

Institute of National Security Studies

Threat Lens on “Sri Lanka’s Media Discipline vs. Online Falsehoods and Manipulations”

Press Release

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS), the premier think tank on National Security established under the Ministry of Defence, organized a Threat Lens titled “Sri Lanka’s Media Discipline vs. Online Falsehoods and Manipulations” on Wednesday, 16th March 2022, from 1400hrs to 1530hrs (IST) via Zoom. The Guest Speaker of the event was Mr. Shamir Zavahir, Head of Reforms and Coordinating Secretary, Minister’s Bureau, Ministry of Justice. Major General, K. R. P. Rowel (Retd.) RWP VSV USP ndu psc USACGSC, Director General, Centre for Defence Research and Development chaired the event on behalf of Secretary, Ministry of Defence and State Ministry of Defence. Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Director (Communications and Publications), INSS. The audience comprised of officers from media divisions of Sri Lanka Armed Forces, media division of Sri Lanka Police, TV channels of Sri Lanka, think tanks and academia. The moderator commenced the discourse by elaborating on the significance of media discipline and how it becomes the most significant to the current situation.

Mr. Shamir Zavahir elaborated the topic with core media issues that the country faces currently. He delivered it in a meaningful manner taking other countries, like Malaysia as an example. Also, he spoke about the difference between misinformation and disinformation. Moreover, he discussed the LTTE media campaign and how it affected the Sri Lankan community on a larger scale. He addressed this issue comparing to Singapore as they also face many online falsehoods and manipulations. Even though they experienced the same, they managed it effectively. Further, he said that since the Ministry of Justice is to strengthen the law in the country, they will pass an Act in near future to prevent the threats in the digital world.

Several timely questions were posed by the audience in the Q and A session where the speaker responded constructively. Subsequent to the concluding remarks by the chair of the event, Mr. Sahan Ukwatta, Research Assistant at INSS, delivered the vote of thanks marking the closure of the event.