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Fonseka's statement puts Foreign Minister in difficulty



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A senior Foreign Ministry official told Lanka News Web that irresponsible comments made by former Army Chief General Sarath Fonseka in the past few days put Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama in a difficult spot during his visit to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in Egypt. Fonseka recently stated that the military had to overlook the traditional rules of war and even kill LTTE rebels who came to surrender carrying white flags during the war against the LTTE.

Many foreign ministers and diplomats who attended the NAM summit had inquired after the statements made by Fonseka from Bogollagama on the sidelines of the summit. They have further said that killing those who try to surrender in a war amounts to a war crime.

"I managed the war like a true soldier. I did not make decisions from A/C rooms. I was under pressure to stop the war even during the final phase. I got messages not to shoot those who are carrying white flags. A war is fought by soldiers. They do so by putting their lives on the line. Therefore, the decisions about war should be taken by the soldiers in the battlefield. Not the people in A/C rooms in Colombo. Our soldiers have seen in life the kind of destruction carried out by those people before they decided to come carrying a white flag. Therefore, they carried out their duties. We destroyed any one connected with the LTTE. That is how we won the war," Fonseka said at an event held in Ambalangoda to felicitate him on July 10.

A senior government minister told Lanka News Web that the comments made by Fonseka, which were critical of the Defence Secretary and the President, at the Ambalangoda event and another book launch added to the reasons behind the decision to send him on early retirement.

After assuming office as the Chief of Defence Staff, Fonseka said that although he no longer possessed the Army Chief's sword, he would always act in the best interest of the people.

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