



Vision
To enhance National Security of Sri Lanka through excellence in research education and networking



His Excellency Gotabaya Rajapaksa
President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa
State Minister of National Security and Disaster Management



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About Us
Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) is the premiere think tank on national security in Sri Lanka established under the Ministry of Defence

COLOMBO CONCLAVE 2021



Institute of National Security Studies Sri Lanka conducted its second national conference “Colombo Conclave 2021”, under the theme of “International Dimensions on National Security”, on 24th of November 2021 from 0800hrs to 1800hrs at Waters Edge, Battaramulla. The event comprised of three main sessions, bringing 12 senior experts around the country to share their perspectives on three thematic areas. Director General of the Institute of National Security Studies, Professor Rohan Gunaratna welcomed the participants, which was followed by a speech by the Chief Guest, General Kamal Gunaratna (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil, Secretary, Ministry of Defence and the State Ministry of National Security and Disaster Management. The new logo of INSS was also launched at the same occasion.

The first session was titled as, “Human Rights: Implications and Interpretations”, which was moderated by Ambassador Bernard Goonethilleke, Chairman, Pathfinder Foundation. During this session he highlighted that it was the government responsibility to ensure that there is a proper mechanism to deal with human rights regulations. The first speaker was Dr. Prathiba Mahanamahewa, Attorney at Law, Arbitrator, Sri Lanka and Jamaica, Rector, Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo. He urged that the international community should be more concerned about Sri Lanka’s human rights protection rather than human rights violations. Dr. Thesara Jayawardene, Head, Department of Industrial Management, University of Moratuwa, presented an illustrious presentation on, ‘Human Rights Violations and Double Standards’. She appraised the audience stating that there is no hierarchy in human rights and there



should be no discrimination. Mr. Malinda Seneviratne, Senior Political Analyst, was the third speaker of the first session. He presented on the topic of “Politicization of Human Rights”

The second session was titled “Political Division of North and South; on Issues of Human Rights”, which was moderated by Ambassador HMGS Paliakkara, Former Foreign Secretary, where he stressed that human rights cannot be separated from politics. Additional Solicitor General Nerin Pulle, President’s Counsel Attorney General’s Department, stated that, “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter”, which generated a significant amount of discussion in the second session. Dr. Maneesha S. Wanasinghe Pasqual, Head of the Department of International Relations, University of Colombo, conducted her discussion on the topic ‘Use of Human Rights in Subjugating

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Developing States', She pointed out that as a developing nation, Sri Lanka's voice on human rights, is silent in front of developed nations. The final speaker of the second session, Ambassador A.M.J. Sadiq, Additional Secretary, Bilateral Affairs (West), Foreign Ministry, further extended his thoughts on the threat of targeted sanctions.

The final session was on "Achieving Sustainable Peace and Stability", which was a thought provoking session, and was moderated by Admiral Professor Jayanath Colombage, RSP, VSV, USP, FNI,



rds, psc, Secretary, Foreign Ministry. Ms. Chamindry Saparamadu, Director General of Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, General Daya Rathnayake (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP VSV USP ndu psc, Secretary, Ministry of Industry and Commerce and Ms. Jeevanthie Senanayake, Senior Assistant Secretary to the President were the three speakers of the final session. The session covered the areas of detrimental effects of forced reconciliation,

emergence of sustainable reconciliation within the society and the role of military in safeguarding sustainable peace respectively. Each session was followed by an insightful Q and A session, which generated a great interaction between the panelists and the audience. INSS awarded tokens of appreciation paying its gratitude to the panelists, for their immense contribution to the conference. Final remarks of the conference were delivered by Professor Rohan Gunaratna. Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunwardena, RWP**, RSP, VSV,

USP, nswc, psc, hdmc Director (Communications and Publications), of INSS delivered the vote of thanks. The conference closure anticipated another edition in the forthcoming year.

At the end of the conference a dinner reception was held at Cinnamon Grand Colombo. Secretary Defence participated as the Chief Guest at the occasion along with the panelists and the staff of INSS.

Highlights of the event



INSS launches Inaugural 'Lt General Denzil Kobbekaduwa Memorial Oration'



Communications and Publications of INSS Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**,RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc. He stated that Lieutenant General Kobbekaduwa is a knowledgeable, highly skilled, great military leader loved by all. He fought bravely and relentlessly to secure the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka whilst always protecting peace loving citizens. Subsequently, General Kamal Gunaratne presented the oration medal to the Guest Orator of the memorial oration, Admiral Professor Jayanath Colombage, RSP, VSV, USP, FNI, rcds, pcs, Secretary to the Foreign Ministry.



The Orator- Admiral (Prof.) Jayanath Colombage, Foreign Secretary speaking on "Intersection of National Security and Foreign policy"

INSS organized the Inaugural Lieutenant General Denzil Kobbekaduwa Memorial Oration on 16th of December 2021 from 1500hrs to 1700hrs at the auditorium of Suhurupaya building, Battaramulla with the participation of Mrs. Lali Kobbekaduwa and family members of late Lieutenant General Denzil Kobbekaduwa, Secretaries to the Ministries, Navy Commander, Tri forces, Police, Intelligence Services, Defence Attaches to Sri Lanka, academia and resource pool of INSS. General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil, Secretary - Ministry of Defence and the State Ministry of National Security graced the inaugural memorial oration as the Chief Guest.

Admiral Professor Jayanath Colombage conducted an illustrative and informative oration on 'Intersection of National Security and Foreign Policy'. According to Professor Colombage, Lieutenant General Kobbekaduwa was an officer and a gentleman par excellence. Commencing the oration, he stated that diplomacy is the main tool that we use to deal with foreign relations, because it is the most productive method of translating the foreign policy of the government into action in the international system. Further, he pointed out that the world community needs to be inclusive instead of being divided into exclusive clubs to overcome issues such as COVID -19 pandemic, global warming, poverty alleviation etc. Professor Colombage concluded his lecture stating that

being a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, unity is of critical importance to Sri Lanka, because lack of a harmonious and peaceful society exposes the country to outside interferences, which affects security and stability of the country. Aftermath of the outstanding oration, Lieutenant Colonel Subasha Wijayalath delivered the vote of thanks on behalf of INSS marking the conclusion of the event. It is certain that this memorial oration was a great platform for relevant stakeholders to consider and formulate methods of using foreign policy to solve diverse issues affecting national security and stability.

Welcome remarks were presented by the Director,



INSS collaborates in organizing 5th Indian Ocean Conference at UAE



centerpiece of current geopolitical landscape. As the Chair of the Organising Committee of the 5th Indian Ocean Conference, His Excellency the President Gotabhaya Rajapaksa delivered the Inaugural Address at the 5th Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) held in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), on 4th and 5th December 2021. This year's theme of IOC 2021 was "Indian Ocean: Ecology, Economy and Epidemic". Foreign Ministers representing 18 countries and more than 200 delegates from over 40 countries attended the conference.

Government of Sri Lanka together with India Foundation hosts the Indian Ocean Conference which brings together eminent leaders, key stakeholders, maritime partners, experts and

academics to deliberate on creating a zone of shared security, prosperity and development in the Indian Ocean Region. With the shift in global power axis, Indian Ocean has come to be at the

Institute of National Security Studies of Sri Lanka, India Foundation, and the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies of Nanyang Technological University Singapore, collaborated in organizing this event. The first IOC commenced in 2016 at Singapore with the objective of discussing issues of common interest and concerns to countries in the Indian Ocean region and other countries using the Indian Ocean. Professor Rohan Gunaratna, the Director General of INSS accompanied President Gotabaya Rajapakse for the conference at UAE.



Speech by the President

Your Excellencies
Distinguished Invitees
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the 5th Indian Ocean Conference.

At the outset, I take this opportunity to thank the India Foundation, the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies of Nanyang Technological

University Singapore, and the Institute of National Security Studies of Sri Lanka, together with the organising committee, for their efforts for this event.

The Indian Ocean Conference provides an invaluable opportunity for countries in the region as well as our partners to deliberate on the critical issues affecting us. The theme of this year's conference centres on three topics, "Ecology, Economy, Epidemic", that deserve our utmost attention and

deepest consideration. As we meet here today, the most immediate and significant of these is the continuing impact of the COVID19 pandemic on the world at large. When the COVID-19 virus started spreading around the world in the first quarter of 2020, it posed a serious challenge to all nations.

For perhaps the first time in history, humanity had the sophistication and the resources to actively identify, inhibit, and even try and prevent the widespread devastation of a global epidemic before it was too late. Urgent actions to save lives were taken by nearly all countries.

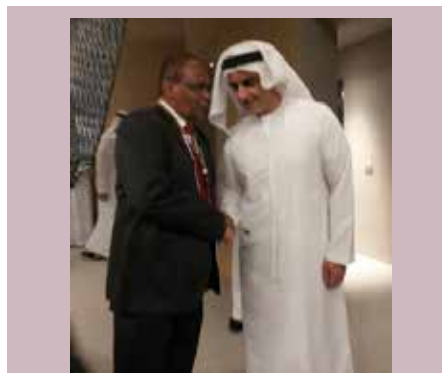
These included border closures, lockdowns, and testing, as well as isolating and treating those infected while rapidly tracing their contacts and quarantining them before the virus spread to the wider population. The able leadership provided by the World Health Organisation during this time was vital in coordinating a global response to this new threat.

Read the full speech at <https://www.presidentsoffice.gov.lk/index.php/2021/12/05/lets-unite-to-accelerate-economic-recovery-following-the-pandemic-president-at-indian-ocean-conference/>

UAE - Sri Lanka Security Cooperation

United Arab Emirates-Sri Lanka discussed enhancing security cooperation in Abu Dhabi from December 12-18, 2021. UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Lt. Gen. Saif bin Zayed Nahyan met with Sri Lankan delegation led by Public Security Minister Rear Admiral (Rtd) Dr Sarath Weerasekera on December 12, 2021. Prof Rohan Gunaratna, Director General of the Institute of National Security Studies, Sri Lanka joined the Public Security Ministry delegation. They discussed the threats to the region after the return of the Taliban to Afghanistan. The delegations discussed how to counter cascading extremist ideologies and disrupt the flow of narcotics.

The Sri Lankan delegation also met with Dubai Police Commander-in-Chief Lt. Gen. Abdullah Khalifa Obaid Al Marri and his principals at the Dubai Police HQ on December 14, 2021. Minister Weerasekera briefed on the threat groups and Professor Gunaratna discussed the creation of



UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Lt. Gen. Saif bin Zayed Nahyan with Professor Rohan Gunaratna in Abu Dhabi on December 12, 2021

a joint working group to mitigate the threats. After discussions with the chiefs of the specialist divisions, the Sri Lankan delegation also visited the Dubai Police Command and Control Center.

The delegation led by Minister Weerasekera also met with the UAE Minister of State Ahmed bin Ali Al Sayegh at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Abu Dhabi on Dec 18, 2021. Minister Ahmed said the economy of Sri Lanka will grow with government having mitigated the pandemic risk and having secured Sri Lanka from security threats. To enhance

UAE-Sri Lanka ties, Minister Ahmed said a UAE trade delegation visit Sri Lanka shortly. Professor Gunaratna said Sri Lanka look forward to the signing eight agreements including the bilateral security cooperation agreement with UAE. The UAE delegation included Minister Ahmed's chief of staff Sultan al Mansoori and West Asia Affairs Director Khaled Nasser Al Ameri. The Sri Lanka delegation consisted of Minister's Senior Advisor Narada Samarasinghe, Minister's Private Secretary Maduranga Perera, and Minister's Coordinating Secretary on Middle Eastern Affairs Seyed Ansar Maulana.



UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Lt. Gen. Saif bin Zayed Nahyan met with Sri Lankan delegation led by Public Security Minister Rear Admiral (Rtd) Dr Sarath Weerasekera on December 12, 2021.



The Sri Lanka delegation led by Minister Weerasekera met with the UAE delegation led by Minister of State Ahmed bin Ali Al Sayegh at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Abu Dhabi on Dec 18, 2021.

Maldives Vice President Faisal Naseem and Professor Rohan Gunaratna discussed common security challenges



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The Vice President of the Maldives Faisal Naseem visited the UAE to address the inaugural session of the fifth Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) in Abu Dhabi on December 4, 2021. As the Guest of Honour of IOC, he held discussions with Prof Rohan Gunaratna, Director-General of the Institute of National Security Studies, Sri Lanka. They discussed security threats affecting the region after the return of the Taliban-al Qaeda alliance on August 15, 2021. After discussing the evolving criminal and terrorism landscape, they shared common challenges posed by crime and radicalisation.



After briefing on the ongoing radicalisation in the region, Professor Gunaratna presented to Vice President Faisal Naseem books on rehabilitation and counter-terrorism cooperation.

INSS holds a Security Salon on “National Security in the 21st Century”

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS), the premier think tank on National Security established under the Ministry of Defence, organized a Security Salon titled “National Security in the 21st Century” on the 13th of October, 2021 from 1800hrs to 1930hrs at Nandimithra Auditorium, Ministry of Defence. The Guest Speaker for the event was Dr. Subramanian Swamy, Member of Parliament in Rajya Sabha, India. The session was chaired by General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil, Secretary to the Ministry of Defense and State Ministry of National Security and Disaster Management. The proceedings were moderated by Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Director General of INSS. Mrs. Banu Prakash, Acting Deputy High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, Vice-Chancellor of General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Commander of the Navy, and Commander of the Air Force were also among the distinguished invitees. The audience comprised of highly esteemed representatives from the military, police, intelligence, ministries, and academia.

objective of a country, therefore, is to develop such technology and use it in one’s defence. Essentially if Sri Lanka could develop the expertise with limited but highly skilled manpower, Sri Lanka could strengthen its capability of fighting a cyber-war in the future. Such dimensions have important implications on the education sector of Sri Lanka. Subjects such as mathematics including concepts like analytical techniques, deductive and inductive logic should be made essential in every level of education if Sri Lanka is to build such expertise. He also emphasized that with the introduction of bitcoin, individuals have purchased and transacted without the supervision of governments thereby increasing the scope for its misuse. Therein, Sri Lanka must prioritize cyber security. He emphasized that therefore the strategy should be to build the cyber warfare capabilities and cyber warfare intelligence. Resource allocation, he stated, would rely on the right economic policies implemented by the government.



especially during moments when Sri Lanka had few friends beyond her territorial waters. Further stating that Sri Lanka is willing to work with every nation including India following a neutral foreign policy, he reiterated that both countries should work together and overcome common threats such as extremism, crime, terrorism, missile proliferation, and maritime threats. The event concluded with an insightful discussion, where the guest speaker and moderator expressed their remarks and addressed questions that were posed by the participants.



Dr. Swamy in conclusion stated that National Security in the 21st century has metamorphosed into a concept that incorporates cyber security and thereby Sri Lanka should do the necessary to equip herself with the capabilities in this domain. Professor Gunaratna expressed his gratitude to Dr. Swamy for the support rendered throughout,

Dr. Swamy providing an initial outline to his lecture stated that the structure of National Security was placed on four pillars; namely Objectives, Priorities, Strategy, and Resource Mobilisation. Based on these four pillars, he presented what the national security dimensions in the 21st Century would be, its implications, and the necessary preparations that were to be made. He commenced his lecture by pointing out that the statuses of countries would play a minimal role in the new structures and domains of National Security. From an era of displaying military power through medieval weapon use and artillery on the ground to airpower in the skies, National Security has now emerged with its newest dimension of cyber Security where statuses of countries are irrelevant. Countries should no longer think of warfare in terms of the size of military forces and weapon mobilisation, but rather in terms of acquiring artificial intelligence, drones, cyber electronics, etc.



Cyber security, due to its lack of traceability, would emerge as a dimension that is crucially important to the National Security of countries. It redefines the traditional concept of defence which is highly correlated with the quantity of manpower. The



Round Table Discussion on “The impact of Sand Mining; a threat to National Security”



Institute of National Security Studies organized a Round Table Discussion titled, “The impact of Sand Mining; a threat to National Security” on the 29th of October 2021, from 0900hrs to 1100hrs via Zoom. Guest Speakers for the event were Ms. Kusum Athukorala, Chair, NetWwater Sri Lanka, Ms. Muditha Priyanwada, Assistant Director (Construction Economics), Construction Industry Development Authority and Mr. Asela Fernando, Director (Regions and Environmental Impact Assessment), Geological Survey and Mines Bureau (GSMB). The proceedings were moderated by Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, Director (Communications and Publications), INSS. The audience comprised

of ministry officials, military officers representing Sri Lankan armed forces, Police and other officers from intelligence agencies, researchers and academics.

Ms. Kusum Athukorala focused on the impact sand mining has on society and the community. Illegal sand mining causes long term implications such as the irreversible damage to ecosystems, migration with attendant social impact, the intensification of climate change, the erosion of community groups and traditional strengths and increase of social stresses that could escalate to conflicts. She provided that it is vital to study the relationship between sand mining, water security and national security.

Ms. Muditha Priyanwada underlined the potential of scarcity of sand deposits for the future construction activities. She also shed light on different types of sand such as lava, silica, plastic that were being used as sand alternatives. She elaborated that it is necessary to enforce regulation related to the certification of offshore sand and manufactured sand, to encourage use of alternatives to river sand and to ultimately ban river sand mining.

Emphasizing on the issued license categories in sand mining, Mr. Asela Fernando stated the respective license has to be acquired if one is to explore, mine, trade, transport and export minerals. He elaborated on the three pillars of the mining industry; exploration, mining, and processing. By underlying the steps taken by GSMB for sustainable mining he stated that they have introduced monitoring mechanisms, hotlines and had obtained support from tri-forces.

This comprehensive dialogue provided a platform for the stakeholders to discuss the predictable repercussions of illegal and unregulated sand mining on National security; shedding light on its impact on water and human security. The event concluded with an interactive discussion where guest speakers and the moderator expressed their views and addressed questions from the audience.

INSS holds a Threat Lens on “How to Fight LTTE's Campaign of Lobbying, Litigation and Law Making”



INSS held a Threat Lens on “How to Fight LTTE's Campaign of Lobbying, Litigation and Law Making” on 09th November 2021 from 1800hrs onwards at Nandimithra Auditorium, Ministry of Defence. The speakers of the session were Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Director General of Institute of National Security Studies and Major Sinduja Jayaratne (Retd.) Lecturer of the Faculty of Defence and Strategic Studies at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University. The event was chaired by General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil, Secretary to the Ministry of Defense and State Ministry of National Security and Disaster Management. Event was graced by high level officials of the tri-forces, officials from the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The Threat Lens focused on the current developments of the LTTE international network threatening the national security of Sri Lanka. Professor Gunaratna emphasized on the transition of the LTTE threat from the sphere of procurement and shipping to lobbying, litigation and law making. In the face of these current developments how Sri Lanka must face the evolving threat was collectively discussed at the event.

US Delegation at INSS



Institute of National Security Studies welcomed a delegation from the Institute for Security Governance on 16th November 2021. The Director General of INSS welcomed the delegation and educated them on the current national security threats pertaining to Sri Lanka. Delegates from the Institute for Security Governance elaborated and gave an overview of the functions of the institute. At the end of the discussion tokens of appreciation were exchanged. The delegation included, Mr. Erick Leklem, Regional Program Lead, Indo-Pacific, Mr. Ashley Mattew, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka Country Project Coordinator (CPC), Mr. Terrence Kilogore, Logistics and Security Cooperation Subject Matter Expert representing the Institute of Security Governance and Mr Kapilla Dissanayake, Security Cooperation Specialist, Office of Defence Cooperation, US Embassy Sri Lanka & Maldives.

INSS Staff attends an Outbound Training



INSS staff underwent an outbound training to uplift the teamwork, leadership and morale at Laya Resort, Kukuleganga on 19th, 20th and 21st of December as a three day training program. The training was conducted by the Sri Lanka Army and it included a hike, team building exercises, obstacle course and adventure activities including aerial rope, archery etc.



INSS Christmas Celebrations

Institute of National Security Studies organized the annual Christmas Celebration on 22nd of December 2021 at Lighthouse Galley, Colombo with the participation of the staff of INSS.



INSS staffs participate in the NESAs seminars

Three members of the staff of INSS represented Sri Lanka in the Executive Seminar Series organized by Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for strategic studies, USA. Representing the first Senior Executive Seminar on the topic 'Global and Regional Power Competition' held from 15th to 19th of November 2021, Research Analyst of INSS Mr. Madushan Seneviratne represented the institute. For the same seminar, Military Research Officer of INSS, Commander Chandana Pawuluge was nominated by the Sri Lanka Navy. This seminar gave an opportunity for professionals from the region to debate and discuss what global and regional competitive dynamics mean for them.

Representing INSS, Research Assistant Ms. Gayanga Dias participated in the Executive seminar titled 'New and Emerging Security Challenges and the Women, Peace, and Security Working Group'. This seminar was held for two

weeks from 06th December to 17th December 2021. It focused on the discussion and study of current and emerging security challenges to further mutual understanding of the security environment and to foster greater trust among different nations.



Loopholes Enabling Terrorism Must Be Shut

“Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar!” were the raucous chants of the radical Islamist mob dragging the mutilated body of the Sri Lankan national on the streets of Sialkot, Pakistan, before forcing him to a fiery end – a terrible twist to the peaceful Islamic prayer.

Priyantha Kumara was brutally lynched by a mob of hundreds of deadly terrorists who struck the Sri Lankan multiple times with sticks, iron rods, rocks and knives before setting him on fire. His crime – the removal of a poster, for workplace renovation purposes, of an ultra-radical Islamist organisation: the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP). The mere reason for exasperation by the radical Islamists clearly depicts the shaky fragility of the ideology followed by these pseudo-religious hooligans.

Radical religious extremism has become the dominant factor of terrorism in the 21st century, with Islamist extremists topping the charts after having spun the teachings of the peaceful religion for their own political, racial and social benefits. Attacks have been launched through a plethora of Islamist terrorist organisations in almost all continents across the world.

A crucial factor that currently creates alarming statistics across Asia is the increasing level of radicalisation of the Islamic youth across both genders by Salafi-Wahhabi doctrines stemming from the Middle East. An array of Islamist terrorist groups are built upon the concept of al-wala' wal-bara, a major pillar in Salafism, which ideologically refers to loyalty and disavowal: which signifies loving and hating for the sake of Allah. Existing regulatory frameworks have continually failed to effectively protect nations' religious spaces thus enabling radical ideologies to spread at distressing rates.

Seeping into Central Asia, the Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine has been overtaking the traditional Pashtun culture of the Afghan Taliban, critically transforming the group from a violent resistance movement into a radical ideologically-powered terror machine. The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, which some claim was greatly supported by the Inter-State Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan, has been a critically motivating factor for Islamist extremism across the world, with multiple groups mobilising with activity and more than 40 terrorist organisations globally pledging allegiance to the Taliban since August 2021.

The Salafi Wahhabi doctrine drove the pseudo-Islamist terrorists of the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka which took the lives of almost 300 civilians in multiple coordinated attacks across the nation. Regulatory religious frameworks, including the apex Islamic religious

body; the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU), was infiltrated by Salafi-Wahhabi clerics, whilst the peaceful Sufi clerics were marginalised. Similarly, the Government body established to regulate the religious space; the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs (DMRCA), lacked civil servants with expertise to clearly comprehend the growing threat and to secure the Muslim community from foreign ideological interference – emanating from Thowheed movements and Jama'ath Islami. Likewise, the Waqf Board, did not monitor the Madrasas, Mosques and other institutions being infiltrated by ideologies from overseas. The failure of these institutions, coupled with the overt neglect for national security by the Yahapalanaya Government to critically identify, acknowledge and act upon the large-scale radicalisation of the Muslim community was a major factor that resulted in the bombings. It is important to note that all religions produce extremists and terrorists. In addition to the Government, religious leaders are responsible for keeping their clerics in check.

Similarly, the lone wolf terrorist attack launched by Sri Lankan-born Islamist terrorist Mohamed Samsudeen in New Zealand in September 2021, could have been avoided had the New Zealand legislature been revised to close any loopholes in its counter terrorism law, which enabled the terrorist to roam freely despite his advocating for terrorist groups and religious violence.

The failures of the legal, religious and regulatory bodies of multiple nations are the gaps in their national security apparatuses, which have enabled the radical Islamist ideologies and doctrines to penetrate and infiltrate the peaceful Islamic religion.

In order to curb rising radicalisation, it is of absolute necessity that the political leadership of the Nation protect its education and religious spaces in order to keep the peaceful Islamic community from getting radicalised by foreign ideologies. In order to achieve this, the Government attempted to strictly monitor the education of Islamic schools and restrict lone clerics and unregistered madras as from operating in the nation. In addition, the Government attempts to place a ban on the complete face covering of Muslim women, namely the niqab and the burqa, which have its origins in fundamentalist Islam – the same traces of the Salafi-Wahabi doctrines.

However, the Opposition, consisting of a majority of politicians who were in power at the time of the Easter Sunday Bombings in 2019, made multiple demonstrations and protests against the Government's decision to safeguard the Nation's education and religious space, citing suppression



By Rashane Jude Pinto

of religious freedom. The Opposition is playing the political card, just like its Government did in 2019, in a matter that requires immediate attention to curb future attacks against the people.

Certain members of the Opposition attempt to disrupt the Government's actions to secure national security. Why is the Opposition pushing demonstrations that can potentially enable another Islamist attack? Do they wish to play the political card after enabling another potential attack? One could opine that the Opposition prefers to play politics rather than supporting the Government for the betterment of the Nation. Are politicians in the Opposition afraid that the present Government protects the national security of the nation, which would be a huge blow for the publicity of the previous Government who failed utterly in this regard? Regardless of the answers, the actions of the Opposition are a major hindrance to achieving national security.

It is indispensable that nations ought to work together to strengthen and protect their religious spaces, thus curtailing the possibility of future religiously-motivated terror attacks across the world. It is of strong vitality that the legal, religious and regulatory frameworks in Sri Lanka are moulded to protect the nation from further penetration of radical Islamist doctrines that seek to create division, hate and terror in the life of the Sri Lankan civilian.

Priyantha Kumara's body was diminished to almost nothing. However, the fire that ignited this gruesome murder is still burning; still burning until the leaders of the nations successfully curb the rising threat of Salafi-Wahabism and radical Islamic fundamentalism in the region and the globe as a whole.

Read the full article at <https://ceylontoday.lk/news/loopholes-enabling-terrorism-must-be-shut>

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