

Abstract

Sri Lankan Police is an integral part of the civil society that has a role to play in the social control. As stated in its mission, Sri Lank police is committed and confident to uphold and enforce the law of the land, to preserve the public order , prevent crime and terrorism with prejudice to none and equity to all. Thus the Sri Lanka Police Department is committed to keep civil society in peace and harmony. However, since in the recent past the Police Department in Sri Lanka has often been criticized as being vicious and inhuman in dealing with ordinary civil cases. Recent police records provide sufficient evidence for the incidents in which the police has instantly made use of armed power without thorough analysis and understanding of the situations. In addition, the view of the civil society is that police does not or incapable of executing its duty.

This criticism has a fair ground because of the fact that most of the police officers departed from their assigned role and exposed to a military training during the twenty year war between the government and the LTTE. The divergence of the role it played in the public sphere resulted in creating a gulf between the police and the civil society. The fear of accessing a police station for even civil matters, suspicion over the impartiality of officers and loss of faith of the public on the police service are some of the expressions of the existing gulf between the police and the civil society.

On the other hand, the lack of clarity of the role, Political and other influences from the elite, lack of dignity, and grievances faced by the police officers also contribute to create and persist such a situation. Thus, it is argued in this research that conflicting attitudes between the police and the civil society have been arisen as a result of departing the police from the public sphere. It is a common phenomenon that in a war situation, the state tends to use all possible means to face the enemy. However, although the state used the police for military activities during the war, it so far has failed to reinstate the police in the public sphere. Therefore, a study of this nature will be useful to understand the limits where the state can use the police for military purposes during a war situation and also the social effects of departing the police from public sphere.