

INSS

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Volume III





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## **ABOUT THE JOURNAL**

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) explores and researches on an array of issues pertaining to the National Security of Sri Lanka. This journal is a compilation of such valuable academic work produced by the staff of INSS doing their tenure of employment over the past few years. The aim of this publication is to build awareness on pressing National Security issues and threats, challenging Sri Lanka and proposes analysis and recommendations to decision makers and public leaders for addressing those challenges as viewed by authors of each paper. The journal of National Security papers will no doubt meet research needs and as such are compiled with authentic materials with quality content on various facets of National security. All papers included in this publication have already been published elsewhere either online or in printed form in Newspapers or Publications of other academic organizations and have been reproduced by obtaining the final draft sent for its initial printing by each author.

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## FOREWORD



The institute of national security studies is the premier think tank on national security of the Ministry of Defence. The institute aims to work with the government to craft evidence base policy options and strategies through debate and discussion, research and expertise after having analyzed and identifying the gaps, loopholes and weaknesses in national security.

Though, originally conceived as protection against military attack, national security is widely understood to include non-traditional dimensions, including the security from terrorism, minimization of crime, economic security, energy security, environmental security, food security, and cyber-security and many more evolving aspects. In this endeavor, the staff of the institute is encouraged to carry out researches, web commentaries and even write to journals on the subject of national security. This third edition of national security papers is a collection of such already published papers written by the able staff of this institute while they were serving in the capacity of Research Assistants and Interns (Research).

The contributions of the authors in this edition include glorification of LTTE, proscription laws of LTTE, Plight of child soldiers, apex threats to national security and how exclusivism can affect humanity, faith and inequality. Aspects like the progress of sustainable development goals, renewable energy, cyber terrorism have also been researched by the INSS staff and taken in to account in to this edition. This publication forms a valuable addition to the existing body of knowledge and is specially intended for students, military, researchers and academia in this field of national security both in Sri Lanka and overseas.

I take this opportunity to thank and also congratulate the authors for their hard work which will definitely have an influence over the future generations apart from strengthening the government understanding of national security threats.



Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena,  
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# Victims and Perpetrators: Plight of the Child Soldiers in the Eyes of Law

*C. L. C. M. Patabendige*

*Published on International Research Conference 2021, Sir John Kothalawala Defence University, 09<sup>th</sup> September 2021*

## ABSTRACT

*The Sri Lankan government underwent a three-decade war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and successfully defended the rights of Sri Lankans. Irrespective of the victory, LTTE international networks are using social media, diplomacy, and legislation and falsely accusing Sri Lanka of having committed the Tamil Genocide. The uprising of false information and hate speech is controversial as well as illegal. The false picture painted by LTTE has resulted in doubts in the world about Sri Lanka's guiltlessness. The Sri Lankan government has failed to counter the false allegations successfully. The Paper showcases the plight of LTTE child soldiers who are a threat to national security. It has attempted to identify the laws relating to child soldiers. Moreover, the paper showcases the government's role in the rehabilitation process and it discusses how to use the argument of usage of Child soldiers by LTTE to alarm the world on atrocities committed by LTTE. The research is doctrinal research, which has used primary sources such as existing and laws and policies. It has utilised secondary sources such as reports and journal articles. The atrocities of LTTE in using child soldiers are strictly in contravention of human rights law and humanitarian law. Therefore, the government can successfully use the claim of child Soldiers to show the dark reality of the LTTE. The steps that were taken by the government to rehabilitate and reintegrate child soldiers into society advocates the guiltlessness of the Sri Lankan Government.*

*Keywords - Child Soldiers, National Security, Law relating to child soldiers*

## INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka fought with The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) the notorious, ruthless terrorist organization and achieved peace and freedom. Irrespective of the success of humanitarian operations conducted by the Sri Lankan government, there is an intellectual warfare uprising. LTTE has deviated from their traditional stratagem of arms and weapons and at present, they use modes including social media, diplomacy, and international pressure by passing laws and policies. This is detrimental to national security. The government has failed in responding to these claims swiftly. It is now high time to act efficiently and counter the fabricated accusations of the LTTE. Usage of Child soldiers by the LTTE is strictly in



contravention of the laws of armed conflict as well as human rights law. Moreover, child Soldiers are a threat to national security. Sri Lanka can use the reality of LTTE's conduct on the usage of child soldiers to alarm the atrocities committed by LTTE. Therefore, it is imperative to look into the legal standards relating to child soldiers to portray the plight of the child soldiers of LTTE. Furthermore, Sri Lanka's role in the rehabilitation of LTTE child soldiers is praiseworthy and it can be employed as a counter-narrative against the false claim on Tamil Genocide.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research is doctrinal research, which is library research also known as "knowledge-building research". Primary sources such as existing legislation and policies are critically analyzed and have attempted to build up an argument against the pro-LTTE international network and LTTE front organizations. Furthermore, secondary sources such as books, journal articles are equipped for the sustenance of the narrative.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***A. Child Soldiering***

Children are known as the future of the country. They must be nurtured with love, kindness, and empathy. The period of childhood is significant. During childhood, they are highly attentive to detail, keen on learning, and grasp information speedily. Due to this, they can be easily manipulated. This is detrimental to children as well as the entire society. One such example is child soldiers. When looking at the history of Sri Lanka, LTTE conscripted child soldiers voluntarily as well as forcefully as instruments of war.

*Sirasu Puli* ('Leopard Brigade'), one of LTTE's fiercest fighting forces, was composed entirely of children. *'LTTE used child soldiers in all capacities, including as infantry soldiers, security and intelligence officers, medics, combat and administrative support, and as trainers for other cadres. The LTTE also used children as suicide bombers. The LTTE gave cyanide capsules and grenades to its soldiers, including children, with instructions to ingest the capsule or blow themselves up rather than allow themselves to be captured by the Sri Lankan security forces'*. This extract depicts the human rights as well as humanitarian law violations by LTTE.

There are various reasons behind conscription. Conscription can be voluntary as well as by threat and inducement. In the case of voluntary enrollment, children tend to join rebel groups or the military due to heroism, feeling of victory, to gain a sense of



ownership, the medals, colours, honours, and patriotism. In addition, Displacement, losing loved ones, family history and poverty are reasons behind joining. When looking at the approach of LTTE, [members of] *'Leopard's Brigade'*, saw *Velupillai Prabhakaran as a father figure and accepted orders unconditionally.* Culture, religion, and politics also play a vital role. Children can also be forcibly recruited by way of abductions, illegal detention and when taken as a witness. According to N Manoharan; LTTE attracted school children by inculcating a sense of guilt *'War is glorified and a 'cult of martyrdom' created to lure children on the grounds of 'national liberation,' 'social reform' or 'defending religion.'* Karuna forces too committed the crime of recruiting child soldiers, *'they generally targeted poor families, and often those who had already had a child recruited by the LTTE. The activities of LTTE, as well as the Karuna group, violated international humanitarian law and human rights law.*

The effect of the conscription of child soldiers is always pernicious. It abuses children mentally and physically. Fundamental rights as well as human rights of the children are infringed including the right to life, right to be free from torture, right to education, freedom of expression and freedom of association. The consequences of war is everlasting and it is strenuous to eliminate trauma in the child victims. Child soldiers end up having post-traumatic stress disorder. This drains their personality by making them vulnerable to threats and less empathetic. Therefore, it is crucial to rehabilitate, disarm and reintegrate child soldiers into the society. It is a pity that the international network of LTTE is making fictitious allegations on Sri Lanka on Tamil Genocide when it is LTTE who are truly culpable. The lacuna in the system is, Sri Lankan government is not paying sufficient attention to rebut their claims strategically. Atrocities committed by LTTE are vast and recruiting child soldiers are only one of them, which affect national security. Therefore, it is pivotal to critically analyse the plight of the child soldiers of LTTE.

### ***B. National Security***

It is evident that there is a threat to national security posed by child soldiering, this goes beyond the human rights approach, which is an ethical and legal concern. What is seldom addressed is the link of child soldiering with national security. The reason is, a repercussion of child soldiering is long term. The trained child soldier is an investment done by a terrorist to make an individual who can run a brigade with authority in future. They will be highly trained and immune to pain, which is detrimental to national security. There is also a possibility of recurrence of violence even aftermath of the eradication of roots of war. Hence, it is clear that child soldiering is injurious to national security including human security. To preserve

national security, it is imperative to de-radicalize, rehabilitate terrorists and reintegrate them into society, which Sri Lanka became successful in.

### ***C. Legal Framework***

Laws and policies are available to prevent and deter child soldiering. Child soldiering is prohibited both in international human rights law as well international humanitarian law.

*1) International legal regime:* International humanitarian law provides both special protection as well as general protection to children. Article 1 of the Child Rights Convention (CRC) 1989 defines a child as, ‘any person under the age of eighteen. Article 38 mentions that the ‘state should ensure and respect international humanitarian law and take all feasible measures to prevent children under fifteen from directly participating in hostilities. If the child is not fifteen, states must ensure to give priority to the oldest. An Optional Protocol to the CRC was adopted by the United Nations in 2000 making the minimum age eighteen for children conscripted, recruited by non-state armed groups. As per article 22, the state is obliged to give special protection to a refugee child or a child seeking refugee status by cooperating with competent organizations to provide protection and assistance.

As per Article 77.2 of Protocol I of the Geneva Convention 1977, recruitment of children under the age of 15 in the direct participation of hostilities is in breach of law. Article 75 prohibits attacks on civilians. Therefore, the principle of distinction is encapsulated making children nonmilitary targets. Moreover, Geneva Convention IV covers civilian protection. Additional protocol II Article 4(3) mentions, children who have not attained the age of 15 years shall be recruited in neither the armed forces nor groups and they are not allowed to take part in hostilities even if enlistment is done voluntarily. Hence, this provision is applicable to direct as well as indirect participation of hostilities. This also applies to non-international armed conflicts. The article sheds light on education, assistance, care, cultural environment, and the exemption from the death penalty. Rule 136 of the customary Human rights law states that children must not be recruited into armed forces or armed groups. According to Rule 137, children should not be allowed to take part in hostilities. Moreover, United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1261 and 1314 deal with children in armed conflict. These international legal standards are suggestive of the importance of the protection of children and especially in times of war. Therefore, children cannot be used as an instrument of war as they are a threat to national security.



### ***1) Domestic legal regime***

The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the supreme law of the country sets many rights including freedom from torture, right to equality, freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, punishment, Freedom of speech, assembly, association, occupation and movement. It also guarantees special protection to children. Sri Lanka is a party to CRC as well as optional protocol I for CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict, Geneva conventions and common Article 3. Sri Lanka has not ratified Protocol II; nonetheless, the majority of the legal provisions are authoritative as customary international law. Amendment to the Penal Code in Act no.16 of 2006, Article 358A (1) (d) of the Penal Code provides that *'any person who engages or recruits a child for use in Armed conflict, shall be guilty of an offence'*. Article 358A (2) states that a person who is guilty of engaging or recruiting a child will *'be liable to imprisonment of either a description for a term not exceeding thirty years and to a fine'*. Therefore, it is crystalline that international as well as domestic legal standards proscribes child soldiering. Therefore, the conduct of LTTE is strictly in breach of law and LTTE is at fault for victimizing children by posing a threat to national security.

### ***D. State Response***

It is vital to pay attention to state responsibility. The state has to foster human rights and fundamental rights. If the state is incapable of guaranteeing such rights it is an aspect of the failure of the state. Sri Lanka took imminent measures to combat child soldiering. Sri Lanka's rehabilitation process was noteworthy. Soon after the war then-president, Mahinda Rajapaksa stated *'Our hearts are not vicious. We will not prosecute children who are 12, 13 and 14 years of age and were forced to take up arms. We need to integrate them into society after rehabilitation.'* This explains how child soldiers were viewed as victims rather than perpetrators. Furthermore, this portrays the reality behind Sri Lanka's humanitarian mission. Sri Lanka established rehabilitation centres to integrate LTTE members including child soldiers. According to Hettiarachchi, there are *'Six modes of rehabilitation; educational, vocational, spiritual, recreational, psycho social and familiar social and cultural'*. The government of Sri Lanka rehabilitated LTTE child soldiers; de radicalized them and reintegrated them into society. The measures of the government of Sri Lanka display how victims of LTTE were emancipated from brutality.

Despite that, there are mishaps in the road towards justice; one such is the concept of "command responsibility". Jayawardena (2010) states that the *'Supreme Court has generally affirmed the doctrine of 'vicarious responsibility in the context of its fundamental rights jurisdiction, even in regard to the working of emergency regulations. However, the extension of this doctrine to command responsibility in*

*conflict situations has not been evidenced. The reform of the criminal law and prosecutions affirming the responsibilities of senior officers in situations of war, rather than the scattered trials of junior officers, is therefore imperative'. Lacuna in the law on the absence of command responsibility hinders justice. For that reason, it is crucial to address the needs without further delay. National security must be preserved whilst abiding by international standards.*

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The abundance in law proves that it is not the inadequacy of laws but the drawbacks in implementation and governance that hinders justice. Sri Lanka has successfully defeated terrorism. However, it is important to preserve harmony and prevent the reoccurrence of extremism. The prevailing lacuna is Sri Lanka has failed to rebut the claim of Tamil Genocide successfully. Even though the law proves LTTE are perpetrators, rebutting false speech and penalizing the hate speech by LTTE is not accomplished. As a result, the Pro LTTE international network has been able to pass legislation such as Bill 104 Genocide Education Week Act in Canada. The recent European Parliament resolution of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021 on the situation in Sri Lanka, in particular, the arrests under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (2021/2748(RSP)) are such examples. Thus, child soldiers are one of the prominent arguments Sri Lanka can raise against the Pro LTTE international network to rebut the claim of the Tamil Genocide. Sri Lanka's State response to LTTE child soldiers was rehabilitation and reintegration instead of penalizing the child soldiers. This can be employed by Sri Lanka as a counter-narrative against the allegation on Tamil Genocide. It is imperative to preserve national security from soft as well as hard threats. Therefore, Sri Lanka must focus on rebutting false claims. It is crucial to prevent false information, misinformation and disinformation and criminalize hate speech. Invoking the command responsibility even though controversial will express the democratic status of the country. Moreover, it is important to adhere to international legal standards whilst upholding national security.

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# Is the German ‘Blitzkrieg’ Military Strategy a Feasible Tactic in Modern Day Warfare?

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*Published on International Research Conference 2021, Sir John Kothalawala Defence University, 09<sup>th</sup> September 2021*

## ABSTRACT

*The ‘Blitzkrieg’ strategy was a well-formulated approach to rapid victory through the swift and simultaneous movement of multiple armoured, mechanical and infantry divisions during the Second World War. The research delves into the very principles of the Blitzkrieg strategy and attempts to discuss the feasibility of this military tactic in modern warfare environments. The research utilises the work of various experts in military strategy and operational art, as well as through primary approaches to persons of military status. The overall purpose of this study is to effectively conclude and recommend developments that can be made to the traditional Blitzkrieg strategy for the adaptation and improvisation of this tactic into modern warfare.*

*The content of this paper also provides a comprehensive analysis of the operational doctrine of the Blitzkrieg strategy and the various developments that this strategy has been transformed through. The research also attempts to provide reasonable ground to make comparative stances of this strategy used in modern warfare including the Gulf War and the Israeli 6-day War. Moreover, the paper discusses the issues that have emerged in the utilisation of this strategy in unconventional warfare, including crises with guerrilla fighters and resistance groups, including operations in the Sri Lankan civil war against the LTTE terrorist force. The study reveals that multiple developments have been made to the traditional Blitzkrieg strategy in modern day warfare and tactical recommendations have also been provided throughout the paper, including armour defensive capabilities, terrain compatibility and historically accurate tactics to achieve air superiority.*

**Keywords—** *Blitzkrieg, Military Strategy, Conventional Warfare, Modern War*

## INTRODUCTION

Almost 82 years ago, the Nazi German war machine utilised the concept of Blitzkrieg during the early years of the Second World War to slice through European borders and annihilate multiple conventional armies, in an attempt to realise the German dream of Lebensraum. The term Blitzkrieg stems from the German words ‘Blitz’, which translates to Lightning, and ‘Krieg’, which translates to War, thus meaning Lightning War. While the Germans referred to this tactic as ‘Schnellen Angriff’, which meant ‘Rapid Attack’, the term Blitzkrieg in itself was coined by Western journalists who could not fathom a rapidly moving conventional force that was numerically inferior, yet strategically nonpareil.

The military strategy of Blitzkrieg refers to the military doctrine that utilises specialised force concentration consisting of armour, mechanised and motorised formations combined with close local air support. The sheer concentration of rapidly moving military vehicles enabled the German command to gain high levels of mobility during battle, which oftentimes secured the element of surprise and gained notable reach in terms of territory and expansion.

The concept of Blitzkrieg was influenced during the Second World War, by German Reichsmarschall (highest rank in the German Military; Wehrmacht) Heinz Guderian, who is known as the Father of Blitzkrieg. The strategy of Blitzkrieg was first used in the Second World War during Operation Himmler in September 1939, when Nazi Germany repeatedly violated the Treaty of Versailles to invade the Second Republic of Poland. However, the Blitzkrieg was also previously tried and tested by the Germans during the Spanish civil war from 1936 to 1939. The doctrine was further utilised in the Nazi invasion of Western Europe, including in Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and France in 1940, as well as during Operation Barbarossa, which was the German invasion of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1941.

In terms of Modern warfare, the content of this paper specialises in the aspects of warfare in the 21st century, which has witnessed the increase in Guerrilla fighting techniques from terrorists and insurgency groups, mostly in aspects of unconventional warfare, including in the Sri Lankan civil war, the US war in Afghanistan and other modern warfare scenarios. Moreover, Modern warfare encompasses the aspect of Informationised war, which refers to the evolution of warfare into attributes of network- centric, cyber, psychological, electronic and information, in present day.



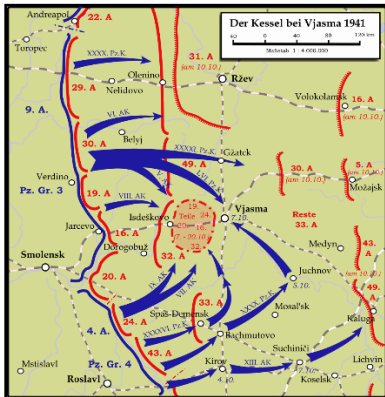
## WHAT DEFINES BLITZKRIEG?

The entirety of the concept of Blitzkrieg was based on the doctrine that military victory could be achieved by the rapid movement of mechanized and armoured forces whilst being concentrated on weak points in the enemy lines, along with close air support, which acts as a surrogate for fixed artillery positioning.

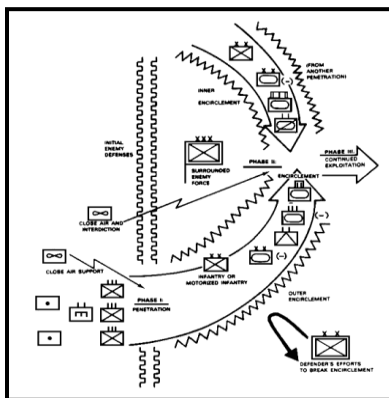
In the military ideologies of Nazi Germany, generals such as Heinz Guderian, tactically developed a strategy that combined the use of Tank divisions, mechanised infantry in troop transports and trucks, mechanised artillery, dive bombers and light bombers for close localised air support and the tactic of interdiction. In the use of Blitzkrieg in the European theatre of World War 2, it can be noted that the German Panzer divisions, were combined with Panzer Grenadiers (German mechanised infantry) in their famous *Sonderkraftfahrzeug 251* (Sd. Kfz. 251) half-truck personnel carriers along with air support from the *Luftwaffe* (German Airforce) using the *Junkers Ju-87* dive bombers and the *Dornier Do-17* Light bomber, which were used to destroy key targets behind enemy lines. Moreover, during the latter stages of the Second World War, mechanized artillery was also utilised including the German *Hummel*, which consisted of a 15 cm Howitzer cannon mounted onto the specialised *Geschützwagen III/IV* chassis, for close support to the Panzer divisions.

The key to the strategy was firepower, protection through armour, movement speed and communication. The birth of such a strategy can be credited to the Prussian general Carl Von Clausewitz who developed the ‘Schwerpunkt’, which refers to the concentration principle through a centre of gravity (Vego and Milan, 2007). This principle is a fundamental in the Blitzkrieg strategy where German forces strategically concentrated the bulk of their armoured vehicles especially the Panzer divisions onto the tip of the advancing attack, which ensured that notwithstanding the numerical superiority or strength of the defending army, the German offensive would always be stronger at the tip of the spearhead and thus would be able to penetrate to a significant amount, the enemy’s line of defence.

In scenarios where strict and strong resistance was encountered, an improvisation to the general tactic was made, where a bypass of the resistance forces was undertaken, through which the advancing force attempted to outflank the enemy from either one of the two sides, or both sides together. This attribute was often followed by the subsidiary tactic of *Kesselschlacht*, which was the strategy of encirclement, where the advancing force enveloped the strong resistance to surrender. This was evident during the Battle of Tomaszow Lubelski on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 1939, where the German strategies of bypassing and encirclement resulted in the surrender of the entire Polish Army Krakow on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September.



**Figure 01: German Kesselschlacht encirclement strategy used near the town of Vyasma, Russia, during the Battle of Bryansk, 1941 (Kesselschlacht bei Vjasma 1941, 2009).**

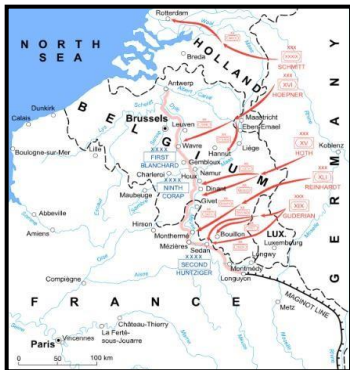


**Figure 02: Schematic of Blitzkrieg Encirclement (Global Security, n.d.)**

While Speed of Movement was one of the most crucial elements in the success of the Blitzkrieg strategy, smooth and clear communication and decision making were also significant attributes in the operation of this military strategy. This is because the rapid movement of troops, armour and artillery required constant progress in terms of territorial gain and expansion. However, in scenario of war, a multitude of factors continually hinder the progress of the offensive and therefore in order to ensure continued mobility and constant movement, quick decisions have to be made, and thus the German command delegated decision making authority of aspects of the relevant battle to ground level junior officers who were the most exposed to the respective battle zone. In delegation decision-making authority, minor battle decisions could be made rapidly in minutes by ground level servicemen, whereas the French decisions were made from higher levels of the chain of command, which sometimes took several days to reach the ground level battalions and companies, thus considerably slowing down the momentum in battle for the Allied forces in the early stages of the Second World War (Imperial War Museums, 2018).

Another aspect of the Blitzkrieg strategy was the close evaluation and exploitation of the weak points in the allied defence and the massive concentration of armour and strength onto these points to secure a breakthrough. This was evident in the invasion of France and Belgium in 1941, where while the regular German infantry battled

against French and Belgian forces in Belgium, the plan of Fall Gelb, tactically identified the Allied weakly defended Ardennes Forest in Southeast Belgium and concentrated the armoured spearhead of the Blitzkrieg to slice through the forest thus outflanking large numbers of British, French and Belgian divisions, which ultimately led to the forced retreat of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and other remaining Allied soldiers during Operation Dynamo, where over 338,000 Allied troops were evacuated from Dunkirk, France to England.



**Figure 03: The German Fall Geb under Blitzkrieg, 1940**

One of the other major aspects of the use of Blitzkrieg was the psychological pressure and shock action that was placed on the defensive units through the overwhelming use of armour and the element of surprise. This was further triggered through the Luftwaffe bombings of key targets behind enemy lines, which oftentimes caused confusion among the defensive force.

As Germany attempted to secure Vernichtungsschlacht, which is complete annihilation of the enemy force by the German military (Nation States, 2014) through Angriffskrieg, which means a War of Aggression against the Allied powers (Verfassungsrecht and Mayer, 2003), a rapidly moving conventional force was required to take major powers out of the war in a short period of time. This was considerably achieved by the military strategy of Blitzkrieg during the early stages of the war; however, the question remains as to whether this strategy of rapid momentum is a feasible tactic in modern day warfare scenarios.

### **1. CAN THE BLITZKRIEG MILITARY DOCTRINE BE USED IN MODERN WARFARE?**

The concept of Modern warfare demands a multitude of various factors that would need developments in the traditional German Blitzkrieg strategy in order to be in the ballpark of feasibility in present day battle grounds. This is due to the fact that the evolution of warfare has been rapid in nature and therefore multiple military developments have been established, especially stemming from the military tensions of the Cold War as well as other major conflicts around the world, including the Korean War (1950-53), the Vietnam War (1955-75), the Gulf War (1991), the US invasion of Iraq (2004), the US invasion of Afghanistan (2001), and numerous insurgencies across the world. The feasibility of the strategy in modern times is

affected by a plethora of various factors that cause considerable changes to military strategy;

#### ***A. Differences in Terrain***

Terrain refers to a tract of land, especially in reference to its natural features. In warfare, terrain plays a significant role in the determination of the military strategy used and the advantages of the natural landscape that can be exploited to benefit the offensive or defensive forces. In the military doctrine of the Blitzkrieg strategy, the aspect of the terrain is of utmost importance in the effectiveness and success of the campaign.

In the European theatre of the Second World War, mostly open terrain and vast amounts of land space enabled the rapid movement and flexible maneuvering of the offensive forces; Operation Barbarossa in 1941 opened the Eastern front in Europe, thus unlocking the largest front in the Second World War. In 1940, Germany held a total land area of 823,505 km<sup>2</sup> (Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht, 1941). The Blitzkrieg heavily relies on tank divisions spearheading the advances and therefore a large terrain in suitable conditions is preferred. However, in other locations across the world such as during the Sri Lankan civil war, the terrain was not in a suitable condition to exercise an all-out Blitzkrieg strategy. This is because the T-55 Soviet Main Battle Tanks (MBT) used by the Sri Lankan Armoured Corps were specifically designed for the Russian and European terrains and not that of a South Asian Island nation. A rapid territorial expansion through the Blitzkrieg strategy in the Sri Lankan context would not contribute to proper efficiency due to the differences in terrain; the sandy terrains of Jaffna, the seaboard of Western Mannar, the jungles of Wannai and the paddy fields and rice bunds of the Eastern province (Mudannayake, n.d.).

Large terrains would provide an advantage for the offensive force to stage an effective strategy against its opponents. As Eaton (1991) mentions, this was evident in Operation Desert Storm during the Gulf war in 1990, where the US led coalition's intense bombardment preceding the ground war, showed similarities to the German JU-87 dive bombers' intense bombardment preceding the Panzer divisions' spearheading advancement. The Gulf war provided mostly open terrains outside of major cities that enabled the US led coalition to utilise Blitzkrieg-like tactics to gain momentum through rapid advancements into enemy territory.

#### ***B. Modern Anti-Tank Weapons and Tactics***

In order to effectively slow down tanks and their momentum in battle, anti-tank weapons have been widely used since the Second World War. In 1942, the USA built M1 Rocket Launcher "Bazooka" was introduced to counter the heavily armoured German army, which competed against the German Raketenpanzerbüchse 54 (Panzerschreck), an 88mm anti-tank rocket launcher.

In Modern warzones, especially in conflicts against insurgencies, terrorists and rebel forces, the modern Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPG) is in wide use due to its relatively cheap cost and effectiveness. The modern RPG follows the design of the



Soviet model of 1958, which was a direct descendant of the design of the German Panzerfaust during the Second World War. In terms of armour penetration, the Panzerfaust had the capability to penetrate up to 140mm of plain steel at a range of 30 meters, and a speed of 28 m/s (Internet Archive, 2001), while the chief Allied medium tank, the USA-made M4 Sherman had an upper bound armour of 177.8mm thick (Chris and Connors, 2000). The inability of rocket launchers to effectively penetrate the armour of most tanks in the Second World War contributed to its infeasibility in slowing down Blitzkrieg advancements.

However, in the decades following World War 2, the use of the RPG has significantly increased with developments made to its penetration capabilities, speed and range. The RPG-7 has been widely used in combat operations by insurgency forces across the world, including by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, Mujahideen rebels in Afghanistan and other terrorist groups. The effectiveness of the RPG-7 is robust that it was responsible for the downing of the 2 US-built elite UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters during the Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia, 1993.

This use of the modern RPGs severely deters the effectiveness of a potential traditional Blitzkrieg in modern day combat. Brigadier (Ret) Sri Mudannayake (2021) of the Sri Lankan Armoured Corps stated that the RPGs utilised by the LTTE had the potential to slice through the frontal 300mm armour of solid steel in the Soviet T-55 tanks of Czechoslovakian origin, used by the Sri Lankan army against the LTTE terrorists. If able to penetrate, the RPG would ignite the ammunition and oil inside the tank which then had the potential to disintegrate the entire tank, due to the armour piercing jet produced by a shaped charge. In 2008, Russia unveiled the RPG-30, a rocket propelled grenade capable of penetrating the frontal armour of the Third generation M1 Abrams US-built battle tank (Hambling, 2008).

### *C. Hindrances to achieving Air Superiority*

Air superiority was an essentiality in the successful operation of the Blitzkrieg strategy as battle tanks are vulnerable to bombs dropped from the skies, due to the relatively lower amount of armour on the top of the tank. This requirement of air superiority in the Blitzkrieg strategy is also hindered in modern day due to the use of the RPG, surface to air missiles and other forms of anti-aircraft weapons. In the Sri Lankan civil war, the LTTE used RPGs and Surface to Air missiles to hinder and destroy Sri Lankan air force operations, such as the downing of Wing commander Tyron Silvapullai and his Mil Mi-24 gunship with a SAM missile during the Second Battle of Elephant Pass in 1999 (Motha, 2019).

Although the problem of anti-aircraft weapons was existent during the Blitzkrieg advancements of the Second World War through the 88 mm Flak 37 Gun, the modernisation and development of this aspect of warfare makes it difficult to achieve complete air dominance in modern times (Flying Heritage, n.d.). Developments such as the Phalanx Close- In Weapon System (CIWS) pose serious threats to air to surface and surface to surface missiles as well as aircraft due to the rapid firing technology with proficient accuracy (Apte and Rendon, 2009). In Modern times, strategies must



be implemented to neutralise these anti-air defensive structures thus ensuring higher efficiency in battle in terms of air support.

Moreover, vast developments have been made to the achievable altitude of modern-day aircraft in comparison to the military planes of the Second World War; the German Junkers Ju-86R is considered to be one of the models that could reach the highest altitude during World War 2 at 41,000 feet (Lehmann, 2019). At present the record for highest altitude was made in 1976 by the US-manufactured SR-71 Blackbird Strategic Reconnaissance Aircraft, when it reached an altitude of 85,135 feet. This record was achieved 45 years ago, after which massive developments have been made to reconnaissance and strategy intelligence aircraft, where the novel RQ-180 is presumed to hold altitudes far surpassing any aircraft, manned or unmanned, but are classified by military institutions (Piesing, n.d.). Due to the capability of achieving extreme altitudes, the accomplishment of air superiority is a far more complex attribute today, in comparison to the 1940s.

#### ***D. Tactical Nuclear Capabilities***

The evolution of warfare triggered the creation of the atomic bomb in 1942, which further evolved into the hydrogen bomb in 1952. Although nuclear explosive devices were only used twice in warfare; during the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, the concept of nuclear warfare and capacity of nuclear weapons rapidly expanded during the Cold War. While 'Fat Man', the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, gave a blast yield of 21 Kilotons (88 terajoules), the Soviet Thermonuclear warhead developed in 1961; the 'Tsar Bomba' has a blast yield of 58 Megatons, which is 58,000 Kilotons (242,672 terajoules).

As the Blitzkrieg strategy focuses on rapid mobilisation and use of powerful armour in close combat and territorial expansion, the traditional strategy has no virtual protection against the powerful behemoths of nuclear warheads which have the power to effectively annihilate entire armies (Howard, 1981). In 21st century conflicts, a striking example of nuclear warfare threats in the South Asian region can be witnessed in the Indian-Pakistani conflict of Jammu and Kashmir, where the Pakistani Federal Minister Sheik Rashid has repeatedly threatened India in nuclear warfare if the latter decided to launch an invasion across Pakistani borders (IANS, 2020).

#### ***E. Informationised Warfare***

As technology expands in continual developments and attributes, certain aspects of warfare are increasingly transcending into digital spaces of the cyber realm. In a report released by the US Department of Defence in September 2020, it was highlighted that China sees emerging modern world technologies such as Artificial intelligence, Cloud computing, Big-data analytics, Quantum information and Unmanned systems as focal points in the future of warfare (Office of the Secretary of Defence, 2020).

Informationised warfare further compasses information warfare, which includes the propaganda campaigns of LTTE front organisations operating in Western nations



which aim to disseminate disinformation and misinformation against the Sri Lankan state in terms of the Sri Lankan civil war. It further encompasses ideological expansion where the radical ideologies of the Salafi- Wahabi doctrines are exported outside the Middle East through digital spaces and other avenues.

This type of modern warfare cannot be entirely fought by physical power and force concentrated armoured battle tanks. The aspect of warfare in the 21st century has revolutionized war which requires specific and specialised military bodies to combat ideological extremism, information warfare as well as cyber threats, which can have devastating consequences to present day operations in both military and civilian spaces.

### **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Owing to the various developments in modern day combat, the traditional Blitzkrieg strategy would be infeasible and ineffective in conflicts with rebel groups, insurgencies and terrorists, as it brings a plethora of disadvantages onto the battlefield. However, a restructuring of the strategy has been prevalent in recent times and improvisations and adaptations to Nazi Germany's lightning war is existent to provide a more relevant strategy to the respective conflict.

A clear depiction of the improvisation of the Nazi Blitzkrieg in modern warfare was witnessed during Operation Focus during the Israeli-Arab 6 Day War in 1967. Like the Luftwaffe attempted to gain air superiority before the Panzer divisions entered the battlefield, the Israeli air force organised a well-coordinated strategic bombing campaign where it crippled the air forces of Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan through bombardment of enemy air force bases and airfields.

A similar strategy was witnessed during Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf War, where the US-led coalition of over 35 nations deployed over 100,000 air sorties whilst dropping over 88,000 tonnes of bombs in the 6 weeks air campaign, ultimately achieving complete air superiority. During the same war, the US identified that a key aspect of defence that the Iraqi military possessed was its state-of-the-art radar equipment and therefore prioritised the annihilation of these radar posts at H-Hour using AH-64 Apache helicopters. The strategic destruction of these radar depicts the evolution in achieving air superiority and dominance in battle (Lambeth, 1993). The tactic of jamming communications and signals were also used during the Sri Lankan civil war both by the state forces and the LTTE terrorists.

As the problem of intense anti-aircraft technology is prevalent in modern day, the Gulf War can be taken as yet another example in understanding the developments that could be done to neutralise this threat. During Operation Desert Storm, the US naval forces and marine corps pilots deployed more than 100 ADM-141 TALD decoy missiles which were flown to divert superior Iraqi anti-aircraft fire away from the fighter jets which attacked strategic communications in the well defended city of Baghdad (Evans, 1991).

A key component of the Blitzkrieg strategy was the aspect of psychological warfare and shock action, which aimed to demoralise the defending forces' will to stand and resist the incoming force. The sheer combination of mobility, intense firepower and overwhelming armour was a driving attribute in achieving this phenomenon. In the context of the Sri Lankan war, the element of shock action was employed against the LTTE terrorists on multiple occasions, including Operation Bhoomi Kampa (Sinhalese: භූමිකම්පා), which directly translates to Operation Earthquake, where Eight T-55 Czechoslovakian-built battle tanks of the Sri Lankan Armoured Corps rapidly advanced the LTTE terrorists' sea tiger base in Mathagal, in the Northern part of Sri Lanka. The sea tiger base was a notorious outpost that was primarily used to shoot down incoming Sri Lankan Air Force planes landing at the neighbouring Palali airport in Jaffna. Brigadier (ret) Sri Mudannayake (2021) states that the overwhelming armour, firepower and mobility of these eight T-55 tanks sporting their D-10T 100 mm cannon placed a great deal of shock action on the defending enemy camp that the majority of the terrorists abandoned their positions and retreated into the fields. The 'Shock Action' created by 8 MBTs supported by wheel mounted Infantry, assaulting an LTTE Sea Tiger Camp was a classic Infantry - Armour combined operation. The enemy offered initial resistance with a sustained 81 MM Mortar attack on the army in the Assembly Area. As the combined armour - Infantry force assaulted, the enemy lost the will to resist and made a hasty withdrawal abandoning their fortified positions. Direct tank fire pulverized bunkers and underground shelter trenches (Mudannayake, 2021). The camp was overrun and the Sri Lankan Armoured Corps achieved a decisive victory.

Moreover, as the RPG-7 was widely used by the LTTE terrorists against the Sri Lankan military and tanks, the Sri Lankan Armoured Corps partnered with private companies in Colombo and designed a specialized iron mesh that was welded into the frontal armour of the tanks, with a brief standoff distance to the armour. As the RPG is a trigger-on- impact device that detonates when the grenade comes into contact with the object, the RPG explodes when it touches the iron mesh and the extremely heated jet of fire is shot forth. However, due to the standoff distance between the mesh and the tank's frontal armour, the effectiveness of this attack is severely crippled (Mudannayake, 2021). Further, modern tanks utilise an array of various defensive techniques to supplement for major issues, including techniques such as the use of composite armour for stronger resistance and Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA) to divert attacks from RPGs and similar weapons.

In Conclusion, the research identified that the Blitzkrieg was an excellent strategy in North European terrain using 1940's military technology to gain rapid momentum in territorial gain; however, it failed to secure German dominance over Europe as the Allied forces successfully transformed the nature of the war to a War of Attrition, thus outproducing the Third Reich and its military bodies. The research identified that the Blitzkrieg was functional through an array of various components including armour, air superiority, shock action and communication.





It was revealed that the 1939-1944 mix of these components in Modern warfare would be detrimental to the campaign due to the advancement of military technology and doctrines. However, the basic components of the Blitzkrieg strategy remain to this day and different armies utilise different mixes of these components to inflict maximum effectiveness towards the battle objective depending on various factors such as terrain, communications, region, type of enemy etc. Therefore, the German Blitzkrieg strategy is an absolutely crucial aspect of war that can be improvised and adapted to in modern warfare to inflict high damage and effectiveness in war.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- LTTE - Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
- USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- BEF - British Expeditionary Force
- US - United States
- RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade
- CIWS - Close-In Weapon System
- MBT - Main Battle Tank



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## **Glorification of LTTE; a Threat to National Security of Sri Lanka**

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Sri Lanka is a unitary state. The country is home to over 21 million people of various ethnicities. The unique geographical location, the existence of high-value natural resources and the importance of Sri Lanka in trade and shipping are evident in the history of the country during Western rule. Sri Lanka, which was liberated from the control of the Western imperialists, came under political leadership and was led by a unique political figure.

Thus, Sri Lanka, ruled by individual heads of state, came to the fore in the face of political conflict and crisis. All these victories and defeats were frozen and the political climate in Sri Lanka, which was gradually developing, suddenly began to change. During this crisis, another force was secretly emerging in Sri Lanka. That is, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) organization led by “Velupillai Prabhakaran”. The stated objective of the organization was to establish a separate state, Tamil Eelam state in our motherland. However, under the courageous leadership, our security forces fearlessly fought to destroy the LTTE. At the risk of their own lives, our security forces’ near 30-year-long humanitarian operation ended on May 18, 2009, defeating all the terrorists, including the terror leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. Sri Lanka is the only country in the modern world to completely dismantle a terrorist force previously regarded as the most brutal in the world, which bled the country for nearly three decades while waging a lengthy separatist war.

The national security of a country refers to the unity of all the ethnic groups living in that country, the independence and the sovereignty of that country as well as the territorial integrity, citizenship rights and human rights without any threats that may be posed internally or externally. Of course, in order to create a strong social environment in a country, special attention must be paid to the safety of the citizens living in that country. Although it is in the national interest to create a secure society through a strong set of policies, the rising tide of crime over the years has made a strong impact on this process. It is very appropriate for a country to have an independent judiciary with a system of moral justice for future development. The first stage in this process is prevention. It must be understood that it is not the responsibility of an individual but a collective effort.

Our resilient nation’s strength is in its ability to forgive the traumas of the past in the hope of a brighter future in a peaceful society. However, it must be emphasized that the LTTE international front is engaged in a struggle to destroy the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our nation and to undermine the past victory of the entire country against terrorism. At present, it is evident that Sri Lanka is still confronting



an active threat emanating from pro-LTTE front organizations operating overseas. Protecting the state and the nation from these threats is a primary responsibility of the government and its security forces. It must be acknowledged that having a comprehensive national security strategy is the foundation of a developing country to achieve prosperity and lasting peace. Therefore, the time has come to formulate a new national security strategy to protect its national interests in the face of the strategic threat environment that is developing against Sri Lanka.

It has been 12 years since the end of the gruesome war in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan government has been concerned with ensuring security since then. However, some acts show that many parties try to thwart the efforts of the government. On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021, Tamil National People's Front Member of the Parliament Selvarasa Gajendran and two others were arrested by the police for organizing a memorial for Rasaiah Pradeepan alias Thileepan, a former LTTE terrorist who died while on a hunger strike in 1987. In the face of these actions, the counter-terrorism process of Sri Lanka is challenged. Although the terrorist conflict has ended, there are constant efforts by LTTE supporters to revive it. These commemorations support them in the process. Government must implement strict laws to put an end to such acts, which promote terrorists. In order to revive terrorism within Sri Lanka; LTTE international network use false propaganda to share baseless allegations of war crimes against the country while glorifying the LTTE. The International terrorism expert Professor Rohan Gunaratna has elaborated on the glorification of the LTTE in their study of the future. This situation is undoubtedly a serious threat to the national security in Sri Lanka.

Indeed, it should be emphasized that such glorification of LTTE terrorism must be addressed through the enactment of legal provisions and policies to further strengthen the stability and national security that is the basis of ethnic and religious harmony in Sri Lanka. Currently, there is no provision in the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act No. 48 of 1979 on the grounds of glorifying or commemorating terrorists. Therefore, it is an urgent need for the authorities responsible to impose the relevant legal provisions expeditiously. The maximum punishment should be imposed to those who glorify the terrorists that threaten the communal harmony of the country by degrading the victory that has been won after making many sacrifices for nearly three decades.

The LTTE international fronts' propaganda created an environment conducive to LTTE plots, planning and revival. Immediate action must be taken to ban such activities altogether. Just as Germany banned Nazi symbols and activities after World War II, the necessary provisions must be imposed to ban LTTE propaganda and paraphernalia forever. Article 86 of the German Criminal Code further clarifies this. The article emphasizes that *"the use of symbols by unconstitutional organizations outside the context of "Art or Science, Research or Teaching" is strictly prohibited. However, the law does not specify what those symbols are, and it is stated that Nazi, Communist and Islamic extremist symbols are prohibited"*.

Of course, Sri Lanka is a democratic country. However, further examination of this scope shows that the tolerance of excessive liberty has given a new life to violent terrorism. For example, although the United States have declared their victory over Afghanistan and Iraq, the infrastructure that necessitated the revival of the terrorists remain unchanged. Likewise, the same fact is encouraging the LTTE's revival. Until Sri Lanka exterminates the separatist ideologies, security forces and intelligence services in the North and East must implement tight security plans. However, this is not a trivial matter. The government and the relevant security authorities should recommend the necessary security strategies to counter these threats.

Strict laws are being enforced against these LTTE terrorists in the international community. In the wake of the brutal terrorist attacks of the past few years, many European countries have imposed stricter laws against terrorism. The British enacted new laws to eradicate terrorism. Once, Justice Secretary & Lord Chancellor, Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP stressed that terrorists and their hate ideology have no place in the streets of Britain. He further elaborated that the terrorists would have to spend more time in jail and face stricter rehabilitation on their release. Moreover, it is justifiable to say that the British government is pursuing every option to face the threat of terrorism and to keep communities safe, from imposing a minimum of 14 years for the most dangerous criminals to strict surveillance. In comparison to the laws of these countries, it is obvious that there are loopholes to address in the existing legal framework regarding terrorist activities in Sri Lanka.

At the end of the 30-year war, the ideology of separatism gradually disappeared. Nevertheless, a handful of attempts have been made to rejuvenate separatism with the aim of achieving their narrow goals. A look at contemporary world phenomena reveals that many Tamils in Sri Lanka as well as abroad has left the LTTE. However, it must be proved that the separatist agenda continues to be staged by several racist politicians and other minorities. The terrorist group has been banned by 30 countries, including the United States, Canada, India and the 27 member nations of the European Union. Some of the unlisted LTTE fronts are still active in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is imperative that the Government of Sri Lanka list the pro-LTTE organizations operating in the country and take steps to terminate them.

The next aspect of this emerging threat is the rise of the second generation of LTTE terrorists. None of the second-generation LTTE terrorists have experienced what really happened in the country and they are just expressing what they have told, and they are brainwashed. They are trying to achieve their narrow goals by making war crimes allegations against Sri Lanka from the international arena. The most serious allegation made by them is that a Tamil genocide took place in this country. LTTE claims that, former heads of state and war leaders of Sri Lanka massacred innocent Tamils by violating human rights.

**Why is the international community not paying attention to the human rights of the innocent Tamils who were killed by LTTE?**

**Why is it that the international community does not find out how many children were forcibly recruited by the LTTE at that time?**

The reality is, LTTE violated the rights of Sri Lankans. The hypocrisy is, it was LTTE who violated Human rights. To fight the war and defeat LTTE, the government and armed forces had the responsibility of ensuring and entrusting the lives of all civilians while safeguarding human rights. Accordingly, the civilians were able to escape from the LTTE and returned to the security forces in the face of the onslaught of the security forces. Then the government and security forces were ready to provide them with all the medical treatment and other essentials.

The United States has imposed sanctions on Sri Lanka Army commander and Chief of Defence Staff, General Shavendra Silva for unsubstantiated claims of war crimes committed at the final stages of the conflict against the Tamil Tigers in 2009, when up to 70,000 Tamil civilians were killed. The US travel ban against General Silva and his family due to these baseless allegations. However, the LTTE has been rehabilitated and have been recruited into the Sri Lankan security forces, giving them opportunities to serve the country. In addition, more than 450,000 landmines placed by LTTE terrorists in the northern part of Sri Lanka have been cleared and the resettlement of Tamils in those areas has been very successful. **Where has the international community been when the Tamil people were resettled and rehabilitated after removing 450,000 mines by our armed forces?** General Silva has also constantly advised the health sector and other support services in the face of the corona pandemic, assisting in maintaining the most successful vaccination and quarantine programs and maintaining the public administration machinery. The LTTE fought with the intention of dividing this country. They want to do the same once again and currently making their best efforts to propagate baseless war crime allegations against our country.

Supports the erection of a memorial to unsubstantiated claims of massacred Tamils in Sri Lanka in the Canadian city of Brampton, a predominantly Tamil city. Approval for the construction of the Mullivaikkal memorial was unanimously approved by the Brampton City Council last year. The demolition of the memorial that supported LTTE terrorists at the University of Jaffna on January 9th last year (2021) provoked strong protests internationally. In this context, Ontario's political figure and Ontario Treasury President Pramit Singh Zakaria Brampton has expressed his support for the establishment of a memorial focusing on the first anniversary of these events. The terrorist memorial at the University of Jaffna was a threat to the national security of Sri Lanka and its reconciliation process. That is because the constructions of those memorials glorify the LTTE terrorists. In general, universities equip the youth of the country with intelligence. But it is very clear that such activities lead to a resurgence of terrorism. The right to remember loved ones can be exercised in a private sphere. But such public events, which are fundamental to the re-emergence of terrorists, should not be allowed in any form. If such commemorations are made, **what justice can be done to the innocent civilians killed by the terrorists?**





Finally, in the face of this ideological threat, it is important to consider how to ensure the national security of Sri Lanka.

A country does not experience peace just because war is over. As soon as the war ended, no government was able to unite the Sinhalese and the Tamils to the fullest extent to harmonize their minds on the right basis and the right objectives. This has led to the occurrence of threats from time to time. In order to eradicate the ethnic crisis in the country, Sri Lanka needs to formulate a proper national education policy that educates Sinhalese, Tamils, and Muslims alike. Education is an important aspect of a state. Policies must be introduced to carry out a smooth school administration with up-to-date knowledge and current trends. Threats posing from extremism penetrate the education system and the monitoring and overseeing of the school curricula is a must. The government must provide a system of governance, and regular monitoring to strengthen the education system. It must be identified that Sri Lanka can never achieve social unity, political stability, and economic prosperity without regulating the ethnic and religious space.

In light of recent societal events, Sri Lanka should build a retrograde system, which has been highlighted as necessary. Armed forces and intelligence services with adequate training should be able to expand knowledge, streamline investigations, streamline operations, and define the scope of activities without the use of internal or foreign forces.

When it comes to cyberspace, Sri Lanka needs a much stronger approach. Network intrusions are commonly considered to be one of the most serious threats to national security, public safety, and the economy. In this scenario, technology becomes a double-edged sword. The persistence and sophistication of cyber threats are becoming increasingly obvious, necessitating solutions that go beyond the typical. The rise of technology-driven new media, such as social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, as well as other websites on the Internet, has posed a threat to national security.

In addition, it is evident that there is an ongoing terrorist threat to Sri Lanka domestically as well as internationally by LTTE. It is no secret that terrorist sympathizers are carrying out various acts locally and internationally to whitewash LTTE crimes, while falsely accusing Sri Lanka of war crimes. With the escalation of such threats, a comprehensive security strategy is recommended.

Therefore, the government should adopt strict laws and abide by them. Terrorists have expanded their power through strategic perspectives using technology. In order to combat these threats, the responsible authorities must realize that our strategies must be more advanced compared to them. Furthermore, the government should take immediate actions to change our defence structure from where we are today to where we need to be in the future. Nevertheless, such acts of the LTTE network locally and internationally devalue the victory Sri Lankans achieved. Necessary steps must be

taken to rebut such commemorative acts. Further, it is imperative that all intelligence services, including the security forces, must be better prepared to stop any potential future terrorist threat to our motherland.



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## Abiding By LTTE Proscription Law

*K. M. M. Jayathilaka*

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Last November the European Political Subdivision of the LTTE lost their battle against the LTTE being listed as an international terrorist organisation within Europe. The General Court of the European Union, on 24 November 2021, dismissed their plea to repeal the Council of European Union (EU) decision to retain the LTTE on the European Union List of Terrorist Organisations. The EU and the UK ordered the court to dismiss the action as inadmissible.

The LTTE was originally listed as a terrorist organisation by the EU in 2006. In 2019, pursuant to the powers conferred by Article 1(6) of Common Position 2001/931 and Article 2(3) of Regulation No. 2580/2001, the EU decided to maintain the proscription on the basis that LTTE retains military and financial capacities coupled with the intent to conduct terrorist acts for the interests of the organisation, despite its military defeat in 2009 in Sri Lanka. The above stance of the EU was disputed by the LTTE on two grounds. Firstly, International Humanitarian Law does not preclude recourse to means that fall under Article 1(3) of Common Position 2001/931 in the context of an armed conflict. Secondly, incidents referred to in paragraph 9 of the Statement of Reasons did not serve a terrorist aim, rather were aimed at ensuring the right of Tamil people to self-determination and their liberation from oppressions of Government of Sri Lanka. However, premised on Article 33 of the Geneva Convention, Article 4 (2) and 13 (2) of the Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Convention, *LTTE V Council and Hamas v Council*, the Court decided to retain the ban on the LTTE.

“The LTTE was widely recognised to be one of the most proficient and dangerous terrorist groups in the world.” The extremely sophisticated international support network, to a large extent, enabled the LTTE to sustain its 30 year-long struggles towards separatism and at present, ensures the LTTE is at the cutting edge of terrorist lethality and finesse. Therefore, curbing the transnational support structure through concerted national and international collaborations is the key to neutralising the extreme threat posed by the LTTE and its affiliations to the sovereignty of nations and security of international system as a whole. The judicial acknowledgment of the proscription of the LTTE by the EU prompts countries to review their practices with regard to the legality of LTTE publicity and fundraising activities based on Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001). This can be viewed as an apt opportunity to rejuvenate existing international and national collaborations, bringing the global operations of the LTTE to a grinding halt.

## **Curtailing Illegal Actions**

Proscription empowers EU member countries to confiscate or freeze funds and assets of the organisation and to prohibit making funds and other resources available for the cause of the organisation. In addition, proscription of an organisation hampers its political life, because it equips member countries to curtail rights of group members to stand for political office, to have access to services and positions in public service, to vote in Elections, to travel across national borders. Therefore, the EU's decision to maintain the proscription can be viewed as a significant blow to the LTTE, in view of the fact that majority of strongholds of the LTTE propaganda and fundraising activities hold European Union membership. It impairs efforts of the LTTE at harnessing political and economic support of European Union members for its aim of creating a separate Tamil state in northeastern Sri Lanka and will bring ongoing terrorist campaigns in Sri Lanka to a standstill.

Further, due to marginalisation at international level, the LTTE is bound to face disadvantages in internationalising their cause and legitimising the claim for an independent state of Tamil Eelam through propaganda and infiltration of legislatures of Western jurisdictions. Responding to the LTTE argument, the Court stated: that neither International Humanitarian Law, regardless of the motivation for the armed conflict, nor the principle of right to self –determination, permit employment of means that fall under Common Position 2001/93.

## **Major Setback**

The reasoning of the judgment starkly undermines the popular rhetoric of LTTE propaganda campaigns, which are used to motivate contributions for the cause and to justify LTTE atrocities committed during the armed conflict. This, undoubtedly, will cause the LTTE to suffer a major setback in their global propaganda campaign.

The General Court of Europe affirmed that in non-international armed conflict, as it was in Sri Lanka, provisions of Common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and its expanded provisions in Additional Protocol II of 1977 should be factored in all evaluations when addressing accountability. Ruling out the principle of command responsibility, Article 6 of the Additional Protocol requires anyone charged with an offence to be tried in his presence and on the basis of individual penal responsibility. Due to the inability to locate and identify former combatants, which becomes a barrier to prosecution, the current effort of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to collect evidence to exercise 'Universal Jurisdiction' to prosecute for war crimes in Sri Lanka becomes a futile exercise.

## **Shrinking International Space**

It is critical that Sri Lanka makes use of this increasingly shrinking international space for LTTE operations prudently to combat the re-emerging threat of LTTE on Sri Lanka soil through a multi-pronged and multi-dimensional strategy.

The Court ruling and the EU ban, which require enhanced vigilance on overt and covert operations of LTTE, set the tone to enhance Sri Lanka's counter terrorist financing efforts. Improved international cooperation with counterparts in European nations in terms of financial intelligence sharing, financial crime investigation, financial crime prosecution and extradition enables to mitigate and preclude threats of terrorist financing, because the LTTE receives a substantial financial support from member states of the European Union.

Constant emphasis by the Court over revival capacities of the LTTE, despite its military defeat, warrants Sri Lanka to act in a more proactive and a preventive manner rather than solely a reactive way to the current terrorist threat posed by the LTTE.

Proliferation of the propaganda in the form of praising, supporting, naturalising and justifying the LTTE cause and its terrorist activities is a major challenge to the territorial sovereignty of Sri Lanka, because it ploughs the ground for violence. In this regard, it is of utmost importance to design laws to prevent indirect incitement to terrorism in compliance with international human rights law and standards.



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# Cyber Terrorism an Emerging Threat to Sri Lanka's National Security

*Thusitha Bulathgama*

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In the modern world, everything is digitalized. The world is accessible at our fingertips. Due to the wide accessibility, people tend to misuse technology. One such way is cybercrime. Cybercrime it is not a novel phenomenon in the world. Even though there are many definitions for cybercrimes, one common definition is for cybercrime is “*any criminal activity which takes place on or over the medium of computers or the internet or other technology recognized by the Information Technology Act.*” Cybercrime is a threat to national security. Cyber hackers can infiltrate security systems, disseminate false news, and spread hate speech, resulting in unrest in the community. This also affects detrimentally to international relations.

In the Sri Lankan context, several cyber-attacks happened in the past. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) hacked the government of Sri Lanka’s websites several times. The new war utilized by; LTTE is Cyber-crime. Cyber terrorists are trying to control human behavior and the government’s behavior using technology. With valuable information, anything can be dangerous if the information falls into a bad hand.

As Curran, Concannon, and McKeever (in Janczewski and Colarik 2008:03) point out, LTTE became the world’s first terrorist group to attack a country’s computer system in 1998. “In 1998, the LTTE organization immerse Sri Lankan embassies with 800 Emails a day for two weeks of the period. The message simply says. “*We are the Internet Black Tigers and we’re doing this to interrupt your communications*”. Again, at the end of the fourth Eelam war, the LTTE launched an attack on several government websites. This time they were able to attack the Army website of the Sri Lankan government on 01<sup>st</sup> of May 2009. When considering these, LTTE’s capability to carry out similar cyber-attacks and advanced cyber-attacks on the Sri Lankan government websites will prove their capability to use the new technology for creating trouble comprehensions on the rival’s mind.

Nevertheless, it wasn’t the end. LTTE cyber strategies got stronger than ever before. On 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2018, the organization called “Tamil Eelam Cyber Force”, hacked the Sinhala version of the official website of the Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs. Furthermore, they hacked the website of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Honorary Consulate in Kerala. As a result of hacking, these websites displayed a long message from the Tamil Eelam Cyber Force and also a rolling news feed message which said ‘*Hacked by Tamil Eelam Cyber Force*’. Another attack has happened on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 on the LK Domain registry. This cyber-attack investigation is still carried out by Sri Lanka

Computer Emergency Readiness Team (SLCERT) along with the Information Technology Society of Sri Lanka (ITSSL). On 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021, the Chinese Embassy operating in Sri Lanka website, Ministry of Health website, Rajarata university website was affected by the cyberattacks. These cyber-attacks were also conducted by a group called “Tamil Eelam Cyber Force”. Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksha’s website was also hacked on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2021. ITSSL said the Prime Minister’s website was hacked in a manner in which any visitor to the website would be redirected to another website that displays content related to Bitcoin Cryptocurrency. Due to all these website hackings, it questioned the security of data in government institutions.

The LTTE also uses various kinds of cyber strategies as an element of their War against the Sri Lankan state. According to “*Counter Cyber Terrorism Effectively: Are we ready to rumble*” by Shamsuddin Abdul Jalil, under the cyber strategy of LTTE, there were many things including, cyber-attacks, cyber threats, cyber propaganda, terrorist financing via the internet, and intense ideological and political campaigns against the Sri Lankan state. Additionally, the technological capability of the LTTE impelled the Government to be more concerned with its informational security.

Considering these facts, it appears that cyber terrorism is an emerging and existing threat in the country. Nevertheless, the challenge is, we cannot witness the threat from our own eyes. This is an invincible threat that we need to face carefully. As a country, we need to be aware of this matter more than ever. For that, we need to prevent and mitigate cyber terrorism. To do that, there should be a perfect strategy to follow. Such as,

- Increase the security awareness

Building awareness about cyber terrorism issues among the community is important. With proper education, they will realize the significance of defending themselves from similar attacks. It will also help to build more inventive communities dealing with information securities. Effective cyber security training programs can help people equip themselves with the skills and knowledge demanded to effectively cover their computer and network systems right.

- Stringent cyber laws

The government can help in controlling cyber-terrorist attacks by adopting new laws and revising prevailing cyber laws that will discipline the perpetrators more heavily if they are involved in similar conditioning.

- Implement cyber security educational policies

The government can implement effective educational programs and workshops with the collaboration of Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), based in Sri Lanka, including Tech CERT, SLCERT to educate the citizens on e-literacy.

- Pursue and enforce the law against the perpetrators

The people, organizations, and governments who face cyber-attacks must enforce the law against the terrorists who carry out such attacks. Although this is a costly process, it allows us to accurately identify criminals and enforce the law. As a result, criminals will deter from committing crimes.

Even though cyber terrorism has become a new topic for most of us, it became a very challenging threat to the world. Government and the general public should work together to end this threat. So far, significant progress has been made through industry and government initiatives in many countries to protect against cyber-attacks. However, with the right strategic security measures, we can win this battle.



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# Exclusivism; Threatening Humanity, Faith and Equality

*Bodhana Perera*

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Every Human being in this world is equal by birth and at death. Thereby every human is bound by duty, to preserve humanity's longevity and goodness. In this due course came faith; giving rise to human spirituality and religious sentiment. Every faith and philosophy promoted positivity towards one another. Created hope for equality and inclusiveness. It was religion that promotes humanity, hope and love. Every spiritual leader became an idol of peace. Their teachings were considered the manuscripts of humanity. Faith enriched humans with love, equality and hope. The tradition of inclusivity passed down from a generation to another. This cycle was preserved through culture for millennia; until the rise of 'exclusive religious superiority'. Modern ideologues of extreme beliefs sowed the seed of extremism and exclusivism deep within religion. Which embedded a tumor of religious violence and hatred. The same faiths once taught love and equality; were morphed into teachings of exclusive dominance and superiority. Humanity thus lost its need for equality; where faith slowly lost its urge for equality.

Exclusivism grows in isolations. A mind that associates a mono-ethnic community; grows fond of its belief. Such belief corrupts the human mind, seducing the mind to seek comfort in their faith, without diversity. A mind which grows in isolation can run wild with thought. Opposing notions to their thought aggravates them, giving motif to violence and hatred. This observation is recognized by eminent scholars, psychologists and theorists; who believes 'Exclusivism' is the first stage of terrorism. Elaborating on the theological concept of one's religion being superior to another; they criticize the concept of a superior god in religious teaching. Believing in the thought of a superior god; disciples of one faith can easily radicalize themselves into extremists. People who'd preserve their beliefs at the cost of humanity. According to Professor Rohan Gunaratna "a mind that grows in isolation radicalizes itself, gives birth to an extremist. And extremists give birth to religious terrorism". This statement provides clarity to the grey area on how violence is born out of exclusivity. Therefore, justifies how religion creates terrorism, irrespective of race and belief and idol.

Sri Lanka stands a prime example in exclusivism leading towards terrorism. Generations of violence and conflict, led by radical politics; promoted exclusive ideologies within the nation. The Official Language Act No. 33 of 1956 was the first major spark of exclusivism in Sri Lanka's modern history; implicating the idea of ethnic superiority. Followed by the tensions between Sinhalese and other ethnic groups; a radical seed of separatism and exclusivity came to bear fruit, leading to a 30 year-long Civil war in the country. The nation suffered at the hands of those who

wanted a separate state. The cost of conflict burdened the nation heavily and detrimentally; laying waste to a millennia-long inclusive culture. The war was later followed by the Easter Sunday bombings in 2019; proving yet again, that there was a problem deep beneath the social layer. The threat after the war was hibernating under religion; until we realized it too late.

In Sri Lanka's context; Zahran Hashim grew up in isolation. A typical mono-ethnic Kattankudi, never showed Zahran the beauty of humanity and ethno-plural coexistence. Velupillai Prabhakaran who led the 30-year long Civil war, wanted a separate nation limited only to his nation. Prabhakaran is a result of radical and exclusive politics, which sought after an elusive separate state. Ganasara Thera, who wanted Buddhism to be the only supreme belief in the country; brainwashed the youth and the clergy into hate-blinded nationalism. The reverend Thera's self-convinced campaign was motivated by the preservation of his beliefs. Therefore, it is approximate Sri Lankan culture includes extreme believers. Ones who seclude a community by provocation and manipulation. A community who isolates into exclusive religious practice; growing and grooming to become believers of an extreme ideology of religion.

Exclusivism is now being taught in Sri Lankan schools, disguised in the curricula as fundamental thought. Relevant authorities have recently come to light of such curricula, which are diverse and threateningly impactful. Attention shall too come towards the reclusive communities living in their religious realms; irrespective of age, caste, gender and status. There needs to be immediate counter-action, to lessen the effects of exclusivism preachers and their hate philosophy. The Easter Sunday tragedy became an eye-opener to this blatant misconduct. It must be ensured for the future; to not let such tragedies mark our history with blood. Humanity should be our race, equality and love must be our religion. Only then shall we conquer the vague thoughts of exclusivism; to a harmonious future.



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# The Progress of Sustainable Development Goals in Sri Lanka by 2022

*Dilmini Abeyrathne*

*Published on Colombo Telegraph, 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2022*

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by all United Nations Member States including developed and developing countries in 2015 are a collection of 17 interlinked aspirational global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were developed in the Post-2015 Development Agenda as the future global development framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which ended in 2015. These 17 goals encompassing 169 targets and 244 indicators meet the urgent political, economic and environmental challenges facing the world.

There are 194 countries including Sri Lanka that have agreed to comply with SDGs by improving lives while protecting the planet over the next fifteen years (by 2030). The 17 SDGs or Global Goals is being achieved via initiating and continuing a variety of development-oriented programs in Sri Lanka. This attempt brings out the prevailing results from the indicators related to SDG progress in Sri Lanka for the first 6 goals.

## **Progress of Sustainable Development Goals**

The first goal of 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere' includes 7 targets and 14 indicators. According to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL, 2020) statistics, poverty headcount ratio indicates a decline from 8.9 (2009/10) to 6.7 (2012/13) to 4.1 (2016). Further Gini coefficient of household income in 2016 has been recorded as 0.45.

SDG number two; 'End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture' includes 8 targets and 13 indicators. As per the CBSL statistics, the average daily kilocalorie intake was 2,111 (2012/13) and 2,095 in 2016.

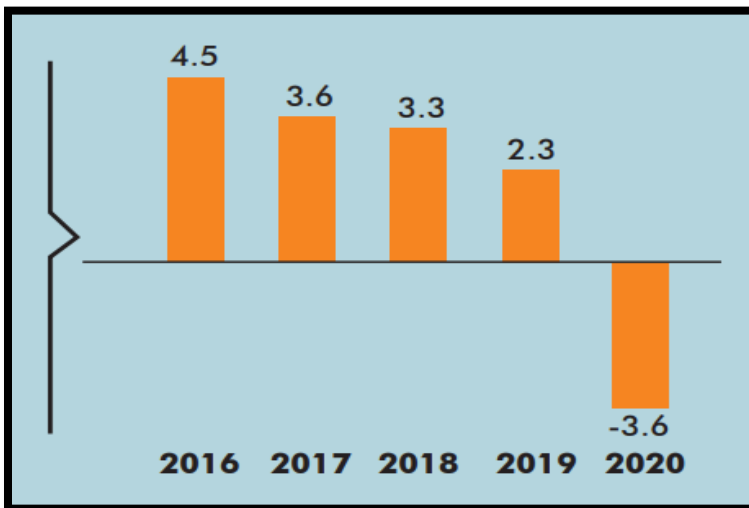
The third goal; 'Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages' includes 13 targets and 27 indicators. Accordingly, the maternal mortality ratio, premature mortality and infant deaths are crucial criteria. In 2016, the crude birth rate was 15.6 per 1,000 persons and has declined to 13.8 in 2020. The crude death rate also indicates a slight decline in number from 6.2 per 1,000 persons in 2016 to 6.0 in 2020. The infant mortality rate shows an increase from 8.2 per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 8.5% in 2015.

The fourth goal is to ‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ that expands to include preprimary education, vocational and technical education for employment and entrepreneurship, qualified teachers and eliminate gender disparities in education, etc. According to the recent CBSL statistics, the entire literacy rate is 93.2% (2015) and 92.9% in 2019. The government expenditure on education in 2016 is 2.0% of the GDP while it has declined to 1.9% in 2019. University admission as a percentage of eligibility was 18.6 (2016) and 22.5% in 2019. With regard to primary education, the net school enrolment ratio was 95.9% in 2016 that has reached 91.1% in 2020.

In the 5<sup>th</sup> goal; ‘Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls,’ a sensitive concern is drawn to eliminate discrimination, violence and any other harmful practices against women and provide women with equal access to economic activities. Without any doubt, water is a basic need for living purposes. Therefore the 6<sup>th</sup> goal is to ‘Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. In 2020, access to safe drinking water is 93.2% per unit and it is an increase of 3.5% since 2016. Further, pipe-borne water access in 2016 was 47.7% which increased up to 53.1% in 2020.

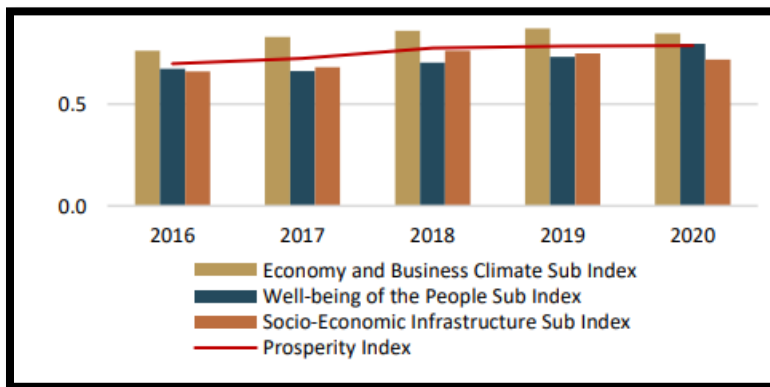
### **Economic Growth and Key composite indices**

During the past five years, the economic growth rate of Sri Lanka maintained a falling trend starting from 5% to 4.5%, 3.6%, 3.3% and 2.3% from 2015 to 2019 respectively. Due to the adverse effects caused by Covid-19 the economy reached a negative value of -3.6% last year. In 2019, the distribution of employees in agriculture (25.3%), industry (27.6%) and services (47.1%) have changed into agriculture (27.1%) industry (26.9%) and services (46.0%). Precisely the statistics indicate an increase in the agriculture employment and decrease in the other sectors.



**Annual Economic Growth in Sri Lanka, Central Bank (2020)**

Concerning the economic and business climate and socio-economic infrastructure in the country, the Sri Lanka Prosperity Index (SLPI) provides a better guidance. Hence the index has changed 0.783 to 0.786 from 2019 to 2020. Amidst the Covid-19 pressures, the sub-theme of the well-being of the people has improved from 0.731 to 0.795 while decreases were noticed in the other indicators as economy and business climate decreased from 0.871 to 0.846 and socio-economic infrastructure from 0.748 to 0.718. Furthermore, the Human Development Index ranking for Sri Lanka has improved 73<sup>rd</sup> place to 72<sup>nd</sup> place from 2015 to 2019.



**Movements of SLPI and sub-indices: 2016 – 2020, Central Bank (2020)**

### **Current Situation**

Even though Sri Lanka has shown positive trends in the Human Development Index (HDI), the current situation of economic security is threatening. People are trapped in an obscure economic crisis. The way out is uncertain and unpredictable. Shortages in necessary food items, medicine, petroleum products and continuous bans on imports add to the distress of people day by day. Therefore, some of the aforementioned triumphs in SDGs are at a stake at present. Hopefully, crises do not prevail every day. They vanish gradually with time and long-term solutions for a persisting recovery.

### **A way forward**

According to the World Bank, Sri Lankan economy has already shown signs of weaknesses prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Owing to the decreasing trend of foreign reserves, allocating funds to uplift SDGs has become a daunting task. In order to overcome the financial issues, academics, economists and other policy-making authorities have suggested seeking the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and establish economic security to enable the flow of investments into Sri Lanka.



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# Apex threats to National Security

*C. L. C. M. Patabendige*

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Guilt, sadness, repentance, and accountability are futile matters to a terrorist or an extremist. Social media is widely used by many, to deceive and manipulate the community. Social media is a haven for terrorists as well as extremists to deliberately harm the social, moral, and public order. At present, it is important to realize that modes of war have changed. Unlike in the past, war is not always militaristic. It can also be by way of information. Information warfare is done by the creation and dissemination of false information, misinformation, disinformation as well as hate speech. One single word, a picture, or a video can create restlessness in society. Hence, it is imperative to criminalize online falsehoods and manipulations. Moreover, it is pivotal to abide by laws, by thwarting the suppression of freedom of expression and freedom of publication. Thus, it is now high time to introduce legislation to criminalize online falsehoods and manipulations.

## **Legislation**

The rationale behind introducing and executing a law, relating to online falsehoods and manipulations is to preserve moral, public, and social order. The law will furnish a safeguard to society to cherish harmony by dissuading deliberate hatred. In addition, the Act will criminalize profit-driven individuals, entities, terrorists, extremists, and people with prejudices. Furthermore, victims of malicious acts must be compensated. This will bestow the judiciary with the power to penalize the perpetrators. Therefore, the Act must provide calibrated remedies. On the other hand, it is crucial that the accused have the right to explain. The Act should not be an undue influence by the Government. Besides, there needs to be room for judicial review. In addition, to judicial remedies, it is important to correct the false statement imminently and in the case of an inherently deliberate false statement, it must be taken down. The Act must be precise and free of ambiguities. It must be focused with great oversight.

## **Freedom of Speech**

Now the question occurs as to whether it will denigrate the right of freedom of expression and freedom of publication which are fundamental rights of the Sri Lankan Constitution. The Constitution is democratic in nature, giving prominence to the public interest. The rights, as well as duties stipulated in the Constitution, are for the enhancement of the life of individuals in the country. What is important to identify is the Act will not prevent constructive criticism. Therefore, determining whether the conduct is acceptable or not is completely dependent on the motive and the conduct of the individual or the entity. Looking at the trends around the world and the emerging as well as the existing threat of falsehoods, it is understandable what free

flow of information is competent of. What is important to identify is, that the Act will not forbid free speech or publication, but it will only impede acts that are inconsistent with the public interest.

### **Raising awareness**

With that being said, it is crucial to accept such legislation. The Government must educate the public on the threat of online falsehoods and manipulations. As long as people are unaware of the existing threat, they will not take any action swiftly to prevent or counteract it. Being ignorant of the threat is disastrous compared to knowing the risk. Therefore, the Government is duty-bound to take essential actions to educate society. There are many benefits of the Act from a public perspective. The Act will act as a safe point to prevent privacy violations and defamation by penalizing the perpetrators meanwhile taking down the false content. The Act provides a reporting mechanism to the public to lodge complaints against falsehoods and manipulations.

Thus, it is crystal clear that online falsehoods and manipulations are detrimental. Introducing an Act to criminalize will aid the justice process. As the Government is the custodian of the public, the interests of the public must be given precedence. Due to that reason, the Government must instill information literacy in people to give society the proficiency, to find, evaluate, organize, use, and communicate information in all its various formats. Moreover, it is important to strengthen data protection in order to prevent data privacy violations. Fact-checking is an important step that will prevent online falsehoods. All the stakeholders must verify the source, motive, context, and other surrounding facts of the piece of information before reacting to the content and disseminating it.



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# Renewable Energy; Securing the Present and the Future of Sri Lanka

*Gayanga Dias*

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Today, Sri Lanka is in the face of a burning economic crisis. This major crack in the economy has led to serious national security concerns including the energy sector. With the disruption of the day-to-day lives of people, the energy insecurity has imposed threats to other sectors such as education, health, transportation, food etc. With these issues, Sri Lanka needs to understand the importance of the renewable energy transition and capacity building.

Sri Lankan energy supply is dominated by three major components; 41% by petrol, 46% by biomass and 13% by electricity. Although the energy produced by electricity is low, it is counted as the most impactful component, since it is strongly intertwined with the daily lives of the people. In Sri Lanka, electricity is generated using three primary sources: thermal power (which includes coal and fuel oil), hydropower, and other non-conventional renewable energy sources (solar power and wind power). The usage of coal and oil in thermal power generation has faced a huge crisis, because the economic crisis has disrupted the import of these components. The significance of renewable energy for the present and future of Sri Lanka has been unveiled with these developments.

## **Entwining of Energy Security and National Security**

Energy becomes a national security issue when energy insecurity affects a country's governing policies and the security of the people. Current energy crisis has directly affected the day-to-day lives of the citizens. Revealing the seriousness of the situation, the country is facing electricity cuts, and long petrol and diesel queues in gas stations have become a common sight. Gas shortage has closed down a large number of restaurants thus far. The tourism sector had a mini-boom in the beginning of February 2022, but yet again severely affected due to the power outages. Hospitals are facing a critical situation and online education has been hampered. It is obvious that the security threat posed by the energy insecurity has spilled over to transportation, health, food, education and many other sectors creating a detrimental effect.

The international factors like, the dependency of oil from the international market imposes national security threats on Sri Lanka. The reliance on the production and transportation of fossil fuels creates national vulnerabilities since the importing country can be influenced by the regulations made by the exporting countries. Not to mention, burning fossil fuels contributes to climate change; yet another aspect of national security. These factors have revealed the importance of moving towards

renewable energy, rather than surviving on coal & oil for energy production.

### **Sri Lanka and Renewable Energy Policies**

The government has given prominence to the renewable energy sector through the current policies. The plan is to increase the power generation capacity of the country from the existing 4,043 megawatts (MW) to 6,900 MW by 2025 with a significant increase in renewable energy. The government is striving to increase the contribution of renewable energy to 70% to the national grid by the year 2030, which is a very effective target. Sri Lanka has already achieved a grid connectivity of 98 percent, which is relatively high by South Asian standards.

Hydropower in the country has almost reached its capacity and produces a fluctuating amount of energy due to less predictable weather patterns. As a result, the authorities have plans to add additional renewable and non-renewable power plants over the next 10 years. The construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant was initiated in 2021 in Kerawalapitiya, identifying the increasing energy need.

Among the renewable energy projects, 'Soorya Bala Sangramaya' is one of the most efficient one that take solar power into the public domain. Making awareness on solar energy, empowering houses, religious places, factories, tourist hotels and other infrastructure, providing relevant technology is done under this program. On a different note, Sri Lanka's first large scale Wind Farm in Mannar which is expected to generate 400 GWh of electricity annually is a huge achievement by the authorities, motivating the renewable power generation.

### **Way Forward**

In the near future, gradual depletion of oil and coal will disable the thermal power generation. Also, depending on fossil fuels make Sri Lanka's foreign expenditure increase, impacting on the economic security. Therein, development of other energy sources must be improved and the capacity of renewable power sectors must be increased. Since the establishment of the Norochcholai power plant in 2013, there were no other power plants established which could generate a considerable amount of electricity to the national grid. Currently Sri Lanka is experiencing the repercussions of it. Hence, it is vital to invest in advanced renewable energy power plants to safeguard the energy security of the country.

Contribution of people equally matters in this transformation to renewable energy. The government must educate the people on the advantages and the benefits of the transformation. Encouraging people to individually move on to renewable sources like solar energy must be done and in doing so the government must give the proper assistance, guidance and concessions. Further, diversifying our energy sources on a national level will be a good move to counter future threats and will help in insulating from supply shocks. Sri Lanka being an island nation, the potential of tidal power generation must be taken into consideration. More research and development must

take place to identify the potential of it. On a concluding remark the current developments clearly denote that the future of power generation lies in the context of renewable energy. Therefore, it is crucial to address energy security in the context of renewable energy to ensure national security in the country.



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# Regulatory Pluralism in NGOs Governance: An Impending Threat to National Security

*K. M. M. Jayathilaka*

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Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are democratic voluntary agencies, which function independently of the government to tackle a myriad of social, economic and environmental problems and to foster social inclusion, economic integration and sustainable development. Therefore, NGOs play a vital role in socio-economic development of a state by complementing efforts of a government to provide services and assistance to vulnerable segments of the local population. However, with the decentralization of terrorist movements such as Al Qaeda, LTTE and development of localized terrorist actors, NGOs are identified as one of the popular channels exploited by terrorists to solicit monetary and non-monetary support for terrorist activities. To infiltrate the sector and misuse NGO funds and operations to cover for or support terrorist activities, terrorist organizations take advantage of characteristics of NGOs such as access to multitude of sources of funds, possession of large transitory workforce, high level of public trust, right to preserve anonymity of donors and beneficiaries and its global presence that provides a framework for national and international operations and financial transactions. Therefore, safeguarding the NGO sector from terrorist abuse is both a critical component of the global fight against terrorism and a necessary step to preserve the integrity of NGOs and underpin the confidence of its stakeholders.

Sri Lanka possesses a complex legal regime to scrutinize and facilitate operations of the NGO sector. Citizen-based groups operating cooperatively for social welfare is a deeply rooted practice in the Sri Lankan society, which can be evidenced by the existence of Temple Development Societies, Death Donation Societies and Thrift and Credit Co-operative Societies. In the late 1970, the NGO sector increasingly diversified in number and activities due to liberalization of the economy and relaxation of exchange controls and travel restrictions. Following the outbreak of the war against LTTE in 1983, political affairs, reconciliation and ethnic harmony and human rights became the dominant identity of NGOs instead of social and economic development. Owing to these historical and cultural reasons, Sri Lanka does not possess a uniform regulatory regime to promote a strong and sustainable NGO sector through good governance, transparency and accountability. There are 13 laws which institutions can avail to register as an NGO in Sri Lanka, including Voluntary Social Service Organizations (Registration and Monitoring) Act No. 31 of 1980, Companies



Act No.7 of 2007, Consumer Affairs Authority Act No. 09 of 2003 and Trusts Ordinance No.17 of 1917.

Regulatory mechanisms spelled out by above-mentioned laws provide inconsistent treatments for NGOs depending on the legal form and entitlement to government support. Therefore, regulatory framework on NGOs is complex, duplicative and imposes a significant regulatory burden on the NGO sector. As a result of this peculiar situation, NGOs are not properly regulated and monitored and they are not held accountable and transparent financially and functionally to the government. Fragmentation of responsibilities on regulation of NGOs across a range of government institutions increases the NGO sector's real exposure to terrorist financing.

Reporting is an essential tool to ensure accountability and transparency in the NGO sector. However, lead Counter Terrorist Financing Agencies in Sri Lanka have not been able to reap maximum benefits from reporting arrangements laid down by regulatory agencies such as the NGO Secretariat, the Registrar of Companies owing to its ad hoc, uncoordinated and complex nature. These reporting arrangements often focus on a particular activity of NGOs rather than providing a holistic description and key information on their finances and ongoing activities. Further, "current reporting requirements across the sector are inconsistent as there is minimal reporting for some organisations and excessive reporting for others", which is disproportionate to the level of risk posed by these entities. Lack of accurate and meaningful information concerning the whole sector is a significant vulnerability, which decreases the likelihood of success in terms of detection, investigation and law enforcement on terrorism related abuse and risk in the NGO sector.

Moreover, multiple reporting requirements, with considerable duplication of effort due to involvement of many applications and forms with subtly different criteria, impose a high regulatory burden and compliance cost on NGOs and provide opportunities for deception and escape reporting obligations. In the absence of a centralized portal of information over scale and scope of the NGO sector, lead Counter Terrorist Financing Agencies and the public face red tape in accessing information. It severely retards the effectiveness of efforts of regulatory agencies on oversight and detection of wrongdoings in the NGO sector; it limits the decision-making ability of Sri Lankan public on prudent allocation of resources among NGOs. Further, "multiplicity of laws and regulatory agencies could act as a trigger for some entities to remove them from regulatory oversight due to extra administrative burden and cost, thus increasing the number of unregulated entities who are already at greater risk of terrorist exploitation."

Accordingly, it is apparent that the present regulatory mechanisms do not operate as an effective shield against terrorist infiltration and manipulation of the NGO sector, in the absence of a single regulatory agency and uniform law on registration, reporting commitments and oversight of NGOs. Inadequate regulatory scrutiny provides opportunities to imperil the sovereignty and national security of Sri Lanka through NGOs. To successfully counter this threat, the NGO Secretariat should be reformulated as the single lead authority to unite and regulate the work of entire NGO sector, which will eliminate existing regulatory complexities and will ensure better transparency and accountability through enhanced regulatory scrutiny. Regulatory functions presently spread across different government institutions should be merged into the NGO Secretariat. The NGO Secretariat should function as the single portal for registration, reporting commitments, collation and dissemination of information, monitoring compliance with reporting requirements and procedures, preventive, remedial and investigative work, educating and supporting NGOs on good governance irrespective of legal status of voluntary agencies. This effort of unification should be complemented by forming an NGO Coordination Board consisting of top executives of NGO regulatory agencies, which will be a platform to determine what organizations with different legal forms qualify as NGOs to be governed under the Voluntary Social Service Organization Act (VSSOA) and to delegate regulation of such organizations to the NGO Secretariat. Moreover, the NGO Secretariat should be armed with adequate authority and independence by amending the VSSOA to render above-mentioned task productively. To that end, the structure, powers and duties of the NGO Secretariat should be modelled on the Charity Commission of UK. Acute shortage of resources currently experienced by the NGO Secretariat render efficient processing of functions attached with ‘one-stop-shop’ NGO regulator arduous. Therefore, the NGO Secretariat should be resourced with sufficient financial resources and excellent information technology to employ automated systems for registration, reporting, analysis and maintenance of a database. It should be equipped with skilled human resources to scrutinize risk and instances of terrorist exploitation and to operate automated systems.



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