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## **Politics of post-disaster management: A case study of Menik farm welfare camp, Vavuniya Sri Lanka**

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### **Abstract**

Among the man-made disasters, civil war or terrorism causes serious consequences in terms of generating refugees and re-settlement problems all over the world. Menik Farm was a welfare camp which functioned in Chettikulam, Vavuniya during and after the civil war of the North and East. It was one of largest welfare camps in the world and there were around 300,000 (86364 families) locally displaced people (IDPs). The welfare camp was maintained under a special institutional and administrative set up with the coordination of civil administrative mechanism, intervention of military leadership and monitoring of international agencies. Since the military leadership played a leading role in the post-disaster management process, it was of much concern all over the world and the camp was closed in September 2012. The main objective of this paper is to critically analyse the role of politics in post-disaster management of the Menik Farm welfare camp in Sri Lanka.

Since this welfare camp was under the direct control of the government military, there were many limitations in carrying out the study and field data collection was influenced by security measures and ethical issues. Qualitative and explorative methodology were adopted for primary data collection. Accordingly, qualitative data collection tools such as observation, in-depth interviews and informal group discussions were conducted. Although there were 9 Zones (from Zone 0 to Zone 8) and three villages, the IDP sample was selected for the interviews and discussions were conducted in Zone 6 and the village of Weerapuram. The key informants (project, state, military, medical officers, sanitary workers and host community) were selected from the entire camp.

The most important finding of this study is the power relationship that existed among three leading sectors as a joint mechanism of postdisaster management. They are the military authority, government representation by District Secretary and Disaster Management Center (DMC) and International Agencies (UNCHR, UNDP, SLRC). Although there was more commanding power with military involvement, international agencies and civil administrations of the government played a

key role in developing critical and social infrastructure (security, health and sanitation) within the camp (761 hectares of land). Even if the military authority was always criticized for dominating the joint mechanism by external sources, IDPs were satisfied with the involvement of the military in terms of providing security and immediate infrastructural facilities. It is also important to mention that the security and well-being of IDPs is always socially constructed based on the power discourse related to war and peace. The media and the international diaspora community together with local politicians mainly engage in the process of making power discourses considering military connections. Among the IDPs, there were social-cultural conflicts owing to the notion of caste and cultural pollution and some livelihood programs reinforced inequitable relations of power among them. These value-oriented power conflicts negatively influenced postdisaster management of the camp. The poor facilities and political attention towards the local host community compared to IDPs, created a tensed situation between them. The host community did not enjoy any benefits through the political economy of the welfare camp. In conclusion, it can be emphasized that the unseen institutional power structure and socially and culturally mandated power relationships played a vital role in the management of welfare camp.

**Key Words:** *Disaster Politics, Joint Power Mechanism, Discourse and Cultural Pollution*

## **1. Introduction**

Disasters have become part of human life today and people seem to be adapting to disaster vulnerabilities. These disasters may be natural or man-made and are well-absorbed into the political economy and cultural ecology of those countries. The impacts of these disasters have created huge changes in local and global politics and development. The recent large disasters such as the Indian Ocean Tsunami, the South Asian Earthquake, Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Nargis, Sichuan earthquake and man-made disasters such as the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorists attacks, Bokoharam in Nigeria and war disasters in the Middle East have highlighted the significance of the political context and post disaster impact and response in national, sub-regional and international politics. Disasters and politics may be two integral parts of the same process and the combination of the two can have two processes namely, “disasters producing politics” and “politics producing disasters”. From this point of view, it is politics itself, as a mode of ordering the world that produces disasters for its own purposes and according to its own rules.

According to Oliver-Smith (2002) & Tierney (2007), the new relationship between politics and disasters can be understood by combining two important movements within the social sciences. The first relates to an interest in breaks and ruptures, rather than continuity and structure. This is closely linked to an attendant idea of politics as problematization of the composition of the world. Disasters as ruptures produce new compositions of the world and they force explications of these compositions. The second movement relates to an interest in the reconceptualizing nature or the ‘non-human’ as actors. Disasters, like accidents, are sociologically speaking the result of the combination of these two: they radically question the composition of the world, in all its technical, natural and social forms.

According to Surendra Kumar (2009), innocent people who flee in search of a secure and stable environment due to war, protracted conflicts, mass violation of human rights, repression of minorities, natural and technological disasters are generally known as ‘internally displaced people’ (IDPs). The global crisis of IDPs finally caught the attention of the international community and aid agencies after this definition, mainly due to three vital developments in three areas. Firstly, a sharp increase in the number of IDPs over the decades. Second, the issue of internal displacement emerging

as one of the most pressing humanitarian, human rights, political and security issues faced by the global community, third, national authorities been unable to provide necessary assistance due to resource constraints. According to the International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDCM), by the end of 2009, there were approximately 27.1 million people displaced due to conflict, generalised violence or human rights violations across the world. This figure was high compared to 2007 and 2008 figures (25 and 26 million respectively). Most of the displacement was due to internal armed conflict, rather than international armed conflict. The most affected region was Africa (11.6 million), followed by South and SouthEast Asia, which saw an increase of 23 % from 3.5 million to 4.3 million.

Sri Lanka suffered from conflict between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam for approximately 30 years resulting in economic, social and political devastations. Since the inception of the conflict, several waves of displacement took place in the North and East causing at least 1,000,000 displaced throughout the conflict (Badurdeen, 2009). With the liberation and recapturing of LTTE controlled areas in the Northern Province, nearly 300,000 people from the LTTE held areas were shifted towards safe areas in the south of the Northern province in May 2009. Due to the large numbers of IDP arrivals within a short period of time, the government of Sri Lanka was compelled to provide them with basic needs at any cost without considering the environmental impact or planned development concerns of the areas that are proposed for IDP housing.

These people were temporarily settled in 13 IDP centers in the Vavuniya and Anuradhapura districts due to security and logistical reasons. IDPs were provided with day to day needs in these make shift camps till the resettlement process began after clearing landmines and other security related issues. These zones have been named as zone 1 ,2,3,4,5,6 A,6B,7,8, Dharmapura, Veerapura and Sumathipura. This place is popularly known as Menik Farm (locally known or used term for the place) Chettikulam (15 to 20 km from Medawachchiya in Mannar road). The provision of logistic facilities and development of the camps were undertaken by a special task force working under the presidential secretariat and the Ministry of Nation Building (UNCHR, 2009).

Even though there are disaster risk reduction concerns that have to be taken into account in planning stages of such zone establishments, due to the rapid building of these zones to meet the demands of the large influx of IDP's, there was neither time nor resources to establish standard good practices in the construction of these sites. According to UNCHR (2009) and CEPA (2014), the GoSL was forced to select IDP camp sites and prepare camp sites to suit the living conditions of IDPs with least priority for disaster concerns. The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) which operates under the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights has been entrusted with the responsibility of managing natural and manmade disasters through the Disaster Management Act of Sri Lanka (No.13 of 2005). Apart from other responsibilities, the main priority of the DMC was to coordinate and monitor DRM activities with other stakeholders in order to ensure that available resources are effectively used by DRM partners in the discharge of their functions towards DRM. For this purpose, many International and local NGOs and government institutes or departments joined in preparing the physical infrastructure of the IDP camp. The Government Agent of Vavuniya, DMC, SLRC, UNCHR, UNDP, UNOPS, CARE International, Oxfam, UNICEF, Sarvodaya, SL Army, Road Development Authority, Assistance Commissioner for Local Governance, Forest Department, Water Resource Board, Central Environment Authority, Sri Lanka Land Reclamation & Development Corporation and National Building Research Organization functioned as key partners in this regard. The major activities carried out by these partnerships at the initial stage to facilitate infrastructure are safety fencing, establishing a one- way road traffic system, construction of pedestrian crossings, reforestation programme, construction of community centers, distribution of relief items, flood mitigation in field

hospitals, drainage maintenance, public preparedness for Monsoon rains and solid and liquid Waste Management

## **2. Objective**

The main objective of this paper is to critically explore the politics of post-disaster management of IDPs in 2008 and 2009 at Menik Farm Chettikulam, Vavuniya Sri Lanka. In both post-disaster management related to natural disasters and war related disasters existing power dynamics or power relationship is very crucial in determining the total function of emergency management. This paper attempts to make a sociological and qualitative analysis of the power relationship that existed among government armed forces, different state institutes, NGOs, civil society and IDPs and how all of them finally influenced the overall management of the welfare camp. Here, power related to cultural values and informal social mechanisms were also taken into consideration in the study of politics related to post disaster management.

## **3. Methodology**

This study mainly utilized an explorative and qualitative methodology used in sociology and anthropology. Qualitative information was collected through qualitative means of data collection. Due to security reasons, data collection was restricted to a few zones and villages by the competent authority of the camp management. Ethical considerations related to IDPs and their experiences of the war also limited the access of data. Thus, although there were 9 Zones (from Zone 0 to Zone 8) and three villages, the IDP sample was selected for the interviews and discussions were carried out in Zone 6 and in the village of Weerapuram. The main data collection tools were (1) observations, (2) thirty in-depth interviews and (3) six informal discussions.

Direct observation was carried out in order to collect information regarding the physical infrastructure of camps and safety measures for people and the lifestyle of IDPs. In-depth interviews were done with GA Vavuniya, ACLG, DS, International Agencies & NGOs, (UNCHR, UNICEF, UNOCHA, UNOPS, CARE, Oxfam) Engineer (RDD), Coordinator of DMC, Zonal commander, Zonal manager, Grama Niladhari, Army officers, Medical officers, Public Health Inspector, Health volunteer, Supervisor and the waste collector. Critical information about power relationships and contradictory views of power dynamics of camps were collected through in-depth interviews. Informal discussions were conducted with IDPs and members of the host community to get subjective experiences of people and information regarding other social aspects of conflicts such as caste, identity and gender issues.

Secondary data and information from government institutions, international agencies (UNCHR & UNDP) and NGOs were also utilized for further justification of qualitative aspects of the study. Qualitative data were analysed based on themes and discourses through the concepts related to power and politics that are found in sociology and social theories.

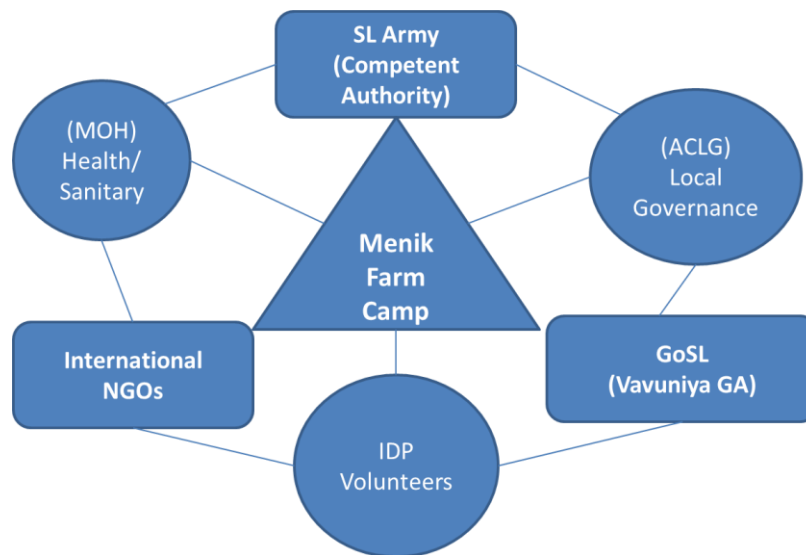
## **4. Results and Discussions**

Policies or actions related to power is politics and can be exercised by any party, institution, military, soft, local or cultural politics- anything connected to power and society is power dynamics. In this paper, it is important to understand disasters as politics, and politics as disasters. When critically analysing the process of post-disaster management in Sri Lanka through a political sociological lens, one could find many different types of power dynamics within and outside natural and manmade

disasters. However, all disaster politics have not been properly studied in Sri Lanka. According to Jones et al (2013), the governance of risk and resilience vis-à-vis community organization rarely is analysed in terms of practical feasibility. Community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) is reasonably well-established in some parts of South Asia, such as Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka, but governance and function of as well as opportunities for community-based resilience-building remains largely undocumented.

As Tudor Silva (2009) and Amarasiri De Silva (2008) have mentioned in studies related to Sri Lankan disaster politics in the case of the Tsunami, there have been power relationships or politics in the general disaster management process. In Sri Lanka, power exists in the form of local politics, patron client politics, ethnic politics or institutional politics and it is closely related to the disaster management process during floods, landslides, droughts or waste dumping site disasters.

The joint mechanism found and used to coordinate the activities of Menik Farm is the most important factor considered here. This mechanism consists of government, non-governmental or international, military and various other volunteer sectors or agencies. This collective body was vested with all political, military, financial and civil power that managed the entire system of relief, rehabilitation and resettlement of IDPs (around 300000 at the beginning) in a sustainable manner. This mechanism can be illustrated as follows in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The Joint Mechanism of overall management of IDP camp

According to data derived from in-depth interviews, it was interesting to identify a partnership agreement among international agencies (UNCHR, UNDP, SLRC) and local organizations (DMC) in order to carry out emergency humanitarian activities in Menik Farm. Although international agencies maintained mutual and non-influential partnerships among them, the DMC under the patronage of the SL government was very influential in the partnership network.

Diaspora communities, the international media and politics severely projected criticism against the military leadership given to the management of camp. Ethical issues and human rights concerns were also crucial with regard to the leading role of the military in the camp administrative process. However, most of the people (IDPs) were happy about the way in which the military leadership organized the relief and addressed the needs of the people immediately without any corruption or

delay. According to the interviews and informal discussions, the joint mechanism established for camp management was successful because of the strong military leadership.

The complexity of the humanitarian crises is problematic due to politicization and its persistent nature is caused by inducing natural or man-made disasters internationally to enable the transfer of assets from the weak to the strong. The supply and access to food, health services and humanitarian assistances becomes an instrument of local power politics rather than an entitlement and therefore crises as associated with resettlements or humanitarian emergencies after a disaster become highly politicized and protracted and developed their own structure of power (Nafziger et al, 2004).

In many disaster management processes, NGOs are outraged when local government units divert emergency discretionary funds (5 % of the budget) to the military, justifying their actions by pronouncing insurgency a human-induced disaster. As a direct result, many communities are deprived of funds needed to protect themselves from recurrent disasters. Moreover, NGOs are unwilling to accept military protection of their disaster relief supplies through insurgent-active territory due to the fear of being closely associated with right-wing ideologies and armed forces' practices in such areas. This is evident by the disaster management practices carried out in the Philippines (Bankoff & Hilhorst, 2009).

According to Kim et al (2016), there are many politicized issues and financial problems that arise due to the involvement of NGOs in disaster management in developing countries. This is no exception in the case of NGOs operating in Sri Lanka. The role of NGOs is crucial in terms of political practices and ideology promulgated in the case of Sri Lankan humanitarian aid processes in post-disaster management. Several types of NGOs such as High NGOs, National NGOs, Provincial NGOs, Local NGOs & CBOs are in operation. From the beginning to the end of the Menik farm, NGOs played a key role in all its activities. Some high NGOs such as SLRC, UNCHR, UNDP are very powerful and there were instances where even the military leadership happened to depend on them. However, all NGOs were programmed into a common management plan through the DMC Medical, sanitary, safety measures and environmental management.

The role of NGOs in post Tsunami disaster management created new discourses of disaster politics in Sri Lanka. As many as 500 international NGOs arrived in Sri Lanka in response to the disaster. In addition, INGOs (international non-government organizations) already active in Sri Lanka such as CARE International, PLAN International and World Vision Lanka, swiftly modified aid portfolios to assist the survivors. A significant part of the aid was used to finance salaries of expatriate staff, maintain luxury vehicles and exceedingly high living costs. The INGOs and NGOs divided themselves among different districts and sectors (e.g. housing, water and sanitation, health, psychosocial support, and livelihood development), but there was limited coordination among different players and frequent competition for territory (Silva, 2005).

Despite sharing a common language and advocating a similar programme of emergency response, the government and NGOs constitute two parallel domains that accord radically different meanings to disasters. The state views disasters as a temporary and unfortunate deviation from development and gears all its activities to effect a return to that prior condition as soon as possible. NGOs, on the other hand, view disasters as a symptom of mal-development, for which they hold the former responsible. They view disasters primarily as the outcome of bad governance. While helping people to strengthen their resilience to disaster, NGOs also consider disasters as an opportunity to raise people's awareness and mobilize them for social change.

In the case of shelter & sanitary programs, state partners such as ACLG and the Water Board played a crucial role. The state was found imposing over inter-governmental organizations in maintaining partnerships and cluster welfare schemes for IDPs in the Menik welfare sites. It was learned that this competent authority was more powerful and significant among stakeholders in the joint mechanism. All the relief, welfare, health, administrative, awareness, and construction programs have been subjected to security scrutiny. This nature of tight security measures within a controlled socio-physical environment had a greater impact on IDPs and their future existence.

The humanitarian governance with regard to refugee management has been changing according to changing discourse of power and the role of international power agencies such as UNHCR. According to Garnier et al (2018), different arguments of power such as 'Money is power', 'Knowledge is power', 'Discursive power', 'Relational power' and 'Governmentality' all these have changed the source of power and execution of power in terms of humanitarian management in the contemporary context. The power of UNCHR, World Bank, Human Rights Organizations and other international agencies, humanitarian and other financial organizations have become very powerful in providing humanitarian aid and financial debt specially for Disaster Risk Reduction projects in developing countries. Even in the case of Menik Farm activities, UNCHR was very crucial and attempted to bring its maximum power of humanitarian governance challenging certain proposals and activities of the Sri Lankan government.

Even if there were best practices of emergency governance regarding post disaster management in the Menik Farm, no proper study has been conducted due to security reasons and poor interest of sociological research in this regard. Thus, many lessons learned from post-disaster management are yet to be converted into new knowledge. It is important to promote more political and cultural responses of disasters for future disaster resilience planning. Any conflicts associated with social values and cultural pollution also leads to 'soft politics' in any post-disaster management process. Ethnicity, regional differences and minority groups have different impacts on post disaster management as socially or culturally constructed politics.

According to studies on Post Tsunami disaster management in Sri Lanka by Amarasiri de Silva (2009), in ethnically mixed communities, the distribution of economic and political power have the implications for coping with disaster-based vulnerabilities. Disaster vulnerability among racial and ethnic minority communities has reportedly increased in the recent past. Significant differences in risk perception among different ethnic groups vis-à-vis disaster events have been reported and different consequences of hazards for ethnic minorities have been highlighted.

Silva (2009) further argues that in the process of recovery, cultural boundaries have been reinvented and culture-based discrimination has resumed. During this process, some people and community groups sought advantages while others were deprived of benefits and opportunities for recovery. Despite the indiscriminate effects of disasters, it is generally recognized that disaster risk and vulnerability are not equally distributed, particularly in the recovery stage. Thus, the recovery process is seen as sensitive to ethnicity and social stratification, especially those that emerge post disaster.

There were many micro level and subjective conflicts of interest among IDPs in the Menik Farm. These underlining power relationships were based on many different social identities based on religion, caste, regional differences and family background. It was possible to observe forms of cultural politics based on the notion of 'dirt' or 'pollution' and caste among IDPs as revealed by interview data. This can be understood by the cultural theory of dirt introduced by Marry Douglas.

According to this theory, what makes things dirt or clean is based on the moral order of a society which periodically renews and reaffirms its basic relations and collective sentiments (Mahees, 2018). The politics or social divisions based on cultural pollution is found in many disaster management sites of Sri Lanka. For example, even in the post disaster management process of floods, landslides and Tsunami there were hidden and subjective social value-based conflicts based on the debate of what is pure and what is dirt within welfare camps. The culture based soft politics of Menik Farm was based on the following three factors.

1. Cultural notion of dirt within the camp
2. Caste consciousness
3. Gender difference or poor gender sensitivity

There were different social strata or layers among Menik Farm IDPs. Caste, different economic backgrounds (class), education level and religion were very significant among them. As revealed by the interviews with IDPs, there were serious contradictions among IDPs based on the 'class' factor. For an example, IDPs who were economically rich consumed more goods from shops established within the zones in addition to the free food given to them. This was an unbearable situation for the poor IDPs. Since there were communication (uses of mobile phones) and banking facilities, economically viable IDPs enjoyed privileges while in camps. Sometimes different caste groups had to inhabit in one temporary shelter and even non-lower caste individuals happened to engage in cleaning work. These situations created a kind of cultural pollution which was difficult to be objectively measured by any study. The success of sanitary and environmental services provided by different agencies was also dependent on the social integration of IDPs.

The gendered dimensions of disasters have been attracting significant scholarly attention since the 1990s. Interest in gender stemmed from the vulnerability paradigm, as it had become obvious that disasters affect women disproportionately, along with other marginalised social groups such as children, the elderly, and people with disabilities (Gaillard et al 2017). Although there is some significant gender-based policies adopted in Sri Lankan national level disaster reduction programs, they are not practiced appropriately in all regions and cultures equally. For an example, the property ownership traditionally held by men and micro finance (credit facilities) for women has negatively influenced women at grassroot level in post-disaster development programs.

In the case of Menik Farm, without over generalization or over specification of gender issues, women in the welfare camp faced a double impact of war and happened to be continuous victims in the post war scenario because of poor gender sensitivity. Many women were widows and had faced severe crises and experiences even among the IDPs. Many of the issues faced by women in Menik Farm did not come out due to cultural barriers and tight security measures but rather by the poor identification of gender needs in terms of planning and implementation of camp management. The decision-making process of the camp was mostly based on patriarchal social and political frameworks. Although there were basic sanitary facilities provided to IDPs, the necessary gender needs were poorly identified in the designing, planning and implementation process. However, women in the camp were highly satisfied with the health and medical facilities available. Majority of the health workers (medical doctors and nurses) were Sinhalese from the South and there was a good rapport and interaction among IDP patients and health workers. For instance, most of the IDP women frequently wanted to visit medical officers more than their medical requirement and share their grievances and issues. However, since there was no proper system of counselling, health workers happened to use informal mentoring tactics or an advocacy role even with language barriers.



As pointed out by Pelling and Dill (2010), some political impacts of disaster management unfold during reconstructions, others may be felt only at a distance indirectly and some of them are yet to influence. Some political impacts are at times coded, hidden or destroyed by the media or rapidly suppressed by other powerful means of politics. Even in Sri Lanka post disaster management activities or development, the media has become very powerful and these local electronic media which function with a super mass culture attempt to capitalize the political context of disaster management. Moreover, the disaster management process or disaster relief work have resulted in the emergence of disaster 'heroes' or disaster related 'political superstars' through the media. In contemporary Sri Lanka disasters have created a new political space or a new political ecological soil for new political leaders to emerge.

Compared to other IDP camps in the country, Menik farm had many infrastructural facilities (water, electricity, roads & sanitation) and many other social, education and medical facilities. Thus, whatever issues related to freedom, human rights and grievances of war, majority of IDPs were happy about the basic infrastructure facilities and the management process carried out by the military leadership. On the other hand, the local community around the camp had significant financial and infrastructural problems. They did not have any access or opportunities to interact with the camp or any advantages like others in camps that function in other areas of the country. The host community of Menik farm were unhappy about the way in which the camp was run by the management and they were totally excluded from the process due to other political factors of tight military control over the camp. Under such circumstances, no IDP was allowed to go out of the camp site except for valid reasons. Even outsiders were totally restricted from visiting the camp and all relationships within camp were controlled by military rules.

Usually the host communities around any resettlement area or welfare camp reap many financial benefits and other social relationships. Sometimes, there are competitions and conflicts between IDPs and host community in terms of enjoying economic, political and natural resources. Wherever IDPs are temporarily settled, the host community receives both positive and negative benefits. According to opinions of the host community, unlike in other IDP welfare sites, Menik Farm does not bring any significant benefits to them. The host community does not have any direct or face to face interaction with those in the camp due to security measures. They also did not receive any new economic benefits by getting a better price for their land or other products (food) or demand for their labour and professions. It is reported that almost every material and manpower supply were done by the host community. In other words, it was not people in Chettikulam but outsiders who were politically powerful and had links with the camp management who enjoyed economic and other advantages from the Menik Farm IDP welfare sites. The only benefit was that Chettikulam became recognized all over the world and people were made aware of certain novel factors related to administration and politics. Instead, the host community experienced many environmental problems, such as dusty atmosphere, deforestation and waste disposal and tightened security. Since many of the state institutions and government departments (LAs, RDA, and MOH) have given priority to IDPs, the host community did not receive due services from such institutions. The regular development activities in the areas were also disturbed by welfare programs. Thus, the host community was dissatisfied with the performance of such institutions.

Finally, the welfare camp was decommissioned in a gradual process from May 2009. Since there were many infrastructural facilities for IDPs, the government of Sri Lanka wanted to provide permanent settlements for some IDPs but a clear majority of people (IDPs) preferred to leave the place and settle down in their own land. However, the government and some political parties were more concerned about assisting IDPs to settle in their usual villages considering their votes for the presidential

election in 2010. Again, it was obvious that national level politics resulted in swift changes in the post disaster management.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The lessons learned and experiences gained from this historical and unique process of Sri Lankan emergency management of around three hundred thousand IDPs need to be critically shared with the international community and used for future local academic and practical requirements in any disaster management. The joint mechanisms of the GoSL, military leadership and NGOs were the focal point, functioning as the central mechanism of disaster mechanisms peculiar to Sri Lanka. However, there is a huge gap between what really happened in the field and what has been taped as new empirical knowledge for the future. Many emergency functions for the betterment of the IDPs were carried out under strict military discipline. Although military leadership was severely criticized regarding human rights violations during the war, IDPs were mostly satisfied with basic infrastructural facilities and for the commitment of soldiers in contributing to better welfarism. Thus, the military leadership functioned as a benevolent dictator. Menik Farm was the thriving place for NGO politics in Sri Lankan disaster management after the Tsunami NGO politics in 2004. The role of UNCHR and UNDP were unique and the DMC which functioned as the responsible body of handling disasters were exposed to new experiences. It was evident that a new form of diversified disaster politics was recognized in the Menik Farm emergency management process. The informal soft power dynamics as well as cultural politics were another scenario that highlighted psychological disaster politics. Finally, it was apparent that Sri Lankan disaster politics is getting diluted and diversified as a new mode of power dynamics depending on the contextual political economy, experiences of state welfarism and military culture.

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