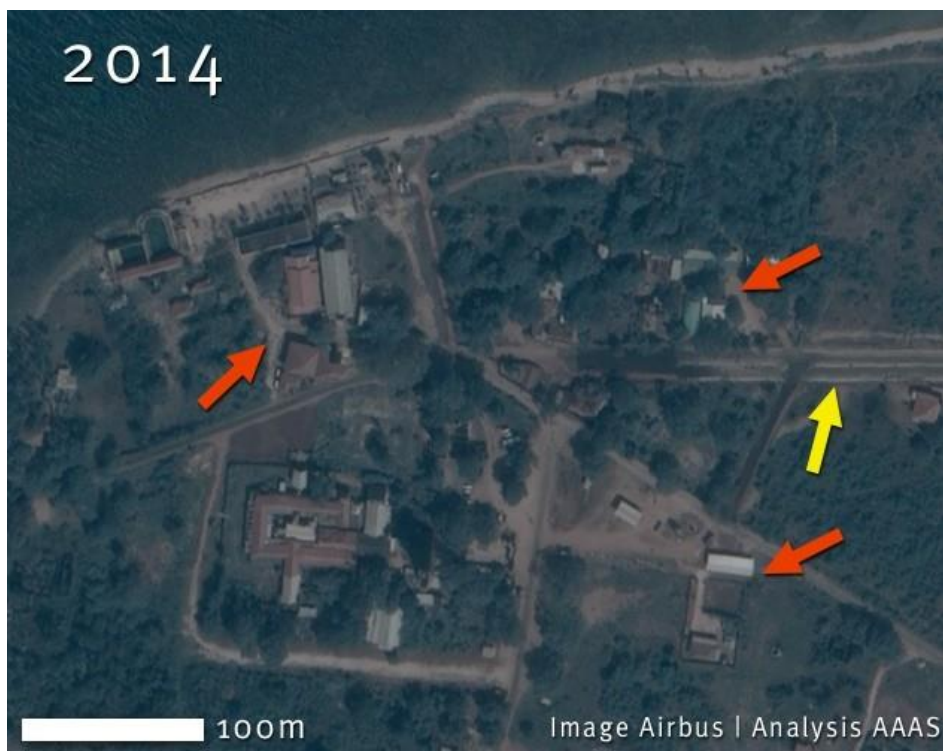




At a site near Thalsevana Holiday Resort, only two buildings are visible in 2009 (red arrows, top image). In 2011, an additional building is under constructions (purple arrow, middle image). Finally, between 2011 and 2014, this site changed dramatically (bottom image). The road running east-west below the complex has been expanded substantially (blue arrow), and numerous buildings have been added to the site, including one building under construction that has a footprint of 1,600m² (yellow arrow). Top and middle images: DigitalGlobe/ Bottom Image: Airbus Defense and Space | Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.815N, 80.021E.

Figure 8: Additional large development along HSZ coast

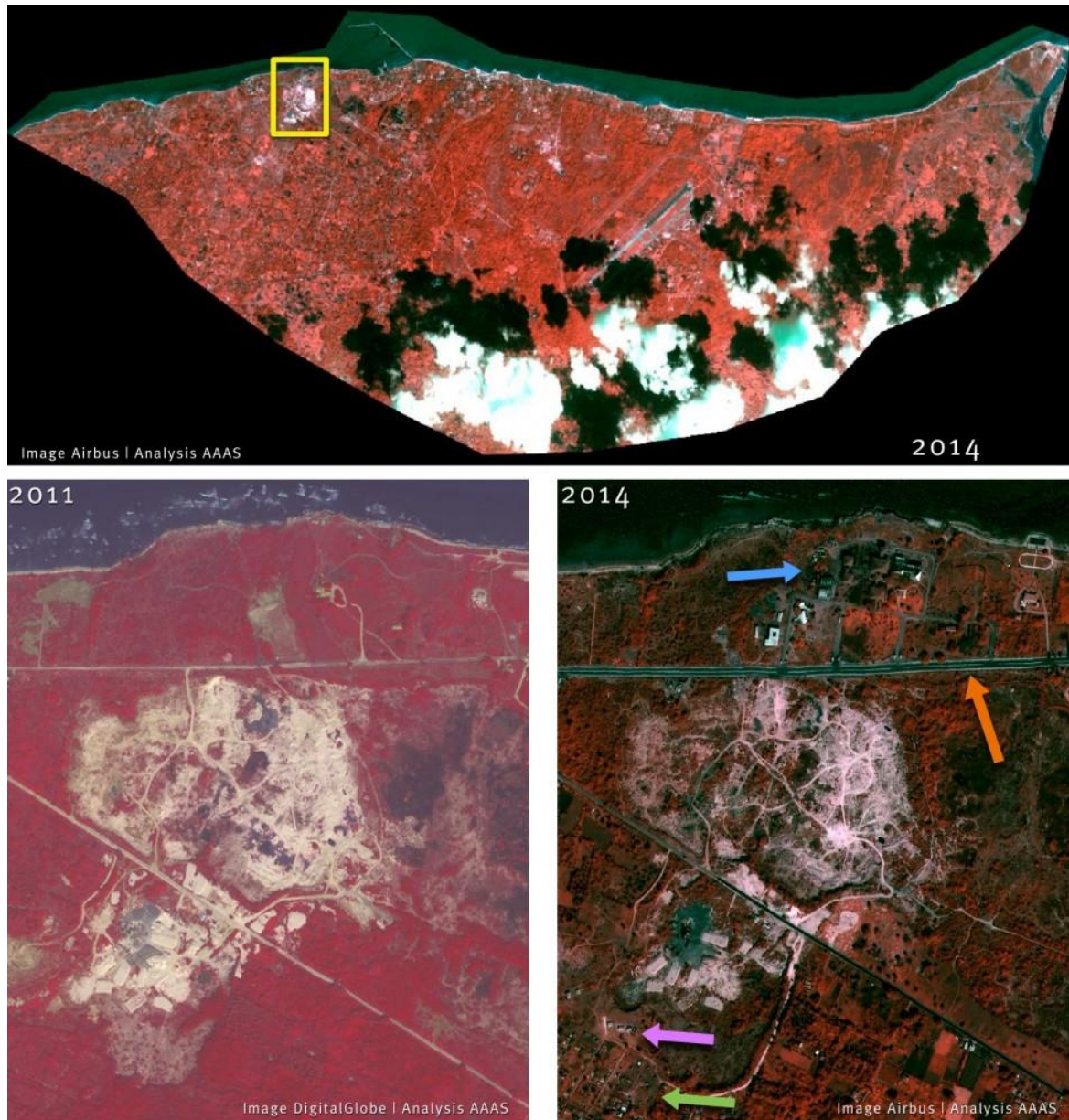




Another complex, located 1km west of the development in Figure 7 and 4km from the Thalsevana Holiday Resort (Figure 6) shows additional construction (green arrow) and a road (blue arrow). By 2014, several large structures have been added (red arrows) and the main road leading to the complex has been widened and paved (yellow arrow). Top and middle images: DigitalGlobe/ Bottom Image: Airbus Defense and Space | Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.815N, 80.011E.

Some changes were observed adjacent to a quarry within the HSZ between 2011-2014 (Figure 9), located just south of the large complex detailed in Figure 7. Several buildings were constructed within the site itself, and along the road running just north of the site.

Figure 9: Changes to quarry



Changes were observed in roads and structures at the quarry area near the northern coast between 2011 and 2014. These images highlight one area, marked by the yellow box in the topmost image. By 2014, additional buildings have been added within the site itself (e.g., purple arrow), as well as several large buildings directly on the coast (blue arrow, also shown in Figure 7), and numerous small buildings to the south of the area. An expansion of the major road running east-west just to the north of the mining area was also observed (orange arrow). Top and right images: Airbus Defense and Space/ Left Image: DigitalGlobe | Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.812N, 80.019E.

Little change was seen immediately outside the bounds of the HSZ, with one exception. Between 2009 and 2011 an existing network of roads was developed into a small housing area, with approximately 77 large structures, the majority of which measure between 30-40m².

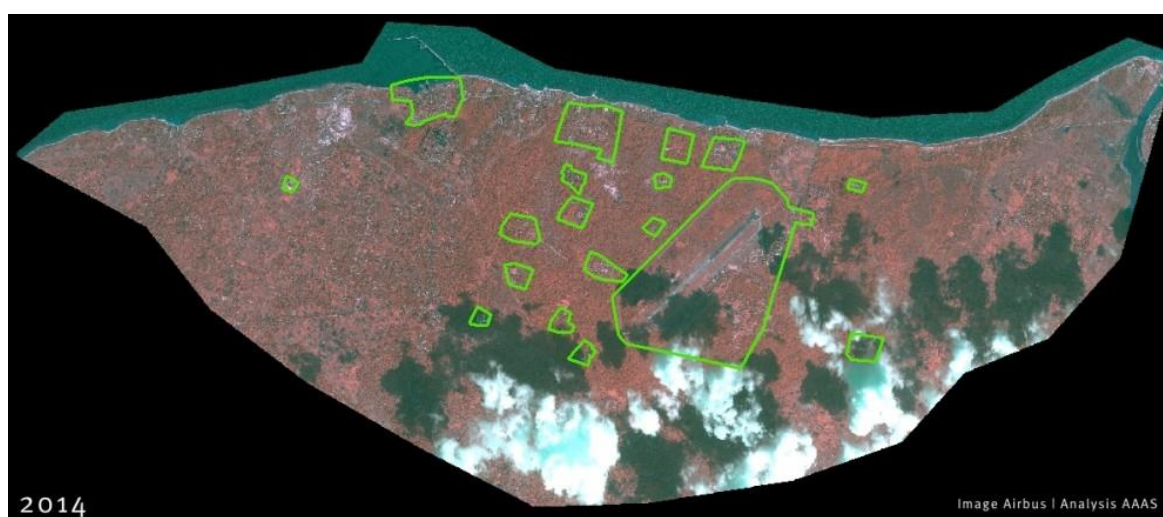
Figure 10: Changes outside the HSZ



In the area just outside the HSZ, few changes were apparent, with the exception of the housing development shown above, which was largely constructed between 2009 and 2011. A total of 77 dwelling-sized structures are visible by 2011- only 3 of which were present in 2009. In addition, dozens of smaller structures, possibly sheds, are visible surrounding the structures. Images DigitalGlobe | Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.773N, 80.085E.

The notice published by the Land Acquisition Officer authorizing the acquisition of the HSZ under the Land Acquisition Act of 1964 asserts that the land is required for a public purpose. ^[11] AAAS attempted to determine if the land acquired as part of the HSZ was being put to a public purpose by identifying areas potentially being used by public institutions and monitoring their growth throughout the study period. This was done under the assumption that an institutional use, e.g., a military base or a hospital, is more likely to be considered a public purpose than other uses such as residential or smallholder agriculture. However, as what constitutes a public purpose was not explicitly defined in the notice, it is possible that, under some definitions, a non-institutional use could be considered a public purpose. Although it is difficult to determine the purpose of structures based solely on satellite imagery, the presence of certain features can indicate institutional uses. These features include: fences and guard posts; large structures with similar building materials and dimensions; structures arranged in an orderly or planned fashion; a barrier (e.g. a road, forest, or field) separating the group of structures from other areas. However, it should be noted that the presence of these features does not necessarily indicate a public institution as businesses, factories, or other uses can be constructed in a similar fashion. Analyzing the 2014 image, 18 areas, containing 7.77 km² of land and primarily situated in the eastern two-thirds of the study area, were identified as potentially institutional (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Potentially Institutional Areas



The number of structures in these areas was then compared to the study area's total structure count to determine the extent to which the growth in the total number of structures in the study area occurred within potentially institutional areas (Table 3).

Table 3: Growth in potentially institutional areas^[12]

Image Date	Institutional Area New Structures	Institutional Area Removed Structures	Institutional Area Total Structures	Study Area Total Structures	Percent of Total Structures in Institutional Areas
2009	NA	NA	1126	3215	35.0%
2011	81	120	1087	3244	33.5%
2014	374	310	1137*	4731	24.0%

**14 structures that were present in 2011 in potentially institutional areas were obscured by clouds in the 2014 image.*

The count determined that, though new structures were constructed in institutional areas, these were largely offset by older structures being removed, and thus constituted a small percentage of the total number of new structures. As a result, the total number of structures in potential institutional areas did not change drastically during the study period. In addition, the potential institutional areas experienced more change between 2011 and 2014 than between 2009 and 2011.

The pattern of structure additions and removals varied between areas. In some areas, the type of structures removed differed from the new structures, as the removed structures were often small and similar in layout to residential structures, while the new structures were larger, warehouse type structures (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Small residential structures replaced by larger structures

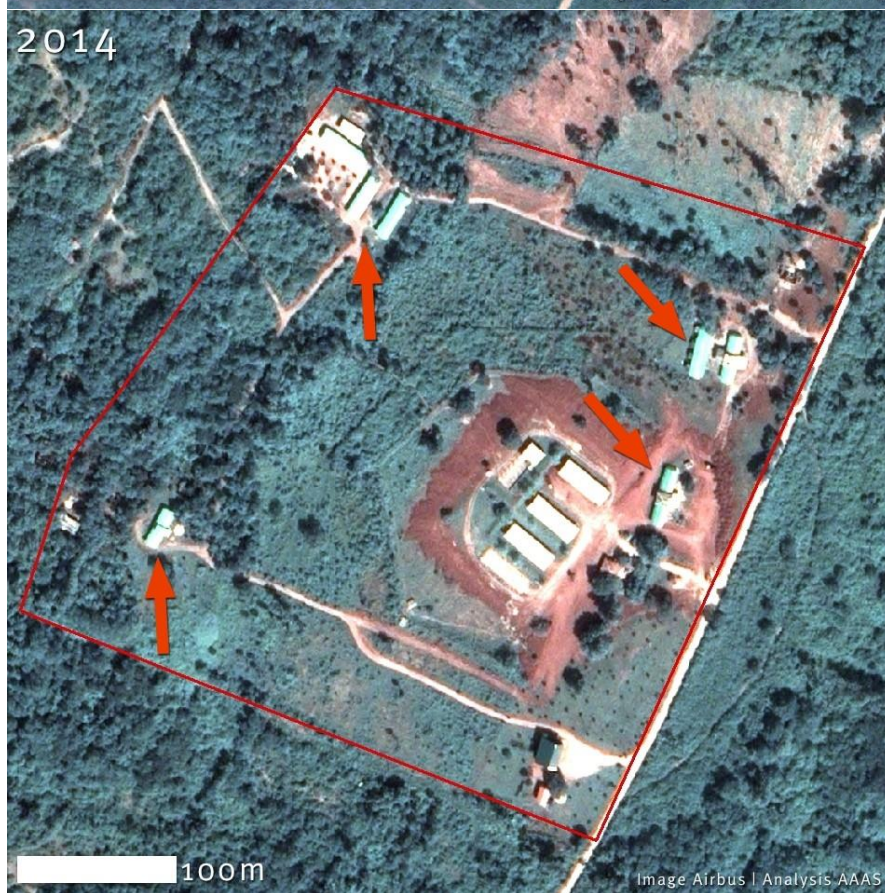
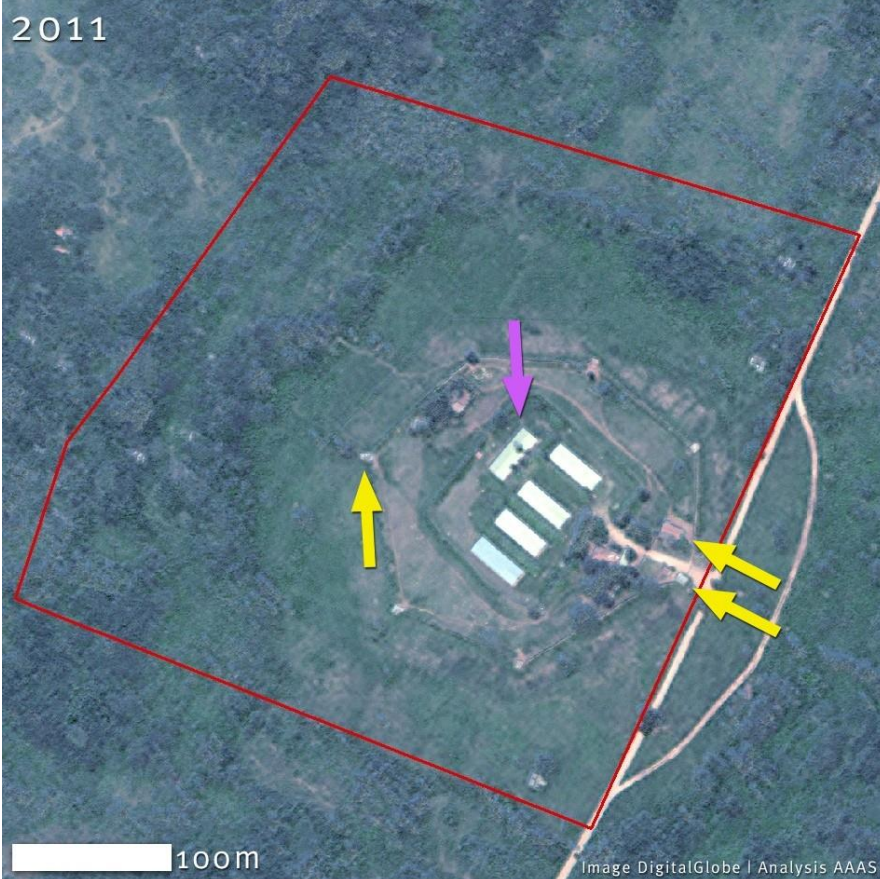




Between 2011 and 2012, several residential structures (yellow arrows) were removed from the area while multiple larger structures (red arrows) were constructed. Left Image: DigitalGlobe / Right image: Airbus Defense and Space | Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.8078N, 80.0726E.

In other areas, the type and layout of the structures indicated that the area was a military installation in 2011. In these areas, the removal of guard posts was observed between 2011 and 2014, as was the deterioration of existing structures. However, new, larger structures were constructed during the same time period (Figure 13). At a different area, marked as a hospital on the open source mapping platform wikimapia, a number of large structures are present in 2011.^[13] By 2014, a complex of several additional structures was added (Figure 14).

Figure 13: Structures removed and added to a potential military installation



Between 2011 and 2014, several small structures (yellow arrows) were removed and a half of the roof of larger structure (purple arrow) was damaged. In the same time period, multiple larger structures (red arrows) were constructed. Left Image: DigitalGlobe /Right image: Airbus Defense and Space / Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.7995N, 80.0525E.

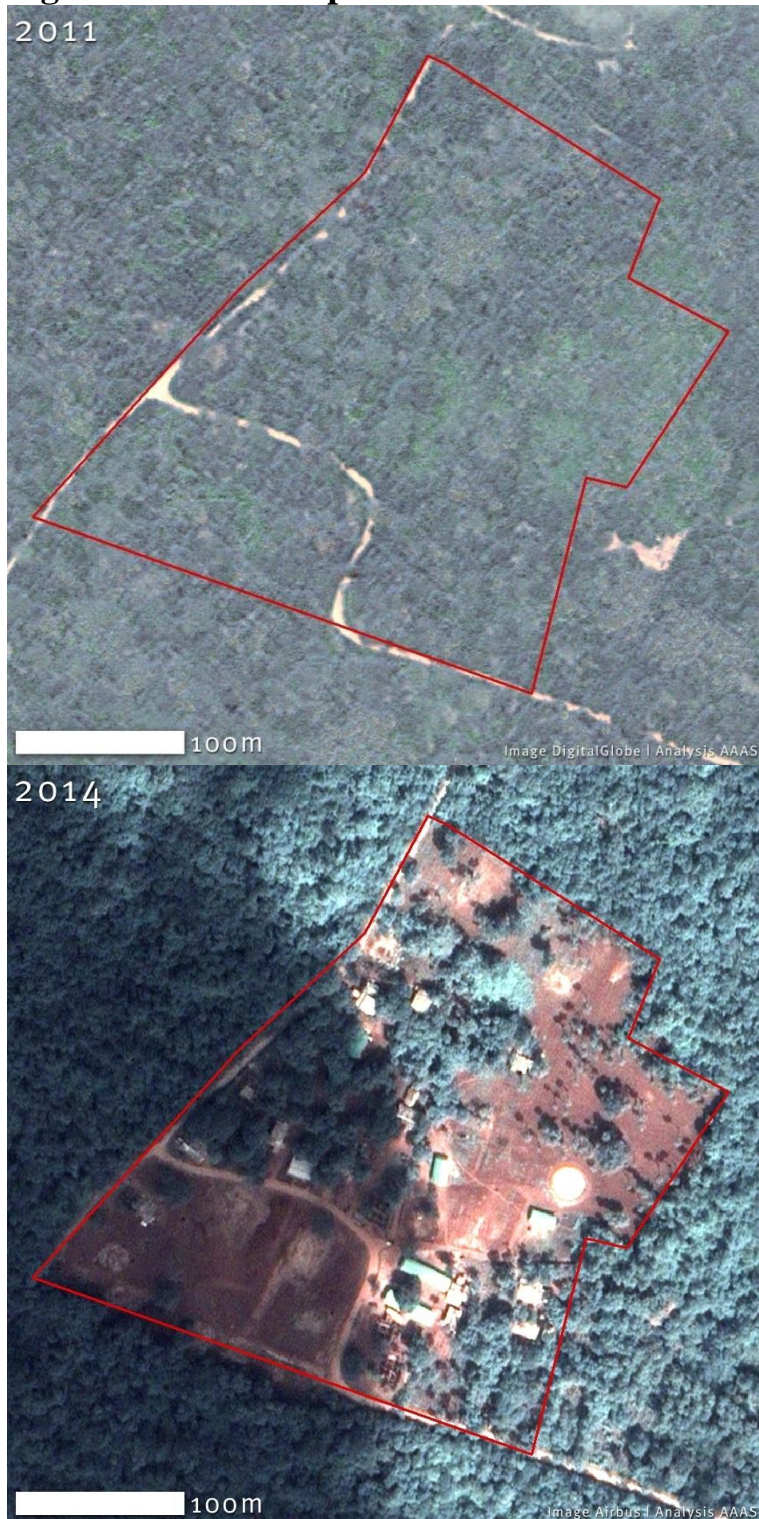
Figure 14: New structures added to a potential hospital complex



Between 2011 and 2014, a complex of several structures was added to a potential hospital. Left Image: DigitalGlobe / Right image: Airbus Defense and Space / Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.7852N, 80.0295E.

In four of the 18 identified institutional areas, no structures were present in 2011. By 2014, several structures had been built in a manner indicating that the land was being put to an institutional use (Figure 15).

Figure 15: New compound of structures



Between 2011 and 2014, a complex of several structures was added to a previously unoccupied area. Left Image: DigitalGlobe / Right image: Airbus Defense and Space / Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.7804N, 80.0535E.

These examples represent the types of changes that occurred at the 18 areas identified as potentially institutional. They include the removal of older structures and the addition of new, larger structures. In addition, an area that could be a hospital was expanded and four other areas were cleared to make space for new compounds. However, the vast majority of new construction occurred outside of these areas. Most of the construction was clustered in the western third of the study area. These structures ranged in size from 3x3 meters to 15x15 meters and tended to be clustered in a manner consistent with residential development. They were often bordered by cleared fields, indicating that agriculture was also occurring in the area (Figure 16).

Figure 16: New residential type structures near cleared fields



Between 2011 and 2014, large numbers of structures were added to the study area in a manner indicating that they were residential in nature. Left Image: DigitalGlobe / Right image: Airbus Defense and Space / Analysis AAAS. Location: 9.805N, 80.019E.

2.3 Conclusion

At the request of the Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice, the AAAS Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project examined the area known as the Valikamam High Security Zone over the period of 2009-2014. This HSZ, located on the northernmost point of the country, on the Jaffna Peninsula, has been under military control for several decades. AAAS investigated changes within the zone since the end of the 2009 military conflict. Specifically, AAAS aimed to assess claims by the SLC that the area was being developed outside the scope of military usage, particularly in light of assertions from former residents that they are unable to return to their former lands. AAAS observed a number of changes in the Zone during the study period relating to land use. The most obvious change was a dramatic increase in housing-style structures, particularly between 2011 and 2014 (Figure 3). This led to a lack of clarity regarding the delineation of the border between the HSZ and civilian areas (Figure 4).

To further analyze if the land was being put to public use, 18 potential institutional areas were delineated from the 2014 image. Structures in these areas were counted to assess the extent to which new structures were clustered in these areas. Though additional structures were observed in these areas, the number was minimal compared to the total number of structures added to the study area in the time period, indicating that the majority of development consisted of the construction of new residential structures.

In addition, many infrastructure changes were observed, including the creation of a large number of roads and improvements to existing roads, particularly in the form of road paving and widening. Alongside these infrastructure changes were several developments of the coastline, particularly the Thalsevana Holiday Resort and other large complexes of structures (Figures 6-8). Finally, an increased use of the land for farming was observed, but was not quantified because the images used for this analysis were from different times of the year, which precludes vegetation analysis.