Redefining Military Engagement: Shifting From Counter Insurgency to Comprehensive Peacebuilding Mechanism in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Sri Lanka was considered one of the most stable and secure nations among the South Asian nations. The Sri Lankan administration only came to know in the several years after independence that maintaining national security was perhaps one of the most challenging and exciting issues the country is dealing with at present. On the international level, it was accepted that the role of the military was essential not only for the protection of the nation's security but also for the population and internal security. Whenever there is an issue of security of a country on any front, the military is seen as having an important role in defending the security of a country. However, it was expected that a very positive and strong feeling of security would be brought back to the country when the military got what it wanted in 2009, and that was to eliminate the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam) in Sri Lanka. According to this, it would be appropriate to assess and consider the security trends, the peace-making activities, and the military participation of the Sri Lankan nation-state. Building on this, the present study has sought to explore in what way and how the military helped in the process of post-conflict peacebuilding. In the study, a qualitative research method was used to conduct the investigation. Secondary data was adopted for this study whereby information was collected from books, journals and government papers. As per this study, the military of Sri Lanka is not a passive bystander in the defence of the country's security but is using both soft and hard power to ensure the preservation of security as necessary. Drawing from this study, this research brings to focus, the major problem of Sri Lanka that lacks a coordinated national security policy that needs urgent attention and appropriate intervention to protect the safety and security of the nation.

Keywords: Civil Military Relations, Defense, Nation Building, Peace Keeping Operations, Northern Province of Sri Lanka

INTRODUCTION

Off the southernmost point of India is the island country of Sri Lanka. Geographically, this nation is bordered by the Indian Ocean and divided from India by the Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar (Global Edge, 2020). Numerous ethnic groups reside in the nation, with the majority being Sinhalese, Tamils, and Muslims, who are spread out across the nation. The Sinhalese have established in the country's Southern, Western, and Central regions, whereas the Jaffna Tamils, who predominately live in the country's northern area are thought to be descended from Indian tribes that first came to the island more than 1500 years ago (Upali, 2017). The plantation labourers that the British tea planters sent to the island throughout the 19th and 20th centuries were Indian Tamils (Migration Profile, 2013). According to Upali (2017), Sri Lanka is a nation with a multicultural, plural society in which all groups coexist in respect for one another's many ethnicities and cultural heritages. Sri Lanka is now classified as a lower-middle-income country by the World Bank, with a GDP per capita of $3,293 (2023) and a total population of a million (World Bank, 2023).

Today, Sri Lanka is regarded as one of South Asia's safest and most secure nations. This unity was attained following the military defeat of the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam), one of the most cruel and strong terrorist organizations. With a 26-year duration, this war was among the most serious and drawn-out ones in recent memory (Lindberg & Orjuela, 2011). As a result, the conflict was over but no resolution to the underlying national issue had been reached. In 2009, the government finally emerged as the conflict's ultimate victor (Kilavuz, 2017). However, it's crucial to take into account the underlying factors that led to this protracted battle. In 1948, Sri Lanka was able to get its freedom from the British. The many ethnic groups' disputes grew as a result of independence. A number of parliamentary laws were passed causing a lack of cohesion and the Tamils' calls for secession. The British 'divide and rule' strategy, which was primarily based on racial and ethnic differences, was utilized strategically to break up the unity among the various populations and prevent a well-coordinated national rebellion. During the British era,

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"ethnicity was significantly politicized" (Lindberg & Orjuela, 2011:18).

According to Orjuela (2010), "the Tamils' civil disobedience tactics gradually transformed into rebellious acts of militancy against the state" (Orjuela ,2010:67). The northern people started to want their own independent state on their ancestral territories in response to the sporadic incidents of intergroup violence, and they also thought that using force was the only way to solve the problem. According to Orjuela (2010), "the failure of the state to deal with minority aspirations originated as the root causes of the conflict" (Orjuela, 2010:67). According to the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, "the military is an institution established by the state for the purpose of defending the country from external threats and internal conflicts" (Karunarathne, 2014:98). Upholding national security is the military's primary responsibility. One of the main responsibilities of the military is to protect national security from threats both inside and outside the country (Ministry of Defence, 2017). When acts of terrorism were perpetrated, the Sri Lankan military intervened on numerous occasions to preserve peace and security in the nation. "The Sri Lankan military forces defeated the LTTE with all of their hard power, crushing the deadliest military group" (Karunarathne, 2014:98).

Sri Lanka's succeeding administrations have used a variety of tactics to protect national security, including the use of intelligence services and contemporary military techniques. For instance, when racial tensions rose, the Sri Lankan government had to take counterinsurgency measures to ensure that certain neighbourhoods had enough security. Due to violent activities committed by the LTTE during it's high time, some other militant groups were motivated to do extremist work against the religions in the Northern Province (Rajapakse, 2013). National security has been put in jeopardy on numerous occasions. Every single time, the military faced these issues head-on and helped the country achieve success. In fact, since the civil war came to an end in 2009, the military's involvement has proven important and critical. In this situation, the succeeding governments enlisted military assistance to reconstruct the Northern and Eastern regions. Since reconstruction, resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration, and reconciliation are all regarded as essential responsibilities that would boost national security, the military has been actively involved in the nation-building process in these areas. The military has established itself as one of the state's premier institutions trying to maintain national stability in Sri Lanka throughout this protracted process. Diverse methods can be used to examine this situation's military involvement and its importance in maintaining security in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, this paper explores how the military contributed to Sri Lanka's post-war efforts to maintain national security and promote peace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of the military in Sri Lanka after the conflict has been the subject of several research papers before this one. While current literature focuses on the traditional view of the national security perspective, how the military can enhance human security in the Northern Province needs to be addressed. This study is necessary to understand military involvement in the post-war period in Sri Lanka. Few of these studies, despite the fact that many of them focused on national security, have examined how the military can help advance human security in Sri Lanka. Finding a research gap, developing a theoretical framework, and comprehending research-related concepts are the major goals of a literature review. This review is expected to bridge the research gap by connecting national and human security, emphasizing the value of the nontraditional role of the military. Many academics and institutions have defined the phrase 'military role.'

Williams (2008) provided a number of concepts regarding what comprises national security and its fundamental tenets. The author took into account a variety of theories about national security, including constructivism, liberalism, realism, and game theory. Additionally, this study focused on a number of crucial contemporary issues, including peace studies, the international arms trade, war, terrorism, genocide and mass murder, ethnic conflict, human security, alliances, regional institutions, contemporary challenges, and private security, transnational organized crime, and energy security. This study is mainly Focused on the different nature of society, that is not limited to the power of the military capacity but extended to which the military can play non-traditional roles such as organized crimes of the society and environmental security (Rajapakse, 2013)

Heywood (2011) discussed national security and its theoretical foundation from a practical standpoint. He has paid close attention to the current state of military strategy, particularly the US and NATO military presence in regions where they have performed operations. This research also discusses events connected to terrorism, human rights, humanitarian intervention, war and peace, and many other topics in international politics. This study offers numerous instances of military strategies for human and national security at various levels. This offers another set of examples from the international system to show how these notions can be applied and appropriated by the Sri Lankan state in its specific post-conflict reality.

Soltani and Yusoff (2012) conducted a thorough investigation into the theoretical underpinnings of the national security concept as well as the national security policies enacted by various nations. As a result, this study discusses the key perspectives on the concept of security taken by rationalism, relativism, and constructivism. The researcher has given comparative studies of national security ideas a lot of consideration in this study. The positivist view, which contends that social and political phenomena can be described in the same manner that scientists explain the natural world, serves as the foundation for the clarifying rationalism presented in this article.

The rationalist approach in relation to Sri Lanka provides the opportunity to analyze the practices of security aimed at the state-centric approach, while the constructivist approach opens up the understanding of the social and political factors of human security.

Höglund and Orjuela (2010) stated that the practical challenges of attempting to avert conflicts were examined for their study. The study also emphasizes how foreign influences are used to shape the internal policies of other

nations. Demilitarization, political power-sharing, justice and reconciliation, post-war reconstruction, economic development, and other conflict avoidance strategies are covered. Even if the conflict in Sri Lanka was resolved after three decades of carnage, the nation is still unable to fully assure human security by using a military strategy. The situation in Sri Lanka both during and after the war can be better understood with the help of the current research. This study is then particularly useful for Sri Lanka in the current context to understand post-war reintegration and reconciliation and the place that the military could occupy in the highly contested questions of political power and justice.

Webeland and Galtung (2007) presented their ideas for the national security and peace studies. This book gives a fundamental overview of conflict and peace studies. The reconciliation process is also analytically discussed. The authors provided real-life examples of rapprochement and establishing peace in many parts of the world. For individuals looking to learn more about the military's function in various nations with a focus on national security and the idea of establishing peace, this research will be of great interest. Placing these real-world examples into the context of Sri Lanka creates a comparative model for engaging with peacebuilding endeavors and the role of the military in these projects.

Karunarathne (2014) presented his view regarding the role of the military by examining how the military can be used to promote development in Sri Lanka, this study concentrated on the function of the military in the post-war era. The study also covered topics like recovery, peace-making, and nation-building theories. There is a discussion of how the Sri Lankan armed forces operated and how they were able to use force to destroy terrorism. Importantly, Karunarathne's work is helpful in examining the role of military forces in post-conflict economic and social reconstruction, which is also part of human security and is missing in the Sri Lankan literature.

Goldstein (2003) outlined the peace-building procedures that came after military intervention. The report gives descriptions of a number of global wars. According to the author, "conflict between states is not an unusual condition but a common one" (Goldstein, 2003). This describes how conflicts are categorized. This research also revealed that "states are increasingly using military might for purposes other than fighting." This book provides some examples of military participation in humanitarian help following disasters, drug trafficking investigations, and peacekeeping missions. Consequently, this study helps to clarify the function of the military and national security worldwide. This truth is very relevant for Sri Lanka as it observed its military engagement in activities that are not only post-war but also essentially post-conflict and entail disaster relief and the construction of significant humanitarian elements of human security.

The Concept of National Security

There is no agreed-upon definition of national security. According to Barry Buzan, maintaining the nation-state's geographical integrity, sovereignty, and sense of national unity are all closely tied to national security (Buzan, 1991). Most nation-states place national security at the top of their list of priorities. In a world of self-help, all states are at least potentially a threat to all other states, hence each state must have the ability to defend itself (Heywood, 2011). This is the basic definition of security. Nabilo defines national security as an intricate interaction between political, economic, military, ideological, legal, social, and other internal and external factors through which individual states attempt to ensure appropriate provisions to maintain their sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, the physical survival of their population, and opportunities for balanced and quick social development on an equal footing (Grizold: 1994). So, in a broader sense, national security can be described as the level of security within a nation-state (Bhandari & Sharma, 2020). It comprises ensuring the safety of the nation's borders, safeguarding the property and lives of its citizens, preserving national sovereignty, and carrying out fundamental societal functions like economic, social, political, cultural, and ecological ones (UNDP, 1994). Therefore, whether a country is large or small, its interest in its own national security has grown significantly.

Rajapakshe (2013) stated that "national security is entirely dependent on the achievement of national cohesion, elimination of terrorism, and formulation of effective responses against external attacks" (Rajapakse, 2013:25). According to some scholars, national security is the psychological freedom from anxiety, whether it originates internally or externally (Kegley & Wittkope, 2006). The emergence of a new world order presented another challenge to the notion of security. "All things can be threatened, all risks can be taken, and all sacrifices can be demanded in the name of national security" (Spiegel & Williams, 2004:286). In the past, national security had a strong military emphasis since it was defined in terms of the state and the military, rather than from the viewpoint of the people. Heywood, (2004), asserted that, realistically, the control of military strength is the primary foundation of national security and that its capacity is essential for security. As a result, the military needs to be powerful enough to counter any threats (Heywood, 2011). The national security apparatus has recently begun to pay attention to human security as well, realizing that it needs to be safeguarded through anti-terrorism legislation, greater taxes, and conscription (Chandra & Bhonsle, 2015). According to the Human Development Report (1994:143), "the notion of security should be adjusted from being state-centric to being human-centric". Additionally, it suggests that the goal of humanistic national security should be economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security.

The Role of the Military in National and Human Security

Sri Lanka, as a South Asian nation, has a history of ethnic conflict that emerged during the 1980s with the LTTE in the Northern and Eastern Provinces due to economic, social, and political disputes among the main ethnic groups. This conflict caused serious threats to the country's stability until the end of 2009. During this three-decade-long conflict, the LTTE used brutal activities to escalate the fear of war for everyone in Sri Lanka (Hoglund & Svensson, 2007). As a result of the conflict, the Sri Lankan military utilised its hard power to destroy the LTTE and then establish normalcy throughout the country (Karunaratne, 2014). Sri Lanka's military had to be responsive to threats posed by the LTTE.

Terrorism has marked tensions everywhere in Sri Lanka since independence, and national security has been jeopardized (Silva, 2007). When it comes to national security and the role of the military, two theories can be applied; realism and liberalism. According to realism, the use of force in states is necessary to ensure security (Mearsheimer, 2001). In addition, realism is often associated with the notion of balance of power, and realism further believes that military strength is essential to face any challenges from adversaries (Walt, 2011). On the other hand, liberalism claims that diplomatic and cooperative approaches are essential tools to achieve national security (Keohane & Nye, 1998). This further justified the idea that international organizations play a key role in maintaining the peace and security of a country.

The Role of the Military in Post-Conflict Sri Lanka

There have been various authors who studied national security and the role of the military yet Williams's book, Security Study: An Introduction, published in 2008, focused on an in-depth analysis of the role of the military. This study focused on matters related to national security and human security perspectives. Thus, this book concerns the main theoretical background of realism and liberalism. Finally, this study has focused on matters related to terrorism and ethnic conflict in the country. In addition, Bishnu et al., (2013) have written a book titled Human Security in Nepal: Concepts, Issues, and Challenges, which provides insider information on matters related to war and vulnerable factors that contribute to human security and national security in the South Asian region. Kristine Hoglund and Camilla Orjuela (2011), Studied sustainable peace and human security in post-conflict Sri Lanka. This study focused on Sri Lanka in the post-war situation in terms of the international actors and how they reacted during the war and in the post-war situation. This study further critically examined some untouched areas such as demilitarization, justice, power sharing, reconstruction, economic development, and reconciliations for sustainable peace.

Research Problem

Currently, every nation-state in the globe treats national security as a key issue. Generally speaking, a nation's military might have a significant impact on its national security. Therefore, the military's duty to protect the nation from dangers and preserve its safety and security from both internal and external attacks is unshakable. After the civil war ended in 2009, national security and the military's position in Sri Lanka became controversial. This study investigates the motivations behind the military's involvement in civil administration, human security, and peacebuilding efforts following the end of the civil war.

Research Objectives

The aim of this research thus is to dissect and reimagine the traditional role of military deployment in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka from a mere counter-insurgency effort to a comprehensive peacebuilding endeavor. Thus, the study aims to explore how the change of role of the military can help in achieving sustainable peace and development in the post-conflict period in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This research used a qualitative research approach to uncover the dynamics of the military's transition for peace in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka post-counterinsurgency. Specifically, the research mainly employed primary and secondary data while secondary data was collected from books, articles, government and policy documents, and websites that are closely related to national security and peacebuilding. Primary data was collected from the interviews and focus group discussions. This study used random sampling to collect information from 200 participants in the Northern Province aged 35 to 50, including civilians and soldiers. In the Kilinochchi district, two divisional secretariats were looked into; Karachchi and Kandawalai. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were used to acquire qualitative data. The survey questionnaire was circulated to gather information on respondents, such as their wartime experiences and opinions on the present function of the military in Sri Lanka's Northern Province. This study used key variables such as participants' gender, age, ethnicity, education, and occupation; their experience of violence and the time of their displacement and their perception of the security forces on changing the role of the military in national security.

The case studies cover the Northern Province and pay much attention to the impact of the militaries in the reconciliation processes, in engineering the reconstruction of structures, and in boosting human security in post-war development. The data was analyzed through the method of thematic assessment, where all the functions of the military were grouped by the proposed themes, including counterinsurgency, peace and reconciliation, civil-military relations, and human security. From these themes, this study engages in a critical evaluation of the transformation and reorientation of military cooperation from a security-centered concept to that of constructive peacebuilding.

Moreover, the study investigated government policies and strategies in the areas of national security and peacebuilding, comparing them with the frameworks of international peacebuilding. The strengths and weaknesses of the military in peacebuilding were evaluated, with emphasis on the challenges and possibilities of enhancing it. Qualitative data was analyzed by descriptive and interpretive analysis tools. The qualitative data gathered was evaluated utilizing descriptive and interpretive analysis tools, allowing for a thorough examination of patterns, meanings, and insights relevant to the research goals.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The military plays a crucial role in any nation's defense. Protecting and ensuring the safety of the state and its citizens is the major goal of the military establishment. Heywood stated in his book 'Politics' that the military forces "guarantee the security and integrity of the state and are frequently only perceived as being above politics" (Heywood, 2004:243). The primary responsibility of the military, according to Sri Lanka's Ministry of Defense, is to maintain national security; but the military must also be equipped to deal with other threats, such as natural disasters (Rajapakshe, 2013). In addition to providing security, the military has also participated in other

endeavors such as UN peacekeeping, disaster management, the distribution of aid, and rescue missions, among others (Ministry of Defense Report, 2018). The military has been playing a credible role in settling international conflicts on a worldwide scale as well. International peace efforts receive significant funding from the international community. To create, maintain, and strengthen world peace, several UN peace missions are frequently sent out (Ruffa, 2017). In Sri Lanka, the military was actively involved in maintaining national security following the LTTE's rise in the mostly Tamil-populated Northern and Eastern provinces. The majority of them might have come to the conclusion that their goals could only be attained by violent ideologies. Due to this conviction, violent activities increased following the LTTE organization's quick development, the state's military response, and the subsequent repression of the Tamils. In the context of major threats to the state, this conflict between the state forces and the LTTE is viewed as a historical event (Höglund & Svensson, 2007).

For a lengthy period of time, Sri Lanka's economic and political stability was negatively impacted by the long-running internal strife. But the forcible closure of the Maavilaru sluice gate in the Northern Province marked the height of this savagery. The primary act that sparked a comprehensive military response against the insurgents was this one. According to Senaratne (2017), this uprising also continues to undermine all Sri Lankans' human security, particularly their food security. Due to this threat, the government launched a military campaign that resulted in the terrorist organization's defeat (Senaratne, 2017; Rajapakse, 2013). Höglund and Orjuela (2011) claim that because the government imposed a victor's peace on the defeated, winning the war prevented further conflict. In Sri Lanka, the LTTE was routed in May 2009, and the government went on to win the conflict. But achieving peace has remained a far more difficult task (Höglund & Orjuela, 2011).

Civil war repercussions included significant financial, psychological, social, and cultural costs. During the final phase of the conflict, about 80,000 people perished, 6,261 military troops were killed and 29,551 were injured (Karunaratne, 2014 & Rajapakse, 2013). Though it is impossible to determine the exact number of fatalities brought on by the conflict, some believe that some 100,000 civilians, most of whom were Tamils, perished as a result of the conflict (Kilavuz, 2017). In addition, there were several more who required immediate assistance, including thousands of internally displaced persons, migrants, victims, child soldiers, and former LTTE combatants. There were several matters that required rapid action in the immediate wake of the battle. First, there was the issue of the roughly 300,000 internally displaced individuals who had served as the LTTE's human shield in the final stages of the conflict (Rajapakse, 2013), demonstrating the seriousness of the conflict at that point.

The military and the government encountered many difficulties after the conflict. The government successfully identified the key areas and worked with other stakeholders to solve them in order to respond to these concerns. The return and resettlement of displaced people, the rehabilitation of LTTE combatants, including child soldiers, and the reconstruction of destroyed material and human

resources were also advised to be done first (Kulatunga & Lakshman, 2013). All things considered; the government's 5Rs programs that involved military mobilization can be discussed under the several areas listed below.

Reconstruction

After the war was over, the military made contributions that are still evident today in a number of fields. One of the major government efforts that was undertaken with military help was the reconstruction of war-torn districts. Due to the fact that the military, aside from conducting battlefield operations, assisted in rebuilding devastated areas where intense fighting had occurred, "the military has accumulated considerable social trust in the post-war scenario" (Karunaratne, 2014:143). It was predicted that a significant number of individuals were uprooted and forced to flee their homes. The Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka "recorded the highest number of migrants, some of whom went abroad" as the country's final phase of the war came to an end (Amnesty International, 2009:32).

Although exact numbers have not been determined, it is thought that between 80,000 and 100,000 Sri Lankan lives were lost during the civil war, with at least half of the dead being civilians. They lost their homes or became refugees, totaling an additional 1.6 million people (Dickwella, Ihjas, & Navarathnam, 2013). A quick recovery project was started by the government to help the 294,000 people who had to leave their homes due to the war (a program like Northern Spring and Deyata Kirula, which aimed to restore the national spring in the devastated areas of the Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka). In addition to improving infrastructure, the military's engagement after 2009 also aimed to improve the socio-economic standing of Sri Lankans residing in the country's North and East (Karunaratne, 2014). The government also had to deal with other difficulties, such as repairing the transportation system, electrical grid, telecommunications system, and irrigation canals. However, the construction of homes in towns and villages posed significant difficulties for the administration, and in this effort the military by itself built close to 6000 homes (Rajapakse, 2014). In accordance with funding provided by the Indian government, 43,000 homes were finished (Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka, 2018). In the most recent conflict between two religious factions in the districts of Aluthgama and Beruwala, the military also assisted in reconstructing homes that were destroyed (Karunaratne, 2014).

This is another basic role that the military plays for the people in the Northern Province. "The military's contribution to the Northern Province's part in reconstruction has improved security there, and it is clear that locals have seen this as a good indication for the region. In this way, the military has been able to guarantee public safety" (Respondent-01). The military's security assistance has also made it possible for other actors, such as NGOs and government agencies, to start their operations throughout the region. According to research on the military's role in reconstruction, one of the locals claimed that this development would not have been possible without the military's support and contribution to enhancing security, and the military has rebuilt roads, wells, bridges, and cleared the area in the demining process (Ministry of Defence & Urban Development, 2012). The military presence in the

Northern Province has also helped to build trust among the people in the province. The military is in fact expected to restore law and order, resume provincial council elections, resume utility services, and restore civil administration for the vulnerable community in the Northern Province (International Monetary Fund, 2009). According to the research, one of the respondents said that military involvement has been very supportive of the civil administration in making the Northern Province a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous region. However, several respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the military's presence in the Northern Province, claiming that the forceful occupation of some territories for security purposes had caused unrest and mistrust among the populace (Respondent-03). The military security strategy had a detrimental effect on the Northern Province's long-term stability and development, as discovered during the research. In conclusion, the military has been crucial in enhancing security in the Northern Province. But there have also been mixed signals for the Northern Province as a result of the military presence.

The military role is debated in this significant area, where the Sri Lankan military has contributed to developing the infrastructure in the Northern Province in the field of the transportation and communication industry. The civil administration had not been in the position of building up such huge development initiatives again. Thus, the military has reconstructed roads, bridges, and other essential development areas to enhance the isolated locations.

According to the report issued by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 300,000 people were badly displaced in the Northern Province at the final stage of the war (OCHA, 2009). Herein, the military provided shelter for the newly resettled people. Not only the military in Sri Lanka but also UN agencies conducted humanitarian operations to provide quick assistance for the reconstruction of the area (Asian Development Bank, 2007). In addition, the government set up welfare villages throughout the Northern Province, including Vavuniya and Mannar, for displaced people. However, some internal stakeholders claimed that these camps were internment camps (Sri Lanka's Humanitarian Effort, 2011). Although the military supported the people in the Northern Province for infrastructure development, including water, sanitation, and electricity, approximately 350,000 people were not facilitated (UNDP, 2010). The military has helped the people in collaboration with UN-affiliated organizations.

As a result of the military role, some of the people have received employment opportunities for the long term with the collaboration of the military in reconstruction projects in the Northern Province. Some of the former LTTE cardholders received vocational training and entrepreneurial skills from the government of Sri Lanka. According to the respondents to the research, they pointed out how they received working experiences within a short term. The military has provided some business opportunities and short-term working opportunities for road construction projects (Respondent-180). This further ensured that the military must collaborate with the local communities and NGOs to operate well in the interests of the local people.

Resettlement

After the civil war ended, relocation posed yet another difficult task for the Sri Lankan administration. Huge losses in terms of both human life and physical infrastructure had to be accepted by the government. Many people were forced to relocate after the war, either abroad or within their own country. Another problem the government faced was resettling people in their previous communities. In the meantime, aid was offered to those who were living in temporary camps, and they were urged to integrate into society and the economy. The hoped-for revival of the post-war economy, particularly in the North and East, will suffer a catastrophic setback, according to Samarasinghe (2009), who asserted this despite significant donor help for reconstruction. In this context, the government quickly implemented a number of measures to resurrect the productive sectors in this area, including crop agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and tourism (Defence Ministry, 2012). After a few years, a surge in the tourism sector and foreign direct investment resurrected Sri Lanka's economy, which sped up the process of resettling people in the war-affected districts. The military provided aid in putting all of these first support measures into action. Due to aid from the government, once conflict-torn communities are now thriving in economic sectors like agriculture, marketing, commerce, and industry (Rajapakse, 2014).

As a result of the military involvement, reconstruction projects started for development in the Northern Province with the support of military including roads, bridges, and public buildings in the Northern Province. According to the Ministry of Defence in Sri Lanka in 2012, as many as 280,000 displaced people were living in IDPS camps at the end of the war (Ministry of Defence, Sri Lanka, 2012). People in the Northern Province had to face economic challenges due to significant reasons, so the military supported revitalizing the agricultural lands, fisheries, livestock, and tourism in the coastal areas (Ministry of Defence Sri Lanka, 2012). According to the research, respondents said that the government had provided them with financial assistance and loan schemes for poor families to resume their lives and upgrade their small businesses to start their businesses again (Respondent-181). According to the findings, the resettlement became more successful if the government could provide assistance in rehabilitation, including roads, hospitals, and schools, for vulnerable communities due to the war. Then, of course, the government faced several issues pertaining to electricity, providing water, rebuilding public buildings with proper sanitation, and healthcare (Kanpathipillai, 2018). However, there were some demands from ordinary people in this resettlement process. A representative stated; "although we appreciated the military role in the resettlement, it must be transparent and inclusive for everyone that we have control over our own resources" (Respondent-167).

During the civil war, most of the public buildings were heavily damaged by the attacks of the LTTE and government forces. Therefore, after the end of the war in 2009, the government supported the military to repair and reconstruct the public buildings for the community. Security and stability are necessary conditions for community building (Kawachi, 2010). Educational development in the Northern Province is a major challenge for the government

and military. However, the conflict that prevailed over the years had an adverse impact on the people.

According to the research, the shortage of qualified teachers and resources in the Northern Province is the main issue in properly providing Education system to ordinary people. During the research, one of the respondents said that "the military has been particularly effective in promoting education development through infrastructure development" (Respondent-100). In addition, vocational training centres located in the Northern Province were built by the military in the Kilinochchi district to train the former LTTE carders (Karunarathna, 2014). As a result of the government technology program, 2000 LTTE carders and children have been given the chance to go back to school (Rajapaksa, 2013). After the post-war period, the military has been able to provide security for the people in the Northern Province. During those wartimes, the military provided emergency security facilities with centres for insurgency operations and peacekeeping operations in government-led areas. According to the research, it was pointed out that the military has been instrumental in security-related activities and preventive operations in the high war zone in the Northern province. Some previous studies also pointed out that security is an essential prior condition for the development of the Northern province (Kawachi, 2010).

Practically, research has shown that the military has been providing patrols for the school areas and making a big contribution to the development of education in the Northern province. However, some scholars have criticized the fact that military involvement in the education sector in the Northern province can lead to militarization of the detection system further in the other province. The protracted conflict in the Northern province resulted in the deaths of a thousand people in Sri Lanka. When it comes to the negative impacts of the role of the military in resettlement, this is another key concern. There have been several responses issued by local and foreign scholars who allegedly charged the government and military with war-related crimes and malpractices for the militarization of the entire Northern province due to the military-related government programmes. This significant programme had several adverse impacts on the communities in the Northern province. Those are discussed below;

Resettlement and Reintegration

According to reports, the security forces accepted the surrender of roughly a thousand LTTE cadres during the final phase of the conflict. It is crucial to be aware of the government's rehabilitation strategy in this context. According to Rajapakse (2013), one of the most important issues concerning the nearly 12,000 surrendered LTTE cadres and the 4,000 detained cadres is that the government took the audacious step of trying to rehabilitate nearly all of them so they could become productive citizens in the future. According to Karunaratne (2014), "the military's participation undertaken after 2009 encompassed not only infrastructural development but also raising the socioeconomic standing of individuals who were residing in the North and East of Sri Lanka. For ex-LTTE fighters, it includes community services including rehabilitation and job training (Karunaratne, 2014:145). When compared to the post-war initiatives carried out in other parts of the world,

the government's rehabilitation efforts were noteworthy. As evidenced by the fact that 595 of them turned themselves into the government, the United Nations provided specific assistance during this process to aid in the rehabilitation of former child soldiers (Rajapakse, 2013). For those who were interested in reuniting with their families, the government offered classes on spiritual theory, psychiatric counselling, and job training as part of the programme. Due to the aid offered by the government, 169 trainees who had previously served as child soldiers were able to be admitted to the university (Karunaratne, 2014).

The Ministry of Education assisted in providing formal education to other young soldiers. 2000 elementary school pupils received a formal education, while 65 received advanced education, which included a six-month vocational program (Ministry of Defence, 2014). Within a year, the child soldiers were permitted to reunite with their families (Rajapakse, 2013). The military and the government assisted youngsters with basic schooling during the rehabilitation time and donated supplies to help them continue their education. They provided specific programs on leadership training, self-employment, and entrepreneurship, presented seminars for schoolchildren, funded educational trips, and more (Karunaratne, 2014).

The United Nations and numerous other international organizations with ties to the UN generously supported this entire procedure so the kids may get back to their regular lives. On this occasion, the UN gave its contribution to the populace (Goodhand, 1999). Several international NGOs, including the Save the Children Fund (SCF), Oxfam, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), started operating in the East in addition to the local NGOs. The majority of these organizations began their operations in the North and East as relief groups, but later on, some, like SCF and Oxfam, switched more and more toward rehabilitation and development initiatives (Goodhand, 1999). For the former soldiers who fought for the LTTE, reintegration programs were also run. Trained suicide bombers have been rehabilitated and released to reintegrate into their communities since the end of the war. 11,935 former LTTE militants had successfully returned to society in this manner by April 2014 (Karunaratne, 2014).

After the end of the war, the military had to join the development sector due to the insufficient workforce in the Northern province. During this entire process, the military has been involved in various rehabilitation programmes. This has not been done only by the government; therefore, the military has also taken support from the government to initiate some of the rehabilitation programmes. One of the respondents said that "the military provided people like us with vocational training programs and helped us start new businesses and programs to resume our lives" (Respondent-12).

As a result of the war, there was no room for the local population in the Northern Province to resume their lives. As a result, people in the Northern Province experienced significant impacts on their daily lives and economies. According to the respondents, "firstly, I received proper vocational training, then I was able to join the civil defence force, where I was able to secure a position" (Respondent-22). According to a study by Peris in 2017, the vast majority

of the former LTTE card holders were reintegrated successfully. However, some of the respondents spoke negatively about the role of the military, saying, "when I first came to the rehabilitation center in the Kilinochchi, it was very hard to live. I felt that there was anoxia, trauma, and emotional pain" (Respondent-74).

Reconciliation

The military and the administration are now playing their final and most crucial role in the fight. Every civil war presents the task of bringing the entire country together once it has ended. Since Sri Lanka is not an exception to this process, it has the same issue, which is challenging to resolve. In order to fulfil their obligations effectively, succeeding governments have made every effort to bring the communities that had been at odds back together. In this regard, the government first determined the top priorities that needed to be looked at in order to help the war-affected population and put in place the right initiatives to restore their standard of living. Secondly, the administration has been making an effort to carry out programs for post-war peacebuilding.

The administration has gradually come to the realization that peace cannot be established without reconciliation taking place between the various communities while it is engaged in this entire process. Reconciliation can be viewed as the establishment of a peaceful relationship in which the opposing communities are at least not causing harm to one another and can be trusted not to do so in the future; as a result, the possibility of retaliation is eliminated (Galtung & Webeland, 2007). After the civil war was over, the government organized a number of programs with the aid of the military to promote reconciliation. As the military was no longer actively engaged in combat, the government turned its attention to the requirements of the post-war period. As such, the military was urged to turn its attention towards areas like rehabilitation, reconciliation and nation-building (Karunaratne, 2014). However, some Western nations have criticized the current reconciliation process because it did not follow their advice. "Western nations are in touch with the Sri Lankan peace process and have recommended to the government that international guidelines should be followed in the reconciliation process" (Samarasinghe, 2009:56). Similarly, the government's handling of other matters, including human rights, devolution of power, constitutional amendments, political reform, land distribution, and civil administration have also been highly criticized by European countries.

Under the President Maythreepala Sirisena's direct supervision, the government set up the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation. This Ministry has significantly aided in the process of recreating the nation. As a responsible ministry, it has put in place a number of initiatives, such as the Reconciliation Focused Youth Program, the Reconciliation Focused Economic Empowerment Program, the Integration Friendly Schools Program, the Integration and Reconciliation Friendly Sunday Religious Schools Program, the Integration Friendly Media Program (Peace Journalism), and the Reconciliation Friendly Schools Program (Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation, Performance Report, 2017). Additionally, in an effort to foster reconciliation, the government developed projects in the North and East to support the economy, political plurality, and social integrity in order to provide aid and foster a positive atmosphere for the war-affected population. The role of the military has not yet been diminished, even with the end of terrorism. For instance, retaining a national army has been justified by the military's peacetime roles during situations like a national emergency, natural disasters, or other security-related challenges. Therefore, it is crucial to fully comprehend that the military not only helps to defend the nation during times of danger but also plays a role in nation-building efforts during times of peace.

CONCLUSION

In the context of global terrorism and the observed and contemplated wars, state security is increasingly viewed as the priority of governments all over the world. Syrian, Libyan, Iraqi and Yemeni instabilities remain extremely high and cause states to enhance their security systems and acquire new powerful weaponry and strategic defence plans. The chosen country Sri Lanka, an island nation that triumphantly concluded the nearly three decades of prolonged terrorist confrontation in 2009, can be described as a country that will experience an important shift in the role of its military from counter-insurgency to more of a peace-building force. The Sri Lankan military demonstrated its assertiveness leading to the ending of the LTTE insurgency to demonstrate its efficiency in protecting the nation from internal threats.

However, the change of situation from conflict to peace has not been easy to come by or permanent in most societies. In the context of the post-armed conflict reconstruction, it becomes clear that the situation in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka can, under no circumstances, be overcome by force; it would rather entail a complex peacebuilding process that would embrace reconciliation, together with development and social inclusion processes. Since the defeat of the LTTE, the Sri Lankan government, with the backing of the military, has launched various processes that seek to consolidate peace, rehabilitation and reconciliation. The change of role of the military from counterinsurgency to conflict reconstruction along with rehabilitation has been very useful in meeting the needs of the new environment.

Currently, the military plays both security and development operational roles especially in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka for social rebuilding and restoration. Initiatives made by the military after end of the war in 2009 in the construction of schools and hospitals, healthcare and education have particularly been central in rebuilding war zones into productive states. This transformation of the involvement of militaries can be said to embrace the essence of the complex nature of security and the need to move from mere defence-oriented roles to a complex concept and human security and sustainable peace. The Easter Sunday attacks in the year 2019 serve as a fact that the world still faces extremism and terrorism and that a military force needs to be responsive and alert. In this regard, it can be concluded that as the phenomenon of terrorism goes international, Sri Lanka cannot afford to be passive when it comes to enhancing its security structures while fostering peace. Indeed, the military has the potential to balance these two responsibilities of security and post-war rebuilding in order to maintain both short-term and long-term stability in the country.

Therefore, this paper argues that it is about time the military engagement in post-war Sri Lanka replaced a counterinsurgency approach with an integrated peace mechanism. To avoid instability, military roles ranging from security, human security and development roles in the Northern Province are paramount in the process of establishing peace. This integrated approach makes sure that the military is still the key factor in the security of a country and also has the responsibility of a general in the development and rebuilding process of a nation. The Sri Lankan case shows that militaries in countries coming from a conflict should not only be ready to defend the newly built peace but also be engaged in the processes of rebuilding societies.

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