



Closed Door Public Lecture on

“Regulating Educational and Religious Space”

12th July 2021 from 1400hrs – 1600 hrs

Organized by Institute of National Security Studies



Institute of National Security Studies, the premier think tank on National Security established under the Ministry of Defence Sri Lanka organized a Closed Door Public Lecture titled “Regulating Educational and Religious Space” which was held on 12th July 2021 from 1400 hrs – 1600 hrs (IST) at the Conference hall of INSS. The Guest Speakers for the event was Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Honorary Professor at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University and Moulavi Murshid Munshif. The audience comprised of representatives from Ministries, tri forces and state intelligence units.

Guest speaker of the event Professor Rohan Gunaratna addressing the audience stated that terrorism cannot be fought when it enters the terrorist space but only in the two preceding stages of exclusivism and extremism. From a national security perspective it is essential to regulate the sectarian national education system to create a multi ethnic and multi religious educational environment to produce Sri Lankans. In order to prevent hatred escalating into terrorism, the educational system comprising of schools and universities should include students of all ethnic and religious faiths. Thus to fight terrorism and counter extremism it is vital to eradicate exclusivist schools and create inclusivist schools. He further pointed out that Madrasas and Arabic colleges in Sri Lanka lacks a common syllabus which allows different ideologies to infiltrate the educational system. He reiterated that the Ministry of Education should develop a common scheme and a syllabus that should be adhered to by all the Madrasas.

Moulavi Murshid Munshif commenced his presentation by providing a basic understanding of the Islamic faith and Islamic jurisprudence. He stated when regulating the religious space and standardizing Islamic educational space, religious institutes and individuals such as Moulavis pay a crucial role. He suggested regularization of educational and religious space could be done by establishing a regulatory body to develop standards and guidelines for institutes and individuals to comply with.

Naadiya Danish, a lawyer adding colours of intellectuality to the session asserted the importance of interfaith dialogue in regulating religious and educational space. She recommended that in order to promote integration and inclusivism the educational system in Sri Lanka should regulate a component in their curriculum that includes the commonality and values of other faiths. The discussion concluded with an interesting question and answer session and the hope of meeting again for another discussion on regulating the informational space.