

The Special Statement made by Hon. Prime Minister Ranil

Wickremesinghe on 28 April 2019

A week after the Easter Sunday attack, I have participated in the Mass made by HE Cardinal and the Mass of the St. Anthony's Church, Kochchikade. During the week, number of facts on relevant attack were uncovered and many persons involved in the attack were identified and arrested.

The suspects involved in this attack run by Jihad terrorists must be immediately identified and presented before the law and this must be ended up immediately. We have issued orders for the same. The entire Government has given the order. The HE President, myself and the Cabinet of Ministers have given the said order. We do not expect to have any further war of 30 years.

The operation against to this terrorism have started on last Sunday afternoon. Within a matter of hours, several suspects involved in the incident were arrested in Dematagoda. Lives of three brave officers were lost there. In addition to same, it has to be stated that any lives of the security forces have not lost in these operations.

It was able to taken Jihad terrorists and their weapons into the custody from several houses in Sammanthurai, Ninthavur, Addalachchenai and Sindamuruthu areas on last Friday and Saturday. This was possible due to spy and information given by Muslim community in said area. The chemicals used to make bombs and several equipment could be found in these houses. Terrorists and their children who were hiding in one house were suicide. We already know that 15 persons were killed in said operation. Another group were injured and admitted to the Hospital. The identification process of them is taking place.

T-56 assault rifle was also found amongst the weapons recovered by the search operation made in the Wanathawilluwa area. An important reveal was made in Gampola. Presently, many suspects have been identified. We have to convey gratitude towards the relevant units who were participated in this regard.

We have seven intelligence units. They have been working closely with foreign intelligence services in the past three to four years. Within this time, it has been built a relationship, that never had before. In addition, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) have reviewed these incidents and number of suspects have been identified within the last week. We have strengthened the CID too. In addition, the Police and Armed Forces have been made operations to arrest the suspects. The nation needs to convey gratitude to the entire parties.

These attacks have been carried out by a well-organized small group. They are not ordinary Muslim community. It should be emphasized that they are a group who were misled and extremist. They have started these criminals by killing two police officers in Vavunathivu, Batticaloa. They have committed that crime on 30th November last year. Then, they have broken the Lord Buddha statue in Mawanella and have shot Muslim Secretary of Hon. Kabir Hashim. They had their training camp in Wanathawilluwa. These disruption and destruction have begun after said incidents. We are now taking actions against these incidents.

It is reported that there are teachers who are working in various education institutions without any employment visa. The Ministry of Muslim Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs are taking measures to drive them out of the country. Similarly, the Ministry will initiate the discussions with the Muslim community in order to decide various laws and measures to be taken and such decisions will be submitted to the Government.

The support given by the Muslim community should be appreciated. I request for not doing any harassment against them. We, as Sri Lankans, are working towards to end up Jihad terrorism. The Hon. Minister of Home Affairs together with the Hon. State Minister of Defence are involved in implementing the affairs such as entry and exit of the boarder, bringing goods, etc in accordance with the plan we have approved. Entire departments engaged with are involved in this regard. It is also expected to implement an information exchange programme together with INTERPOL. Reports have been obtained on its progress. The rest of the progress reviews are expected to complete soon.

Emergency regulations have been implemented to ban relevant terrorist groups. We do not have clauses in our laws to deal with terrorist activities that happens outside of the country, Sri Lankans those who are connected with terrorist groups in other countries. The Penal Code is limited to crimes only made in Sri Lanka. The Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1979 is only limited to terrorist activities in Sri Lanka. Those in camps in South India have later been

included into said law. The said fact has clearly stated in the second, third sections of the same.

We were acted here according to the England Law of the year 1974. That law was only then implemented against the terrorism in the Northern Ireland.

In order to fill this gap, we have included facts to the Anti-Terrorism Bill. The third section of the Anti-Terrorism Bill states that if any person threatens any ethnic group, make an illegal influence to Government of Sri Lanka or Government of Foreign country, hold such governmental affairs, threat to territorial integrity of any country, then it says that they are committed a crime in Sri Lanka.

It was an obstacle to implementing legal action against to relevant suspects related to incident happened in Sri Lanka prior to commit these crimes by them, due to non-adopting these new laws. We have submitted this bill to the Parliament in year 2018. Presently, this draft has been encountered in the relevant committee of the Parliament. I would like to emphasize to get urge action to table this Act to the Parliament immediately rather than keeping it delay in the committee. By delaying this, we have been missed the opportunity to take these terrorists before the law. At least now, we should implement it immediately.

Further we will take measures to bring number of new laws. The Jihad terrorism should be immediately eradicated. This terrorism brought issues not only for Christians but also for the Muslim community according to our culture. They have been initiated to destroy statues of Lord Buddha. The issues have occurred in Hindu Temples.

It should be clearly stated that they are an extremist group. They are not a part of any religion. If so, we take action to avoid spreading such philosophy through prevent this extreme. Most of them have been arrested. Some have been died. Now we have an opportunity to be back to normal situation. Three Armed Forces and the Police will inform the general public regarding same. If so, lets support to restore ordinary lives.

(Images have been emailed)

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