**UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE ARMY IN THE POST- CONFLICT PERIOD WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON CIMIC ACTIVITIES**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Sri Lanka Army is known to be serving the people as the one of the most efficient and productive establishment in the country due to its organisational strength and discipline. Sri Lanka Army always plays a leading role in all spheres of national security domains to establish peace, harmony and stability among the citizens. However, the attempts of revamping the separatist ideology still exists in the country especially in the North and East. There are interested parties who are creating such situations to achieve their vicious intents during post conflict situation.

2. Therefore, if the army is failing to perform and understand the role of army during post conflict situation specially when conducting CIMIC activities, will create a platform for extremist elements to exploit the the ground situations. Especially due to the socio, cultural and economic differences, poverty and lack of opportunities one might be able to concert people again to use violent means. In such a context, Sri Lanka Army as the Defenders of the Nation should carry out CIMIC activities in different spearhead to win the hearts and minds of the people as well as building the trust and confidence between military and community.

3. However, changing ideology and understanding NEETs ( you have to give the full version of the acronym at the first time) of the community are the prerequisite for successful CIMIC. Hence, understanding of army’s role in post conflict situation with special emphasis on CIMIC activities carried out by the Aarmy, should focus to change the ideology of the people in order to build trust and confidence between community and Security Forces. Further, scope of the study is narrow down to give especial consideration to Jaffna Peninsula under Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA).

**AIM**

4. The aim of this paper is to examine and understanding the army’s role in the post conflict situation with special emphasis on CIMIC activities to be carried out by the Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) in Northern Peninsular.

**CIVIL MILITARY COOPERATION AND ROLE OF MILITARY IN POST CONFLICT SRI LANKA**

5. The Civil-Military Co-operation (CIMIC) is the means by which the military command establishes formal relations with national and local authorities, the civilian population, international organisations and non-governmental organisations within its Area of Responsibility (CIMIC Introduction, n.d.).

6. If armed forces understand CIMIC to be a central part of their mission, then we might expect them to dedicate considerable resources (human, financial, and intellectual) into refining their approach. We might expect, therefore, the incorporation of best practices from the field of development and relief (Ankersen, 2007).

7. After 2009, Sri Lankan Security Forces were engaging, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Resettlement, Reintegration and peace building. Present post conflict situation aim at develop the different spears in the Peninsular. The Civil Military Cooperation activities are having direct linked to sectors such as infrastructures, humanitarian aid, economy and market, culture and education, administration and public affairs, heath care and human security.

**CIVIL MILITARY COOPERATION AND THE ROLE OF SRI LANKA ARMY IN POST CONFLICT SITUATION**

**ROLE AND TASKS OF SRI LANKA ARMY**

8. The main role of Sri Lanka army related to CIMIC activities is defined as to assist government agencies to deal with internal threats and provide aid to civil authority in times of national disasters, calamities and emergencies, when requested for. The major tasks are assisting the government authority in disaster relief and disaster mitigation operations, Assistance to civil authorities to maintain law and order in times of civil unrest, uprisings and disturbance to civil administration and provision of assistance to government-initiated nation building programmes (Capstone Doctrine 2018, p.5.6)

9. Sri Lanka Army has been engaging in conducting CIMIC activities in the Northern Peninsular since 2009.CIMIC activities conducted by Sri Lanka army under Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) for last 13 years not completely gained desired end state due to its nature and complexity where the separatist ideology still remain same. It is evidence that following some of the allegations are very common against the security forces:

a. The allegations that the military is keeping the Tamils in a state of brutal suppression of civil and human rights, and in a state of oppression by denying normal lives and livelihoods, intruding and regulating into their private, family and religious functions and occasions.

b. Unlawfully grabbing privately owned lands, damaging desecrating places of worship.

c. Continuing to occupy private dwellings, denying fertile arable lands in ‘high security zones’ which are no longer necessary.

d. Harassing owners of lands and seizing by force documents of ownership from them, even selling business properties of absent Tamil civilians,

f. Demanding security forces to leave from Jaffna Peninsula.

10. Hence, when analysing army’s role and tasks no specific quantitative definition for CIMIC activities is given instead of giving broader qualitative definition. However, the role and tasks should be more specific in the context of CIMIC activities during post conflict situation.

**THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE SECURITY FORCES HEADQUARTERS**

**( JAFFNA) IN THE CONTEXT OF CIVIL MILITARY COOPERATION**

11. It is very important to analysis what Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) had done during last 13 years? What is doing at present? What should do in future? in the Northern Peninsula. The summary of military assistance and welfare activities conducted for civilians by Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) are as mentioned below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ser** | **Description** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **Total** |
| 1. | Permanent Houses Constructed | 563   (2009-2016) | 36 | 89 | 12 | 36 | 15 | 5 | **760** |
| 2. | Construction of Hospitals | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |  | **10** |
| 3. | Bicycles distributed to students | 0 | 20 | 353 | 191 | 511 | 0 | 13 | **1088** |
| 4. | Scholarships awarded | 418 | 41 | 459 | 56 | 0 | 12 | 25 | **1011** |
| 5. | Students received stationeries | 1637 | 361 | 4009 | 765 | 446 | 181 | 555 | **7954** |
| 6. | Toilets constructed | 574 | 37 | 112 | 111 | 36 | 12 | 4 | **886** |
| 7. | Wheelchairs distributed | 0 | 0 | 13 | 64 | 10 | 11 |  | **98** |
| 8. | Artificial limbs distributed | 43 | 33 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | **95** |
| 9. | Spectacles distributed | 0 | 118 | 1936 | 225 | 1936 | 500 |  | **4715** |
| 10. | Dry Ration packs distributed | 463 | 232 | 608 | 1804 | 5400 | 3606 | 1858 | **13971** |
| 11. | Medical camps conducted | 20 | 15 | 18 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | **58** |
| 12. | Blood donation | 451 | 844 | 666 | 319 | 295 | 250 | 387 | **3212** |
| 13. | Cataract surgeries | 0 | 0 | 71 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | **71** |
| 14. | Drinking Water  Supply | 8 | 0 | 11 |  | 9 | 8 | 1 | **37** |
| 15. | Construction of Water Tanks | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 0 |  | **6** |
| 17. | Constructed of Preschools/Children Park | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 2 | **11** |
| 18. | Northern Ex- Servicemen programme | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |  | **3** |
| 19. | Welfare programme for School Children's | 0 | 0 | 22 | 28 | 14 | 4 | 2 | **70** |
| 20. | Shramadana Campaign | 43 | 84 | 63 | 78 | 4 | 44 | 22 | **338** |
| 21. | Sports Development programme | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 8 | **16** |
| 22. | Religious Activities for public | 0 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 19 | **40** |
| 23. | Coconut Plants Distribution | 0 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 2 | **19 (plants 21224)** |
| 24. | Tree planting Programme | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 1 | **12** |
| 25. | Seminars | 30 | 18 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | **58** |
| 26. | Coastal Belt Clean-Up Programme | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 3 | **12** |
| 27. | Other events | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 1 | **8** |
| 28. | Harmony Centre Opened | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |  | **4** |
| 29. | Disaster activities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 1 | **18** |
| 30. | Compost Project | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |  | **2** |
| 31. | Dengue prevention | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 5 | **13** |
| 33. | Renovate Road and Bridges | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | **3** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Table1- Statistics SFHQ (J)

11. After eradicating LTTE from the motherland in year 2009 more attention was given to construction of houses in Jaffna as a part of peace building until 2016 or even before. However, after year 2016, CIMIC activities conducted in different levels to win the hearts and minds of the people and to build trust and confidence between military and community.

12. When carefully analysing the above statistics, it is proven that activities were aimed at the poor and low-level income community whereas no attention was given to the middle and high-class community in the Jaffna. It is very important to understand the magnitude of the requirements of CIMIC based on the geographical environment, socio economic and cultural dimensions before launching. Need to understand challenges existing in respective areas. Some parties are still accusing military in different ways to prevent its role and task in the post conflict situation.

13. The Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) with his under command 51, 52 and 55 Divisions along with Brigades and Battalions need to understand the real NEETs of the all community around the respective Areas of Responsibility. Following areas, be considered when determined and understanding the army’s role in post conflict situation in the Peninsula:

a. Understanding the nature of the Post Conflict situation.

b. Building the trust and confidence between security forces and all levels of the community.

c. Identified and address the ideological changes of the people.

d. Public relation and winning the hearts and minds of the community.

e. Livelihood and infrastructure development.

f. Assistance to Government Authorities.

14. Moreover, having understood the nature of the post conflict situation, CIMIC activities should focus on how to overcome from the different nature in order to gain trust and confidence of the community, wining the hearts and minds, identify and address the ideological changes while promoting day today life of the people. Use of media, international diplomacy and awareness programmes are some of the activities that would regain the image of the military. However, winning hearts and minds, building trust and confidence and changing ideology are the key considerations in the army’s role in carrying out CIMIC activities in Jaffna under the Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA).

15. Civil - Military relationship is of utmost importance to execute the role and task expected by the Army. Therefore, always address to younger community than adult, which would facilitate to change the ideological mind set easily. Hence, the army should implement carefully selected new concept of CIMIC activities. The 51 Infantry Division in the heart of Jaffna Peninsula has initiated new concept of CIMIC Park called Sports, Recreation and Education Support Park in Divisional Headquarters and declared opened by the Commander of the of the army on 8 July 2022.

16. The new concept of CMIC Park is developed under Sports, Recreation and Education facilities. Sports are for Play, Recreation is for Leisure and Education for Explore are the main concern addresses to all community living around the camp in order to change the ideology at the youngest ages. In this park mostly children below 15 years are benefited not only them but also adults as well. It is believed that changing ideology is easier with younger generation than adult and CIMIC Park support to build and create a perfect person to the nation since he or she under goes through real needs of a human being.

17 The CIMIC Park addresses all dimensions of activities having facilities of Medical Clinics, Personal Development for Apprentice, Women Empowering Activity, Language Skills Development and Education, Fitness Equipment, Open Theatre provides civil society to Training Public Speaking, Art and Performances, Community Engagement and Apprentice Recruitment, Play area for conduct festival of sports, Open library is a place having a collection of books, novels, articles, newspapers and magazines (Concept Paper CIMIC Park 51 DIV, 2022).

18. New concepts of CIMIC provide excellent opportunity to change the ideology among younger generation as well as within the adult community in order to build the trust and confidence between military and community.

19. When conducting CIMIC activities all parties of the community should be taken in to consideration. The Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) must always understand how to address the entire community of the Peninsula when conducting CIMIC activities in quantitative means to gain trust and confidence. This includes Nation Building, Disaster Relief activities, CIMIC for Search and Rescue Operations, Emergency Operation against Pandemic outbreak, Livelihood and Infrastructure Development. Assistance to Government Authorities. Capacity Building, Human Security, Health and Education are some of them. The Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) have been doing all these activities since last 13 years but ideological mind set still remain with the majority of the people of the Jaffna. Therefore, endeavour is to improve and introduce new dimensions to role of army’s when carrying out CIMIC activities during post conflict situation Jaffna.

**UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE AND CHALLENGES**

20. The people living in the North are now enjoying a state of normalcy. Judicial system is functioning, children freely go to school and life is already returned to normal after a prolonged period of living in state of fear. Understanding the nature and challenges during the post conflict situation are very important. The separatist ideology still remain and instigated by pro LTTE Diaspora. People demanding security forces to leave from Jaffna Peninsula and Human Right allegation against military are few challenges outside the organization.

21. Moreover, the army is having very limited funds and resources. Many time CIMIC activities are costly and need funds. Therefore, army is always facing financial constrain to perform effective CIMIC. However, effective CIMIC should be civilian led rather than military led but military lead to establish focal points for coordination and reinforce with government agencies and other agencies like ICRC and OCHA. In addition, seek assistance from donors who are willing to contribute for the betterment of others with in the same community specially when introducing new CIMIC concept to the society.

**CONCLUTION**

22. Sri Lanka has emerged victorious from a long period of civil war and instability. Army is playing a vital role to keep protecting those long-established respect for humanitarian values, tolerance, understanding and interactive processes of consultation and cooperation in politics and development. A new start has to make to revive and re-establish the interactive processes that made Sri Lanka a likeable place to live in by all communities.

23. Within the context of civil-military relations, there are a number of situations where some level of coordination between the humanitarian and military may become necessary. Civil Military Coordination is a shared responsibility of the humanitarian and military. Therefore, there is a need of a new concept to coexistence with the society, upgrading civil-military relations that could usher sustainable peace and development in the country. Hence, understanding the Sri Lanka Army role and tasks against the socio-economic and political challenges within and outside the community when carrying out CIMIC activities address all challenges with utilisation of available recourses in optimal level in the course of attainment of the NEETs of the people is of paramount importance.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

24. The Army being the leading contributor in to the society, always entrusted with incomparable responsibility to secure national security needs by winning the hearts and minds of the civil community. Hence, focus on closing capability gaps, address emerging challenges and threats, reduce waste, foster economy of effort, promote mission command and provide an innovative mechanism to encounter challenges are mandatory through CIMIC.

25. Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) activities should focus on to counter all false allegations that will have impact on ideological changes within younger generation if not that would lead to resurgence of the LTTE, which has been effectively eliminated.

26. Introducing new project concept like CIMIC Park to all Divisions, Brigades and Battalions under the Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) in three stages as stage one at Battalion levels, stage two Brigade levels and stage three Divisional levels to develop trust and confidence among civil society living in neighbouring villages in order to provide them with the feeling of **‘OUR ARMY’‘OUR CAMP’ “අපේ කඳවුර”.**

27. The Security Forces Headquarters (JAFFNA) to launch rapid infrastructure development programme in collaboration with government in fields such as Irrigation and Agriculture, Fisheries, Education and Health that encompassing the gamut of services and needs essential to life in the community to facilitate unemployed, poor and un skills community in numerous ways to minimise anger on military.

28. When analyzing, CIMIC activities conducted during last 13 years only aim at low-income level need community. Activities never aimed at all community in the Jaffna Peninsula where high and middle levels were neglected, Therefore, CIMIC activities should address the entire community in the Peninsula.

29. Since the role and tasks of Sri Lank Army has not given specific quantitative prominence to CIMIC suggest to develop own Doctrine specifying the nature of Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC).

30. Due to financial and resources constrain, army is in difficult situation to introduce new CIMIC concept to the community, Therefore, get the assistance from government and nongovernmental neutral organizations like ICRC,OCHA and donors from local and international.

31. The effective CIMIC should be civilian led than military. Hence, concrete steps may need to establish Task Force at battalion level with the representative of the community as well as civilian administrators and non-government organizations for planning, implementation and coordination of the CIMIC activities and for the implementation.

32. Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) projects should be brought about more people-sensitive programmes of action in the areas of sports, entertainment, knowledge and information sharing, and social integration like concept of CIMIC Park.

33. Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) activities aim at **new thinking and development of** agriculture and fishing which today needs a huge lift both in terms of financial and technological support**.** Therefore, agriculture-based projects need to introduce by military with the support of the Government, private sector and Non-Government Organizations since most of the people who are living in the North, are employed in agriculture sector such as paddy farming and cultivation of vegetables, tobacco and subsidiary food crops such as chilies and onions.

Student Officer( Signature and name)

**Annexes:**

A. References.

B. Bibliography.