

Institute of National Security Studies

**“NEW SECURITY DIMENSIONS RELATING TO ISLAMIST EXTREMISM  
IN SRI LANKA”**

Press Release

Institute of National Security Studies; think tank on national security established under the Ministry of Defence, organized a ‘Threat Lens’ a closed door discussion under the theme of “New Security Dimensions Relating to Islamist Extremism in Sri Lanka” on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 from 1500 hrs to 1630 hrs at the main auditorium of the Ministry of Defence. The Guest speaker for the event was, Major Sinduja Jayaratne, lecturer from Department of Strategic Studies, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University. The event was graced by the presence of Major General (Retd) J. R. Kulathunga RSP the Chief of National Intelligence. It was attended by several other experts from the intelligence and operational fields that were invited to attend from other security agencies. The Threat Lens was moderated by Admiral (Prof) Jayanath Colombage RSP VSV USP rcds psc, Director General of the INSS and Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The discussion disclosed the threats identified soon after the Easter Sunday Attack and also the new security dimensions of two years from the Easter attack. Some of the threats identified are as follows; the continuation of online radicalization, threat of lone wolf attack, radicalization of the feeble and weak (women in marginalized societies), spread of communal violence through exclusion, the returning foreign terrorist fighters in the region, and activation of sleepers. At the same time, Sri Lanka being used as a transit point or a sanctuary of extremism was also identified as a threat eminent soon after the attack. The use of crypto currencies by terrorists, proxy jihad in South Asia, radicalization of women and reciprocal radicalization were further identified as new security dimensions at the discussion. The Speaker expounded that a “cycle of resistance” has been created following rise of extremism in the country and emphasized the importance of removing the “fear factor”; to break the key element off cycle of resistance curtailing the radicalization in Sri Lanka. In doing so Major Sinduja stated the need to strengthen the social contract between government and citizen. The discussion ended after obtaining views and comments of other stakeholders present and a brief Q and A session.