SRI LANKA ATTACKS
NEW OPENINGS BY ISLAMIC STATE

CHANGING NATURE OF TERROR
A PROFILE OF ATTACKERS
THE INDIAN CONNECTION

THE FIRST CHOICE IN THE DOMAINS OF DEFENCE, SECURITY AND WORLD AFFAIRS WORLDWIDE
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The power of a King lies in his mighty arms...

Security of the citizens at peace time is very important because State is the only saviour of the men and women who get affected only because of the negligence of the State.

- Chanakya
Despite years of Civil War with its Tamil minority, a brutal insurgency in the South involving its Sinhala majority, nothing quite prepared Sri Lanka for the sheer scale and surprise of the 21st April Easter Sunday multiple attacks. Everything about them was like new, unexpected, and horrifying in its impact.

The repercussions of which are going to be long lasting, both in terms of the society and the state. An over reach by the state has already been reported, but at this early stage of the investigations, this is only to be expected in the aftermath of what is a truly frightening scenario for Sri Lanka.

For the first time a minority has awoken Sri Lanka to the scary fact that its internals are exposed to global pulls and pressures. But these have not been caused by wobbly markets, shifts in oil prices, or even political whims of an unstable global leader. The claim by Islamic State that its activists carried out the attacks makes for a whole new ball game in Sri Lanka’s security scenario. And, it is a storyline in which none of the neighbours can be silent observers, but in fact, have to share the responsibilities with Colombo.

The greatest challenge to Sri Lanka lies in the fact that financially and politically, well-connected members of its Muslim minority, conspired to blow themselves up during Easter Sunday services, and in hotels. They not only shook Colombo, Negombo and Batticaloa, the major target centres, but the whole country. It will never be the same again, for the simple reason that the perpetrators, and their family members, would seem to be the last people to feel alienated, abused, denied justice, or opportunities in that beautiful island. They were, after all, well off even by the standards of the posh in Sri Lanka.

So, the common person on the street looks with utmost suspicion at others of the community. This requires great social and political tact on the part of Sri Lanka’s leaders if the country is to see out this phase without greater damage to its fabric. The entire neighbourhood has a role to play in this, for gloating majoritarianism will only exacerbate matters. Which, after all, is not in the long term interest of any global citizen. Since there is an Indian connection to the multiple blasts, and officials in New Delhi let it be known that they had shared intelligence with Colombo, cooperation between both countries should be enhanced. Terror is transnational, a reality that Islamic State successfully demonstrated on Easter Sunday.

So efforts to counter terror must also be transnational, without a sectarian or political agenda masquerading as cooperation. The sheer scale of the conspiracy suggests some are still at large, but riding roughshod over law and its procedures is not the answer, anywhere. After all, alienating innocents in the name of operations is recipe for further disaster. A well-heeled and western educated Abdul Latheef Mohamed Jameel has already caused enough grief. Those like him have to be stopped, and new ones not allowed to go in that direction.
SRI LANKA ATTACKS
NEED FOR JOINT ACTION PLAN

F or the past few decades the entire globe has been afflicted by the twin curses of global warming and global terrorism. While scientists are trying their best to find out the reasons for and solutions to counter the global warming phenomenon, the entire world’s policy and decisions-makers in the governments, police and security forces are occupied in finding the connections and nexus between the fountainheads and sleeper cells in the many global terror networks. Unfortunately, there has been a drastic and rapid change in the operations and the strategies and formations of the newer terrorist outfits across the globe.

We have seen the scenario in Afghanistan, Nigeria, Russia, European countries and even the US, and, how badly these States were affected by the terrorist activities. The common man as well as entire governments were shaken up by the operations of the global terrorist groups like Al Qaeda, LeT, Islamic State, Pakistan’s ISI and Talibban, Black Widows, Boko Haram and Jaish e Mohammad to name a few. Asia has been, by and large, the main continent for the operations of all these terrorist groups.

India has long been a major target of the terrorist groups pampered by the Pakistan army and its intelligence wing, ISI. If we talk about the SAARC nations, almost all the member nations have been directly affected by terrorism. Sri Lanka, for many decades, suffered the depredations of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and suddenly, last month, Islamic jihadists showed their presence there with a ghastly series of attacks that made the world wonder how to deal with the scourge.

The recent attacks in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday illustrate how dramatically the image of the terrorist has shifted from the deprived of the community to well-educated and financially sound entities indoctrinating themselves to such heights as to sacrifice themselves in the process of mass brutal murder.

The investigations later revealed that a local Muslim businessman and his family were directly responsible for these killings. It was also revealed that this business family was also in touch with the Islamic State Chief and that it helped organise the initial training to the jihadists in India through their connections in this country. This shows that the ultimate connectivity of the terrorist attacks was also somehow linked with the terrorist groups in operation in India.

Now the big question is how to control such nexus between certain business people and the terrorist groups who mastermind attacks and disturb the peace anytime anywhere. Financial Action Task Force (FATF) that is investigating Pakistan’s role in terror-funding is but a microcosmic effort. It needs to be expanded and strengthened. I think that all the affected nations should immediately form a joint action force with a central command headquarters equipped with all the latest technologies, arms and ammunitions and above all, a strong sharing networking zone where all information is shared by all the affected States for swift action and counter-attack on the terrorist groups.

This edition is focussed on the recent attacks on Sri Lanka and how the scenario has changed and how it has a connection with India. Our experts have given their candid thoughts for your brainstorming, dear reader!

Jai Hind!

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