The Influence of Global Islam Radicalisation to Sri Lanka

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Abstract— 'The Threat of Global Islam Radicalisation to Sri Lanka' is a paper submitted to the 10th KDU International Research Conference. This paper in its Introduction examines the background to conflicts in countries where Islam is followed as a religion and gives a historical perspective to the current conflicts in the Middle East. The Introduction identifies that the historical divide between the Sunni and Shia Islam sects have led to create deep rooted sectarian divide among these two Islam schools of thought. It also brings out the present beginning of this sectarian divide when the paper identifies four major contributory factors to the rise of present day conflicts in the Middle East and its spill over effects to other parts of the world. The paper hopes to inspire Sri Lanka's public servants and policy makers to gain more knowledge on the subject in order to be able to formulate effective counter mechanisms. This brings the reader to the research objective which is to find if Sri Lanka has a suitable national security and social framework to face this challenge. The research methodology is qualitative and mainly based on secondary sources related to Islam radicalisation and best practices as counter measures. A definition of radicalisation and Islam militancy by Tomas Precht which could be adopted to suit any religious militancy has been cited in context of the paper. The paper discusses how the phenomenon of global Islam radicalisation affected Sri Lanka in two ways. Firstly, it has affected the Muslim community but not to the extent where rapid radicalisation has taken place to inspire violent or radical activity openly. Secondly, this phenomenon set in motion a wave of Sinhala Buddhist radicalisation leading to intimidation and targeted violence. The Sri Lankan perspective gives insight to Islam radicalisation in Sri Lanka and the problems faced within the Muslim community. The paper also makes recommendations to counter the spread of violent radicalisation and also the necessity for regional and global cooperation to face this challenge. The whole of government approach or adoption of the concept of homeland security by strengthening cooperation between Government Departments and the Intelligence and Security Sector appear to be the key to deter this phenomenon.

*Keywords— **Radicalisation, Islam, Buddhist, Sunni/Shia, Orthodox***

I. INTRODUCTION

The threat of Global Islam radicalisation to Sri Lanka begins with the advent of the IS propaganda declaring the concept of caliphate and its intentions to redraw the Sykes –Pigot 1917 map of the Middle East. Three other major events such as the 1979 Iranian revolution and Ayotollah Khumeni establishing Shia power resulting in the Shia-Sunni deep rooted sectarian violence that is witnessed today, the war against Iraq in 2003 which deepened the sectarian divide and created a political vacuum that was filled in by extremist groups such as the Jabhat Al Nusra Front, Al Qaeda and subsequently the present day ISIS. The third is the 2011 Arab spring which begun as a demand for political change but has now turned into a fully blown regional and global proxy war. Subsequent to the Arab spring the world is witnessing an accelerated global influence of Islam radicalisation taking place in the world due to exploitation of the deep sectarian divide between the Sunni and Shia Muslims and Sri Lanka is no exception to this influence.

Historically Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi religious country. The population of Sri Lanka consists of a 9% Muslim population, which is divided into two different religious sects; 98% Sunni with the Shia and the rest of the sects forming the remaining 2%. Sri Lanka has already experienced the spread of Muslim extremism through the spread of Wahabism and its offshoots, but that has been directed against the fellow Muslims and never against the Sinhalese (Hussain, 2014). This is the divisive line that defines the present day Islam religious conflicts. Taking into account the changing dynamics in the Islam global environment and present day religious contentions between the Muslims, the Buddhist and the sporadic tensions between the Muslims and Tamils, the local Muslim population is susceptible to be made a part of the global Muslim grievance thus creating a sense of solidarity. Therefore, the Sri Lankan Muslim could be exploited by interested parties. For the purpose of this paper Islam radicalisation is defined as follows:

- Radicalisation is defined as a process of adopting an extremist belief system and the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence as a method of effecting changes in society. Radicalisation can take place within any extremist group (from left/right wing groups to environmentalist, separatist, and terrorist groups). It is important to note that radicalisation as such, does not necessarily have to result in terrorism and the use of violence. (Tomas, 2007)

- Militant Islamist (or violent Islamism) is used as a term for Muslim individuals who use violent means to achieve religious ends which are inspired by the ideology of radical Islam. For example, it is seen as a religious duty to defend Islam against western values and free the occupation of Muslim heartland. For some militant Islamist the goal of establishing a

Caliphate is used as a justification for the use of violence. (Tomas, 2007)

- Muslim extremist describes persons who support the ideology behind militant Islam but who do not actually carry out terrorist actions. (Tomas, 2007)

- Islam or Buddhist Radicalisation is defined as a process of adopting an extremist belief system or stance inspired by the belief of a radical ideology, and the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence as a method of effecting changes in society in the name of that religion.

A. Problem Statement

What we are witnessing are the local implications of the influence of a worldwide Islam radicalisation due to sectarian divide between Sunni and Shia Muslims. This situation also influence extreme elements in Sri Lanka to have long term political, social and security implications. This paper hopes to inspire policy makers to acquire more knowledge and to find suitable effective security and social solutions to deter, prevent and resolve the influence and spread of this phenomenon in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is prudent to examine if Sri Lanka is ready to face these challenges and seize opportunities to make this country a more secular place for all ethnic and religious communities.

B. Research Question

Is there a suitable national security and social framework to absorb the effects of growing global sectarian clashes which have inspired Islam and Buddhist radicalisation to pose a threat in Sri Lanka?

C. Research Objectives

To identify security and social measures that will comply with the constitution, human rights and democracy to tackle the problem of the influence of global Islamic Radicalisation in Sri Lanka.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research paper methodology is qualitative. The bulk of data is obtained through secondary data. Generation of secondary data for the research is through a review of literature on conflicts believed to be due to Islam radicalisation and best practices to fight this phenomenon.

D. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study will be restricted to the internal factors of Sri Lanka that will influence in creating a viable mechanism to counter this threat.

E. Limitations

Imposed limitations by Intelligence Agencies and divulgence of national security sensitive information related to extremist activity in Sri Lanka.

III.SUNNI SHIA SECTARIANISM

F. Background

By 632 Islam had consolidated power in Arabia. After the death of Mohammed the debate over succession split the community into Sunni and Shia sects leaving a contest to rule over the caliph.

According to historical facts stated on the Sunni Shia Divide in the web article of Council of Foreign Relations Sunnis dominated the first nine centuries of Islamic rule (excluding Shia Fatimid Dynasty) until the Safavid dynasty which was established in Persia in 1501. The Safavids made Shia Islam the state religion, and over the following two centuries they fought with the Ottomans, the seat of the Sunni caliphate. (Geneive Abdo, 2014). AS a result of this the borders of Iran and Iraq were redrawn in the 17 century by the Sykes-Pigot arrangement as they are today. IN the modern day a majority of the Shia Muslims are habited in Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan and Bahrain and plurality in Lebanon, while Sunnis make up the majority of more than forty countries from Morocco to Indonesia. (Geneive Abdo, 2014)This historical 1400 years of rivalry is what has manifested into the present day sectarian violence that is seen in the Middle East and has spilled over to the other regions of the world.

1).Population: According to the 2011 Pew Research Centre survey the global Muslim population is to increase from its 2010 estimate global population of 6.9 billion to 8.3 billion in 2030. The Muslim population growth rate is double that of the non-Muslim populations of the world (Brian J. Grim, 2011).

In this context, Sri Lanka has also experienced an upward trend in Muslim population increase. According to the 1981 and 2012 census and statistics the Muslim population in Sri Lanka was 1,121,700 and 1,967,227. This is an increase from 7.56% to 9.71% almost double the percentage increase of the Buddhist population (Izeth, 2014). The reason this has been stated is that the rate of Muslim population growth in Sri Lanka has been subject to debate and concern of the non-Muslim population in Sri Lanka. As, on the face of these statistics it appears that at this rate of population increase, Sri Lanka is threatened to be a predominantly Muslim country by 2050 causing Islamophobia and other related issues which are perceived as the influence of Islam radicalisation. This perception has been used to stimulate anti-Muslim sentiments among the radical Sinhala Buddhist population in Sri Lanka.

2).The Sunni-Shia Divide: Based on the demographic distribution of Sunni and Shia Muslim populations the sectarian divide between the Sunni and the Shia could be well understood by looking at the ongoing sectarian conflicts in the Middle Eastern and Asian region. The conflicts in Lebanon, Syria Iraq, Iran Saudi Arabia and Bahrain remain sectarian elevated and are countries that have experienced or are having ongoing political or military conflicts mainly based on issues of discrimination due to religious differences fuelled by ideology, groups,

associates, religion or family ties to either the Sunni or Shia schools of thought which are dominated by either of the regional rivals Saudi Arabia or Iran. Against this background the fear psychosis of Shia domination or influence in the region was built up by the ISIS in order to attract the Sunni support. In turn Suadi Arabia and Iran and their numerous allies, militarily support the many different groups fighting in Syria or Iraq. The ISIS has also cleverly used its propaganda for three other purposes; to export its terror and also to recruit fighters from the west; to influence vulnerable and willing orthodox Muslims to radicalize and for likeminded militant Islamist in other parts of the world to independently form ISIS support cells. These cells could then be used to carry out organized or lone wolf attacks in countries other than Syria and Iraq.

3).The Sunni-Shia Dividein South Asia: Pakistan is home to 85% Sunni and 15% Shia minority population. Sunni extremists in Pakistan have killed thousands of minority Shias over the past few decades. According to CNN Between 2015 to 2017 ISIS have claimed direct responsibility for 3 deadly attacks that killed 231 and wounded over 560. Bangladesh has a majority Sunni population of 99%. According to IANS web-news article 30 June 2016, Islamists have claimed responsibility for around 40 killings in the last three years (since 2014) of foreigners, secular bloggers, gay activists, Hindus and Christians (IANS, 2016).According to the US State Department country report 2015 terror groups such as AQIS, ISIL have claimed responsibility for attacks against Shias in Bangladesh (Department, Country Reports South and Central Asia, 2015). Maldives is a country with a 99% Sunni population and a state with freedom of religion restricted. Since 2010, concerns about a small number of local extremist, who support violence are involved with transnational terrorist groups have increased. It is reported that at least 50 Maldivians had opted to become foreign terrorist fighters (Department, Country Reports South and Central Asia, 2015).India has a Muslim population of 14.23% and home to 11% of the world Muslim population (India, 2011). India has raised concerns over the use of social media and internet to recruit, radicalize and foment inter religious tensions in particular the ability of the ISIS to recruit online. The statistics given here show that South Asia has been no exception to the Global influence of Islam radicalisation and producing Militant Islamist inspired by the ideology of radical Islam.

By considering above, it is very clear that the conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia are mainly based on *Sunni-Shia* divide and projected towards the western nations or its allies' in defiance of western domination and as a symbol of resistance to it. Therefore, Sunni-Shia rivalry is seen as a regional and international security threat as the rationale behind the threat is to target any form of opposition to the beliefs of the ISIS ideology and this could happen anywhere. What needs to be identified here is the opportunity for Islam militants to carry out attacks targeting symbolic western interests in the country

ranging from Embassy compounds, diplomats and tourists etc...etc… Looking at attacks carried out in Brussels, Paris and London in the recent past it is very clear that an, on ground ISIS presence is not needed for these types of attacks to be carried out but could be done by any Muslim group or individual radicalised on line or otherwise.

III.THE SRI LANKAN PERSPECTIVE

There are two types of Muslims in Sri Lanka. The Moors and the Malays. Both these groups of Muslims are largely concentrated in predominantly Sinhala areas of Colombo, Galle and Matara and in the Central Province hill towns. The rest of the Muslims are concentrated in the Eastern coast Districts of Batticaloa and Ampara.

G.Diversification of Islam in Sri Lanka
Out of the 9.7% Muslim population in Sri Lanka 98% are Sunni and 2 % Shia. Out of which 96% are Moors and 2% are Malays. The faith that the Sri Lanka Muslim follows is South Asian Islam which from its inception has been a benign form of the faith. However, the Muslim population in Sri Lanka over the years has further diversified according to ritual and practice or leadership. Further, the Sunni school of thought has further divided into 6 different branches namely; Sunni Shafii, Sunni Maliki, Sunni Hanafi Barelvis, Sunni HanafiDeobandi, Sunni HannbaliSalafis and Sunni Hanbali Wahabbis. The Shia school of thought has divided into four different branches which are Shia Ismaili, Shia Zaydi, Shia Jafari and Shia Twelver. Further there are six different organisations that the Muslims of Sri Lanka belong to and they are as follows; Thabliq Jaamath, Tharika, Ehewanu Muslims, Thawheed Jaamath, Jamithul e Islam and Jamathul Muslimeen. This diversification has also resulted in varying degrees of radicalization/extremism among these sects. According Schwartz, the Wahhabi, Deobandi, and Mawdudist jihad trends have revealed their ambition to control South Asian Islam through violence in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. In all these countries traditionalists resist them. The Sufis of Sri Lanka, although obscure to the rest of the world have also taken steps to oppose the spread of radicalization of Islam in Sri Lanka (Stephen Schwartz, 2013). On the other hand, the phenomenon of global Islam radicalisation effected Sri Lanka in two ways. Firstly, it has affected the Muslim community but not to the extent where rapid radicalisation has taken place where Muslim youth have been stimulated to travel to Syria or Iraq. Nor has it inspired any showcasing of support or violent or radical activity openly in Sri Lanka other than those involved in propagating or supporting extreme ideology online or on the social media. Secondly, it set in motion a wave of Sinhala Buddhist radicalisation through religious and social entities leading to intimidation and violence targeting not only Muslims and Islam but other minority communities/ religions in Sri Lanka.

Even though Sri Lanka has since independence faced periodic inter-ethnic social upheaval, at no given point of time in the history of Sri Lanka has there been inter religious pogroms that altered the social and cultural way of life in Sri Lanka other than for clashes between the fundamentalist and orthodox Muslims. These outbursts of clashes were geographically contained to the local area and did not take on national proportions. What is significant is that these outbursts of Muslim extremism had no extra-Muslim dimension and were never directed towards other communities.

H. The Influence of Islam Radicalisation in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka unlike many other Muslim countries in the world which has been subject to global, regional and local Islam radicalisation manifesting in varying degrees of terrorism has yet only experienced radicalisation of a few individuals. Even this level of radicalisation has challenged the orthodox Muslim thought and conventions that exist within Sri Lanka without the consensus of the Muslim community. The slow but growing influence of radicalisation, and the subsequent involvement of some of them in terrorist activity is a concern in Sri Lanka.

I. The global, regional and local push/pull factors effecting Sri Lanka.

The Global influence of Islam radicalisation has influenced Sri Lanka in many ways. To this end, the worldview of Whabbism and its global resistance to the west or what it terms as western values not falling in line with the sharia, the kinship derived by projecting defiance through Islamic radicalism, the collectiveness shared by radical perspectives and the medium of the internet and social media which plays a key role to indoctrinate vulnerable youth who are born and bred in Sri Lanka and who do not fit into the global trend of 'migrant' are factors of significance. ISIS propaganda is another factor that motivates and drives young believers who are on the margins of Islam radicalism towards militant Islamism. Considering this effect in the South Asian region and on countries nearer to Sri Lanka the functioning of underground ISIS cells in Sri Lanka cannot be ruled out. The fact that 36 Sri Lankans have already joined ISIS and that there are social media platforms in Sri Lanka that support the radical ideology and are gradually increasing in numbers is further evidence to this. (Colombo Page, 2016)Sri Lanka is also vulnerable to regional waves of Islam radicalisation through travelling preachers from countries such as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Maldives. Organised and systematic conversion of Shia and non-Muslim poverty stricken families to Wahhabism mainly in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka is another factor that could have medium and long term effect as part of the increasing Muslim population in Sri Lanka. It is not that there is rapid conversion taking place from village to village and the

number today stands insignificant but what is significant is that it is happening.

*1).Wahhabism.*The spreading of Wahhabism in Sri Lanka took place after 1973. The avenues for the spread of Wahhabism opened with Sri Lankan Muslims traveling to Saudi Arabia for employment. Once in Saudi, these Muslims were given the opportunity through scholarships to pursue further studies of the Saudi way of Islam which is Wahhabism. Those who returned to Sri Lanka after their studies propagated the ideology of Wahhabism by opening madresas. Further, "to pursue their goal the Wahhabis resorted to violence and intimidation culminating in death and destruction. Our religious society… was not spared and had to face untold hardship." (Stephen Schwartz, 2013). There are numerous instances where Militant Islamist caused sectarian clashes in Muslim populated areas such as Kattankudy(which is the most common geographic area of contention), Beruwela, Aluthgama and Ukuwela and more recently attacks against Muslims by Sinhala mobs also took place in Aluthgama in 2014.

2).The ISIS in Sri Lanka. The unrevealing that a Sri Lankan ISIS fighter Mohammed SharazNilam Mushin aka Abu ShuraihSeylani was killed in Syria on 12 July 2015 (Colombo Telegraph, 2015)and martyred through social media sent shock waves throughout all quarters of Sri Lanka. This confirms the existence of Islamic State-linked jihadist networks in the country and that several other Sri Lankan nationals may also be fighting for the jihadist group in Iraq and Syria. Subsequent investigations revealed that there are a number of 36 Sri Lankans who have travelled from Sri Lanka to Syria and have joined the ISIS. (Colombo Page, 2016).Many Sri Lankans and groups have joined social networking sites which are affiliated with jihadist groups that are linked with the Islamic state in Syria and Iraq. For instance, a Facebook group named "Seylan Muslims in Shaam" (Sri Lankan Muslims in the Levant) urged Sri Lankan people, irrespective of Tamils or native Sinhalese, to join the Jihad bandwagon (Nanjappa, 2016). What is significant is that Nilams postings of ISIS related activity on his face book drew 'likes' from some of his followers in Sri Lanka (Ranga, 2015). This is disturbing as Sri Lanka is a country where a majority of Muslims of Sri Lanka practice an orthodox from of Islam and have integrated well with the Sri Lankan culture and way of life. This incident signals that there are those who condone the acts of violence and ISIS extremist ideology. This has a direct bearing to the threat of Islam radicalisation in Sri Lanka and escalation of rivalry between not only the Sunni and Shia populations but also between the Muslims and other religions in Sri Lanka. This could be considered as an example of the global influence of radicalism to Sri Lanka. According to Professor Rohan Guneratne the ISIS is spreading like a wildfire in South Asia Governments are only crawling when the ISIS is sprinting (Guneratne, 2016). Even though that is the case in Asia the influence that ISIS

has been able to wield in Sri Lanka so far is minimum and no reason for alarm.

According to the All Ceylon JamiyyathulUlama, while the government of Sri Lanka investigates the growing stature of the Islamic State, several Muslim clerics' organizations, denounced the ISIS and its ideology. Other than this the Muslim population in Sri Lanka specifically in the East is vulnerable to increasing activity by Whabbi/Salafist activists. One such organization is the National Thawheed Jamaath (NTJ). This is a breakaway group from the Sri Lanka Thawheed Jamaath (SLTJ) who practices a more moderate form of Islam. The NTJ and its leader Saran Moulavi is responsible for spreading of hate speech, printed material and leading activity against other forms of Islam such as Shia,Qadian and Ahmadiyyain the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. The NTJ is found to promote sectarian friction within Islam such as challenging the orthodox Islam clerics and spreading discord within Islam while preaching a rabid strain of Islam.

Beginning from the early 90's Sri Lanka has experienced a very slow and gradual shift from traditional South East Asian Muslim religious practices which have been deeply integrated and ingrained to Sri Lankan culture towards a more Salafist/Wahabbist teaching. The rise of extremist movements in Sri Lanka has been systematic with the earliest reports coming from the late 90's (Telegraph, 2016). According to Guneratne the ISIS has already several hundred cells in East Bangladesh, Maldives and South India and they have built several organizations in Pakistan and Afghanistan (Guneratne, 2016). Considering this it is very unlikely that Sri Lanka could escape from the influence of Islam radicalization and forming of small cells and groups that support violence.

J. The Shia Muslim Factor. Parallel to other developments it is observed that Shia expansionist have become much more emboldened and active in Sri Lanka since the past decade. It is observed that the Shia segments funded by Iran have now adopted a similar modus operandi which the Saudis' practiced in the early 70's. The Shias are most active in the Eastern city of Valachchenai and its surroundings. Functioning of Shia madrasas, financial aid to poverty stricken families from Muslims, Sinhaleese and Tamil ethnicities, conversion of Sunni Muslims to Shia religion, sending of chosen youth for further Islamic studies to Iran and other countries that propagate the Shia agenda, functioning of education institutes for higher studies in Sri Lanka, offering of scholarships to chosen individuals are some activity that is carried out to increase the Shia influence in Sri Lanka. This is done in an organized and systematic manner and therefore are considered and perceived by the non-Muslim community as religious expansion and a threat to existing social order.

4).Actors of Radicalisation: The threat to the moderate and orthodox Islam way of life in Sri Lanka, or the actors of radicalisation are the Wahhabi fundamentalist/extremist/radicalised elements. The actors in this case are politically motivated elements and a few inspired Muslim individuals who come from various walks of life who believe and propagate Islam/Muslim extremism. In addition to this the media and social media also play a role sensationalising and propagating communal or religious disharmony to proportions that they are actually not.

5).The Drivers of Radicalisation. The drivers of radicalisation are; the ISIS concept of the caliphate and its stated boundaries which Sri Lanka is part of, the teachings of salafi /jihadi interpretation of Islam through madrasas, the internet and broad access to social media and sermons contrary to orthodox Islam, ISIS propaganda which are global drivers of Islam radicalisation and finally targeted violence against Muslim population of Sri Lanka by other religions or communities. In the Sri Lankan context socio economic factors such as poverty, unemployment has resulted in religious conversion which in turn is seen as Islam expansion.

6).Polarisation of the Muslim community: The National Thawheed Jamaath (NTJ) and the Sri Lanka Thawheed Jamaath (SLTJ) are two organisations that promote a form of stricter Sharia adherence. These organisations or breakaway groups has the potential to promote militant Islamism in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka Thawheed Jamaath also maintains direct links with South Indian Thawheed Jamaath. The NTJ today openly articulates and boldly displays its opposition to those who do not practice Islam according to their beliefs. The NTJ sees themselves as a small group able to take action. However, what is encouraging and important is that at present even though the action is radicalised it is non-violent. Nevertheless, extremist groups such as the NTJ increases the probability of radicalised Muslim youth embracing militant Islamism. Another important factor often overlooked is the medium of language that the Muslim community in Sri Lanka speak and preach in. The Muslim community has adopted a total foreign language to their original Arabic. The medium of communication adopted is Tamil in all aspects of life, which group them on the basis of language and geography with the Tamil speaking community which has the potential to make an "us vs them" phenomenon when it comes to majority –minority ethnic issues.

7).Growing Radicalisation. The growing anti-Muslim public opinion against certain Islam precepts among the Sinhala Buddhist community in Sri Lanka has been clearly articulated through the many Sinhala radical organisations such as the Bodu Bala Sena and Sinhale organisation. The first of these in the recent past took place with the "Halal Story" in 2013 followed by the visit of a Buddhist extremist clergy Venerable Wirathu from Thailand's extreme Buddhist party "Ma Ba Tha" in 2014 and then culminating with incidents of violence in Aluthgama in the same year. This and following incidents has resulted in tense majority minority relations. Continuing this manifestation of

extreme Sinhala Buddhist political, religious and social opinion as a counter action to global and local radical Islamist precepts and believed expansion, a recent spate of violence against Muslim places of worship and businesses have occurred. The Secretariat for Muslims (SFM) a Muslim civil society organisation documented 548 incidents against the Muslims from 2013 to 2016. (Hilmy, 2017) .In 2017 alone more than 15 incidents of violence of this nature has been documented (Hilmy, 2017). Likewise, during the same period 8 incidents against Buddhist symbols/places of worship specifically from the Eastern Province have been reported. Further, other issues of contention such as Buddhist archaeological land encroachment by Muslims, population expansion are some major concerns that have been given a radicalised connotation.

In this argument it is important to note that not every Buddhist and every Muslim is radicalised and are either militant Buddhist or militant Islamist. But the point to note is that the spate of violence against the Muslim community and also against the Buddhist community continues to take place and any backlash by either of the communities is very likely to bring to the fore front an ISIS connotation. As historically the majority population is Sinhala Buddhist and the impulse to perceive Islam as an intruding religion only increases this tendency. This replicates situations elsewhere in the world, where there are communal and religious fault lines which could trigger greater violence. What is different is, that the situation in Sri Lanka has a Buddhist dimension to it and is not as fluid as the situation in Syria, Iraq, and Turkey or as in Bangladesh. The ground in Sri Lanka however does not provide an opportunity for transnational jihadist movements to spread its influence and recruit more like Mohammed Sharaz Nilam Mushin. Nevertheless, ISIS through social media and propaganda are making inroads to try and shape the environment within the Muslim population in Sri Lanka to be conducive for ISIS passive operations and also to win over the understanding and support for the caliphate. However, the strong integration of the Muslim community to the Sri Lankan culture and way of life has prevented rapid radicalisation and support to the extremist ideology. Having said this, continued targeted violence against the Muslim community by Sinhala extremist groups cannot rule out the Muslim population retaliating violently as a mode of self-defence in Muslim dominated areas. Preparation in forms of self defense classes, rudiment securing/fortifying of villages and arms training are activity7 to look out for.

Apart from this, in the Eastern and Western areas of Sri Lanka there appears to be a growing complicit secret social surround fuelled by the anti-Muslim rhetoric of extreme Sinhala social cum religious movements that serves to bring together likeminded radicalised Muslim and Buddhist individuals through the internet and other social media platforms. This is a medium that is hard to monitor and preventive action is hard to come by due to lack of expertise, technology, infrastructure, policy and legal framework resulting in the Sri Lankan Law enforcement and security sector being at a disadvantaged position to handle this situation. According to Professor Rohan Guneratne "If ideological extremism is neglected and ignored by any government, it would lead to terrorism in future" and this is a dangerous situation for a country to be in.

Further, the polarisation of the Muslim community is an indicator that the control of the Muslims in Sri Lanka is gradually slipping away from the more moderate orthodox Muslims towards a more radical Wahabbist headship. This could be altered if the more moderate Muslim groups band together to support and alter this wave of radicalisation by getting involved in more active forms of de-radicalisation programmes targeting Muslim communities in areas where there are high levels of Islam sectarian diversity and in low concentrations that under Wahabbist influence. The moderate Muslim community leaders, religious leaders and educational institutes should get involved in this process at a macro level. A hard check and monitoring and of standardisation of the teachings in Madrasasas should be a priority. A coordinated effort must be taken by Department of Emigration and Immigration and other related agencies to curb the influx of foreign preachers.

There is also the Sinhala Buddhist factor that needs to be addressed in this issue. Sinhala extremism in Sri Lanka one can argue creates a necessary counter balance. Nevertheless the government should make initiatives to bring together and engage Muslim, Sinhala and Tamil civil society organisations, religious leaders, intellectuals and community leaders in a bid to settle social differences and hate speech issues. This could also be a platform to address religious conversion.

The current Legal framework to fight ideological radicalisation in Sri Lanka is inadequate. Global best practices should be adopted to suit Sri Lanka in redrafting new laws that will enable Sri Lanka to effectively face the challenge of Global Islam Radicalisation. Stronger international relations and cooperation in the intelligence and security sector to specifically deter and prevent groups such as ISIS making use of Sri Lanka in its greater global expansionist plans could be an effective deterrent to the spread of radicalisation.

V.CONCLUSION

Sri Lanka is an Island nation and all threats emerging to its national Security come from outside of the country. Then there is also the state vs the individual's belief of what Islam radicalisation is? The state believes that it needs laws and controls to prevent or pre-empt the influence of Islam radicalisation to Sri Lanka and that the individual believer has to give up his right to gain the security of the state. This social contract between individual and state therefore demands , capacity building in the security sector namely

in the Ministry of Eternal Affairs, Department of Emigration and Immigration, Department of Customs, Department of Personnel Registration, Civil Aviation Authority and Intelligence Agencies. The government should take precedence of adopting a whole of government approach/ Homeland Security concept to deal with issues religious radicalisation, religious militancy, and extremism and other terrorism and related transnational crime.

However, it is not all those who are radicalised that get involved in terrorism or violent activity. Therefore the distinction between violent radicalism and nonviolent radicalism need to be carefully understood and defined when it comes to law making and enforcing. Drafting of a strong legal frame work and adopting a whole of government approach are key factors in countering and pre-empting this global phenomenon from influencing Sri Lankan society and also preventing spill over effects of Buddhist radicalism. However, it is important to comprehend that the problem at its inception could be managed through the existing mechanism that exist within the Muslim way of life and the mosque or Buddhist temple as the binding centre stage. Nevertheless, without state sponsorship and choreographed programmes to achieve a desired government end state the problem could aggravate to limits beyond control. This needs to be guarded against.

If Sri Lanka is to prevent the influence of Global Islam radicalisation and its spill over affects, Sri Lanka should manage this sectarian phenomenon at its evolving stage which is now, where it is still controllable with the cooperation of effected communities.

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