

REASONS FOR SUCCESS AND LESSONS LEARNT

1. After fighting one the world's most ruthless and dangerous terrorist organization for almost three decades, the Sri Lanka Army too, has acquired immense knowledge, experiences and skills in combating terrorism and insurgency. This has being amply demonstrated by the comprehensive defeat of the LTTE through decisive political leadership and guidance / and with a clear military aim.
2. The final and decisive years of this conflict saw the Army develop in to an adaptive, flexible, and professional fighting outfit, capable of executing innovative Counter Insurgency operations and Counter Terrorists warfare concepts. The most effective being the adoption of a small group concept as the principle modus operandi.
3. Reasons for success and lessons learnt will be enumerated as shown on the slide.
 - a. Tactical Level.
 - b. Operational Level.
 - c. Military strategic Level.
 - d. Grand strategic Level.

TACTICAL LEVEL

4. Preserving Vital Ground and Defending Firm Bases. Adequate allocation of fire assets and the availability of local reserves with a well coordinated defence, / facilitated the conduct of the campaign.
5. Improving the Fighting Capability of Defensive Positions on Daily Basis.
The Forward Defended Localities of own forces under went progressive changes on a daily basis, even with the rapid expansion of territory .

6. Small Groups as a Decisive Arm in Counter Terrorist Operations.

The specially trained Small Groups were the leading combat elements of the formations. // The emp of small groups along the entire front of the Eastern and Northern Theatre, / resulted in simultaneity of ops, which confused and overloaded the LTTE leadership. // The LTTE never could come terms with this new concept adopted by the Army, / throughout the humanitarian campaign. //

7. Combat Manoeuvres to Reduce Target Profile.

Employment of larger troops within narrow corridors was avoided. // The employment of well trained and rehearsed small groups reduced vulnerability to LTTE indirect fire. // Ground commanders rapidly exploited the success gained by these small groups without exposing the main body to LTTE indirect fire.

8. Accurate Close Fire Support.

Well coordinated defensive and offensive fire / along with the ability to correct fire support rapidly, / and at times reducing the conventional safety distances in support of own forces / brought immense success in confrontations. //

9. Commanders at Forward Positions.

The isolated nature of the battles and engagements in jungles created a degree of chaos and uncertainty. // However, the presence of the higher commanders with troops in forefront overcame the difficulties in Command, Control, Communications and Coordination, / and contributed to the maintenance of morale. //

10. Identification of the Culminating Point.

Heavily fortified defences combined with Ditch cum Bunds and strong points, / caused delay in reaching selected objectives. // On being resisted by determined LTTE defensive positions, / field commanders prevented troops reaching the culminating point and took necessary steps to reorganize and conduct task focused training closer to the objective area. // The troops, / who were well motivated, determined and orientated to the ground and to the LTTE, / seized the advantage of planning the attack in depth to maintain the momentum. //

Whenever necessary, / troops were relieved and the battalions in the rear were re-launched. //

11. Maintaining Tempo. Tempo on the battle field was maintained by conducting operations along multiple lines of operations, / respecting the elements of fire power and allocating clearly identified objectives were important for the successful conduct of prolonged offensive operations against well fortified defensive positions.// Enhanced night fighting capabilities accrued through well formulated training programmes, infused confidence in ground troops to counter LTTE night actions. // Concurrently, / the capability to undertake offensive operations during the hours of darkness was developed.//

12. Innovation through Training.

The skills developed through training,/ immensely aided the Infantryman to develop new tactics and techniques to negotiate natural and manmade obstacles,/ in adverse weather and difficult terrain conditions.

13. Training Concept for Small Groups.

The introduction of small group operation concept based on multi skilled training and mission command, / Immensely benefited the infantry battalions in many folds.

14. Offensive Sniping in Close Battle.

Snipers played an important role throughout the campaign.// A coordinated employment of snipers in support of offensive and defensive operations provided immense advantages.

15. Innovations for Service Support.

Combat Service support units of the Sri Lanka Army innovated new systems and methods to support the rapidly expanding Army/ and even more rapidly expanding Area of Responsibilities.// Proper dumping with correct quantities helped to maintain the offensive momentum of the campaign.//

OPERATIONAL LEVEL

16. Accurate and Timely Decision Making.

The LTTE concentrated its forces at decisive points of the battle to regain tactical advantage over own forces.// An accurate analysis of the LTTE *modus operandi* with the use of battle field intelligence,/ resulted in identifying LTTE intentions accurately and timely.// Thus enabling Comds at all levels to take the initiative against those indications.//

17. Delegating of Command Responsibility/ Exercise of Flexibility.

The situation and circumstances dictated the level of decentralization of command in order to exploit success.// However in most situations,/ Commanders were encouraged to practise mission command to wrest the initiative in a rapidly changing combat environment.// The commanders were flexible enough to adapt to structural and organizational changes, / and at times altered the conventional doctrines to suite ground realities // These changes were unavoidable in the rapidly changing asymmetric combat environment,/ and were instrumental in sustaining Operational Formations.

18. By Passing Strong Points.

In order to maintain the momentum of offensive operations,/ by passing objectives were accepted even with heavy casualties in order to reach decisive points.// These manoeuvres later facilitated throwing the LTTE off balance by converting them into envelopments,/ carried out by the employment of larger forces.

19. Manoeuverist Approach.

By adopting attrition and manoeuvre tactics, / own forces forced the LTTE to resort to sub conventional warfare thus concentrating cadres, who were vulnerable to SF firepower.// In such situations sea – air - land battles proved to be the best way to degrade a determined enemy.// Further, the will of the terrorists to resist was shattered due to heavy degradation caused by synchronizing operations in deep, close and rear areas.// However,/ calculated risks were taken at decisive points in the battle,/ and as such,/ sacrifices in men and material had to be accepted at times./

20. Importance of intelligence and information sharing.

The Blend of Intelligence and the real time-ground information provided by elite troops operating in LTTE rear areas, paved the way to accurately destroy HVTs in correct time and space. This was due to the centralized control of intelligence and information, and timely dissemination.

21. Joint Operations. The optimum use of precise airpower synchronized with artillery on selected legitimate targets produced positive results. Hence the Land Battle and role played by the Sri Lankan Navy and Sri Lanka Air Force in effectively containing and reducing the LTTE Combat power, proved to be the best combination to achieve desired results in a highly fluid combat environment.

22. Leave Policy. Though relief in place was not adopted as per the military teaching itself, a well formulated leave policy with associated transport helped the field commanders to maintain the desired levels of strength whilst addressing the human factors of the soldiers.

MILITARY STRATEGIC LEVEL

23. Identification of Military Center of Gravity of LTTE.

The military strategy was to deplete the fighting power of the LTTE whilst respecting the humanitarian aspects of the people, who were confined to the areas held by LTTE against their will. In this background, the Leadership, Combat Power and the Population were identified as the Centre of Gravity at Military Strategic Level. The cleverly defined Ends, Ways paved the way to destroy the LTTE leadership and its combat power whilst separating and rescuing the population.

24. Campaign Authority and Command Responsibility.

The campaign authority and command responsibility, were vested in competent commanders who were battle tested, effective and professional. The clear allocation of missions, objectives and task were the other contributing factors which helped to establish mutual understanding, share experience, cooperation and cohesive efforts in achieving the End State. It also facilitated flexibility in making timely decisions to exploit success in the battle field.

25. New Military Strategy.

The concept was to take the terrorist on a very broad frontage extending from the East shore to the West with multiple axes.// The aim was to deny the terrorists ability to concentrate whilst luring them to fight in unfavourable conditions. // This reduced the LTTE combat power to a greater extent and, had adverse effects on their logistic.

26. Skilful Planning and Periodical Reviews, New Concepts and Innovative Application.

Complexity of the civilian heavy operational environment added constraints to the planning and conduct of the Humanitarian Operation.// The selection of military objectives, employment of forces, use of weapons systems and sustaining logistics in combat, created a number of challenges to the military commanders at all stages.// This demanded skilful and extensive planning, thus developing new concepts and innovative application of the same.// Military plans were kept very simple and flexible. Briefings and debriefing were carried out regularly at all levels/ in order to achieve much needed coordination and share information and experience.//

27. Real Time Battlefield Information.

Availability of real time battle field information systems (UAV, radar, real time sat image etc.) was essential to conduct effective tactical operations, to minimize civilian casualties whilst causing attrition to the LTTE.//

28. Force Generation.

Meeting the ever increasing demand for troops to keep up with the successes and regaining of ground, / whilst catering for wastage was a critical issue.// Numerous measures were introduced to meet these requirements which were amply supported by the national will, manifesting in successful recruitment drive and availability of manpower.//

29. Effective Medical Support.

The effective and successful contingency plans implemented by the medical authorities anticipating adverse medical conditions, epidemics and health hazards, significantly aided the troops to engage in battle without being subjected to unnecessary health issues. Casualty evacuation and treatment systems became an integrated effort of military and national medical service assets. //