

## Dismantling LTTE international network vital - Prof. Rohan Gunaratna

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Sri Lanka, Oct. 25 -- International Terrorism Expert Prof. **Rohan Gunaratna** was interviewed by Sunday Observer staffer Manjula Fernando while he was in Sri Lanka recently.

Prof. Gunaratna spoke on the Sri Lanka's post Prabhakaran strategy.

Q: The Government was successful in dismantling the LTTE military wing and killing all its important leaders. The LTTE post-Prabhakaran leader KP was also apprehended in a very successful intelligence operation. Can we say the LTTE is in decline?

A: Within the territorial borders and waters of Sri Lanka the LTTE has been entirely dismantled. However the LTTE propaganda fund raising, procurement and shipping organisation is active overseas.

LTTE International still poses a threat to the country as it lobbies Western Governments not to give aid and assistance to Sri Lanka. As a result the Government is facing a monumental challenge in its ambition to develop the North and the East. It is imperative for the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry to work closely with the police intelligence, security and information ministries to counter the vicious LTTE lobby and propaganda network. If Government is unable to rise to this challenge Sri Lanka will suffer economically, politically and diplomatically.

Q: Are you satisfied with the Government's Post-Prabhakaran Strategy?

A: The Government should develop a post Prabhakaran and national and international strategy. The post-Prabhakaran strategy is to be fought not with guns and bullets but with laptops and cell phones. And by influencing the Tamil community in Sri Lanka and overseas.

It should also entail a powerful component to dismantle the LTTE network overseas.

The Government should give the option to Rudrakumaran, the de-facto head of LTTE organisation who is living in the US to engage the Sri Lankan Government or risk rendition. There are other Leaders including those who are currently managing the fund raising and procurement network.

Q: How many top rung leaders are there in the LTTE international wing which poses a threat to Sri Lanka?

A: Internationally, the LTTE has fractured into three wings. The intellectual wing is headed by Rudrakumaran. The other two leaders are, Oslo based Nediyan a.k.a Perinpanayagam Sivaparan and Ayyiah a.k.a Ponniah Nadarajah who is in the most wanted list as he was involved in the illegal procurement of weapons and ships which led to the death of several tens of thousands of civilians and soldiers.

Q: How many second level leaders are there now?

A: With the Government engagement of the Tamil Diaspora, inviting them to invest in the development of the North and the East, the cry for separatism and advocacy and support for violence will diminish.

Most Tamils both in Sri Lanka and overseas today regard Prabhakaran as a failure and his project to

create a monoethnic state as a day dream.

With this the spirit to fight and desire to support the LTTE will wane away and many of these second tiers are likely to dissent the LTTE movement and look after themselves and their families.

Firstly the Government should understand that the human terrain is the key.

Whoever that influences the population will win the fight. The Government must engage the Tamil community in the North and the East in a sustained way and reach out to them.

The Government has built a strategy to release the IDPs that is now working. It is a huge task and it is being managed well despite unreasonable criticism from a few individuals and organisations.

The Government is also formulating a rehabilitation program to rehabilitate LTTE detainees. There should be greater attention paid to development in the North and the East from agriculture to industry and technology.

As such the Government should work closely with the International community especially the US, the European Union and the Far East to bring both funds and transfer expertise.

Q: A group of LTTE figures met in Oslo recently. What was their mission? Was it successful?

A: They want to create a transnational government. The Sri Lankan Government should pro-actively prevent this. It needs to build a post-Prabhakaran vision, strategy and an organisation to operate both in Sri Lanka and overseas. We should not live in the past. This is the need of the hour. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at [htsyndication@hindustantimes.com](mailto:htsyndication@hindustantimes.com)