



MAJOR GENERAL
W V K M WIMALARATNE

RWP RSP psc



ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES 2018
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Maj Gen G V D U A Perera RWP RSP USP USAWC psc

Delivers Lecture

at

**Maj Gen W I V K M Wimalarathne
RWP RSP VSV USP psc**

Annual Memorial Lecture Series

2018

LECTURE DELIVERED BY

MAJ GEN G V D U A PERERA RWP RSP USP USAWC PSC



Let me thank Director-General of INSSSL (Institute for National Security Studies in Sri Lanka) for inviting me to deliver Maj Gen Vijaya Wimalarathne memorial oration. It is an amazing feeling for me. It is like delivering my own fathers' memorial oration.

He is not only the father to Hiran and Nishanthi but also a father and mentor for many Army officers, especially Gagaba officers.

Let me first thank Mr Asanga Abeyagoonesekera, Director General of INSSSL and his team for organizing this event as it is a requirement of the day for the future generation to know the contribution made by great heroes like Maj Gen Wimlarathne and Kobbekaduwa in defeating terrorism, in laying a solid foundation to create a peaceful atmosphere for the progress of this great nation.

I can remember meeting Asanga at a reception on board a Bangladesh Navy Ship on a Port Call to Colombo last year, may be somewhere in June, and during our conversation, he indicated to me that he was going to organize a Memorial Oration for Gen Kobbekaduwa. I was extremely happy and congratulated him for the initiative and told him it was long overdue. At that moment, I also mentioned to him that Sri Lanka has produced two great Generals, two world-class military leaders who were second to none in the profession of arms. They were Vijaya Wimalarathne and Denzil Kobbekaduwa.

It is not possible to deliver an oration on Gen Denzil Kobbekaduwa without reference to Maj Gen Wimalarathne, not because they made the supreme sacrifice together, but because of their joint effort in laying a solid foundation to defeat



terrorism and save the nation for the next generation. It was a solid combination we will never see again. At that point, I told Asanga that our nation and the military will ever be grateful to him if he could extend his cooperation to organize a memorial oration for Maj Gen Vijaya Wimalarathne.

Today, it has become a reality and we are thankful to Asanga and his team for organizing this event and the Ministry of Defence for sanctioning it. When the oration was entrusted to me, I thought I should use the knowledge and information which I discern as his vision of this exceptional professional, the experience I garnered through the close association I had with this exemplary Infantry General, to enlighten you, especially the young military leadership to shape their professional life. Therefore, today I will be speaking on the theme; the Legacy of Maj Gen Vijaya Wimalarathne and his vision for a professional military.

Fareed Zakaria, the CNN Anchor and the Presenter of the Program called GPS (Global Public Square) once interviewed a senior scientist from NASA and asked him why the US Government and NASA spend an exorbitant amount of money on “Project Mars” when millions of global population are struggling to live. 26 million people perish due to non-communicable diseases, Ischaemic heart disease 8.6 M, strokes 6.24 M, Lower Respiratory Infections 3.1 m, Lung related 3.17, cancer 1.7 m, Diabetes 1.6 m, dementias 1.5, diarrheal diseases 1.4 m. Communicable disease such as Tuberculosis 1.3 m, Road injuries 1.4 m, 68.5 million are displaced, about 750 million live in extreme poverty and millions die due to starvation. Why can’t we spend the money you use to venture into Mars for a better cause. The scientist gave a one-sentence reply and I quote “single planet species perish whereas multiple-planet species are perpetual” that means they live forever. Can you get a better answer than that for ‘joint-ness’? These two-visionary military scientists, military philosophers believed to a great deal on concordance and practised it.



These two together were undefeatable and all the operations they planned and executed to victory and finite success were joint operations; from Vadamarachchi, Leap Forward, Clean Sweep, Sea Breeze, High Tide, Balavegaya 1 & 2, and the last one "Operation Final Countdown" which was on the drawing board when they got caught to a land mine 26 years ago, on the 8th of August 2018. That was fate and destiny.

For General Wimalaratne he always placed his motherland before self. He declined to proceed on NDC as he wanted to recapture Jaffna before handing over the Jaffna Command to another officer. He definitely would have accomplished the mission, if he had lived for a few more days. Determination and patriotism drive military commanders to victory and political leadership to maintain national will. We saw it in 2006 as well, when President Rajapaksa declared that he would annihilate terrorism as he did not wish to see the next generation suffering the way we suffered and the Commander of the Army Field Marshal Fonseka was determined to bring an end to the war by the completion of his tenure. He said, I quote "I will not leave the problem to the next Army Commander". Both could accomplish their missions in unison, as their intentions were made of a shared vision of the nation and the Army respectively.

Wanigamuni Indrajith Vijaya Kumara Mendis Wimalarathne was born on the 25th August 1940 as the second of a family of eight boys. From his young days, he displayed the qualities of a leader by taking the responsibility of disciplining the seven boys. He was born with leadership. After joining the military, he was destined to join the new Infantry Regiment, the Gamunu Watch where his leadership was in demand in organizing the new infantry regiment into an effective entity. The litmus test of his leadership was the amalgamation of the Rajarata Rifles and Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment to make the most prestigious and battle-worthy regiment in the Sri Lanka Army where he proved his leadership and management skills beyond doubt. Amalgamations are common even in the cooperate world, but the success rate is minimal. The biggest challenge in an amalgamation is reconciling two perceptions into one. Jim Collins, author of the book entitled “Good to Great” after research found that amalgamations generally fail even under charismatic leadership. Samuel Huntingdon in his book, Clash of Civilizations aptly propounded how cultures bound to clash. Richard D Lewis in his book entitled When Cultures Collide explains through an array of research findings the difficulty to reconcile cultures. The alternative is absorbing cultures by way of overwhelming power, economic, military or otherwise. In societies, hasty action in absorption or reconciliation can lead to other complications or conflicts such as terrorism, extremism, insurgencies, violent social movements.



Maj Gen Wimalarathne, the greatest military leader ever produced by Sri Lanka Army was a challenge to the theories of Huntington, Collins and Lewis and the



likes. He proved that an inspirational level 5 leader could achieve success through amalgamation. A befitting example of this effect is the elite war machine popularly known as the Gajaba Regiment. In the year 1983, the government was to make a crucial decision on disbanding the Rajarata Rifles due to certain incidents that took place in the north. Lt Col Wimalarathne, the Commanding Officer of the 1st Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment had a different idea altogether.

His proposal to the military higher command was an amalgamation of the two regiments; namely Rajarata and Vijayabahu as disbandment could bring in long and short-term adverse consequences to the nation and the military. A similar case is the Iraq military's disbandment after the so-called military defeat of Iraq in May 2003 which led to a virtual void in democratic governance. The enormous responsibility of the amalgamation fell on the shoulders of the advocate himself. An advocate turned architect Vijaya Wimalarathne took the challenge and commenced extensive planning and decided to house both regiments at Saliyapura camp. As just passed out young officers, what we saw and experienced at that time was fractions and frictions at every level.

Lt Col Wimalarathne, who had a wealth of experience in raising the Gemunu Watch after working closely under Col John F Halangode, anticipated the issues he was going to face and therefore his first move was to get the leadership of both battalions on board. Being a crafty strategist and a specialist in jungle warfare, the environment he selected to reconcile the leadership was not a five-star hotel, but his favourite place - the Jungle, Thanthirimale Jungle. When we were told to be prepared for a jungle exercise after being at Saliyapura for a few days, our morale was in the boot.

We were wondering as to why we should proceed to a jungle for an exercise when there was a tremendous amount of work in hand and the exercise participants were only officers and senior NCOs who were loaded with work. This jungle



exercise is etched in our fond memories as the best picnic in our lives. We had a few miles of walking during the day time, as it was designated as a jungle exercise, but the evening was fun. We had a campfire with barbeque, good spirits, sang songs and danced. When we left the jungle, we were in the new infantry battalion and there was no trace of Rajarata and Vijayabahu. We were even inspired to shed our Rajarata and Vijayabahu Regimental insignia under one Commanding Officer.

There he created the path for the Wimlarathne legacy and laid the foundation for the greatest Regiment in the Sri Lanka Army. The Gajaba Regiment, he fathered was entreated by every field commander. The officers he groomed were always in high demand for the field as well as staff appointments. The best proof is the number of Gajaba Battalions that participated in the 2006 – 2009 Humanitarian Operation which defeated the ruthless LTTE. Not a single battalion of Gajaba was spared.

Not only the battalions but also the field commanders and officers who held crucial appointments, almost all represented the legacy of Gen Wimalarathne. Field Marshal Fonseka, the legendary leader who played a crucial role in defeating the LTTE displayed the quality of a Level 5 leader by considering “who” first and “what” next concept. This theory recommends selecting your team first and then planning the mission using their knowledge and experience. The takeaway is; the leader’s success depends on his ability to select the suitable team. Field Marshal Fonseka accommodated only the best onboard, and threw the rest out of the bus in his own style, a decision that drove us to the victory. Thereafter with the team, he decided on the route to proceed. I am extremely proud to be in that Hybrid Bus and we had astute field commanders such as; Jagath Dias, Kamal Gunaratne, Shavendra Silva, Chagi Gallage, Nirmal Dharmaratne, Jagath Alwis positioned in different crucial seats in the bus.



We all are humble and genuinely proud to be on the bus driven by Field Marshal Fonseka, another Great Tactician the Sri Lanka Army has ever produced. Gen Wimalarathne and Field Marshal Fonseka had an extraordinary aptitude to relate the map to the ground which helped them in championing tactical manoeuvres.

There was another gentleman groomed by Gen Wimalarathne who played a very crucial role in guiding the victorious bus. He is none other than the former Defence Secretary, Lt Col Gotabaya Rajapaksa (Rtd) RWP RSP psc.

Speculations were ripe that there was political influence in selecting the team that played the crucial role which is wrong a claim. I, as the Director Operations, was closely involved in the decision-making process and can confirm that not only the passes to the bus was issued by Field Marshal Fonseka, he personally allocated the seats without any biases.

Ladies and gentlemen, these Generals who were Frontline Commanders were a mischievous lot of Second Lieutenants and Lieutenants under the watchful eye of Gen Wimalarathne during the early '80s. It was definitely not an easy endeavour to control and discipline them, but he did it exceptionally well with his experience in disciplining mischievous seven brothers at home, without letting anyone go berserk. I need to admit here that if it was for any other Commanding Officer, half of us would not have made it to the rank of Generals. We are his legacy and I am sure he should also be proud in his grave for producing the best set of Generals to the Army who was instrumental in defeating the LTTE.

Gen Wimalrthne was a great visionary and a dreamer like Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela and a Charismatic figure like Winston Churchill. Charismatic leaders have a liability of being getting isolated as their charisma deter subordinates from reaching them, even if they reach it will be doctored to be



good. Therefore they use various tactics to overcome the situation. Churchill during the war created a special department called the Statistical Department to ensure the uninterrupted information flow. He wanted to know unfiltered brutal facts and realities to make crucial decisions.

Gen Wimalarathne got his feedback and information by socializing with officers and reaching men in the fields of sports and training. General Wimalarathne as a ritual celebrated every victory in the evening with his subordinates and he was ready for PT at 6 the next day. I have never seen him getting tired. He is the only officer I have seen leading the operation in the morning, playing a game of Basketball in the afternoon, socializing with officers in the evening and then without retiring to bed as we do, he will first write the Operation Completion Report, then the commendations for gallantry for officers and men, and if time permits a few hours of sleep. Not only was he a brave and bold field commander, but he was also the best Staff Officer I have ever met in my military career.

He had the ability to write fast and clear. Clerks will take days to type what he has written within a just few hours. Officers and men under him were commended lavishly and recommended for medals for their achievements without delay, and that led to consistency in performance by the Gjaba Regiment.

This visionary leader strongly believed in reforms. In the book entitled Hit Refresh Microsoft's first non-American and Indian origin CEO, Satya Nadella explains how important it is for any organization to undertake reforms periodically to achieve success.

Satya Narayana Nadella is an Indian American business executive. He is the Chief Executive Officer of Microsoft, who succeeded Steve Ballmer in 2014. Born: August 19, 1967, Hyderabad, India, Salary: \$20.0 million (2017), a smart Indian. Satya also explains how reforms should be planned and executed with precision in an environment that always resists reforms and change.



Societies resist change to continue living in comfort zones and many leaders succumb to the popular demand, whereas successful and effective leaders undertake change and reform as a challenge to prevent ‘Boiled Frog’ syndrome. Let me explain the parable of the boiled frog to understand the dangers of failing to read the changing environment. You can experiment this, not now, but later at home. First, catch two frogs, then take two pots with water. Put one frog into the water, you will see the frog enjoying the water with a passionate swim at room temperature. Then keep the pot on a stove and slowly increase the temperature of the water by boiling it. It will be amazing to see the frog continuing to enjoy the water and swim until the frog is boiled to death. Boil the other water pot and then insert the frog you will see that it will instantly react and jump over to live for another day.

It is the same with any organization, organizations perish while the staff is in their comfort zones. This happens to industries as well. For example, the automobile industry in the US experienced this in the early 50s. American products like GM(General Motors), FORD, Chrysler, and Chevrolet enjoyed a larger market share in comparison to Japanese products such as Toyota, Nissan, Honda.

American automobile industry didn't change in keeping with the environmental changes like the Japanese car industry. Slowly the Japanese cars became popular resulting in a death blow to the US automobile industry just like the boiled frog. The American car industry would have survived if they had assessed the gradual growth of Japanese cars.

In our scenario, this visionary leader assessed the growth of the LTTE, and he realized that the military was not reforming to the same pace of the terrorists and thus we were in danger. At the beginning of the conflict, our military was not ready to take on the LTTE and other terrorist groups (30 in number). We as young officers experienced technological advancement in military products through the



LTTE. I saw a 40 mm grenade and an RPG for the first time in Kokilai after the failed attempt by the LTTE on an isolated platoon detachment in Kokilai led by Ggajaba warrior, Capt Shantha Wijesinghe, a PWV recipient.

Our infantry was just soldiers with a rifle and a section with Bren 12.7 mm British LMG, though it was called Light Machine Gun, it weighed 12 kg (produced in 1938) whereas the Chinese RPD which we use now, is only 7 Kg in weight. We were disorganized for a defeat instead of organized victory.

Gen Wimalarathne gave the leadership for a complete overhaul of the infantry and others followed suit.

Peter Senge in his masterpiece management volume entitled the Fifth Discipline talks about a Learning Organization, for any organization public or private, state or corporate, to become an effective entity, it should undertake fearless reforms continuously to meet the rapid challenges of the environment. In the concept of a learning organization, the entire membership led by its leader should undertake continuous learning. He proposed five disciplines, Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Team Learning, Shared Vision and System Thinking to succeed. I had the privilege of reading this book in 2012. When I was reading it, I saw the image of this great soldier through its pages like a watermark, I visualized his persona adopting those techniques in transforming infantry from rudimentary stage to be one of the best infantries in the world. I have no hesitation in claiming that our infantry at that time was the best in the world because of its resilience and efficiency. He transformed a weak infantry to a great infantry. How did he do it? I GR, or the first battalion the Gajaba Regiment was first formulated into R&D setup.

This was the early '80s and everyone in the battalion was entrusted with a subject to research; some on new equipment, some on the organization, meals, dress from uniforms, boots, headgear etc. Everyone was on the bandwagon



including officers, men, tradesmen such as tailors, cobblers, cooks, mechanics, drivers. Learning, researching and innovatively developing an array of equipment; carrying packs for various equipment and food MRI (Meals Ready to Eat). We had to continuously, without break research and develop many items until the boss was satisfied. This was an extremely arduous mission because his standards were high. May be due to the initial training he received from the Indian Military Academy and professional training from the British Staff College and more importantly his own DNA, the born-leader in Vijaya Wimalarthna.

Finally, the organization was transformed and new weapon systems, equipment, vehicles were introduced. All this was done in keeping the country's economy in mind. He was a firm believer that the Military should not be a burden to the nation, but an asset it should be. This innovative military commander introduced the tractor as an alternative combat vehicle, though he knew it was not the best.

However, he was careful enough to hide the use of this machine from the public eye as it ran the risk of affecting the image of the military, in turn, their deterrent power. If he was alive, the first thing that he would have done was to remove the tractor from the military immediately after the victory in 2009.

General's innovative approach helped us to develop much equipment in support of the Humanitarian Operation in 2006/2009. As Director Operation, I was able to initiate many innovative projects to produce warlike equipment such as gas masks to counter the LTTE chemical attacks, battle ladders to negotiate Ditch-cum-bund defence, conversion of 40 feet containers into mega cloth dryers to dry 40,000 wet uniforms and boots during monsoons, Bangalore torpedoes to create mine safe lanes using sky rockets from Kimbulapitiya, modification of 60mm mortars to deliver various substances, cannibalization of many weapon systems during periods of embargo by the west, modification of vehicles to stand

landmines and many more. Wimalarathne legacy inspired us to take on these innovative projects.



Prior to restructuring, infantry's lowest fighting entity was a buddy pair and he changed it and introduced the buddy trio to the infantry by increasing the firepower with an LMG in every buddy trio. Section strength was reduced from ten to nine, but the effectiveness was increased with additional firepower.

Introduction of buddy trio to the infantry was a revolutionary change and the beginning of the small group operations that culminated in special forces LRRP (Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol) that hunted down the ruthless LTTE leadership behind enemy lines, deep inside enemy territory during the 2006-2009 period. New weapons such as 60mm mortar, 81 mm Mortar, 40 mm Grenade Launcher, RPG 7, RCL, night vision, flame throwers, weapon sights for snipers, laser indicators, new types of grenades, carrying packs and equipment harnesses, armour-plated tractors and dozers were introduced to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the infantry organization. Camouflage and barring rank insignia on the battlefield to prevent identification were his ideas.

Battalion Scales for arms, ammunition, equipment and food too were introduced after extensive research and trials. The next step was training. Innovative training packages were introduced to enhance the capability of fighting in built-up areas and night fighting. Special platoon training and joint training with the Navy and



Air Force were done under his guidance. This is the strong foundation that he laid in the early 80s to pave way for the victory in 2009.

War is an extension of politics-this is a golden adage that is applicable to all eternities by the military strategist and philosopher Karl Von Clausewitz. Sri Lanka and its conflict is not an exception. War and peace are declared by the political leadership as part of governance and a professional military should be prepared for all eventualities while maintaining deterrence. During the period of the Sri Lankan conflict, many attempts were made to find a political solution through dialogue.

While accepting the political sanity in pursuing a political solution based on the local, regional and international landscape the hard reality was LTTE's craftiness in using those periods of peace talks or cease-fire to their advantage to enhance their military capability by training and equipping themselves. Therefore, the military had to pay the ultimate price.

After the famous peace talks in Thimpu, the security environment in the North and East was in a critical condition. All the camps were surrounded by the terrorists. There were about 30 terrorist groups operating hand in glove to defeat the Sri Lankan military establishment. Soldiers could not even move within the perimeters of the camps in the North as every movement was targeted by snipers and by heavy mortars.

Those mortars were nicknamed "Baba" and "Gini Baba". While Baba contained high explosives and metal particles such as nuts and bolts, Gini Baba was an incendiary bomb. We could hear the launch of the mortar and sentries will shout 'Baba" and give an early warning for the entire camp to take hardcover. Casualties were on the rise day by day and logistics was a nightmare. Every logistic convoy was a hard-fought battle.



Helicopters couldn't land due to restricted space. During daylight, even to answer the call of nature was a challenge and a decision. You should make the call whether to move and die or postpone the activity to hours of darkness.

1Gajaba Regiment (GR) headquarters was at Vasvilan next to Palaly airport and its airstrip was a lucrative target for the terrorist. The moral of the soldiers dropped low. The political establishment was shaken up and had serious doubt about the military's capability. We were virtually dancing to the tune of Prabhakaran, a reactive force. That was the time this great leader planned and executed a series of military excursions to expand the camps with the declared aim of relieving the burden of the soldier, but the strategic mission was to give confidence to the government about the military establishment and its capabilities.

Over and above, those military manoeuvres were battle rehearsals for the major offensive operation code-named, Operation Liberation or commonly known as Operation Vadamarachchi which was on the drawing board.

Operation Liberation was the first-ever Brigade Level Operation conducted by the Sri Lanka Army. Two brigades were in the offensive and those were commanded by Brig Kobbekaduwa and Col Wimalaratne. Col Vijaya Wimalathne was the Commanding Officer of 1 GR at that time and Army Commander General Wanasinghe requested him to command "3 Brigade".

Col Wimalaratne entrusted the command of IGR to his trusted and battle-hardened Second in Command Maj Gotabaya Rajapaksa. I have never heard of such a move in military history. I know the relationship between these two were not at the best during initial stages of the amalgamation and formation of the Gajaba Regiment. Things changed later after a few rough patches in the relationship. This is a unique quality of the General, he never carried grudges



with anyone, especially with his juniors. He was not vindictive at all. The true quality of a professional military commander.

Operation Liberation commenced on the 26th May 1987 and progressed with heavy resistance until 4th June where the operation had to be abandoned due to Indian intervention. India dropped food using Indian Air Force cargo aircraft escorted by fighters, the operation was code-named Operation Poomali. The operation involved five An-32s of the Paratroop Training School in Agra, escorted by five Mirage 2000s of the No. 7 Squadron.

Many political and military analysts view the situation at that time differently. Some analysts were of the opinion that we could have defeated the LTTE in 1987 if Operation Liberation had continued till the end.

Others have differing views. As professional military personnel, we all should know that terrorism cannot be defeated with a single military move. However, isolating the terrorists from society through a socio-political approach and taking on the isolated terrorist by the military is the solution for insurgencies and terrorism.

Operation Liberation could have given the military a great tactical advantage and the strength for the political establishment to find a political solution. Unfortunately, Operation Poomali strengthened the position of the terrorists thereby suffering from the civilians continued to the next 25 years. This is how a short-sighted action could lead to long term conflicts. The most important lesson for governance that naturally comes out from this VUCA situation is the importance of a regional and global political will to resolve or to wage war over and above the national will. When we precipitated the Humanitarian Operation in 2006 - 2009, Sri Lanka was able to shape the regional and global political landscape through astute political and diplomatic manoeuvres.



Gen Wimalarathne read the politico-military contours extremely well and took all possible measures to avoid major conflict with our neighbour on one hand. And on the other, he educated the local leadership on the importance of military deterrence and political maturity in national security. He also commented on the disadvantage of having a strategic airstrip in the peninsula which can lead to a threat to national security as we had to disable the airstrip to prevent a landing. A nation should be cautious of its ability to preserve its values and safeguard its legitimate national interests at any cost in maintaining national security.

Ladies and Gentlemen, any military establishment consist of three main pillars; namely Physical, Conceptual and Moral. Gen Wimalarathne's vision for a professional military addresses all three pillars to achieve maximum military deterrence to avoid conflict, to avoid interference by other nations in our domestic affairs and to deal with domestic eventualities such as insurgencies and terrorism.

Our intention is not to strengthen the physical component with nuclear power, but to have the proper strength and equipment of a professional military to secure all domains from internal and external aggression.

Second, the conceptual component should be strengthened by training, education, research and development.

Last but not least, the Moral component or the pillar - how you shape your military to be a universally-accepted professional military, a well-disciplined entity that upholds universal and local values.

I, as a follower of Wimalarathne Doctrine, introduced his vision through a set of values to DSCSC, Sri Lanka National Guards and the Gajaba Regiment. First, a set of values was introduced to the Staff College and the Sri Lanka National Guard and I saw the transformation to my own eyes and those values are embedded in the minds of all officers and men. Finally, when I was privileged to



take over the command of the Gajaba Regiment, strictly going by General's vision a set of values was introduced to ensure that Gajaba follows the Wimalarathne Doctrine forever.

The uniqueness in all three sets is the driving tenet 'Common Sense' that binds the values together and encourages learning to enhance knowledge. For any profession, common sense is deemed vital than ever before.

Gen Vijaya Wimalarathne was a traditionalist who believed in customs, traditions and regimentation. He attended every single wedding and proposed a toast loaded with advice to the newly wedded couple and to their relatives. He had the ability to quickly scan and identify individuals whom a message should be driven and did it flawlessly. He was an excellent orator of his own style.

Generally, scientific research has found that motivation as a non-entity and if an organization to flourish you should avoid demotivation and also strive to recruit motivated personnel. That is why recruitment and selection are vital, you should decide who should be on the bus and who should not be allowed on the bus. Jim Collins talks in length about the subject of motivation in his book Good to Great. However, this theory was challenged by this great soldier-general by motivating men in his own art and style. In the battlefield, his presence alone was a motivating factor and his call sign "Bull Dog" over the radio echoed and gave confidence to troops, alertness to commanders and fear to Prabakaran and his consorts.

You as budding leaders should be aware of a theory which is very important- in becoming a level-five leader in selecting your team, in selecting people to be on your bus and in deciding who should be pushed out of the bus, it is the Theory of diffusion of innovation that matters. Any society consists of people of different capabilities and attitudes and as per the theory of diffusion of innovation only 2.5% are innovators, 13.5 % are early adopters, 34% are early Majority, another



34 % represent the late majority and last 16% are laggards. These figures represent a bell curve.

Gen Vijaya Wimalathne falls into that tiny bracket of 2.5%, innovator category. Who are the others in this category; Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Right Brothers, Martin Luther King and definitely Gen Denzil Kobbekaduwa. If you want leaders in your, the bus they should be innovators or early adopters of 16 %; 2.5 + 13.5. If you are looking for followers, they should come from the category called the early majority (34%). Other 50% of the society may not stand a chance in a professional military. This will solve the serious issue of desertion in the military. The billion-dollar question is; how to identify this 2.5% at the recruitment which requires a scientific approach.

All and sundry felt Gen Wimalathne's presence in the battlefield in many ways; commanders were obliged to be in front as he was, all felt the precision in execution, logisticians were on toes, frontline soldiers felt the smoothness in supplies, casualties were confident of their evacuation, navy and air force were battle-ready to react, and higher commanders were on pins not knowing his next daredevil manoeuvre and prepared the staff for his next possible request, that will always be demanding but reasonable, therefore, there was no chance of saying no. Deshapremi songs were played by the General using two traditional loudspeakers mounted on his land rover to facilitate the tempo in fighting. His ability to read the situation on the field fast accelerated the decision-making process.

Regimentation helped build trust and respect. He taught us many things by example and advice. Gen Wimalathne, as a practice, sat with us at lunch and dinner table and many important subjects were discussed during those long sessions. It was virtually a Staff College syndicate discussion.

When he comes to the table, crockery and cutlery are laid and well-attired waiters serve just like at a Regimental Dinner Night, he hates buffets and advised us that



buffets are not meant for officers and that officers should be served, it should only be fine dining. He encouraged this practice even in the Sergeants' Mess. You can see the strategic thinking of this man even in trivial matters, we never trained our waiters for dinner nights and functions due to on-the-job training they received without much effort. Dinner and luncheon sessions were mess etiquette lessons for young officers.

From every move, he built trust between the leader and the led, within and without the community. Allow me to quote Stephen Covey who wrote an excellent book entitled "Speed of Trust" that can change everything and anything; in that book Stephen proves that success in the corporate sector lies on trust, within the company, the trust between the management and coworkers increase production, in the community trust increases the bond between the product and the consumer. His formula is; with the increase of the trust the production goes up and the cost comes down when trust decreases, the production comes down and the cost goes up.

The Wimalarathne Doctrine encompasses first to build the trust within, to increase the efficiency of the Regiment and the Army. Secondly, to build that trust with the community to provide a safe and secure environment. Militaries in the 21st century are required to have a program to build trust in the community if we are to avoid another period of social unrest that will lead to insurgency and terrorism. In the communication age security is provided through bridges connecting communities, not raising walls to disconnected communities. Trust in the military revolves around professionalism and deterrence. How does Covey's formula apply to security? when the trust increases, the dividends of peace increase and conflict decreases. The flip side of the coin is -when trust decreases the dividends of peace decreases and conflict increases.



Let's turn to the trust in the Wimalarathne family unit. The focal point in the family unit is the lady. It is emphatically believed; there is a woman behind every successful man. We are very fortunate to have that lady in the audience with us today. General left the management of the household affairs to his beloved wife Madam Manel Wimalarathne.

Nishanthi and Hiran are living examples of her achievement. Both are doctors by profession and lead an exemplary life. These humble human beings are a perfect model for the profession of medicine which is losing trust due to lack of professionalism demonstrated by a few in the medical profession. Mrs Manel Wimalarathne, a teacher by profession, took a great deal of effort to groom not only Hiran and Nishanthi but also us and our ladies from the inception of our career and her Army of Royal students. For that Army of Royalists, she was the virtual Commander in Chief and for the husband at times. She not only attended all regimental events but also contributed immensely in organizing those events and all the officers and ladies of the regiment adore her for her role as the First Lady.

In conclusion, let's put Wimalarathna Vision into context. If you apply Wimalarathne Doctrine in the present context, we should stop thinking small and weak. We are a growing nation and not a shrinking nation as some evaluate. 65610 (120) is only the landmass but, we are blessed with a large ocean around us. First the territorial waters and the vast EEZ which is 7 times of the landmass and then the continental shelf 23 times of the landmass. In total, we inherit 1.5 million sq km area of interest.

This is almost the size of the 18th largest country in the world. Mongolia; 1,564,110 sq km (largest landlocked country that does not border a closed sea.) (Peru; 1,285,216). In this century sea is more important than land due to the minerals deposited in the sea bed and 90 % of the world's cargo is transferred



through sea lanes using 50,000 merchant ships registered in 150 nations. Out of these 50,000, 3 to 350 vessels sail through our territorial waters and 900 to 1000 pass through our EEZ daily. This is a luxury many other nations have not inherited. Just like the tractor does not deserve a place in a professional military inventory, the tin of sardine should not be in our menu considering the vast ocean around us.

Interestingly we also have one of the largest natural harbours in the world and two strategically located harbours in the West and in the South. Looking at the Indian Ocean; its value increases and has become an attractive and sensitive zone for world's powerhouses.

Therefore, Adm Mahan's philosophy of the Indian Ocean's pivotal role is redefined and expanded today by major sea powers. Meanwhile, China's OBOR will be a strategic window of opportunity for us to develop if approached sensibly with a strategic mindset by preserving our values and legitimate interests.

America has redefined the ocean as Indo-pacific and it is not just a change of the name tag, but an expression of politico-military interest by the USA. The crucial role played by mighty India as a powerhouse and regional rivalries between China, India and Pakistan are also important factors to consider when developing our National Security and Defence Policy based on the Interdependency Strategy. Interdependency, collective security and joint operation doctrine are concepts that a country like us with a meagre GDP should consider to reap maximum benefit through collective effort. Do not forget the perpetual theory of the NASA scientist on collectiveness.

Taking all these factors and the geo-strategic location of Sri Lanka into account, Sri Lanka's stability has a great impact on regional and global security. While effective domination of air and maritime domains will deter external aggression, history has dictated us to maintain an effective land force to deter internal threats



in the form of insurgencies and terrorism. The latest challenge to reconciliation that can lead to insecurity will be populism under the guise of democracy. Sri Lanka's security establishment has a crucial role to play in maintaining the required level of stability of this great nation to facilitate its own benefit and the benefit of the others in the community of nations. In doing so, strengthening the three pillars of the military; physical, conceptual and moral component is your responsibility today. Please keep this definition of national security in mind when planning and implementing reforms through a comprehensive national security policy. A nation is secure when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests and values to avoid war. If the national interests of a state are challenged, military and war can be the last resort in statecraft which should not be compromised at any cost.

In the simplest sense, you can maintain peace only by preparing for war, that is called deterrence which is inscribed in Wimalarathne Doctrine. That was his vision for a professional military.

Thank you and May the Noble Triple Gem bless and protect you all!

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