

**Sri Lanka's Winning Counter Insurgency Strategy:  
A Re-Look from Norwegian Peace Effort to Military Coercion 2002-2009**

*Major Hemantha Dayaratne SLLI, MA (Mass Com), BA (Def St), Fellow IDSA, New Delhi  
Department of Strategic & Defence Studies, KDU*

**ABSTRACT**

Sri Lanka's military encounter with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) offers a new insight into a politico-military strategy for confronting intractable and formidable internal armed conflicts. The country's military offensive ran contrary to a Norwegian-facilitated peace effort which was seen as the only hope for ending the three decade long conflict. However, the State's strategy was to defeat LTTE militarily first and find a solution to the ethnic issue, the root cause of the conflict, later.

In this view, the Sri Lankan Government mobilized its resources for the largest military operation in the history of the country and defeated the LTTE militarily in just two and a half years. Military success over the LTTE has proved a popular belief wrong: those terrorist organizations cannot be defeated through conventional war, particularly a long drawn one with an ethnic essence.

This paper argues that the Sri Lankan experience was an optimum application of military power with a clear political strategy to resolve an armed conflict with a state of the art guerilla force. This was preferable to relying on a fragile peace mediation which was unable to deal with a conflict of such magnitude. In doing so, this paper explores the Norwegian peace process and the events which lead to the Government of Sri Lanka's (GOSL) decision to resort to military means instead of continuing with negotiations. It also examines the GOSL military offensive, strategy, the conduct of military operations and measures taken to protect civilians as this has been severely criticized.

**INTRODUCTON**

The Norwegian facilitated peace process was the final peaceful effort during the 26 years long armed conflict between Sri Lankan armed forces and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elaam. As a number of previous military and peaceful attempts had failed disastrously, many believed that the solution lay in this final effort which was also the only international mediation<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, the peace effort continued after the signing of a formal ceasefire agreement (CFA) on 22 February 2002 between GOSL and LTTE until it was rescinded in 2008 by the government, seeing it as an impediment to the successful conclusion of military offensives.

Sri Lanka viewed the LTTE as an obstacle to the establishment of peace in the country and declared an all out military offensive. The aim was to eliminate LTTE militarily first and to later find a solution to the ethnic issue by involving all sections of the Sri Lankan polity, including those sidelined during negotiations. Sri Lanka concluded military operations victoriously and re-established the state governance in the whole country after eliminating almost all of the top LTTE leadership.

<sup>1</sup>Indo- Sri Lanka peace accord in 1987 is a bilateral attempt and hence Norwegian involvement into the conflict is the only international mediation.

## REASONS FOR A PEACEFUL MEAN

The Norwegian peace effort was the result neither of a “ripe moment”<sup>2</sup> nor a “mutually hurting stalemate”<sup>3</sup> faced by both parties to find a bilateral solution. To achieve ripeness or mutual stalemate would require that both parties reach a position where continuing the conflict would not be worthwhile. Ideally, it should be an alternative to a preferable unilateral win for both<sup>4</sup>. Yet, the 2002 Peace Agreement was not signed under such circumstances. There was little reason at this time for the LTTE to end the conflict. This was exemplified in LTTE Chief V. Prabhakaran’s “Hero’s Day” speech in 2005<sup>5</sup>.

“...we were compelled by unprecedented historical circumstance to participate in peace talks with the Sinhala state, we were compelled to engage in the negotiating process by the intervention of the Indian regional super power at a particular historical period and by the pressure of the international community at a later period...”

... “Having liberated the Wanni region and over run the Elephant Pass military complex, we had firmly established the balance of military power in our favour...”

India’s pressure and global counterterrorism efforts after the 9/11 attacks forced the LTTE to stop presenting itself as a terrorist outfit. Hence, the LTTE decided to show up as a political organization to avoid being targeted in the global war against terrorism. It was thus a time to switch back to ‘peace’ as ground conditions did not prevail in their favour. Nonetheless, the LTTE maintained its military capacity, allowing for the conflict to “just simmer along, waiting for the moment when it can boil over”<sup>6</sup>.

---

2 A “mutually hurting stalemate” in a conflict or negotiation between two parties is defined as “the point where parties no longer feel they can use force to gain unilateral advantage and become willing to consider other options”(Zartman 2000).

3 Ripeness is a point at which the parties have reached a ‘mutually stalemate’In other words at which point neither party can win the conflict unilaterally” (Zartman 2000).

4 Zartman,William.Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond, *in international conflict resolution after the cold war*, edited by Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. 2000.

5 *LTTE Chief’s Heroes’ Day Speech*. 27 November, 2005. Available at <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countires/shrilanka/document/papers/l...>

6 Zartman,William, I. *Peacemaking in international conflict: methods & techniques*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. 2000. Page 18.

For Government of Sri Lanka, there was no option at that time. It was due to a variety of military, economic, and political factors. Having lost all strategic ground gained after years of military operations, the lives of many soldiers, and with the first ever negative growth rate in the economy, the state was in peril<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, 50,000 troops who were then serving in the Jaffna peninsula were cut off by the LTTE and were sustained only with naval and air transport at heavy cost. The Parliamentary election win of the opposition United National Party (UNP) led by Mr. Ranil Wickramasinghe who campaigned on a peace platform had also indicated the public preference for a negotiated settlement<sup>8</sup>. These factors led to Norway's peace effort.

### **COLLAPSE OF THE CEASEFIRE**

Norway proved to be incompetent in bringing parties together<sup>9</sup>. It lacked power and influence on many occasions when parties breached the ceasefire. Norway was also not successful at integrating differing stances of the State and LTTE because it did not possess a mechanism to attract both parties mutually into a stalemate. The facilitator could not prove that the costs of war were higher than the costs of peace<sup>10</sup>.

The peace agreement was struck a severe blow when LTTE deputy leader Karuna Amman broke away with 2000 eastern cadres under him, creating a major power struggle in the outfit. Norway's ruling 'lack of clarity' with regard to new LTTE faction indicated a failure of application of the ceasefire<sup>11</sup> to the emerging scenario. The new Karuna's faction claimed the 'East' and consequently defied LTTE representation of Tamils there under Prabhakaran as agreed in the accord.

The death of Anton Balasingham, the Chief Negotiator of LTTE, due to a long-standing kidney ailment was another blow to the peace process<sup>12</sup>. He was the initiator for the peace move

7 Jeyaraj, D.B.S. *Tactical shift. Sri Lanka*. Frontline. The Hindu Publishers. Volume 16. Issue 27. 25 December 1999-07 January 2000.

8 Madhawa, Palihapitiya. *Of a Norwegian Summer and a Viking intervention in Sri Lanka*. Asian Journal of Public Affairs. Available at: <http://www.fceox.com>.

9 Madhawa Palihapitiya. *Of a Norwegian Summer and a Viking intervention in Sri Lanka*. Asian Journal of Public Affairs. 2006. Available at: <http://www.fceox.com>

10 Zartman, William I. and Saadia Touval. "International mediation in the post-cold war era". In *turbulent peace: the challenges of managing international conflict*. Edited by Crocker, Chester A., Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press. 1996.

11 Madhawa Palihapitiya. *Of a Norwegian Summer and a Viking intervention in Sri Lanka*. Asian Journal of Public Affairs. 2006. Available at: <http://www.fceox.com>

12 Reuters. *Sri Lanka Rebel Negotiator Balasingham Dies of Cancer*. 2006. Available at: <http://alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/COL/152001.htm>.

from LTTE side. Balasingham headed LTTE delegations in all previous peace negotiations. While the Norwegian peace effort was browbeaten by southern extremist Sinhalese political parties, it too did not go well with hardliners of LTTE. His death placed the LTTE in two disadvantages positions. He had been the driving force in the peace move from guerillas' part. Norway faced difficulties afterwards negotiating with hard-line Wannu LTTE decision makers. The LTTE also found it difficult to market itself to the international community in the absence of Balasingham. The new atmosphere led Prabhakaran and other hardcore LTTE leaders to place more emphasis on an armed solution.

In this context, the LTTE went back to its original position of demand for Eelam in June 2006<sup>13</sup> and used the lull to re-group and re-arm for a potential future military engagement<sup>14</sup>.

### STRATEGIC MILITARY OFFENSIVE

The fragile peace process however, continued as the then Premier Mr. Ranil Wickramasinghe who had actual control over government with parliamentary majority saw no other viable option other than internationalizing the conflict to tame the Tiger. Nevertheless, his election campaign in 2006, on a peace platform was seriously hampered when the LTTE boycotted the election at the last minute. The UPFA candidate Mr. Mahinda Rajapakse thus was able to gain a narrow victory of 190,000 votes with 50.3% of the electorate. Prabhakaran's strategy was to demonstrate to the world that people living in the North and East no longer trust any Sri Lankan government by boycotting the election - a prelude the LTTE's exit from the peace agreement.

Merely, two weeks after President Mahinda Rajapakse took over the office, the LTTE launched major attacks on security forces, signaling that it was now ready to solve the issue with force. Rather than overreact in response, the new state leadership instead reiterated the need to have a negotiated settlement to the conflict while meticulously and patiently planning a strategic military alternative.

In the meantime, the conditions in favour of the LTTE were quickly changing. The defection of Karuna weakened the guerilla outfit militarily. LTTE continued child conscriptions and links to similar terrorists groups contributed to the extension of ban on the LTTE as an international terror organization further.

The unexpected Boxing Day tsunami in 2004 had devastated LTTE sea tiger assets considerably and this natural disaster was also a blessing in disguise as the LTTE was compelled to postpone the opportune moment to strike.

---

13 Kumar, Sunil. *Why the BBC is a greater enigma to Sri Lanka's war Against terrorism than Prabhakaran and the LTTE*. 25May2009. Available at: <http://www.lankaweb.com/news/items08/251208-2.html>.

14 Statement by Hon. Rohitha Bogollagama, Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the Diplomatic Briefing held at the Foreign Ministry on 04 January 2008. Available at: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/EDIS-7AJMQM?OpenDocument>.



India's change of perception towards the LTTE was significant. After the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, the LTTE became an enemy of both Sri Lanka and India despite the several connections it maintained with sections of the Tamil Nadu regional polity. Afterwards, the LTTE relied mainly on western Tamil Diaspora funding, their influential capacity to foreign domestic policies, illegal human trafficking, arms and drugs smuggling connected to other terrorist movements, etc.

India was concerned that the LTTE having semi autonomy in her neighbourhood. This trend forced India to carefully review the undercurrents in the peace effort and accommodate the Sri Lankan government's view: that was the need to find a viable home grown solution to the armed conflict as a major war was inevitable sooner or later, in this case the use of military force to safeguard territorial integrity and, in turn, safeguard regional security.

India's discernment cleared the biggest challenge of Sri Lanka for its military desire. Sri Lanka viewed that there could be many obstacles to a military option, particularly in the form of economic embargos, sanctions, etc. A worst case scenario would have been military interference by an outside act on a par with the India Peacekeeping Force of the late 1980s. The state was confident to tackle the rest<sup>15</sup>.

The US-led "War on Terror" after 9/11 attacks had also changed the rule of the game. It gave moral justification to Sri Lanka's military operations, despite pressure exerted by the many sections of the influential Tamil Diaspora connected to LTTE in western countries.

Uninterrupted military hardware assistance from China and Pakistan ensured the state's military offensive for an extended period.

As the newly elected UPFA government in 2005 was a coalition alliance, His Excellency the President Mahinda Rajapakse ensured political stability by providing ministerial positions to all coalition members<sup>16</sup>. It resulted to the ever largest cabinet in Sri Lankan history but the decision assured the political stability until the end of the military offensive.

No sooner the political stability was established, the next aim was to achieve a sound politico-military coordination. Mr. Gotabhaya Rajapakse who was brother of the President and a battle hardened infantry colonel himself succeeded in it as the new Defence Secretary. The state tripled the strength of Sri Lanka Army from 100,000 to 300,000 in a short period of time. The raising of a 42,000-strong para-military wing named Civil Defence Force (CDF) provided added strength to secure the ground captured. It could be viewed that this decision enabled the Army to single mindedly focus on the war in the northern jungles.

---

15 Mr. Gotabhaya Rajapakse, Secretary Defence Interview with Indian Defence Review, *Winning Wars: political will is the key*, 30 December 2010. Available at: [http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20100429\\_05](http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20100429_05).

16 Shashikumar,V.K, Indian Defence Review and Sify News India, *Decisions That Changed The Course Of Sri Lanka's History*, 16 May 2010, Available at: <http://www.development.lk/news.php?news=495>

One of the most significant facets of the Army's strategy was its military explanation of the withdrawal<sup>17</sup>. The Army continued its assaults since the very beginning to the end with no breaks and with steady momentum. It made the LTTE, "withdraw in contact" or in other words "withdraw under fire"; the most difficult phase of war that any fighting force could execute. Loss of command and control, lack of coordination and discipline, fear and psychosis in face of enemy fire, high desertion among cadres leaving stranded leadership would best describe such a situation. LTTE thus was positioned in a totally un-tactical withdrawal phase since the beginning of the war.

The whole infantry employed a recently reformed military doctrine. It emphasized effectiveness and efficiency of small unit infantry attacks. Those troops carried out military operations deep into LTTE territory with little logistical support. They operated in small teams in jungles for several days whilst maintaining the element of surprise at its highest levels<sup>18</sup>. It was a conventional army fighting against guerillas using the very same combat tactics but with better trained, equipped and coordinated personnel. This kept Sri Lanka Army out of engaging in traditional "defence line concept" battles and reduced the number of troops in defensive deployments by drastically increasing the strength of offensive operations. A fewer number of troops thus fought more efficiently and effectively in a larger expanse of territory, keeping LTTE guerillas off balance. Soon enough, the LTTE began to retreat from Eastern areas and consolidate defence lines in the Northern and Wanni jungles, preventing a complete overrun by the advancing military. Guerillas generally do not either hold ground or fight against any conventional military force by occupying constructed permanent bunkers and deliberate fire positions. It places them in a rather disadvantaged position before a conventional Army that is basically born and built for such battles. However, the Sri Lankan Army advanced North after capturing the Eastern Province and made the LTTE guerilla force desperately to adopt what was a conventional Army strategy.

The LTTE leader Prabhakaran for his arrogance misread the new state leadership's skilled political and diplomatic maneuverability. He underestimated the bigger picture unfolding at the time. He even did not realize that the Sri Lanka Army over the years had transformed itself into a fully fledged military force unmatched. The result was that LTTE unwisely being resorted to a no-hold-bar fighting. Since then the terrorist outfit was being isolated in the battlefield and in the international and regional strategic setting too despite unsuccessful significant pressure applied by LTTE overseas arms, LTTE connected Tamil Diaspora lobbies, proxies etc.

17 Rick Baillergeon and John Sutherland, Tactics 101 035, War Collage, – *The Withdrawal*, 16 February 2009, Available at: <http://www.armchairgeneral.com/tactics-101-035-the-withdrawal.htm/5>

18 Ranasinghe, Sergie De Silva. *Strategic Analysis of Sri Lankan Military's Counter-Insurgency Operations*. FDI Associate. Independent Strategic Analyses of Australia's Global Interests. 12 February 2010.

## PROTECTING CIVILIANS/ TARGETTING LTTE CADRES

It is noteworthy to analyze as to how Sri Lankan military concluded the battles during the final days. The Sri Lankan Army itself lost more than six thousand officers and soldiers. The total injured in the Army is reportedly more than 35,000<sup>19</sup>. Considerable deaths and injuries have been reported among infantry troops during final battles as they resorted to close quarter battles without artillery and aerial fire support due to concern for civilian casualties. The military succeeded and rescued civilians but it was at the cost of many soldiers' lives. Restriction of the use of heavy weapons<sup>20</sup> placed front line troops in peril.

LTTE was cornered into a smaller and smaller land patch after the fall of their main garrison, Kilinochchi. The fall of Kilinochchi was decisive to the LTTE as it was the best position to delay the troops, attract them and also keep up the fast losing LTTE morale of fighting. Since then it was a cakewalk and it could have done rapidly if troops engaged LTTE with proportionately higher rate of fire power ignoring civilians<sup>21</sup>. Military saved more than 300,000 civilians in their rescue missions. There were 11,968 LTTE cadres who fled and surrendered to the Army<sup>22</sup>. LTTE leader Prabhakaran's parents, LTTE political leader Thamil Selvan's wife, Sea Tiger Leader Sussai's family, LTTE spokesmen Daya Master and George Master, LTTE women's political wing leader Thamilini and five doctors under LTTE were also among them.

Sri Lanka army in its history for the first time employed its women corps in the very battle zone to receive fleeing females and children. Several women soldiers too succumbed to their injuries due to LTTE attacks whilst on their duty of receiving those stranded<sup>23</sup>.

---

19 Ranasinghe, Sergie De Silva. *Strategic Analysis of Sri Lankan Military's Counter-Insurgency Operations*. FDI Associate. Independent Strategic Analyses of Australia's Global Interests. 12 February 2010.

20 Muralidhar, B. *An eyewitness account of the last 70 hours of ealam warIV*. Frontline. Volume 26. Issue 12. 19 June 2009.

21 Ferdinando, Sharmindra. *Defence Secretary speaks out*. "The Island". 10 February 2010. Available at: [www.island.lk/2010/02/10/features5.html](http://www.island.lk/2010/02/10/features5.html).

22 Rajapakse. Gotabhaya, Colombo high court hearing, *I did not order surrendering ltte leaders to be shot*, says gotabhaya. 25 January 2011, available at; [www.newsfirst.lk/index.php?...surrendering-ltte...gotabhaya](http://www.newsfirst.lk/index.php?...surrendering-ltte...gotabhaya)

23 Wax. Emily, *Blast Kills 28 at Sri Lanka Camp*, Washington Post Foreign Service, 10 February 2009, available at; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/02/09/AR2009020900525.html>



According to UN at least 7,000 civilians have died<sup>24</sup>. Since Army had lost 6000 soldiers, at least equal number of LTTE cadres would have also been killed. Most LTTE cadres were in civil clothes to disguise military<sup>25</sup>.

.....

According to statistics and clear evidences of mass graveyards, in 1990s, long before this final encounter with LTTE, between 40%-60% of the dead tiger fighters were children<sup>26</sup>. UNICEF has documented close to 7,000 cases of child conscripts since 2006. In addition, LTTE used a civil militia, known as "Makkal Paddai" for attacks against Sri Lanka Army. More than 3000 civilians from the North and East had been trained in basic weapons and explosives handling at the very outset of the battle<sup>27</sup>. The oldest among the surrendered "Makkal Padai" members long before the final military operations launched was a sixty one year old man who had been forced into "active duty" by LTTE<sup>28</sup>. Hence, any civilian death toll should be calculated in real terms contrary to hypothetical assumptions based on iconic LTTE propaganda images.

LTTE international networks and lobbies even though unsuccessful in their attempts to bringing military offensives to halt, they succeeded considerably discrediting Sri Lanka Army internationally. The conduct of the Sri Lankan Army in the battles however is totally otherwise throughout. To set an example, after seeing the plight of cattle which trampled LTTE unconventional mines laid everywhere haphazardly during military Operation 'Jayasikurui' in 1998, the frontline Sri Lanka army fighting troops collectively suggested the top brass in the Army a substitute for beef in their meals. Accordingly beef in the menu was replaced with chicken. Beef is still the cheaper and more protein rich in the Sri Lankan food market. However, since then beef is not served or ordered for any of the food ration supply menu by the Sri Lanka Army to date. It was how the Sri Lanka Army collectively extended their sympathy even towards an animal victimized by LTTE. This simple example is enough to gauge the Sri Lanka Army's collective behavior which is unknown internationally.

.....

24 Gamage, Daya. *7000 Tamil Civilian Casualties in Sri Lanka: The United States/Britain rejected US Bureau Asian Tribune*, 01.10.2010, available at; <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2010/10/01/7000-tamil-civilian-casualties-sri-lanka-united-statesbritain-rejected>

25 Sharindra Ferdinando, *The Island*, *Shavendra tells LLRC: The army killed no civilians; Tigers fought in civilian clothes*, 18 November 2010, Available at: [http://www.island.lk/index.php?page\\_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code\\_title=11573](http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=11573)

26 Human rights watch report-Sri Lanka 2004

27 Rajendran Nataraj, *Perpetuated by hatred and lie....* 2006/07/11, Available at; [http://220.247.224.34/new.asp?fname=20060705\\_11](http://220.247.224.34/new.asp?fname=20060705_11)

28 Sri Lanka Guardian, February 2008, Did LTTE do a repeat not Navally, in Madhu?, available at <http://www.srilankaguardian.org/2008/02/did-ltte-do-repeat-of-navally-in-madhu.html>



**RULES OF WAR**

**To be adhered to by all Officers and Soldiers of the Sri Lanka Army.**

*In situations of Armed Conflict I will abide by the rules of International Humanitarian Law as contained in the Geneva Conventions.*

● I will not kill, torture or abuse captives and prisoners.  
I will not attack or harm enemy combatants out of combat or who surrender. I will disarm them and treat them humanely.  
I will collect and care for the wounded, shipwrecked and sick, whether friend or foe.  
I will fight only enemy combatants and attack only military objectives.  
I will not alter weapons or ammunition for the deliberate purpose of increasing suffering.  
I will employ methods of attack to achieve the military objective with the least amount of harm to civilian life and property.

● I will respect all civilians and treat them humanely.  
I will not tolerate or engage in rape or looting.  
I will respect all cultural objects and places of worship.  
I will respect all persons and objects bearing the Red Cross and/or Red Crescent emblem, as well as other personnel being involved in humanitarian work.

*I understand that disobeying these international humanitarian principles is a breach of the Law of Armed Conflict. It dishonours military personnel and their country and makes them liable to punishment. I will therefore abide by these principles and report any violation to my superiors.*



By Order of the Commander of the Army

  
Maj Gen LCB Goonewardene RSP USP nde IG  
Deputy Chief of Staff

<p style="text-align: center;"> Signature</p> <p>Name : <u>Maj Gen Goonewardene</u> Rank : <u>Lieutenant</u> No : <u>0183233</u> Date : <u>2007.11.13</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Signature</p> <p>Name : <u>MHL De Silva</u> Rank : <u>Colonel</u> No : <u>01825</u> Date : <u>2007.11.13</u></p>
--	---

The above document was individually signed by all the members of Sri Lanka Army subsequently to calculate a common pledge to abide by the rule of International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. Accordingly, Sri Lanka Army knew very well about the appropriate behavior and procedures to adopt in battles well before the final battle started. They have been properly educated on such procedures to adopt with regard to civilians and surrenders in battle. Most importantly, they have been ordered to conduct the battle abide by the rule of law by the highest order of the Command (by the ordered of the Commander of the Army in concurrence to the vision of the Commander-in-Chief).

No army in the world has initiated this kind of a project with the help of another country while fighting a decisive guerilla war. Interestingly, the host country to implement this project was none other than the peace facilitator Norway and they had expressed their satisfaction many times to the Sri Lanka Army on this initiative. Sri Lanka Army systematically conducted this programmes to all through Directorate of International Human Rights and Humanitarian Laws in the Sri Lanka Army. Therefore, despite the failure of the peace process, the unsuccessful peace facilitator himself is an undeniable witness to the lawful conduct of the Sri Lanka Army.

## CONCLUSION

Norwegian peace effort failed for its own deficiency and obvious duplicity of LTTE for its own use of war mobilization. Moreover, there was no room for a powerful mediatory involvement in the Sri Lankan context as the Island nation and her neighbour both disinterested, disagreed and suspected such efforts. In such a context, there was little for Norway as a weak third party mediator

could offer to resolve the conflict.

LTTE leadership's own egoism and misreading of regional and international strategic setting placed the terror outfit in a further disadvantage isolated position despite its military prowess and international connections.

Sri Lanka's experience is significant in that a non-state actor with ethnic roots was defeated through conventional military means and an accompanying politico-military strategy. The lessons learned for counter insurgency warfare are many and it will be valuable to study this strategy as a potential model applicable to similar situations where isolation of the battle ground is possible though it is difficult.

With regard to allegations against the military on disregard of humanity, there are ample of evidences to prove that collective behaviour of the Sri Lankan Army as a fighting force during the battle was totally otherwise to what is being propagated.