

SMALL TEAM AS A SUCCESSFUL STRATEGY TO WIN THE WAR AGAINST LTTE

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ABSTRACT- Sri Lanka's Armed Forces have used many war strategies to win the protracted war against LTTE. In the fourth stage of the war, which erupted under the cause of securing humanitarian needs against LTTE, the Sri Lankan Army used different strategies, tactics, and techniques and employed procedures to achieve their targets on the battlefield. The infantry regiments of the Sri Lanka Army headed adopting those more effectively against the brutal terrorism, LTTE. These new methods worked efficiently on attacking and advancing their capabilities on the battlefield while providing massive defeats for terrorists. This research extends to broadly discuss “Small Team” as one of the successful strategies used to win the war against LTTE in Sri Lanka. The composition of the Small Team consists of Navigation, Gunnery/Demolition, Communication, and Medical experts as a unit. The small Team strategy used by the Sri Lankan military was one of the key elements of the maneuverist approach to shatter the LTTE cohesion and will to fight. Moreover, Small Team provided effective battlefield shaping and conducted deep operations to weaken the enemy's ability to fight effectively while contributing to overall success in Eelam War IV. This research elaborates on the concept of a Small Team as a strategy and analyzes its impacts to win the fourth Eelam War. This research used a qualitative research approach to explain the strategy and the author used first-hand experiences of military officers through interviews, questionnaires, and other military-related secondary data for this research. Most of the sectors in Sri Lanka are going through a reform process, and Sri Lanka's military reform has also taken top priority. Against this backdrop, the modernization of Sri Lanka's military while enhancing its capabilities will help to protect and provide its national security as a key concern of the country's national security.

Keywords: Small Team, Strategy, War, LTTE, Fourth Eelam War, National Security

I. INTRODUCTION

“You must adopt guerrilla tactics, strategies, and procedures on the battlefield if you want to defeat a guerrilla”. This is the main strategy of the Sri Lanka Army and Special Operation Force used in the final stage of the conflict against the brutal Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam, also known as the LTTE, who according to many knowledgeable assessments were far worse than Al Qaeda or any other terrorist group the world had ever known. The LTTE was a group of different capacities capable of using suicide cadres at any time and anywhere, and LTTE also had access to light aircraft, armored tanks, artillery, a fleet of ships, and some rudimentary submarines. (Hameed, 2015, p.xiv). The LTTE was well organized with their leadership and maintained naval and air force in addition to their fighting cadres on the ground, which had a potent auxiliary force supporting them. The group's leaders, who wanted a separate state in this island nation fought for almost three decades whilst doing brainwashed the group. An entire nation was horrified by the horrific conflict they fought over 30 years. They were able to maintain solid external support from Western and Asian countries to increase their funds and pressure the Sri Lankan government by political means. One of the main reasons to protract this war was the political support they achieved thus the government had no option other than to be in line with the terms and conditions brought forward by the LTTE. With strong political leadership, the Sri Lankan armed forces approached defeating the LTTE with a combination of strategies, including the use of Small Teams, to achieve their goals. Special Forces played a pivotal role in the last phase of the conflict by implementing new tactics such as Small Team Operations. While Small Teams played a vital role, it's important to note the role played by the Special Forces

towards the overall victory against the LTTE. These small-team military actions are mainly conducted by Sri Lankan Special Operation Forces (SOF) which include Commandos and Special Forces (SF) and Special Infantry Operation Team (SIOT) of the Sri Lanka Army, Special Boat Squadron (SBS) of the Sri Lanka Navy and Regiment Special Forces (RSF) of Sri Lanka Air Force.

Small Team operation against LTTE during the war was often conducted by specialized units within the Sri Lanka Army, such as Commando and Special Forces Regiments. These Small Team operations were designed to carry out specific objectives with precision, agility, and flexibility during the war. These elite regiments had conducted several Covert operations, Long Range Patrols (LRP), precision strikes, ambushes and raids, intelligence gathering, physiological warfare, and covert infiltration. One of the key factors that contributed to the success of the Sri Lankan Army's specialized units was their specialized training and expertise. These elite units underwent rigorous training in various aspects of warfare, including unconventional tactics, counterinsurgency operations, intelligence gathering, and precision strikes. This specialized training enabled them to effectively engage in combat situations and counter the unconventional tactics employed by the LTTE.

In addition to their training, these specialized units developed innovative tactics that proved instrumental in the success of the Eelam Wars. One such tactic was the use of small, highly mobile units for targeted strikes against LTTE strongholds and leadership. These units were adapted to infiltrating enemy territory, conducting surprise attacks, and quickly retreating, minimizing the risk of casualties while inflicting significant damage on the LTTE's capabilities without knowing the terrorists. Moreover, they played a vital role in intelligence gathering and analysis. Their ability to infiltrate LTTE ranks and gather crucial information about the organization's plans, movements, and weaponry provided the Sri Lankan military with a strategic advantage. Precise and accurate information and intelligent gathering helped to take accurate targets by the elite forces themselves and by the target acquired by the Air Force. This intelligence was used to plan and execute

successful operations, disrupt LTTE supply lines, and dismantle their command structure. The Small Teams' contributions extended beyond conventional warfare to psychological operations (PSYOPS) as well. They were skilled at conducting psychological warfare, including disseminating propaganda and disinformation to weaken the morale and cohesion of LTTE fighters. By sowing confusion and mistrust within the LTTE ranks, the Small Teams further undermined the organization's effectiveness. Further, these methods helped to reduce the fund-collecting ability of Western countries and their political support towards their course.

Another significant aspect of the small teams' success was their ability to establish strong relationships with local communities in conflict-affected areas. Continued infiltration into the LTTE areas made them have strong contact with the local community in the affected areas thus, they were able to win their hearts and minds. This facilitated the collection of valuable human intelligence, as well as the gaining of support and cooperation from local populations who had been adversely affected by the LTTE's activities. The small teams' engagement with communities helped in isolating the LTTE and weakening its grip on the region. This intelligence collected through the local community helped to identify the movements of their leadership and supply chain. Furthermore, the Sri Lankan Army Special Operation Forces (SOF) collaborated closely with other branches of the military, such as the Navy, and Air Force, to execute coordinated and synchronized operations. This joint approach allowed for a comprehensive and multi-faceted strategy against the LTTE. These Small Team's unique skills and capabilities complemented the efforts of the other branches, contributing to a holistic military campaign. In terms of technological advancements, the SOF embraced cutting-edge equipment and technology, enhancing their operational capabilities. They utilized advanced communication systems, surveillance equipment, and weaponry to gain a tactical advantage over the LTTE. This modernization improved their situational awareness and enabled them to respond swiftly to evolving threats.

Use of infantry initially the Sri Lankan Army found that the usual tactics of advancing infantry

formations along linear avenues of approach and attempting to breakthrough set positions were a meat grinder. The LTTE infiltrated these formations' flanks using freedom of movement before striking the column deeply. When IEDs and other obstructions caused the army columns to stall, the LTTE used lethal accuracy with their artillery and mortars. (www.moore.army.mil, n.d.) Therefore, the expansion of innovation to infantry the most innovative aspect of the Sri Lankan Army's adjustments after the 2001 to 2006 cease-fire was the organization of 12-man teams within infantry Battalions was one of the successful strategies to win the war against LTTE through introduced Special Infantry Operation Team (SIOT) concept. These methods were introduced by SOF to the infantry regiments and the specialized unconventional tactics were trained to fight the terrorists with unorthodox tactics.

The Sri Lankan Army's maneuvers approach against the LTTE involved a combination of conventional warfare tactics, counterinsurgency methods, and intelligence operations. importantly one of the key elements of the Sri Lanka Army's approach included the use of SOF small teams for covert operations, intelligence gathering, and targeted strikes against high-value LTTE targets. moreover, based on the operational framework the Sri Lanka Army utilized small, specialized teams in deep operations to target key LTTE leaders, disrupt their operations, gather intelligence, and conduct sabotage. These deep operations were often carried out by Special Forces and other elite units. While specific details about individual operations may not be readily available, these small team deep operations had several effects on the overall conflict against the LTTE: This also provided the necessary facility to carry out rear and close operations for SIOT teams effectively.

This paper will give an in-depth idea Small Team as a strategy: the concept of using a small team as a strategic approach refers to the deliberate decision to form and deploy a compact group of highly skilled individuals to achieve specific goals or objectives. This approach contrasts with traditional large-scale operations and emphasizes efficiency, agility, and specialization. Small teams are often favored in situations where rapid decision-making, adaptability,

and close coordination are crucial. In a war against a terrorist organization such as the LTTE, we hit them by using their tactics, and techniques in which they were eventually defeated.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To analyze the positive and negative effects that happened during the war due to the concept of small team operations during the 4th Elam war and to urge the main key aspects of small team operations and strengths of those missions whilst fighting against LTTE.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- a. What are the strategies used under the “small team operations” concept to defeat LTTE?
- b. Did “Small Team Operations” contribute to the 4th Elam war?
- c. Does “Small Team Operations” work parallel to other warfare concepts of the Sri Lankan Army?

IV. MILITARY DEFINITION OF SMALL TEAM OPERATION

A military Small Team Operation refers to a coordinated and organized mission conducted by a small unit or team within a larger military force. Small group operations are essential for achieving specific objectives, often in complex and dynamic environments where a conventional force might be difficult to achieve. These operations typically involve a relatively small number of personnel, ranging from a handful to a few dozen, and are characterized by close collaboration, specialized skills, and a high degree of adaptability. (irp.fas.org, n.d.)

Key aspects of military small group operations include:

- a. **Teamwork:** Close cooperation and effective communication among team members are crucial for the success of small group operations. Each member's skills and expertise will contribute to the overall mission.

- b. **Flexibility:** Small teams can quickly adapt to changing situations on the battlefield and adjust their tactics as needed. This may help to maneuver in different dimensions of war.
 - c. **Stealth and Surprise:** Many small group operations rely on surprise and stealth to achieve their objectives, often catching the enemy off-guard.
 - d. **Specialization:** Team members often possess specialized skills, such as marksmanship, demolitions, medical expertise, communication, and language proficiency, which are utilized to accomplish specific tasks. These individual skills will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency during the war.
 - e. **Terrain and Environment:** Small group operations often take place in challenging terrain or urban environments, where larger military units might face difficulties.
 - f. **Risk:** Due to their smaller size, these teams may face higher risks, but their agility and specialized training help mitigate some of these risks.
 - g. **Precision:** Small group operations often aim for precision strikes or targeted actions rather than engaging in large-scale combat.
 - h. **Infiltration and Exfiltration:** The ability to enter and exit the target area discreetly is crucial for the success and survival of small group operations.
- a. **Clear and Hold Operations:** The Sri Lanka Army engaged in a series of clear and hold operations, where LTTE-controlled territories were targeted and cleared of terrorists. Once cleared, the army aimed to establish a lasting presence to prevent the LTTE from regaining control. Mainly, these operations were carried out by the infantry.
 - b. **Surveillance and Intelligence:** Gathering accurate and timely intelligence was crucial in the fight against the LTTE. The Sri Lanka Army invested in intelligence-gathering efforts to locate LTTE hideouts, supply routes, and leadership centers. The use of the Air Force, Naval, and intelligence agencies of Sri Lanka immensely contributes to this regard. The support of the Small Teams also contributed well in terms of surveillance and intelligence.
 - c. **Counterinsurgency Tactics:** The Sri Lankan Army employed counterinsurgency tactics, such as cordon and search operations, to isolate LTTE fighters from the local population. These operations aimed to minimize civilian casualties while targeting LTTE elements. Deep operations in the LTTE-controlled territories made LTTE leadership restrict their movements and hinder their supply chains.
 - d. **Amphibious and Aerial Assaults:** In certain instances, the Sri Lanka Army utilized amphibious and aerial assaults to target LTTE strongholds, disrupt their command and control structures, and cut off their supply lines.
 - e. **Humanitarian Operations:** As the conflict intensified, there was an emphasis on providing humanitarian assistance to the civilian population trapped in conflict zones. The army worked to rescue civilians and provide them with aid, medical care, and essential supplies.
 - f. **International Coordination:** The Sri Lankan government sought international support and cooperation in its efforts to counter the LTTE. This included diplomatic efforts, intelligence sharing, and assistance from other countries. The

V. **OPERATION FRAMEWORK OF SRI LANKA ARMY THE FOURTH STAGE OF THE WAR AGAINST LTTE**

The Sri Lankan War against LTTE, which lasted for decades, involved multiple phases, and the Sri Lankan Army employed different strategies and tactics over time. The fourth stage or final push to defeat the LTTE took place from approximately 2006 to 2009. Here's a general outline of the operational framework that the Sri Lanka Army employed in its efforts against the LTTE:

specialized training that was given to the Sri Lankan Armed Forces by the friendly countries made them understand different kinds of tactics used in similar scenarios faced by those countries.

- g. **Use of Special Forces:** Special forces units played a significant role in conducting precision operations against high-value LTTE targets, including leadership figures and key installations.
- h. **Psychological Operations:** The Sri Lanka Army also employed psychological operations to undermine the morale and cohesion of LTTE fighters, as well as to encourage surrender among insurgents.

It's important to note that the Sri Lankan Army's approach evolved and was influenced by various factors, including changes in leadership, international pressure, and shifting tactics employed by the LTTE.

VI. ARMY SMALL TEAM OPERATION

Sri Lanka Army Small Team operation can be divided into two categories firstly, SOF operation conducted by Commandos and Special Forces. Secondly, infantry operations are conducted by SIOT. The campaign was led by these SOFs, who carried out several missions while acting from the forefront of planning through the operational level and occasionally the tactical level. These Elite Forces contributed to the success of this campaign, which is unparalleled in the history of counterinsurgency, by striking at the terrorists' leadership in the heart of the LTTE-controlled areas, destroying and disrupting their reserves and indirect fire weapon systems in the middle of the battle, and at times counterattacking to restore crucial defenses (Dharmaratne, 2011). The SOF mainly conducted the deep operations in the LTTE areas beyond miles away from the government-controlled areas and the SIOT teams conducted their operations along the forward line and beyond. At the start of Eelam War IV, the LTTE was able to operate throughout the country. To overcome the LTTE tactics Sri Lanka Army used small-team operations. According to the article published by Peter Layton small, well-trained, highly mobile groups were essential in these missions. The LTTE's supply and

communication lines were disrupted as these groups slipped behind the LTTE's front lines and attacked High-Value Targets (HVTs) while also giving real-time intelligence. Groups as small as sections were instructed and given permission to order precise air, artillery, and mortar attacks on LTTE defenses. The LTTE forces were forced to lose their ability to move and were held down, which allowed for a detailed loss. This was made possible by the combination of frontal and in-depth assaults. (Layton, 2015).

During the Eastern theatre of operation, the infantry units' offensive actions against the LTTE were led by the Elite Forces. The dispersed enemy tactics and the dense forest with an overhead canopy that is frequently encountered in the East were deciding considerations in choosing such a design. The operations were planned to combat the LTTE by having the Elite Forces spread out in Small Teams ahead of infantry battalions, gathering intelligence and weakening LTTE combat power over an extended period through a series of well-coordinated attacks, pulling the battalions to the critical location on the battlefield. In stages, this procedure was repeated. By using this strategy, military operations in the Eastern theatre were carried out in two stages: the first saw Special Forces affiliated with some infantry battalions capture LTTE-controlled areas north of the Polonnaruwa - Batticaloa road, and the second saw Commandos supported by some infantry units' capture LTTE controlled areas south of that road (Dharmaratne, 2011).

The SOF was used to conduct operations over the entire width and depth of the Northern operational theatre when the humanitarian operations were expanded there. Their duties included everything from LRP to Small Team operations inside enemy lines, striking operations to rescue operations, and traditional operations to unorthodox ones. The remaining Elite Forces were used to operate up to about 20 km from the forward line of their troops, primarily in support of close operations of the infantry Divisions and Brigades, which significantly restricted LTTE freedom of movement. The LRP conducted strategically important operations deep into enemy territory, such as gaining targets for air strikes and artillery, and ambushing LTTE (Dharmaratne, 2011).

Here, a vital factor was how these Elite Forces Small teams shaped battlefields during stipulated operations. for that used strategies were:

- a. **Attrition:** The Elite Forces Small Teams infiltrated through the LTTE lines, executed out targeted attacks, and significantly damaged them while infantry formations engaged the LTTE in close combat. This made the LTTE's defeat inevitable by forcing its cadres, who had been fighting the approaching infantry, to disperse. The Elite Forces have demonstrated their capacity to eliminate a sizable number of LTTE cadres in a specific location before infantry forces arrive at their targets. Another key event occurred at the very end of the fight when the Elite Forces tasked with clearing the region used precision targeting to eliminate nearly all of the LTTE leadership.
- b. **Flank Protection:** One of the primary missions given to the Elite Forces Small Teams was the protection of the flanks of infantry divisions. Infantry formations' flanks were expanded and exposed as they advanced by liberating territory. To keep the enemy from approaching these flanks, the Elite Forces operated away from them.
- c. **Counter Penetration Tasks:** Elite Forces Small Teams prevented the certain collapse of troops' defenses and LTTE regaining initiative.
- d. **Destruction of Strong Points:** There were times when the army advance was slowed down or outright stopped by heavily entrenched LTTE strongholds. The Elite Forces Small Teams were brought in as a last resort to neutralize these strong locations.
- e. **Rescue Operations/Rear Area Security:** On 29 September 2008, the LTTE raided the Anuradhapura Air Force base using their elites, the black tigers. Two LTTE aircraft bombed the base at the same time. A squadron of Special Forces was reinforced from Vavuniya with the task of halting further exploitation of the terrorist attack. Special Forces teams maneuvered into the area and accomplished the mission killing the remaining terrorists and regaining control. Following the defeat in the Eastern province, the LTTE's strategy was to disperse the Armed Forces throughout the country thus decreasing troop concentration on the Northern Theatre of operation. The LTTE's planned actions were predominantly concentrated in the Southern Province because the jungles provided substantial cover to conduct clandestine operations against the government Security Forces and to disturb the civil administration. Small groups of LTTE conducted a series of operations such as ambushes and sabotage. To thwart such devastations, small groups of Special Operations Forces were inducted to carry out sustained operations with support from infantry and paramilitary forces. Besides major offensive operations, the tasks that were carried out by the Combat Riders and Dog Squadron of the Special Operations Forces were instrumental in pacification operations. Clandestine operations, offensive patrols, sabotage missions, raids, and other operations that were carried out by them in liberated areas and existing government-controlled areas facilitated diminished LTTE accomplishments and secured lines of communication in support of offensive operations.
- e. **Isolation of LTTE Positions:** In many battles, the Elite Forces Small Teams launched a series of concentrated attacks behind LTTE forward positions to isolate the infantry's objectives or create a dislocation effect, thereby fostering the conditions necessary for infantry to successfully capture those areas.
- f. **Leading Infantry to Positions:** Elite Forces Small Teams guided the infantry columns in certain moves up to pre-designated forward locations.
- g. **Break-out Battles:** The SOF played a significant role whenever the operations reached a crucial or decisive point. The largest-ever rescue operation, which took place in Pudumatalan, was led by the Commandos and Special Forces, who breached enemy defenses from two different angles and created two entry points.

- h. **Deep Operations:** Long-range patrolling, a stunning tactical component, is the most terrible operational pattern used in special operations. These Small Teams combine individuals with a variety of skills to perform demanding tasks. They have the skills and drive to carry out independent, small-group deep operations for a long time—up to 20 days or longer, depending on the "Caches"—without resupply. Troops from the Vavuniya, Mannar, and Welioya regions were initially incorporated when offensives started in the Northern theatre. Terrorists were more free to move around in the space between the two. Long Range Patrols, or "LRPs," as they are more commonly known, carried out a well-coordinated long-term program to deny the LTTE this freedom. LRP set up their long-term caches and surveillance in the area gradually and updated the intelligence picture. they subsequently started carrying out strikes, dealing the LTTE a devastating blow. They severely damaged the top leadership of the LTTE by assassinating several top LTTE leaders and separating their fighting cadres from their leaders. The LTTE deployed thousands of their cadres in their rear to counter the threat that the LRP had halted.

Moreover, the formation of 12-man teams within infantry battalions was the novel change made by the Sri Lankan Army during the 2001–2006 fragile ceasefire. Within the four-kilometer frontline zone that served as the lead elements' perimeter, these operated autonomously. The infantry battalions were divided into small units to patrol along the Forward Line of Own Troops (FLOT), abandoning the conventional strategy of a fixed forward line with major units massing against narrow frontages to engage the LTTE cadres and press the attack on a broad front. (www.moore.army.mil, n.d.) The Small Teams included Special Forces operating deeply and a unique Sri Lankan innovation: significant numbers of well-trained SIOT operating closer. The much increased 10,000 strong Special Forces proved to be quite effective in hitting LTTE military leadership targets, taking out very seasoned commanders when they were most needed, and seriously upsetting the rigid hierarchical command structure. Army Chief

General Fonseka, who developed the SIOT idea, said of them: "We also battled with four-man teams, trained to operate deep in the forest, be self-reliant and function autonomously. Therefore, a battalion had a lot of four-man units, which allowed us to attack from larger fronts. There were 1500 SIOT-trained soldiers when Eelam War IV began; by 2008, there were more than 30,000. Therefore, these Small Teams operations greatly influenced the success of the war against LTTE.

VII. LESSON LEARNT

- J Deployment and use of new strategies of elite forces with mobility in time and space were a force multiplier. The flow of accurate and timely information by elite troops operating deep in the LTTE rear areas, on the intentions of the LTTE, its capabilities, and weaknesses enriched the visualization of the battlefield by commanders at all levels.
- J The employment of small teams of Special Operations Forces facilitated to shape of the battlefield for the infantry formations to exploit success whilst threatening the centre of gravity of the LTTE by eliminating High Value Targets and High Payoff Targets.
- J The specially trained small groups of infantry and Special Operations Forces were the leading fighting components of the fighting forces and maintained attrition by threatening the leadership of the LTTE. It caused the LTTE to cater to their maximum forces on the front line by minimizing the infiltration of the Armed forces on multiple fronts.
- J LRRP forces made a huge impact in defeating the LTTE by conducting several attacks on High-Value Targets and Payoff Targets and committing their reserve in the rear. These operations hinder the movements of the LTTE leadership and hinder the fighting power of the tactical elements. The acquisition of intelligence that remarkably contributed to increasing the battlefield awareness of strategic, operational, and tactical levels about the LTTE's preparation for battle

-) The advanced training methods of the Special Operations Forces vastly facilitated the infantry battalions to operate in isolation. Further, SIOT teams in infantry divisions made the fighting force available along the fighting areas whilst maintaining momentum throughout the operation. Focused training programs such as Advanced Infantry Platoon Training (AIPT) and Special Infantry Operation Training (SIOT) to develop small group skills contributed significantly to identifying targets and engaging them effectively.
-) Assistance provided by other arms and services during battles led to the seizure of the initiative of the LTTE and compelled them to react in circumstances unfavorable to them. Assistance provided to the infantry formations at critical stages of the conflict had a greater bearing on minimizing casualties and boosting morale.
-) Timely information gathered through the Sri Lanka Air Force with close coordination made the small teams more effective and deadly force which made accurate targets. Their mobility helped to deploy, redeploy, and casualty evacuation on the battlefield without any delay.
-) The use of indirect fire with the precise information passed by the small teams made more threat to the LTTE elements and it caused the LTTE to hinder their free movements. The administration of the LTTE was scattered by these indirect attacks.
-) Coordinated attacks on the LTTE defenses and rear areas by small teams overloaded the LTTE military leaders and their decision-making process. This kind of simultaneous encounter also compelled the LTTE leaders to commit their reserves prematurely.
-) Effective domination in the rear areas by the small teams mitigated the prospects of the LTTE disturbing the Security Forces' line of communications and ensuring a smooth flow of men and material to the battlefield. Further, these dominations curtailed the LTTE strategy to disperse the Security Forces elsewhere.
-) The mission command maintained by the small teams made them make timely decisions and it gave the initiative to the team leaders of small teams. The commanders had effective

communication with the small teams which helped them to mobilise them whenever needed.

-) The innovations adopted by the small teams such as locally developed equipment/ material to address battlefield requirements such as remote-control devices, claymore mines, clothing food, and medicine assisted in augmenting survival on the battlefield.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Small Team operations made a significant impact on the winning of humanitarian operations against LTTE. The prominent results achieved through the Small Teams tactics were made famous around the world and adopted by the Sri Lanka Armed Forces.
2. The use of Small Team tactics during battalion training will enhance the skills of the infantry troops and will develop their personal skills and battle readiness.
3. Use of advanced equipment such as communication equipment and navigation equipment will enhance the mobility and fighting power of the small teams. Therefore, it is pertinent to use such equipment to face future threats.
4. Joint operation training with the naval and air force will enhance the joint operational structure and the troops will have the ability to incorporate with the sister services. Small teams training with the sister services will make them understand the capabilities and weaknesses where they will retain the initiative with them when require the use of them.
5. Further training with foreign nations will enhance their ability to acclimatize to the present advancements and techniques. More training with the foreign forces will be an added advantage when the situation arises.

IX. CONCLUSION

Sri Lanka's Armed Forces have used many war strategies to win the protracted war against LTTE. In the fourth stage of the war, which erupted under the cause of securing humanitarian needs against LTTE, the Sri Lankan Army used different strategies, tactics, and techniques and employed procedures to achieve their targets on the battlefield. "You must adopt guerrilla tactics, strategies, and procedures on the battlefield if you want to defeat a guerrilla". These are the main strategies the Sri Lanka Army and Special Operation Force used in the final stage of the conflict. The Small Team operation against LTTE during the war was often conducted by specialized units within the Sri Lanka Army, such as the Commando Regiment and Special Forces Regiments. These Small Team operations were designed to carry out specific objectives with precision, agility, and flexibility during the war. Key aspects of military small group operations include such as Teamwork, Flexibility, Stealth and Surprise, Specialization, Risk, Precision, Infiltration, and exfiltration. The fourth stage or final push to defeat the LTTE took place from approximately 2006 to 2009. The general outline of the operational framework that the Sri Lanka Army employed in its efforts against the LTTE is Clear and Holds operations, Surveillance and Intelligence, Counter Insurgency Tactics, Amphibious and Arial Assault, Humanitarian Operation, Use of SOF, and Psychological Operations. Here, a vital factor was how these Elite Forces Small teams shaped the battlefield during stipulated operations. for that used strategies were: Attrition, Flank Protection, Counter Penetration Tasks, Destruction of Strong Points, Rescue Operations, Rear Area Security, Isolation of LTTE Positions, and Deep Operations. Hence, preserving special forces tactics, techniques, and procedures will be compromising when there is no clear enemy in the post-complete era. To maintain the soldier's skill and will can be achieved through continuous training and exercises.

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