

Rehabilitation of Ex Combatants



Bureau of the
Commissioner General of
Rehabilitation

Department of
Government Information



The information / statistics given in this book
are based on the records available at the
Bureau of the commissioner General of Rehabilitation
as at 31st May 2013.

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Introduction

The government of Sri Lanka headed by HE the President who is guided by the Buddhist principles of forgiveness and compassion knowing the value of human life, thought that, as the terrorists are human beings whose minds were distorted, and hence misguided, could be reformed and could be rehabilitated to enlist their services as useful citizens of the country. For this purpose, he sought the assistance of the very Security Forces which led a humanitarian war against the terrorists.

In contrast, in other countries where terrorists had been active and when they were detected and captured they were summarily killed as they work on the presumption that they cannot be reformed and rehabilitated. In order to ensure their destruction, they were shot on the head leaving no chance of survival. Apart from human considerations, Sri Lanka cannot afford to lose the lives of valuable human beings as Sri Lanka is increasing its population at a decreasing rate.



This is the success story of rehabilitating the diehard ruthless terrorists of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) by the Government of Sri Lanka with the assistance of the Security Forces led by the Sri Lanka Army and to re-amalgamate them to the society as useful and productive citizens.

The pluralistic society of Sri Lanka consisting predominantly of Sinhalese along with Tamils and Muslims have had harmonious and cordial relations with one other for many centuries. However, the



past three decades have pushed the very same people to live amidst dangerous experiences of a brutal war instigated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. (LTTE)

Sri Lankans in the North and the South encompassing all races, religions and communities suffered from the brutalities of the LTTE for 30 long years. Further, the LTTE recognised as the most ruthless and organized terrorist organization in the world hindered the nations progress for almost three decades.

However, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces militarily defeated the LTTE by May 2009 and eradicated terrorism from Sri Lanka. Thereafter one of the world's largest rescue operations in living memory was launched with a strategy to ensure that the people of the country will no longer experience the horrors of brutal death, destruction and desolation and instead establish a future of hope, prosperity, peace and reconciliation.

When the Security Forces commenced the humanitarian operation to liberate innocent civilians in the North and the East who were held virtually





hostage by the LTTE, a parallel operation was launched to ensure the safety of civilians who were either rescued or who escaped from the LTTE.

In particular during the latter stages of the war, the government realized that winning the confidence of the refugees was important to attract them into the areas held by the Security Forces, so that they would come without any fear. "No Fire Zones" were declared, to ensure the safety of the civilian refugees. The areas in which civilians were concentrated were spotted through UAV images, and precautions were taken to avoid such areas for ground and air assaults.

In addition, the government machinery was financed and actively maintained even in the then un-cleared areas during the height of the war, despite the fact that the government was aware that most of the supplies meant for the civilians would be plundered by the LTTE. The public was kept informed of the entry points to the "No Fire Zones" through leaflets, by public address systems and other means.



The Continuation of viable civil and military coordination, immediate casualty response, evacuation to hospitals and preparation of secure villages with health and other basic facilities to shelter Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), gave hope to civilians for a new life in a safe and a secure environment. All declared entry points were secured and front line soldiers were instructed to receive the civilian surrendees with respect and care.

In addition, a considerable number of safe passages were made available for the people to reach the government controlled areas. As the civilians approached the government controlled areas, every refugee was given a bottle of mineral water at the entry point followed up with immediate medical attention.



All arrangements were made to establish transit centers close to every entry point with medical, food, water, sanitation facilities and clothes.

Simultaneously arrangements were made to air-lift critically ill and wounded people to hospitals together with special medical attention. People who came from the LTTE held areas were accompanied to the registration centers, with the ICRC and other UN agencies including UNHCR, assisting the registration of persons.

In keeping with international norms and regulations, separation of ex-combatants from the civilians was mandatory. Hence, the Security Forces requested all ex-combatants to report to designated centers in the presence of the ICRC. Thereafter a large number of ex-combatants willingly reported for rehabilitation placing complete confidence in the Security Forces.









Twenty four (24) Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers were established at the initial stages and made functional separately for children, females and males. In accordance with international norms, statements and letters of consent were obtained from the surrendee ex-combatants for follow-up of the rehabilitation programme.



Rehabilitation commenced with Sri Lankan Forces laying down their arms to take up a different role quenched the thirst. They fed the hungry, nursed the wounded, carried the elders and the disabled, traced the relatives of people who had undergone untold suffering. They also brought back to their parents, children who upto then had worn the cyanide capsule and carried a gun.



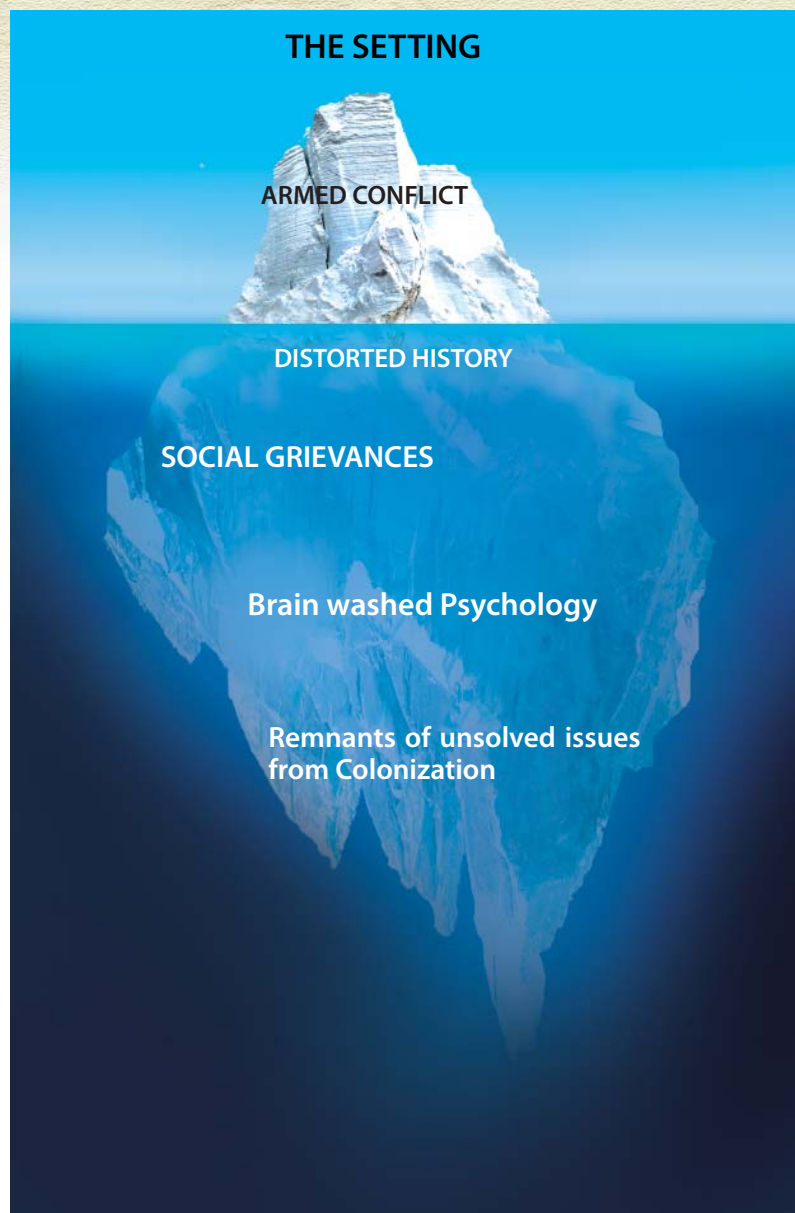
Preparation for Rehabilitation

The armed conflict in Sri Lanka against the LTTE was similar to the armed conflicts in most other countries in the world. The conflict with the LTTE was comparable to a tip of an ice-burg. Although we could physically witness only an armed conflict, there were many other complicated issues behind the conflict, such as the distorted history of the country, social grievances arising from the

strict caste system that prevailed in the North and the East, psychological brain washing and remnants of unsolved issues from colonization etc.

These issues were used to the maximum by the LTTE leadership to brain-wash the Tamil youth and to misguide them, to resort to violence to achieve the ulterior motives of the LTTE leadership. Hence, it was essential to rehabilitate ex-combatants with a view to guiding them on the correct path and transforming them to be peace loving and useful citizens of this country.

In this background the state recognized the importance of rehabilitating youth who were members of the most dangerous and ruthless terrorist organization in the world. Thereafter rehabilitation was given the highest priority and goals were set within a conceptualized frame-work. A national action plan together with the policy and legal



frame-work was formulated to facilitate the designed objectives. The Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, was established to take the lead role together with other relevant institutions and line ministries.

The Sri Lankan government adhered to a three pronged approach when dealing with the ex-combatants. Accordingly those ex-combatants who were to be investigated and prosecuted, due to their higher involvement in various terrorist activities were tried in accordance with the law of the land. Those to be rehabilitated were directed to the Bureau of Commissioner General of Rehabilitation and on confirmation by the intelligence agencies, were released due to their marginal involvement in LTTE activities.

Consequent to the separation of ex-combatants from normal IDPS, they were accommodated at 24 Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers (PARCs). All PARCs were provided with:

- Security
- Water
- Sanitation
- Food and Nutrition
- Health and Psycho-social Support
- Non-food Relief Items
- Opportunities to make contacts with their family and friends.
- Access to all UN Agencies

At these centres, a comprehensive study on all ex-combatants was carried out with intelligence agencies followed by a dynamic psycho-social and socio economic profiling in liaison with profiling experts such as Clinical Psychologists,

Psychiatrists, Medical Officers, and Counsellors. Areas covered in each profile were:

A. Psycho Social Profiling

- Age
- Gender/Marital Status
- Level of Radicalization

B. Socio Economic Profiling

- Professional Skills and Education
- Talents and Past Experiences

Under this profiling, levels of radicalization, talents and experiences were assessed. On these findings rehabilitees were guided to undergo educational, vocational, and skills development programmes along with development of mental tranquillity, spiritual enhancement and expansion of moral values to prepare them to rejoin the community. Personal files were maintained in respect of each rehabilitee to assess their progress in rehabilitation and de radicalization. The legal frame-work for rehabilitation was approved



by the Attorney General's Department and all Rehabilitation Centers were gazetted.

Use of language was given the highest priority from the commencement of the rehabilitation programme to prevent continuation of the stigmatization on rehabilitees. Further, a friendly atmosphere was developed for the ex-combatants to feel safe and responsive during the rehabilitation process through the proper use of language. All ex-combatants became beneficiaries of rehabilitation and all child soldiers became our children.

Number of countries who were and are conducting similar rehabilitation programmes have adopted the Sri Lankan model specially in the use of the language. Out of approximately 300,000 Internally Displaced Persons, 10,790 ex-combatants either surrendered or were motivated to surrender. Thereafter action was taken to ensure their security and well-being in order to ensure the smooth transition of ex-combatants to peace loving and useful citizens of this country.



The statistics of the surrendeers are as follows:

■	Number of surrendered Rehabilitees	-	10,790	
■	Under age (12 – 18)	-	Boys	364
		-	Girls	230
				} 594



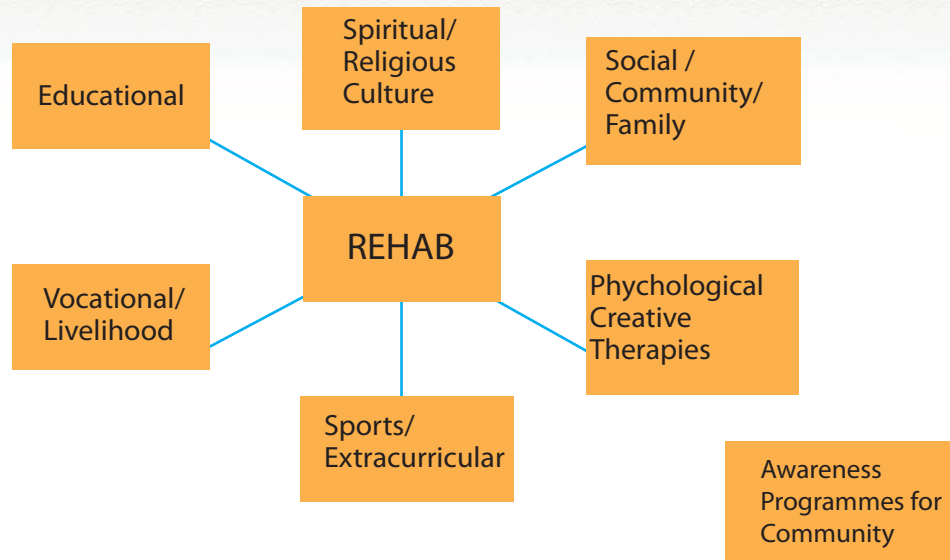
■	Gender	-	Females	- 1823
			Males	- 8373
■	Civil Status	-	Married	- 3658
			Single	- 7035
			Widows	- 97
■	Religious Denominations -		Hindu	- 9967
			Christian	- 814
			Muslim	- 03
			Buddhist	- 06

The Sri Lankan model of rehabilitation for ex-combatants was initiated designed, developed and implemented by the Sri Lanka Army. However, the assistance of a number of Professionals, Intellectuals Academics and many experts in the respective fields were obtained when rehabilitation modules were designed. Further, rehabilitation components were specially developed and designed to suit the culture and ethics, norms and values and religious sentiments of Sri Lankans in particular, to suit the Tamil speaking people in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

It is important to note that when preparing the components of the rehabilitation programme, special attention was paid to the opportunities that had been denied to the LTTE cadres by the hierarchy, during their stay with the LTTE.

The Sri Lankan rehabilitation model designed and implemented by the Sri Lanka Army had six main components with a special programme for the community as indicated below:

Rehabilitation Components



Awareness Programmes were conducted regularly for religious leaders and community leaders on the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants into the community. These programmes were organized mainly to educate the different segments in society on the rehabilitation and reintegration process, in order to clear the doubts and uncertainties in the community, regarding the acceptance of rehabilitees to work together for unity and peace.



It has also been found that in certain areas, ex-combatants have encountered many problems in the community, once they go back to the society after rehabilitation, due to their unacceptable behaviour in these areas a few years back, toting guns in their hands. There are also instances cases where ex-combatants had forcibly taken children from their parents during the conflict. Most of

these children are not alive and when these ex-combatants go back to society, the parents who lost their children are inclined to harass and take revenge from ex-combatants. As such, awareness programmes for the community was a mandatory requirement to ensure the successful reintegration of ex-combatants into society. Let us now see the activities done under each component.



Spiritual Religious and Cultural Component

Arrangements were made for the ex-combatants to attend a series of meditation programmes with a view to developing their minds while at the same time inculcating the qualities of kindness, compassion and good behaviour. All possible arrangements were also made in the respective rehabilitation centres to celebrate Hindu religious events like Thaipongal, Deepavali, Sinhala and Tamil New Year and even Christmas and Vesak celebrations. It is relevant to note that the ex-combatants never had any opportunities to participate in such events when they were with the LTTE and these celebrations were something new in their lives. Ex-combatants participated in these events with a lot of enthusiasm and interest.







A mass marriage ceremony was held on 13 June 2010 where 53 couples took their marriage vows, with the consent of their parents / families. Their marriages were conducted according to the religious customs, and traditions by the respective religious dignitaries. A number of VIPs, parents and well wishers attended the ceremony including Bollywood stars. The Bureau paid all the expenses for the entire ceremony, which included:

- a. Wedding Dresses – Sarees, verties
- b. Flower Garlands.
- c. Pottu, Thalís.
- d. Bridal Dressing by experts.
- e. Individual Wedding Photographs.
- f. Wedding Gifts in the form of Rs 5000/- deposited in joint saving accounts.







The Peace Village was established to facilitate reunification of married ex-combatants who were undergoing rehabilitation separately at different centers. 53 couples who had the privilege of being the members of the first mass marriage ceremony of Sri Lanka were housed in the peace village with a plot of land for cultivation. These beneficiaries underwent rehabilitation and vocational training programmes whilst living under one roof as a family unit.

In another instance, the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation arranged a wedding ceremony for an ex-combatant who had



been forcibly taken to the organization by the LTTE when he was in an orphanage. This particular ex-combatant had lost his parents when he was a small kid and he was not aware of his relatives and after completing his rehabilitation period there was no one to take care of him. Therefore the Bureau found a partner for him from the Kilinochchi area and with the consent of her parents, the Bureau organized his wedding ceremony at one of the rehabilitation centres.



It is important to highlight here that the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation always encouraged the ex-combatants to get married and settle down in society as a family unit. Family culture was something new to the majority of ex-combatants as they had joined the LTTE during their childhood. Most of them did not know the responsibilities of a husband /

father towards his wife and children and even to his parents. Similarly most of the female ex-combatants did not know the responsibilities of a house wife and most importantly the responsibilities of a mother and that of the family unit towards the society. It all happened due to their involvement in a guerrilla organization in which they thought that they can get everything done through violent means. Most of them were used only to gun culture and not to a civilized life.

On another occasion, a female ex-combatant was given in marriage to a partner, whom she has found getting the consent of her parents.

Ex-female cadres were given the opportunity to participate in a number of training programs in different fields. Subsequently these female ex-combatants became sufficiently proficient to perform even cultural shows for the general public. Participating in cultural activities by the ex-combatants who used to live inside a bunker with a gun brought about significant change. All these activities were done with lot of enthusiasm as most of the ex-combatants were in the prime of youth.





Cultural Excursions were organized regularly to visit religious places in the South. 99% of the ex-combatants had not travelled beyond Vavuniya towards the South and they had thought that the Sinhalese community does not allow the Tamil people to live in the Southern part of Sri Lanka.

They were also under the impression that the Sinhalese do not allow any Hindu temples in the Southern part of Sri Lanka. Hence, during the rehabilitation period, special arrangements were made for ex-combatants to personally





experience the peaceful living condition of the Tamil community in most areas in the Southern part of Sri Lanka without any difficulties or harassment from anybody. The Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim communities lived in harmony.







The ex-combatants were shown the large number of Hindu temples in the Southern part of Sri Lanka, and how the people of the Tamil community together with the Sinhalese participate in religious rituals conducted in those Hindu temples. The visit to the Sacred Kataragama Devalaya (one of the most sacred Hindu temples in Sri Lanka) was an unforgettable experience to these ex-combatants.

The ex-combatants even attended the Buddhist rituals at the sacred Kirivehera temple at Kataragama and the sacred Buddhist temple at Mahiyanganaya where the Buddhist priest invoked blessings on them.

These ex-combatants had the opportunity to visit most of the Hindu temples in the Southern part of Sri Lanka during their visits to the South from time to time.





The ex-combatants visit to the Dalada Maligawa the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy was a another unforgettable experience to them. History records that on one occasion they tried to destroy the temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic (Dalada Maligawa) in Kandy.



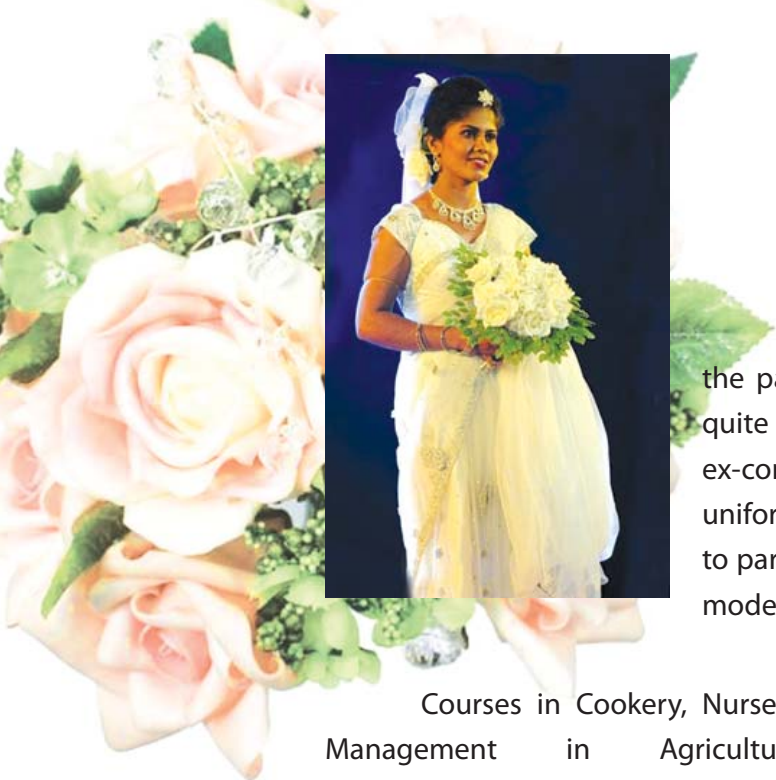
Social, Community and the Family Component

The ex-combatants who had important and urgent needs in their families were granted home leave to visit their families and attend to their requirements. At the same time, the families of ex-combatants were allowed to visit the rehabilitation centers to see their loved ones.

Further, a job fair was organized in Vavuniya in liaison with Public and Corporate sector institutes with a view to educating ex-combatants on the most demanding jobs available in the country.

Courses on Bridal dressing , Hair dressing and Make up were conducted extensively for the female ex-combatants who were really keen to learn these new subjects just like any other girls in society.





A number of Bridal Shows were held with the participation of female ex-combatants. It was quite a turn-around in their lives for former female ex-combatants who used to dress in camouflage uniforms with a cyanide capsule around their necks, to participate in bridal shows just like professional models.

Courses in Cookery, Nursery Management in Agriculture and Tailoring activities were also conducted regularly for the rehabilitees.





Psychological and Creative Therapy component

The training of trainers attached to the rehabilitation centres was one of the most important activities in this component. All administrators were directed to a number of preparatory counselling programmes to adjust themselves to treat the rehabilitees with kindness and compassion.

Counselling programmes for rehabilitees were conducted extensively in order to adjust their minds, for harmonious living in society. Pre-reintegration Mentorship Programmes were conducted one week prior to their departure from rehabilitation centres to educate them (rehabilitees) on family culture. During this programme special attention was paid to educate rehabilitees on diversity and harmonious living,



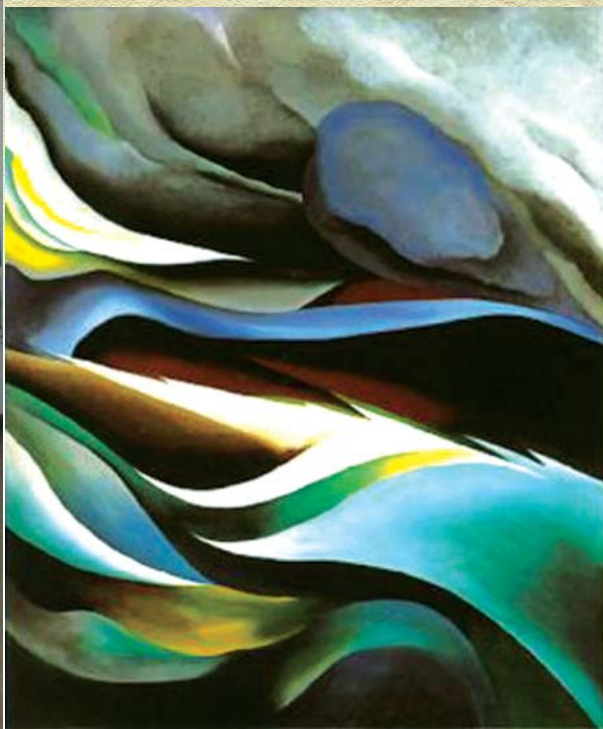
peace building, role of a man and a woman in society and interpersonal relationships and empowerment.



Developing skills in the arts was another important and interesting activity for rehabilitees and it had a remarkable impact on the de-radicalization of ex-combatants. There were many ex-combatants who had the potential to develop skills in arts and cultural activities such as painting, dancing, singing and playing instruments. A number of art exhibitions were held in different parts of Sri Lanka to display the work of the rehabilitees.







Drama was another interesting therapeutic activity conducted during the rehabilitation process and special Drama and Cultural programmes and art exhibitions were conducted to select ex-combatants who had talent in singing, acting, dancing and painting and other activities conducive to mental relaxation.



Today many ex-combatants have become professional actors, singers, and some have even formed their own western musical bands. There were some ex-combatants who joined performing arts groups and they perform skilfully in public shows.



Sports and ExtraCurricular Activities Component

Rehabilitees were given maximum opportunities to participate in a number of sports activities at the rehabilitation centres and many of them preferred to play cricket. The Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation arranged ex-combatants to play many cricket matches with a number of sports clubs in the South. It was a great opportunity for the youth in the North to interact with the youth in the South.





Ex-combatants were very keen to play even Football and Volleyball. Matches were organized with various sports bodies in the South from time to time. Another interesting event for rehabilitees was Tug-of-War.





Special arrangements were made in liaison with the Ministry of Sports to identify talented youth in various sports with a view to grooming them up to national level. Accordingly 135 ex-combatants who excelled in various sports were brought to the Ministry of Sports in Colombo and national coaches were directed to select potential players in various sports. Different tests were done to



select the most suitable players. Three ex-combatants were selected for shooting, two ex-combatants were selected for Cricket, eleven ex-combatants were selected for Swimming and one was selected for Karate.

The three ex-combatants were trained in shooting at the Ministry of Sports and it was encouraging that they have the potential to represent Sri Lanka in the near future.



The rehabilitees participated at the “Deyata Kirula” national development exhibitions with various items produced by them during their rehabilitation period. There was a big demand at the “Deyata Kirula” exhibitions for the handicrafts made by the rehabilitees.





The formation of a musical band with the rehabilitees who had a good talent in singing and playing instruments was another important achievement in the rehabilitation of ex-combatants. The "Friends of Peace" band consisting of ex-combatants performed several musical shows in many places in Sri Lanka.



Visits to the South

A number of excursions were organized for the rehabilitees to interact with the people in the South and the upcountry, to understand the concept of brotherhood. As indoctrinated by the LTTE the ex-combatants were under the impression that Sinhalese people do not allow Tamil people to visit any area in the Southern part of Sri Lanka. But they were surprised at the very warm welcome



they received from the Sinhalese people at each and every place they visited. It was an unusual opportunity for them to experience the desire of the Sinhalese people to live with them peacefully and harmoniously. A large number of politicians attended the functions organized at various places





The ex-combatants also had the opportunity to visit the Hambanthota harbour during its construction stage which was a rare opportunity as visitors are restricted during the construction stage of a harbour. Ex-combatants were also given the opportunity to visit the Mattala International Airport during one of the visits to the South.



in the South to welcome the ex-combatants. The visits to the South by the ex-combatants was a once in a life time experience for them as it was the first time, they got an opportunity to visit interesting and important locations in the South.







The ex-combatants were also given the opportunity to visit Dambana where the Veddha community (ancient settlers) live, where they were given a warm welcome. When the ex-combatants met the Chief of the community, he stressed the necessity to maintain cordial relations with the Sinhalese and the Tamil communities for the advance and development of the country.





Hakgala Botanical Gardens was another interesting location visited by the ex-combatants during their visit to the hill country.





The ex-combatants were overjoyed to experience the weather in Nuwara Eliya. Their visit to the Ambuluwawa complex was also a life time experience. The Hon. Prime Minister warmly welcomed the ex-combatants and had a very friendly conversation with them at Ambuluwawa.



The National Youth Corps at Gampola entertained the ex-combatants to many cultural programmes when they visited Gampola.



Narampanawa and Deniyaya are two Sinhalese villages situated in the Kandy district in the Central Province and Matara district in the Southern Province respectively. The ex-combatants were taken to Narampanawa and Deniyaya during two visits to the South to give them an idea of the culture in remote Sinhalese villages. They spent the whole day at Narampanawa village having enjoyed a refreshing bath in a branch of the Mahaweli River and thereafter were hosted for lunch prepared by the villagers. Even at Deniyaya, they spent the whole day having a bath in a branch of Nilwala River and enjoyed the meals prepared by the villagers.







Ex-combatants were even taken to interesting places in the city of Colombo and they really enjoyed these tours as they had not got any such opportunities during their stay with the LTTE.



They also had the rare opportunity of visiting the official residence of the Hon Speaker together with a visit to the Parliament.



In one of the visits to the South, the ex-combatants had an opportunity to attend a special “Bhajan Pooja” at the Sai Mandhir at Barnes Place, Colombo.



Vocational and Livelihood Component

This could be considered the most important component of the rehabilitation programme as it had a great impact on the livelihood of ex-combatants once they were released to society. A large number of Vocational Training programmes were conducted for the benefit of the rehabilitees and many ex-combatants followed these training programmes successfully.







A fully equipped mini computer lab with 30 computers was established to enhance their IT knowledge and vocational training. This Computer Lab was declared open by HE the President on 01st April 2010. It had the capacity to train approximately 100 persons at a time. Over 1000 ex-combatants obtained their IT qualifications using the facilities of this lab.



In the year 2011, new schemes were introduced to the vocational training programme for ex-combatants, in liaison with the National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA). Accordingly the ex-combatants were awarded the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) certificate on completion of their respective vocational training courses. The NVQ Certificate is recognised for job opportunities locally and internationally.

A large number of female ex-combatants had the opportunity to undergo Juki Sewing Machine Operator Training programmes and many of them are currently employed in a number of leading Garment Factories.







The courses leading to a Diploma in Pre-School Teacher Training had a very high demand from the female ex-combatants.

Further, programmes on Sugar Cane Cultivation, use of Chemical Fertilizers, Coconut Cultivation, Advanced Modelling and Bridal Dressing, Aquarium and

Rearing Fish, Bakery Production were also conducted for ex-combatants very successfully.





C o m m u n i t y
Awareness Programmes
were conducted regularly
to educate the general
public on the importance
and necessity to accept the
ex-combatants when they
reverted back to society
after rehabilitation.



Children (Ex- Child Combatants)



Statistics pertaining to the former Child Combatants.

1.	Total Child Combatants surrendered for rehabilitation	-	594
	Boys	-	364
	Girls	-	230
2.	Formal Education given	-	273
	Boys	-	154
	Girls	-	119
3.	Vocational Training given	-	321
	Boys	-	209
	Girls	-	112

4. Age Groups

AGE	BOYS	GIRLS	AGE	BOYS	GIRLS
13	-	2	17	166	58
14	1	2	18	131	87
15	11	13	19	2	5
16	53	40	ABOVE 19	-	23
TOTAL				364	230

Ex-combatants were treated like our own children and apart from formal education they had the opportunity to attend scouting programmes and even some Radio Programmes at the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation.





Statistics of Rehabilitation Beneficiaries

a)	Total Ex-combatants enrolled for Rehabilitation Process as at 31.05.2013	-	12,167
b)	Deserted while in Hospitals	-	26
c)	Natural Deaths	-	13

Ex -Combatants Reintegrated as at 31.05.2013.

Adults

S/N	Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centre	Male	Female	Total
1	Co-ordinating Office - Vavuniya	7853	1924	9777
2	Co-ordinating Office - Jaffna	250	104	354
3	Co-ordinating Office - East	871	0	871
	Sub Total	8974	2028	11002

Children

S/N	Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centre	Male	Female	Total
1	Hindu College - Rathmalana	154	118	272
2	Poonthottam	210	112	322
	Sub Total	364	230	594
	Grand Total	9338	2258	11596

Reintegration as per Districts

District	Male	Female	Total
Vavuniya	1022	202	1224
Mannar	591	160	751
Ampara	70	11	81
Batticaloa	415	62	477
Trincomalee	449	89	538
Polonnaruwa	12	-	12
Kilinochchi	2313	560	2873
Mullaitivu	1929	450	2379
Jaffna	2449	683	3132
Badulla	5	-	5
Monaragala	1	-	1

Colombo	7	-	7
Gampaha	2	1	3
Galle	2	-	2
Kandy	5	1	6
Matale	-	1	1
Nuwara eliya	8	2	10
Kegalle	1	-	1
Ratnapura	3	-	3
Puttalam	2	4	6
Kurunegala	1	-	1
Addresses not clear			83
Total	9287	2226	11596

Current Status as at 31.05.2013. (All Adults)

S/ N	Protective Accommodation & Rehabilitation Centres (PARCS)	Male	Female	Total
1	Poonthottam Centre (Male)	106	-	106
2	Welikanda Centre	118	-	118
3	Kandakadu Centre	100	-	100
4	Poonthottam Centre (Female)	-	17	17
	Grand Total	324	17	341

Note: All ex-combatants who surrendered to the Government Forces in 2009 have been rehabilitated and reintegrated by end of 2011. The above mentioned numbers are those who were directed for rehabilitation by the Courts.

Number of Beneficiaries who completed Vocational Training

S/ N	Type of Vocational Training Course	No of Participants
1	Electrical	245
2	Carpentry	407
3	Masonry	1123
4	Plumbing	302
5	Steel Fabrication	30
6	Beauty Culture	144
7	Tailoring	234
8	Computer	174
9	Typing and Shorthand	44
10	Accelerated Skills Acquisition Programme (ASAP)	1003
11	Heavy Machinery Training (Dozer)	30
12	House Wiring	203
13	Driving and Motor Traffic	50
14	Coconut Cultivation Course	1031
15	Nursery Management	332
16	Mushroom Cultivation	100

17	Garment Training	662
18	Agriculture Course	3327
19	Advanced Modelling Concepts Training Programme	30
20	Modelling and Bridal Dressing	36
21	Three Wheel Repairing Course	150
22	Pre-School Diploma Course	31
23	Motor Boat Engineering Course	125
24	Sugar-Cane Cultivation	100
25	Certificate Programme on Psychosocial Counselling	481
26	Course on Handicrafts using Palmyra Leaves	91
27	Paper Work Training	30
28	Vehicle Tinkering Course	15
29	Leather Work Training Course	25
30	Aluminium Fabrication Course	102
31	Handloom Training Course	17
32	Wool Course	30
33	Food Production Course	40
34	Entrepreneurship & Micro Enterprise Development Course	687
35	Motor Mechanism Course	53
36	Post Agriculture Technology Course	208
37	Cookery Course	87
38	Land Scalping Course	30
39	Cake and Pastry Course	30

40	Fabric Painting Course	30
41	Course on Manufacture of VHF/UHF TV Antenna	49
42	Milk Products Programme	411
43	Aquarium and Fish Keeping Course	12
44	Bakery Course	222
45	Handicrafts Course (Coconut Shell)	28
46	Art/ Paintings Training Programme	421
47	Programme on Protecting the Environment	200
48	Industrial Fisheries Programme	45
	Total	13257

Number of Beneficiaries who completed other types of Courses/Workshops.

S/ N	Type of Courses/Workshop	No of Participants
1	Aesthetic (Music)	174
2	Sinhala Language Course	136
3	Emotional Intelligence and Strength of Life Skills Programme	745
4	Pre-reintegration Mentorship Programme	892
5	Art of Living Programme	881
6	Banking Awareness Programme	500
7	Self-Employment Workshop	100
8	English Language Course	60

9	Meditation Programme	4916
10	Awareness Workshop on Dangerous Drugs	456
11	Family Planning Programme	118
12	Counselling Programme	421
13	Christian Religious Programme	729
14	Awareness Programme on Conservation of Water	175
15	Programme on HIV/AIDS	78
	Total	10381

Vocational Training Programmes currently in progress as at 31st May 2013.

S/N	Activities/ Courses	Place	No of Participants	Duration	
1	Carpentry Course	Poonthottam (Male)	28	03.12.2012	20.06.2013
2	Beauty Culture Course	Poonthottam (Female)	17	16.01.2013	20.06.2013
3	Sinhala Language Course	Poonthottam (Female)	17	21.01.2013	20.06.2013
4	English Language Course	Poonthottam (Female)	17	22.01.2013	20.06.2013
5	Masonry Course	Kandakadu (Male)	15	15.02.2013	14.08.2014
6	Carpentry Course	Kandakadu	16	15.02.2013	14.08.2014
	Total		110		







Other Activities

All ex-combatants who have lost or not in possession of National ID Cards, Birth Certificates, Marriage Certificates and Education Certificates were assisted to obtain the relevant documents by arranging a special programme in liaison with the Registrar General's Department and Education Department.

It is important to indicate the type of interaction the ex-combatants had with the staff of Rehabilitation Centres. Although the Government Forces

fought with the LTTE almost three decades, when it came to the rehabilitation of ex-combatants, the personnel of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Police who handled the administration of every Rehabilitation Centre became their best friends. Our officers and other ranks treated ex-combatants very kindly and humanely. This kindness towards them by the members of the Armed Forces had a great impact to De-radicalize the ex-combatants and it was something that they never expected from the Security Forces.





Special arrangements were made to conduct Business Counselling Programmes to those who were keen on business enterprises.



Medical camps were conducted at the rehabilitation centres regularly to ascertain the health condition of the ex-combatants as they hardly had proper health facilities when they were serving the LTTE.



On another occasion the disabled ex-combatants felicitated the first ever Sri Lankan to win a medal at the Paraolympics held in London in 2012. It was disabled Staff Sergeant Pradeep Sanjaya of the Sri Lanka Army, who won a bronze medal in 400 metres race.

Eye Clinics, Mental Health Workshops were also conducted regularly for the ex-combatants. A course on Dairy Products was also conducted to the rehabilitees recently on their request which will have a direct impact on their livelihood once they go back to society.





The Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation had a special programme to meet those who were rehabilitated and released to their respective areas to identify their difficulties, to assist them to stand on their own feet, and to re-amalgamate them with society. A number of such programmes were conducted in the North & the East from time to time to solve most of their problems in liaison with respective authorities.

Whilst going through all programmes related to rehabilitation the ex-combatants were happy to participate even in the National Tree Planting Programmes with a lot of enthusiasm.



Recently a new project was initiated with assistance from a finance company in the Private Sector (The Alliance Finance Company) to provide Three Wheeler vehicles to rehabilitated ex-combatants without an initial payment. They were given the opportunity to pay back the money in instalments from the income they received from the Three Wheelers.



Several NGOs too assisted these ex-combatants to re-establish their livelihoods, by providing water pumps to help them in their agricultural projects.

Last year the Chief of the Army Staff of the Indian Army visited the female ex-combatants Rehabilitation Centre in Vavuniya and he commended the rehabilitation programmes conducted on behalf of the female ex-combatants.





Pol Ruppawen Thal Ruppawata (from South to North) was another programme launched to improve the relationships between the people in the South with the people in the North. Under this programme approximately 100 people from Southern Provincial Council and some villagers from the South visited a remote village in Mullathivu District spending the whole day with them.

The Hon Minister of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms too participated in this event. People who went from the South assisted the villagers to renovate their houses and also to put up their fences. Some coconut plants were also distributed to the villagers during this programme.



Awareness Programmes on HIV/ AIDS were part of the rehabilitation process as ex-combatants were a new segment of people who joined the society after a long spell of their lives inside jungles and bunkers.

Ceremonies held for Reintegration

Reintegration Ceremonies were given prominence whenever possible as it was the day that these ex-combatants started their new lives.





Livelihood Assistance to Reintegrated Ex-Combatants:

1. Granting a loan up to Rs. 250,000/- at a 4% interest to initiate Self Employment Projects. Approximately 1800 ex-combatants have received loans by 30th April 2013.
2. Arrangements have been made in liaison with the Foreign Employment Bureau and with a number of Foreign Recruitment Agencies to obtain employment opportunities in the Middle East and South Korea.
3. Conducting Pre-School Teacher Diploma courses continuously in Vavuniya.
4. Obtaining employment opportunities in the fields of construction/ development where work is now in progress in the North and East of Sri Lanka through the Public / Corporate Sector Institutions.
5. Providing required resources to initiate Agricultural Projects in Vavuniya through various NGO's on the basis of buying back the harvest by respective NGO's.
6. Arranging Vocational Training Courses in Vavuniya and Jaffna targeting the most demanding jobs in the market.

7. Initiating an Aloe Vera farming project in the Jaffna peninsula.
8. Assistance to obtain bank loans for Self Employment Projects at regional and local level.
9. Initiating a Crab Fattening Project in the Jaffna peninsula.
10. Establishing a Cement Brick Making Project in the Jaffna peninsula.
11. Providing water pumps for agriculture in Vavuniya.
12. Providing sewing machines for self-employment in Vavuniya.
13. Providing boats and required equipment for fishing in Mullaitivu.
14. Obtaining IT related business process outsourcing programmes from the corporate sector.
15. Absorbing to the Civil Security Department to be deployed for agricultural development projects.





Future plans for reintegrated ex-combatants

- Obtain foreign employment opportunities.
- To provide a monthly allowance of Rs.3000/=to all disabled ex-combatants who do not have a stable income.
- To obtain artificial limbs to all disabled ex-combatants.
- To provide a grant of Rs.25000/= to all disabled ex-combatants.
- To obtain assistance to construct houses for the needy disabled ex-combatants. (up to Rs.250,000/=)
- To provide necessary medical attention through specialized doctors to deserving ex-combatants who were wounded during the battles.
- To obtain suitable employment opportunities to rehabilitated and reintegrated ex-combatants through various INGOs/ NGOs and Corporate sector.

What is the Expected Outcome of REHABILITATION

TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN LIFE

Through a very comprehensive programme to address their *Ideological, Emotional, Social, Religious, Cultural, Economic and Political needs* to

Transform

The Most Dangerous Terrorists

to be

Peace loving, Harmonious and Responsible member in society when reintegrating to the social fabric.

How....?

By synchronizing their

Brain - Heart - Limbs

Knowledge - ▶

A Heart to work - ▶

Skills - ▶



Then



Transformation



Now



Then



Change of Mindset



Future



The resultant transformation  A responsible partner contributing to the Prosperity and Development of the Country

Then

Change of Mindset

Future



Then

Change of Mindset

Future



The resultant transformation  A responsible partner contributing to the Prosperity and Development of the Country



Conclusion

Rehabilitation of approximately 12,000 ex-LTTE cadres who surrendered to the Government Security Forces during the final stage of the humanitarian operations was a critical issue to the government because being as members of the LTTE these surrendees had served the most ruthless terrorist organization in the world. Further, they had also been motivated and trained in gun culture to kill innocent civilians and destroy public properties and also to commit suicide for their cause.

However, despite the fact that all of them had been engaged in some form of terrorist activities, the government took a decision to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society without prosecuting or jailing them. It was a decision that speaks volumes for the governments' commitment to reconciliation and it should be noted that such generosity has rarely been shown in similar cases in other parts of the world.



Psychological Care, Spiritual Therapy and Vocational Training were provided to the ex-combatants during their stay at the Rehabilitation Centres. Most ex-combatants have now been reintegrated into society with sufficient knowledge and skill to live a peaceful and a contented life with their loved ones, and others in the community. Only a small number of cadres with known higher-level involvement in the LTTE activities have been prosecuted up to now.

It is important to mention that as at today there have not been any major issues or complaints reported from any part of the country regarding the behaviour or the activities of the ex-LTTE cadres who have been released to society after rehabilitation since 2010.

Professor Arie Kruglanski, a Professor of Social Psychology of the Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Response to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland in the USA who spoke at the Defence Seminar held in August 2012 in Colombo stated that a scientific study conducted by him provides statistically significant proof that Sri Lanka's rehabilitation programme and the staff interaction have a direct impact on De-radicalization of ex-combatants.

It should be noted that the Sri Lankan Government is committed 100% to make the ex-combatants to be useful citizens in our country who can contribute positively towards the development and the reconciliation process.



When ex-combatants surrendered to the Government Forces in May 2009, their future was determined on Buddhist principles observed by the government. As the military and political leadership of Sri Lanka were predominantly Buddhist, it was not the rule of law but the tenants of Buddhism that was applied to the defeated ex-combatants. They were Metta- the wish that all sentient beings, without any exception, be happy, Karuna - the wish for all sentient beings to be free from suffering, Muditha - the wholesome attitude of rejoicing in the happiness and virtues of all sentient beings, Upekkha - not to distinguish between friend or foe, or stranger, but regard all sentient beings as equal. These Buddhist concepts were applied to the defeated enemy by the political leadership and the Security Force personnel, in its endeavour to transform them to be useful citizens of the country.

In the heat of the battle, Sri Lankan soldiers targeted their enemy. However, vengeance and punishment were not their motive. Instead, even in the battle field, Buddhist concepts of Metta, Karuna, Mudita and Upekkha prevailed, where water, food and medicine being the basic needs in the context of that situation were provided by the soldiers to their enemy. No soldier ate before feeding those who were before him. Buddhist concepts have been in the minds of political and military leadership throughout the humanitarian operation.



At the end of the humanitarian operation, rather than adopting retributive justice, the government adopted restorative justice. That is to restore life by rehabilitating the misguided former LTTE cadres and reintegrating them to society.

Finally, the Sri Lankan government has not restricted its commitment towards ex-combatants, only to rehabilitate and reintegrate them back to society. The Government of Sri Lanka through the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation has already established branch offices of the Bureau, in the Government Agents Offices of all districts in the North & East of Sri Lanka. Those offices are known as “Socio Economic and Welfare Coordinating Office for Rehabilitated Beneficiaries.”

The prime responsibility of the Socio Economic and Welfare Coordinating Office for Rehabilitated Beneficiaries is to ensure the successful and sustainable socio economic reintegration of all rehabilitated ex-combatants in the respective districts by coordinating all government/ corporate sector institutions, INGOs/ NGOs and the community.



The First to Apologize is the Bravest

The First to Forgive is the Strongest

and the First to Forget is the Happiest



Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation

Department of Government Information



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Ministry of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms - Sri Lanka



Published by Department of Government Information

Design Concept AnuhasMahawalageAdvertisingMedia

Printed by Department of Government Printing