# The Role of Information Warfare in Exacerbating Ethnic Tensions: A Case Study of Sinhala-Muslim Dynamics in Sri Lanka

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The world is currently witnessing an Information war (IW) that extends beyond traditional military conflicts. Vital information has the power to forge international alliances or breach harmony. IW manifests through disinformation, misinformation, false information, propaganda, hate speech, cyber hacking, and election meddling, resulting in chaos, polarization, division, and misrepresentation. This non-kinetic competition poses a significant and disruptive threat globally. In the context of Sri Lanka, IW poses a critical national security challenge by breaching peace and harmony. The study attempted to identify how IW in Sri Lanka often exploits historical grievances, religious differences, and ethnic tensions to fuel conflict. This manipulation of information exacerbates existing divisions and threatens social cohesion. This study aimed to identify IW as an emerging threat and assess its impact on Sri Lanka's security landscape in light of ethnic tensions. A qualitative methodology and secondary data were utilized to conduct a social media analysis. to uncover how IW operates in Sri Lanka. The study addressed key questions: How does IW manifest in Sri Lanka? What are the specific impacts of IW on national security and societal harmony? What proactive and preventive measures can Sri Lanka implement to counter IW effectively? to the study showcases that a multifaceted approach that combines regulatory measures, educational initiatives, and community engagement is needed to handle IW.

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