

The challenges of national defence in Sri Lanka with special reference to the on going LTTE threat on national security of the country

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National defence is the first priority of the government. However extending it unlimitedly will cause for a trade off between national defence and other government services that are important in economic development. Therefore there is a need of effective and efficient functioning of national defence. In Sri Lanka, the internal conflict has been the major determinant of national defence. The defence expenditure which was just over 1-2% has been increasing up to 6-7% of GDP in peak war tone periods (1987&1996) after the conflict escalation. Despite the expansion of the national defence, the LTTE threat has not been under control over the years in the last few decades. Accordingly the efficiency and the effectiveness of national defence have been the major critics over the performance of national defence in the past.

The critical analysis proves that the globalization of domestic threats, economic globalization, government budgetary problems, 'Indian factor' along with the geopolitical location of the country, lack of understanding of the stake holders, lack of conceptual stability of national defence, psychological, socio economic and political factors and finally non availability of other necessary conditions for effective functioning of national defence have resulted in circumstances that have made the effectiveness and efficiency of national defence of Sri Lanka highly dependent. Therefore it has been hard for the national defence of Sri Lanka to play its role and deliver the contribution towards national security of the country as a public good unless the necessary conditions are prevailed. Under these circumstances in order maintain the effectiveness and efficiency of national defence, the complimentary conditions that are identified above are become necessary conditions.

Key words: National defense, National security, Public good, Economic globalization, Psychological factors, Economic and political factors

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