SSOAR

Open Access Repository
www.ssoar.info

Post-war conflict in Sri Lanka: violence against Sri Lankan muslims and buddhist hegemony

Aliff, S. M.

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Aliff, S. M. (2015). Post-war conflict in Sri Lanka: violence against Sri Lankan muslims and buddhist hegemony. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 59, 109-125. https://doi.org/10.18052/www.scipress.com/ILSHS.59.109

Nutzungsbedingungen:
Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY Lizenz (Namensnennung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de

Terms of use:
This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). For more Information see:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0

gesis
Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Mitglied der
Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences *Online: 2015-09-11*
ISSN: 2300-2697, Vol. 59, pp 109-125
doi:10.18052/www.scipress.com/ILSHS.59.109
© 2015 SciPress Ltd., Switzerland

Post-War Conflict in Sri Lanka: Violence against Sri Lankan Muslims and Buddhist Hegemony

S. M. ALIFF

Head / Dept. of Political Science, Faculty of Arts & Culture,
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Oluvil-Sri Lanka.

E-mail address: Smaliff@seu.ac.lk

Keywords: Radical Buddhism, Ethnic Conflict of Sri Lanka, Muslim of Sri Lanka, Post War Violence in Sri Lanka, Buddhist Hegemony

ABSTRACT. Following the end of the thirty years old civil war in Sri Lanka, there were expectations that the post-war period would usher in peace, development and reconciliation. The last four years have witnessed several positive developments including resettlement of people and rehabilitation of infrastructure. Nonetheless there are range of problems and policy gaps that have hindered the transition from war to sustainable peace. A key post-war challenge is that of violence against religious sites and members of religious communities. More recently, from last year, there has been an unprecedented level of violent attacks, demonstrations and hate speech targeting Sri Lanka's Muslim population. It noted a 'sharp uptick' in religiously-motivated violence and said the authorities are 'passively and sometimes actively' condoning extremist Buddhist groups, Mainly perpetrated by Buddhist-fascist fundamentalist groups, such as the '*Bodu Bala Sena'* or 'Buddhist power force' and the *Hela Urmaya* or Sinhala Heritage Party are the main groups behind these targeting of Muslims.

The events have left the country's second largest minority community - the Muslims feeling afraid and vulnerable which forcing a concerted campaign against them. In addition to attacks on places of religious worship there are calls to boycott Muslim shops and establishments, all of which is increasing tensions, particularly in areas where Muslims and Sinhalese live close to each other. These were virtually programmed by some prominent and influential personalities in governing circles, besides others who had a vested interest in seeing Sri Lanka imploding amid heightening 'communal tensions.'

On this context, this study focuses on the recent incident of violence against Muslims in Sri Lanka. The primary objective of this study is to examine the motive for violence against Muslims as well as impact of the violence. The fundamental questions of this research are the following: why does post- war violence and hate propaganda arise against Muslim in Sri Lanka? In which ways the violence against minorities, particularly Muslims impact on reconciliation process? And why does Buddhist nationalist hegemony arise soon after civil war in Sri Lanka? This study is based on an interpretive approach. The data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. In addition to primary sources, qualitative interviews were conducted with selected specialist on this particular research area. I conclude that after end of war against LTTE by government of Sri Lanka, religious tension has been increased in the recent past and the government's reluctance even to take firm action against to perpetrators which would be helpful in restoring the rule of law and security of Sri Lankan minorities has been a big hurdle in the post -conflict situation and government are perceived to serve only the Buddhist side and to marginalize those holding legitimate grievances.

1. INTRODUCTION

The end of three decades of war in Sri Lanka in 2009 following the defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam(LTTE) brought with it expectations of not just an end to large scale violence and a restoration of normalcy, but also hopes of long-term peace, stability and development. While there have been significant developments and opportunities in a variety of areas to consolidate the post-war situation, including mass resettlement and rehabilitation, almost four year after the war, Sri

SciPress applies the CC-BY 4.0 license to works we publish: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

Lanka faces a number of fundamental challenges and policy gaps in making the transition from post war to post conflict.

The post-war period has seen a wave of incidents of threats, intimidation and violence targeting religious symbols, places of worship and clergy. The Dambulla Mosque attack of April 2012, the attack on Evangelical churches, hate campaigns against Muslim all highlights an undercurrent of violence and insecurity. Given the considerable volume of attack on religious places and actors, it is necessary to look at the incidents and trends instead of assuming that they are just part of a general trend of violence. While violence targeting religious places, religious practices, business establishments and persons is not new to the post-war period, the nature and continuing spread of the incidents in various part of the country raises concerns in terms of religious freedoms, peace and the rule of law. That there are spates of attacks and in some specific instances, repeated acts of direct and indirect violence, hate speeches have raised serious concerns that these are not all isolated incidents but, instances of systematic targeting based on religious minorities and business center. At the very least it suggests a culture of insecurity and a worrying trend of the use of violence to address disputes that may be ideological and doctrinal in nature. Actors from all religions have conveyed their perceptions of being besieged by threats to their religious identity and practice, perceived or otherwise. While there is a need to examine the individual incidents and separate trends in terms of these incidents, it is difficult to deny the growing fear of increased levels of violence or even the potential for a 'new conflict' around religious identities. Addressing the issue of religious conflict and violence is central to building a post-war Sri Lanka. It is in this spirit that this research is framed.

During the past year, there has been an unprecedented level of violent attacks, demonstrations and hate speech targeting Sri Lanka's ten percent Muslim population. Mainly perpetrated by Buddhist fundamentalist groups, the events have left the country's second largest minority community – the Muslims – feeling afraid and vulnerable. The response from the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) has been limited. Police inaction in some cases has enabled violence to take place and there have been few arrests.

The 'Bodu Bala Sena' or 'Buddhist power force' is the main group behind the targeting of Muslims. Appeals by Muslim civil society to the GoSL to take action against this group have met with little positive response

The BBS projects itself as a self-appointed guardian of "country, race and religion" (rata, jaathiya, aagama). It further arrogates to itself the role of a de-facto law-enforcement agency relating to matters on which the country's courts of law are there to adjudicate.(Sunday Times:2014).

Although the Muslim parliamentarians bring the issues to the President of Sri Lanka kind attention the continued hate campaign, intimidation and threats to Muslims, carried out by some Buddhist extremist elements of the Bodu Bala Sena (BBS), Sihala Ravaya and Ravana Balakaya organizations. (colombotelegraph:2014), nor fruitful action have been taken by government.

2. BACKGROUND OF SRI LANKA AND RELIGIOUS DEMOGRAPHY

Sri Lanka is a multi-religious, multi-ethnic country, with four of the world's major religious represented: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. While all religions are protected by the Constitution and law, foremost place is given to Buddhism. Religion and ethnicity are closely intertwined; a majority of Buddhists are Sinhalese.

According to Sri Lanka's 2011 census, Buddhists constitute 70.2% of the population, Hindus 12.6%, Muslim 9.7% and Christians 7.4% of a total population of 20.2 million.(Dept of Census:2011). The Sinhalese speak Sinhala and Tamils and Muslim speak Tamil. The Muslims however, utilize their religious identity as their primary identity, thus differentiating themselves from the Tamils. There is considerable demographic distribution and variation of these religious communities across the country. While each of the religious has a majority population in specific districts, there are pockets of all religious communities dispersed across the country.

Sri Lanka has a long and proud tradition of religious coexistence, which is attested by presence of multi-religious, sacred sites throughout the island, as well as its uniquely mixed cultural geography. Buddhists, Hindu, Muslim and Christians have historically shared public space.

Although, Sri Lanka was long famous for its rich social diversity and the harmonious co-existence of various communities, centuries of religious coexistence were slowly eroded from independence. Since independence cultural and political discrimination in governance, the lack of equitable development policies, and failure to preserve and respect local and cultural knowledge have become endemic. Competitive ethnic and religious politics became institutionalized. Democracy came to represent the 'tyranny of the majority', while political culture premised on the notion that 'might is right' became entrenched in the various regions of the island.(Darni Rajasingham:2012)

One of the most significant and under-researched issues is the history and status of Muslim communities, who have been the target of discrimination, political violence, massacres and ethnic cleansing since 1915 and the fighting began in the early 1980s between government forces and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE). Unless the problems faced by Muslim communities are resolved, a viable, long-term peace settlement will be difficult to achieve.

Unlike the Tamils and Sinhalese, who have an ethnic identity based on language and history, the Muslims claim a separate ethnicity based predominantly on their adherence to Islam. This has prompted a complex search for identity at different periods, particularly in reaction to the growing nationalisms of the Sinhalese and Tamils throughout the twentieth century.(ICG:2007,2)

Muslims now clearly have a separate ethnic identity, based partly on the political trajectory of the past hundred years, but more fundamentally on their Islamic belief and culture.

3. VIOLENCE AGAINST MUSLIM IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF SRI LANKA

Anti-Muslim and anti-minorities sentiments are not a new phenomenon in Sri Lanka. The Muslim community has allied itself with the majority Sinhalese on most national issues, although the relationship between the Sinhalese and Muslims in Sri Lanka has been mostly cordial there were periods when the Sinhalese leaders did not fail to show their actual hatred towards the Muslims. During such periods the Sinhalese leadership had been instrumental in instigating the Sinhalese masses to attack Muslim life and property. Anti-Muslim riots in 1915, in which Sinhalese gangs attacked Muslim traders and shops, were the first major communal disturbance in modern times.[1] The causes were complex but partly attributed to rising Sinhalese nationalism coming into conflict with the traditional Muslim control over much of the business world. Sinhalese nationalists were inspired by figures such as Anagarika Dharmapala, one of the most influential Buddhist revivalists at the turn of the last century, who wrote:

> The Muhammedans,(Muslims) an alien people, who in the early part of the nineteenth century were common traders, by Shylockian methods became prosperous like the Jews. The Sinhalese, sons of the soil, whose ancestors for 2,358 years had shed rivers of blood to keep the country free from alien invaders… today…are in the eyes of the British only vagabonds.…The alien South Indian Mohammedan comes to Ceylon, sees the neglected villager without any experience in trade…, and the result is the Mohammedan thrives and the son of the soil goes to the wall.(ICG:2007.4)

Such overt racism is rare in contemporary Sri Lanka, although a certain prejudice against the Muslims as traders, deceiving the poor "sons of the soil" is occasionally still evident in everyday, private discourse. But for the most part, the two communities have peaceful relations; there is

[1] The anti-Muslim riots of 1915 were the first modern manifestation of the ethnic fissures that have plagued the country since independence. However, historians suggest that more people died in the brutal British repression of the rioters than in the riots themselves. The British viewed the unrest as anti- colonial but it seems to have been caused by inter-racial disputes over resources and trade and a growing Sinhala assertiveness in Colombo's business world. "[R]eligious sentiment gave a sharp ideological focus and a cloak of respectability to sordid commercial rivalry". K. M. de Silva, "Muslim leaders and the national movement", in Dr M. A. M. Shuhri, (ed.), Muslims of Sri Lanka, Avenues to Antiquity (Beruwela, 1986), pp. 453-472, 455. See also "The 1915 Riots in Ceylon: A Symposium", Journal of Asian Studies 24, no. 2 (1970), pp. 219-266.

limited social integration but a good deal of economic interaction. Nevertheless, violence has erupted intermittently, usually linked to organized nationalist campaigns or business disputes. Even more recently, in the seventies, there were several instances of Sinhalese mob violence against the Muslims in places like Panadura, Galle, Mahiyangana, Puttalam, Kalutara, Gampola and Beruwela in which Muslim business establishments were looted and burnt. If such incidents have diminished in the eighties and nineties that was not because of any fundamental change in the attitude of the diehard chauvinists but because of their current obsession with the major problem of fighting the Tamils(LTTE).(Ameer Ali:1997). In 1976, police shot several Muslims in Puttalam after clashes between Muslims and Sinhalese, apparently provoked by disputes over jobs and land. .(V. Ameerdeen:2006,104 and Urmila Phadnis:1979). There were sporadic incidents in the 1990s, including attacks on shops in Nochchiyagama in 1999.(ICG:2007.4) In April 2001 Sinhalese mobs attacked Muslims in Mawanella; two Muslims died, and dozens of buildings and vehicles were destroyed. The riots seemed to have been sparked by Muslim complaints of police inaction over an assault on a Muslim store owner by three Sinhalese racketeers.

Sometimes these incidents may stem from small personal disputes but there are often accusations of underlying nationalist campaigns against Muslim business, in some cases instigated by extreme Buddhist-nationalist factions linked to local business or mafia groups. In the Mawanella case, Muslims accused the Sinhala Urumaya,(SU) a nationalist-Buddhist group, of supporting the rioters, through their United Sinhala Traders Association (USTA). This body was apparently established under the aegis of the Sinhala Veera Vidhana (Sinhala Heroes' Forum, SVV), a forerunner of today's Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU). In other cases, too, Sinhala nationalist forces have been blamed for instigating or benefiting from the violence. (ICG:2007,4)

In addition, some inter-ethnic tensions had existed for decades between Tamil and Muslim areas on the east coast but for the most part the communities mixed well, were strongly interdependent in economic affairs and had significant cultural and linguistic ties. Already in the late 1980s clashes were developed between Tamil militants and Muslims. In 1980s and 1990s Muslim were targeted by Tamil Militant groups.. The attacks by the LTTE on Muslims in 1990s, in the east that may have killed as many as 1,000. The 1990s massacre in Kattankudi , Eravur and other part of eastern province of Sri Lanka, were followed by several weeks of attacks on the Muslim community, marked in many cases by extreme brutality. At the same time LTTE ordered the northern part of Sri Lanka's Muslim, announcing over loudspeakers that Muslims had 48 hours to leave LTTE-held territory or face reprisal. The best research suggests that at least 75,000 people were forced out. (S. H. Hasbullah:2001.1). Refugees fled across difficult terrain towards government-controlled areas in Vavuniya and Anuradhapura, while many from Mannar fled by boat to Puttalam, further south, where many continue to reside.

In recent years, Sri Lanka has experienced an alarming rise in Buddhist fundamentalism and is fast becoming a hotbed of Buddhist terrorism. The fear that Sri Lanka is hurtling towards the black hole of religious extremism is a very real one. The current ruling party, United People Freedom Alliance (UPFA) / JHU) has been fanning the fires of radical Buddhism. Now, the tactic support of state authorities has given them a carte blanche to operate with brazenness. Terrorist acts are part of a systematic attempt to destroy Sri Lanka's democracy and rule of law, as well as its vibrant intellectual and cultural life, and to convert the country into a hard line Buddhist one. It would be no embellishment to say that Sri Lanka is another Myanmar in the making.

4. BUDDHIST HEGEMONISM AND EMERGENCE OF BUDDHIST EXTREME GROUPS IN SRI LANKA

Buddhism is widely regarded as one of the world's most peaceful religions. Although Buddhism, like other religions, historically has been associated with violent episodes.(Neil De Votta:2007,01). All agree that Buddhist philosophy eschew violence, yet in Sri Lanka (and elsewhere) some Buddhist monks especially Buddhist political elites have used *jathaka* tales dealing with buddha's reincarnated lives and Buddhist mytho-history celebrate and justify violence. The militarist posture adopted by certain Buddhist monks over the Island's ethnic conflict has

caused even state owned press note how frightening it is "to observe the insouciance with which the most revered prelates of the Maha Sangha talk of…recourse to arms.(Sunday Observer:2000). Analyst Jayadeva Uyangoda argued that "Sinhalese Buddhism has made no significant contribution to non-violent social ideology. On the contrary, Sinhalese Buddhist historiographical tradition and ideology inherent in it supports ethnic political violence" (Uyangoda:1996). Events that transpired in post-independence Sri Lanka when Buddhist leaders and Buddhist monks campaign for hegemony policies that exacerbated ethno- religious violence highlight Uyangoda's argument.

Beginning the late nineteen century, Buddhist rhetoric in Sri Lanka took on a blustering tone and promoted intolerance. Buddhist monks specially entered the political fray after Sri Lanka's independence in 1948, a phenomenon that can be called "political Buddhism". The rhetoric has, among the other things, led to the abuse of Buddhism by monks and opportunistic politicians to justify anti-minorities practices. Nearly a quarter century of ethnic conflict between the predominantly Sinhalese Buddhist state and the LTTE has only hardened the anti-minorities stance among Sinhalese.

The most fundamental belief anchoring Sinhalese Buddhist hegemonism is that Sri Lanka has been preserved for Sinhalese Buddhists and minorities live there only because Buddhist' sufferance. This sentiment automatically privileges Buddhist, marginalizes those of other religions, and justifies Sinhalese Buddhist superordination minorities' subordination. Although not all Sinhalese Buddhist are nationalist, the sentiment is sufficiently embedded so that Sinhalese Buddhist hegemonism, aided by political Buddhism, has undermined majority- minority's relations attempt at social harmony, tolerance and good governance. Neill De Votta correctly in 2007 argued in his book title "Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalist Ideology: Implication for Politics and Conflict Resolution in Sri Lanka" That Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism will remain potent for the foreseeable future and could target other minorities (e.g.., Christians, and Muslims) .

In post-independence Sri Lanka, numerous extremist Sinhalese organizations have mobilized against religious minorities. These groups support political Buddhism even as they manipulate Buddhism. They most certainly are among the protagonist the nationalist ideology. The three most prominent political parties in this regards are the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (Peoples Liberation Front- JVP),National Liberation Front (breakaway faction of JVP), (NLF), the Sinhala Urumaya (Sinhala Heritage Party-SU), and the Jathika Hela Urumaya (National Heritage Party- JHU) (Neill De Votta :2007,25). And also recently emerged some extremist Sinhalese groups have openly encaged anti-minority activities. The most predominant groups in this regards are the Bodu Bala Sena (Sinhala Power Force-BBS), the Ravana Balaya (Ravana Force- RB)

In recent times Sri Lanka has experience numerous controversial incidents impacting various constituencies that have combined to make the country look into intolerant ungovernable. Although these incidents may at first glance appear disconnected, the involvement of Buddhist Singhalese hegemonies is a common element in each. Some Buddhist sympathize with the hegemony position on particular issues (e.g,.. No Halal and anti-slaughter) , but it appears that most Buddhist Sinhalese do not support the hegemonism in all their activities. After 2005, incumbent president Mahinda Rajapakshe came to power as president of Sri Lanka, that notwithstanding, of late electorate win appears increasingly to favor Buddhist Sinhalese hegemony. This evidenced by the increasing not support for ethnic minorities grievances, decreasing support for devolution of power, the increasing influence of NLF, JHU and Buddhist extremist groups in the present government, and the government's conspicuous anti-minorities policies. The new trajectory in Sri Lanka politics is best understood within the context of the now-institutionalized Buddhist hegemony.

Not surprisingly, some in various Sinhalese Buddhist organizations insist that one valid ethnic identity for a Sri Lankan is a Sinhalese Buddhist identity. There are no different the extremist Hindu forces in India who want see a *Hindutva* (Hinduness) agenda instituted so that all Indians, irrespective of their religious beliefs, would embrace a Hindi ethos. Globalization and specially spread of religious extremism since the end of cold war, have enabled extremist in other countries, even if they belong to different religions. Sri Lanka's Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist have certainly been influenced by their counterparts in India's "saffron movement". (Neill De Votta :2007,31).

State institutions in post-colonial Sri Lanka worked within the general institutional framework of parliamentary democracy, yet this process, took the character of an ethnic majoritarian democracy. The latter evolved in a context of the rise of Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism, the ideology of which contained a political vision of using the post-independence state institutions to serve the interests of the majority Sinhalese community. Through this mean it was expected that the state policies should specifically serve the Sinhalese language, Buddhist religion and the Sinhalese-Buddhist culture.

The Republican Constitutions of 1972 and 1978 in a way culminated the process of the post-colonial state in Sri Lanka being majoritarianised. It altered the constitutional foundations of the Sri Lankan state in a manner that brought the state to comply with the Sinhalese nationalist vision of a nation. Among the key majoritarian features of the new constitutions was the continuation of Sinhala as the official language and recognition that Buddhism was the foremost religion in Sri Lanka and that it was the duty of the state to protect and foster Buddhism.

In the case of Sri Lanka and other Third World countries weighed down by 'spat communal strife', the state and powerful political actors have played, for the most part, an active but destructive role. It would be stating what would now seem to be obvious by taking up the position that sections of the state of those times planned, orchestrated and executed the 'ethnic riots' of 1983. There were very powerful political hands at work during the riots and this aspect of the troubles is very well established**.** The marauding mobs which devastated Tamil lives and property were not acting alone to be sure, the relations among communities are not free of troubling elements, such as stereotyping, ill-will and prejudice, but it is usually opportunistic powerful political forces and others who stand to gain by generating and sustaining communal tensions, who orchestrate and execute violence and rioting of this kind. What is simplistically labeled 'ethnic violence' is, therefore, far from spontaneous and 'natural.'

5. POST WAR VIOLENCE AGAINST MUSLIM

Recent years have seen an alarming rise in anti-Muslim violence, fuelled by organized campaigns of hate-speech and propaganda. Mosques have been attacked, businesses and establishments run by Muslims have been boycotted, Muslim dress codes have been mocked and Muslims have been harassed and branded as aliens and subversives. These incidents still continue, even in 2014. Impunity for attackers and purveyors of hate has meant that widespread fear-mongering has gone unchecked. Intimidation, harassment and outright discrimination against Muslims and those of other religions in Sri Lanka have become increasingly commonplace. Over 300 such incidents have been reported, from all parts of the country, against Muslims in 2013. These have often been accompanied with official inaction. Arson, vandalism and physical violence have taken place with Police officers standing idly by.(A.M. Faaiz:2014). "They just finished hunting the Tamils, without solving any of the issues, and now they are starting on the Muslim hunt. Virtually all minority communities are being threatened," said Muslim political leader Azad Salley.(Jaffna muslim:2013)

A Muslim volunteer group, which does not wish to be identified for fear of reprisals, has documented 33 anti-Muslim incidents since September 2011. They include at least five attacks on Muslim places of worship, attacks on businesses and an episode where Muslim students at a government agriculture school were served pork, which their religion forbids them from eating.(Jaffna muslim:2012). The 'BBS is the main group behind the targeting of Muslims. Appeals by Muslim civil society to the GoSL to take action against this group have met with little positive response.

The BBS is not only nationalist; but also racist. The truth is that fundamentalist forces like the BBS are both anti-Muslim and anti-Islam in character.(Ground view:2013). The group asked the Sinhalese Buddhists boycott Muslim business centers, twisted history to encourage violence against Muslims.(e.g,..recasting the anti-Muslim riot of 1915 as an anti-Sinhalese affair) and promoted anti-Muslim campaign throughout the Island. The BBS has called for ban on cattle slaughter, "No Halal Food Campaign", encouraged the government act swiftly in this regards and organized several

mass meetings, street processing march, demolishing mosque, thrown stones and thrown prohibited animal meats into the mosque, and hate campaign against Islam etc..They proposed that the government closed down the animal slaughter run by Muslim and remove the Halal food which is consumable by Muslim, they claim that these are anti Buddhist culture, sought to justify Sinhalese Buddhist civilians taking the law into their hands if the government fails to protect them against so called Muslim fundamentalist. A Buddhist monk set on fire himself and suicide to demand and pressurized the government to remove Hallal food.

The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama(ACJU)[2] said regarding the Halal issue " halal cannot be stopped, as it is the right of the Muslims. And add that,

> "It is our democratic right, and we have the right to eat what we want. We have the right to wear what we want. It cannot be decided by any other entity or any other group. Therefore we stand firm that the consumption of halal products is the right of Muslims and must continue for the Muslims. I have no comment for those parties who are having an issue with it as everyone has the right to comment or express their feelings. However as the Muslim community and the Muslim Council of Theologians, we maintain that halal is for Muslims and no one has the right to remove it,"(Saro Thiruppathy and Camelia Nathaniel:2013)

BBS has succeeded in propagating a number of myths of Islamic infringement on Sinhalese Buddhists and launched campaigns against Muslim communities, including attempts to prevent halal certifications to businesses for food items produced in Sri Lanka. However, BBS activism has surpassed mere political propaganda and has also becoming increasingly violent.(Chaminda Weerawardhana:2013). . Although halal-slaughter is opposed elsewhere in the world for animal rights reasons, in Sri Lanka it was purely political. With the support of the government, the group was successful in abolishing the certification of domestic meat products. Evidently scared by the threats by BBS, particularly with the patronage of the government, the Muslim clergy represented by the All Ceylon Jamaiythul Ulama (ACJU), agreed to stop the system of halal certification. In other words, no Muslim in Sri Lanka will be able to choose Halal meat.

The BBS and their cronies next turned their attention to the way Muslim women dressed. There were reports that Muslim women in their traditional robes were teased and physically intimidated at some places and prohibited wear traditional robes at school as well.

BBS-led activism is better organized, and is reportedly financed by the secret budgetary allocations of the Ministry of Defence, according to journalists in exile. The Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, presidential sibling and highest authority in control of Sri Lanka's armed forces.(.(Chaminda Weerawardhana:2013). Despite debates on the veracity of reports regarding funding and links to the government of Sri Lanka, a cursory glance at BBS activism suffices to demonstrate that BBS is an influential, considerably well-funded and well-connected organization.

The BBS and other hard line Buddhist extremist ardently support anti-Muslim violence among the Sinhalese Buddhist and harbor almost no concern for the plight of innocent Muslim civilians.(M.L.Issadeen:2014). This altitude was most prominently displayed when they restored the "No Halal" poster and processing campaign, which urged the government immediately stop Halal food in Sri Lanka. Moreover, these groups adopt same positions regarding Muslim religious dress code.

There is a rumor defence secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksha helping these groups ability to organize mass rally across the Island, and, arguably, the groups are now a more potent force then they were in 2012. However, given the degree to which the groups have powerful among the government circle, the groups are likely to fare better in the near future. Irrespective of its future success, the

[2] The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama is the apex religious body of Islamic Theologians that provides religious and community leadership to the Sri Lankan Muslim Community. The ACJU is responsible for issuing Halal certificates for certain products in Sri Lanka.Halal meaning permissible or lawful in Arabic is a term designating any object or an action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to Islamic law. The term is used to designate food seen as permissible according to Islamic law. The opposite of this word is haraam

group's monks will continue to play an influential role in the effort to expand extent Buddhist hegemonism and anti Muslim campaign.

The extremist Sinhalese Buddhist generally believe that Muslims are influenced by Islamic fundamentalism, are lackeys of those advocating partition of Sri Lanka, and are part of Islamic terrorist attempt to carve up the united Sri Lanka. (Jaffna Muslim:2012)

The extremist Buddhist and the Sinhala media that support them laud the Muslim community whenever it side pro- government, but they take an opposite position whenever Muslims or Muslim political party or other Muslim organization blame the government. The BBS, for instance it cricriczes the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) handed over a report regarding recent violence and hate speeches against Muslim in recent past, and brand them anti-patriotic. A stranded operating practice for the extremist Buddhist is automatically castigate anyone accusing the government as unpatriotic or pro-fundamentalist , and the Muslim community and Muslim political parties typically take the brunt of their criticism.

The extremist Buddhist organization fan the public's fears by claiming that just as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia were made a majority Muslim states following Muslim invade them, Sri Lanka will soon come a Muslim majority state if the Muslim community are allow to high birth rates and multiple marriages in the country. The argument that Sinhalese Buddhist may soon lose their majority status because Muslims are multiplying at a faster rate. This fallacious and fantastic claim is similar to that made by India's radical Hindus vis-à-vis that country's Muslims (De Votta: 2002). Their fears were apparently taken seriously, given the manner in which Sinhalese Buddhist, including Sinhalese nationalist parties such as JVP/NLF and JHU, politicized the so-called unethical conversion issue and supported or conducted anti Muslim violence.

The mindset of the Sinhala chauvinists is that the entire island belongs only to Sinhala Buddhists. This entrenched mentality encourages the destruction of any identity that seems to be a counter or a threat to Sinhala Buddhist domination. This mindset has emerged from a chauvinistic interpretation of the Mahavamsa, which states that Buddhism needs to be preserved for a period of 5000 years in the island until the next arrival/reincarnation of Buddha. This idea has led to the Sinhala Buddhists believing they are of racial superiority with the island belonging to them alone as they were the chosen ones. The extreme form of this ideology has led to the belief that other communities in the island are invaders or mere visitors with no entitlement to the same privileges as the Sinhala Buddhist.(Nirmanusan Balasundaram:2013)

As a Tamil scholar and a political observer interviewed for this study mentioned, '…with par-ties like JHU (and JVP/NLF) the country is back to original Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism' (V. Kunaratnam: 2014). In his view, the major involvement of a powerful segment of the Sinhala-Buddhist intellectual intelligentsia with JHU was a dangerous trend in recent politics. As many respondents shared, their role in promoting such chauvinist politics was not only altering the state's ideological path but also distorting the teachings of the Buddha. For example, by providing manufactured Buddhist doctrinal justifications for killing and for justifying the end goal of Sinhala-Buddhist hegemonic state through the means of violence, war and killings has created some tensions in the society (Uyangoda 2007:2). From the point of view of hegemony building, this confluence of religious, economic, intellectual and political forces in contemporary times under JHU can be called as a renewal of the traditional hegemonic bond during Dharmapala and Bandaranaike times between these forces. When analyzing the class background of the leadership and the initial voter base of JHU (which is now declining), it is not surprising to find the use of Sinhala-Buddhist national ism by JHU to fulfill the class-based interests of the leadership and their political allies. This research finds that in many ways the current political coalition organised by JHU is similar to nineteenth century 'Dharmapala politics'. As one respondent to this research also noted, as was the case during Dharmapala times, despite their minority status in politics, JHU (and JVP) is effectively manipulating the sentiments of the majority Sinhalese by using Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism. Reflecting on the structure of the political system and the competition and cooperation between large and smaller parties, this respondent noted '…when the main political parties have to rely on extremist Sinhala political parties to secure a parliamentary majority, the main parties

cannot offer concessions to the minority political parties. The problem in Sri Lanka is everyone wants mainstream politics, not peripheral politics. Therefore there is a tendency to use nationalism'. Another respondent noted, '…without an element of nationalism, today no political party
The anti- Muslim hysteria leads to numerous troubling incidents, and they collectively signify how the nationalist hegemony espoused by extremist Sinhalese Buddhist can be utilized to target Muslims. Anti-Muslim violence in the recent past has included "beatings, boycotting trades, throwing stones, disturbing prayer, damaging mosques, disturbing peaceful assembly and media conference, hate speeches" (M.Fowsar:2014) in recently BBS disturbed a media conference jointly organized by Muslim and Sinhala organization lead by Buddhist monk to address public about social harmony(Sunday times:2014 and The Island:2014).

6. INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS

The violence in Sri Lanka has reverberated internationally. The large numbers have become an issue for Sri Lanka, in particular, US, Muslim Countries, UNHRC and Human Rights Watch. The US ambassador to Sri Lanka Michele J Sison over the attacks and hate-speech against Muslims , she said "This type of hateful sentiment must not be allowed and urged to take stronger action to prevent persecution of Muslims and bring the perpetrators to justice .(G Pramod Kumar:2013).

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, in her statement at the 24th United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) in Geneva, Pillay said that she was "alarmed" at the recent surge in incitement of hatred and violence against religious minorities. She added that attacks on churches and mosques, and "the lack of swift action against the perpetrators" were disturbing. Since her visit to Sri Lanka last month, the UN Human Rights chief said she has received a compilation of 227 incidents of religious attacks, threats, incitement to hatred against Muslims alone that were recorded between January and July 2013.(The News:2013). In February 2014 the Commissioner, in her report on Sri Lanka after her visit to Sri Lanka summarized the trend of religious intolerance. This report noted that "in many cases perpetrators were readily identifiable in video footage, where police are seen standing as onlookers to the violence." (Jehan Perera:2014)

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has also called on governments to control violence against Muslims and has offered humanitarian help Muslims in conflict-afflicted area. The OIC has pointed out that it is confident that the Lankan government is taking the appropriate measures to calm the situation on the ground.(eye Sri Lanka:2013)

Amnesty International director Steve Crawshaw said, "We're seeing a pattern of really severe human rights violations right across the board… The government can't stand any forms of protest or criticism, and yet it appears to actively turn away from violence and lawlessness against other ethnic minorities and religions."(Katy Daigle:2014)

Pope Francis during a meeting with Sri Lanka Bishops noted the "rise of religious extremists who, in promoting a false sense of national unity based on a single religious identity, have created tensions through various acts of intimidation and violence," in Sri Lanka.(Colombo Telegraph:2014 and Sunday Leader :2014)

Beyond these concerns, violence against Muslims in Sri Lanka has seriously damaged the country's reputation at a time when it is just beginning to emerge from three decades of ethnic conflict. This presents an economic risk – sending a message of caution to foreign investors who already have concerns about entering the Sri Lanka market. There is also the political risk that Sri Lanka could seriously damage its standing in the West and Muslim world, including parts of UNO. As it attempts to chart a new course of openness and reinvigorate its economy, Sri Lanka can ill afford these risks.

7. THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The government and police have been widely criticized, domestically and internationally, for the poor response by police forces to the violence, which in many cases was clearly biased and woefully inadequate. Dambula mosque attack in 2012, the police reportedly did little to stem the violent attacks.(Jaffna Muslim:2012) Police in the area are overwhelmingly made up of BBS

Buddhists who are at best unsympathetic to Muslim victims and at worst may have been complicit in the violence against them.

In these incidents, witnesses spoke of police being apparently incapable of initially controlling the angry crowd at the Dambula and Grandpass mosque attack, and then rapidly outnumbered. They appeared to lack of response, and either arrest the perpetrators or no block the angry to contain the situation. The response from the GoSL has been limited. Police inaction in all cases has enabled violence to take place and there have been no arrests. Over 300 incidents have been reported, from all parts of the country, against Muslims in 2013. These have often been accompanied with official inaction. Arson, vandalism and physical violence have taken place with Police officers standing idly by.(A.M. Faaiz:2014) **.** There have been instances where the identities of the perpetrators have been noted, but not one has been arrested. In one instance a Muslim government minister himself gave the information personally to the police, but no visible deterrent action appears to have been taken.(Jehan Perara:2014)

Although the Muslim parliamentarians bring the issues to the President of Sri Lanka kind attention the continued hate campaign, intimidation and threats to Muslims, carried out by some Buddhist extremist elements of the (BBS), Sihala Ravaya and Ravana Balakaya organizations. (colombotelegraph:2014 and Tamil Guardian :2014), nor fruitful action have been taken by government. Due to government ineffectiveness to curb the violence against Muslim it has been seen in the midterm election, in the election where the Muslim population is significant, no Muslim candidate who contested in a government-allied Muslim party got elected. By way of contrast, a Muslim candidate headed the list of the main opposition party in the number of preferential votes obtained and several other Muslim members were elected. . The unfavorable result of the government's pro-Sinhalese stance was demonstrated at these elections with regard to the minority vote. This shows that, the government has carefully and systematically cultivated Sinhalese nationalism even at the expense of losing the support of the ethnic and religious minorities. Five years after the end of the war, the country continues to be divided in ethnic and religious terms. The government that has failed to listen to the voice of fear and distress of the Muslim community of Sri Lanka. . An important constituency that the government seems to have lost in recent times is the Muslim community. The attacks on them by Sinhalese nationalist groups, such as the BBS, have alienated them from the government.

Very important aspect of multi societies is that religious tolerance. It's missed one in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka government neither foster the religious harmony or nor interest to safeguard the religious tolerances. The minority feels that the government of Sri Lanka not only safe guard the minority rights and but also biased toward a particular religion. This lead to fear and safety less among the minorities to live in Sri Lanka.

8. THE ROLE OF BUDDHIST MONKS

The main features of the violence against Muslim and their establishment is either Buddhist monks leading the violence or among them in the mob attacks. These incidents have cast a harsh light on elements of the Buddhist monkhood in Sri Lanka, some of whom preach extremist anti-Muslim views, and a small number of whom have been involved in perpetrating acts of violence. The BBS projects itself as a self-appointed guardian of "country, race and religion" (rata, jaathiya, aagama). It further arrogates to itself the role of a de-facto law-enforcement agency relating to matters on which the country's courts of law are there to adjudicate.(Sunday Times:2014). BBS has taken laws into their hand and claims them to be the unofficial police publicly but no action has been taken to stop their violent interferences. Therefore they act freely with no respect for police or other religious leaders (Waruni Karunarathne:2014)

The BBS movement, led by prominent monks including Galaboda Aththe Gnanasara Thero has been particularly vocal in its extremist rhetoric, including making wild claims of a "extremist forces trying to create divisions, buy our lands, marry our wives and recruit our children. The same thing happened in Malaysia, the Maldives and Bangladesh - all now Muslim countries. The same thing may happen in Sri Lanka if we're not careful.. (Katy Daigle:2014) It also encourages Buddhists to boycott Muslim businesses, and has been a leading voice for the adoption of a law to

restrict inter-faith marriage – with one monk threatening to launch an electoral boycott of parliamentarians who oppose the law.

The reluctance to criticize BBS extends to the Buddhist clergy itself. Many prominent monks believe that the movement's message of intolerance and religious nationalism is inconsistent with, and even antithetical to, Buddhist teaching. Most are reluctant to say so publicly. They are worried about a backlash, held back by a general taboo against criticizing other monks, particularly those from other sects, or because many of the more orthodox monks follow a practice of disengagement from worldly affairs. If influential moderate monks do not speak out clearly and repeatedly against the violence, the Myanmar people and the world will only hear voices of intolerance. This would be hugely damaging for the country and the religion. In this regard, it is encouraging that the top Buddhist regulatory body inSri Lanka has refused any religious status for the BBS movement.

This is shortsighted, because the reality is that growing Buddhist militancy will only weaken already strained relations between different communities within these countries, threatening to undermine democratic and economic development in the process.

9. RISING TIDE OF BUDDHIST FUNDAMENTALISM IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka suffers currently from growing ethnic tension fed by the denial of minority rights and the absence of power sharing. Attacks by militant Buddhists led by monks on Muslim religious sites – for example damaging the mosques in Anuradhapura in 2011 and Dambulla in 2012 – and businesses owned by Muslims have increased dramatically. Since long, politicized courts have corroded the rule of law – in particular the emergency regulations issued under the Public Security Order and the 1979 Prevention of Terrorism Act override otherwise applicable law – and Sri Lanka's judiciary has failed to protect both constitutional and human rights, which has increased ethnic tensions (ICG 2009).

In order to understand these dynamics of conflict in the current formative post-war years, which have strengthened several new religio-political mass movements like the Bodu Bala Sena (Buddhist Power Force) fighting new mini-wars like the "boycott halal products" campaign.

Since the independence in Sri Lanka in 1948, the country is witnessing the rising tide of Buddhist fundamentalism. Various government measures provided tacit support to this process, attributed to the presence of the Buddhist influences in the ruling coalition. Thus, by the time of the 1956 that the election were held , the Sinhalamisation process and religious –based policy and politics were firmly in place and most ruling political parties were reconciled to the Buddhist indoctrination of Sri Lanka. During the election campaign, parties found it judicious and politically rewarding to champion Buddhist issues. This trend continued since then and has led to the emergence of pro-Buddhist organizations /parties in Sri Lanka politics.

As a result, the so called secular- oriented United National Party(UNP) and the left-wing Sri Lanka Freedom Party(SLFP) were not averse to enlisting the support of the pro-Buddhist Organization / party and the party has emerged as a major player in coalition building.

In some form or another, the pro-Buddhist groups have played a significant role in the formation of all two new constitutions since 1956. The alliance with the JHU enabled the ruling the UPFA to secure an absolute majority in 2006. The growing Buddhist fervor in Sri Lanka and growth of Buddhist organization manifested themselves in far reaching changes that are taking place in the country. Despite its avowed commitment to democracy, the UPFA has adopted a number of overtly religious positions to win over mainstream Sinhalese voters. During the regime of ruling party UPFA, JHU introduced ban on conversation act in the parliament. The JHU, which fought the election as ally of UPFA, sought to regulate and institutionalize, 'foremost place to Buddhism'. Other pro-Buddhist organizations have also adopted an overtly religious position in their activities.

The UPFA is following the policies of centralization of previous regime, which is pro-Buddhist, and almost anti-minorities. As facts reveal, a moderate democratic and secular nationalist government of Chadrika Bandaranayake Kumaradunga was replaced by the authoritarian forces in

2006 and his policies of anti-minorities, anti-colonialism, and close friendship with China at the regional level lead to systematic discrimination against its minority's people of Sri Lanka.

And also, the UPFA, though it re-emerged as a major influence in Sri Lanka's Sinhalese people, has still not fully-acquired its pre-eminent position in the interplay of political forces in the country, because UNP also has same capacity to influence the ordinary Sinhalese people, and has failed to reinstate the ethos and ideology of Buddhism. But, there is a re-emergence of Buddhism in 2009 after bloody war against LTTE, as a factor which is considered necessary to consolidate Sri Lanka's national identity. The increasing influence of the JHU and other religious groups confirms this assessment. This was clearly reflected in the post-war period of Sri Lanka.

10. GROWING BUDDHIST MENACES

The government appears to be responding to growing public discontent among Sinhalese also by tacitly encouraging, and in some cases directly supporting, the anti-Muslim campaigns led by militant and often violent Buddhist organizations, as a way to distract from the pressures the President's Sinhalese constituency is facing."(The Island, 12 August 2013.) Reaching a high-point in the first three months of 2013, an initial campaign tapered off by the end of April, following interventions by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).(news.lk, 18 April 2013) . Since then, however, anti-Muslim attacks and public protests have returned as a regular feature of politics. Militant Buddhists have regularly attacked Christian churches for years, but the vilification of Muslims is a new and dangerous development.(Camelia Nathaniel: The Sunday Leader, 27 October 2013.) The worst incident to date was the 10 August attack on a mosque in the Grand- pass areas of Colombo.(ICG:2013) A mob demanding its closure, including Buddhist monks, attacked it as prayers were being conducted, breaking windows and damaging the building. Both Muslims and Sinhalese were injured in communal clashes over the weekend, as Muslim youths from the neighborhood fought back against Buddhist attackers. Police are accused of failing to stop the incident until there was significant damage. No one was arrested, despite photographs and video of the attacks. The affair provoked an unusually strong and united response from senior Muslim politicians in the government, who condemned police inaction and called for the perpetrators to be arrested and the president to halt the months-long anti-Muslim campaign.(Island, 16 August 2013.)

Religious intolerance and militancy has increased dramatically. Various government measures provided tactic support to the Buddhists. Ceding to the demands of Buddhist partner of the coalition, the JHU, the government introduced a bill to ban conversation and a bill to abolish the 13th amendment of the Constitution which provide substantial power to regional minorities.

In rural and suburb area of Sri Lanka a gang of Buddhist militants and BBS headed by Buddhist monk unleashed a reign of terror beginning in 2009.

Sri Lanka is now in the eye of a new storm –Buddhist extremism and terrorism. For years Sri Lanka congratulated itself and was feted as a so-called model Buddhist state that had rejected extremism and stayed on a democracy path. But looking through post-war lens, there seem to be demonic winds of terror swirling over the Dambulla, Anurathepura, and Colombo mosques that were muses for Anagariga Dharmapala monk.

Contemporary Sri Lanka is emerging as a hub of and haven for Buddhist fanatics of various shades. Sri Lanka's image has already been tarnished, on the on hand, by the violation of human rights and international humanitarian low during the war against LTTE in 2008-2009, and the present UPFA-JHU governments' unwillingness to take appropriate actions against human rights violators during the war in 2009, on the other. It could be a new born in the nursery of fanatics who pose a far greater danger to Sri Lanka civil society and polity than the LTTE did during the ethnic war between in 1983-2009.

The JHU, which share power with UPFA under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapakshe, masquerade as 'Buddhist guardians.' Wolves in sheep- skins, they have successfully guided the present regime to a pro-Sinhalese, pro-Buddhist position. In a sense, the process of Sri Lanka's Buddhisization in the mould of Myanmar's world view began. Over the years, men who trained in the temples have come to occupy offices in government, civil administration, police, and

the armed forces of that country. The position of fanaticism/ religious extremism has simultaneously seeped into most branch of Sri Lanka's government.

These organizations aspire to abolish parliamentary democracy in Sri Lanka and bring in Buddhist hegemony. They seek to establish Buddhist state in Sri Lanka similar to Myanmar by, among other things, waging violence against Muslim minority of Sri Lanka. They want Sri Lanka's Buddhist culture and ethos to be established very soon, which is rabidly anti-democracy.

Simultaneously and also greatly facilitated by the ascendance of Buddhists, Sri Lanka has become the camping ground of Buddhist extremism of various shades of pink. In sum, patronage of cross border violence, and an increasingly support trend towards Buddhist extremism within, is a deadly combination. It has turned Myanmar into a rogue state; Sri Lanka is very close to becoming another one.

There is no dearth of evidence about the nexus between members of the ruling coalition in Sri Lanka. But there are reports and news that BBS enjoys the support of influential UPFA cabinet ministers and some powerful officers. The BBS is also known to enjoy a measure of sympathy and support from sections of police and armed forces.

The governments' response to BBS and other Buddhist organization violence has been extremely suspect. Despite the mounting evidence of their activities, until fairly recently, the state agencies continuously denied the very existence of these entities.

The most troubling aspect of BBS and other Buddhist extreme organizations rise in Sri Lanka are they connection with Buddhist religious groups. The group has camps in the accessible, rural and suburb areas. The groups enjoy the support and patronage from temple. These temples are used for propaganda and recruitment.

11. SRI LANKA'S CIVIL SOCIETY UNDER SIEGE

The re-emergence of Buddhist hegemony has torn the social cohesion and intensified the communal divide in Sri Lanka. Predominance of the Buddhist identity and the corresponding dilution of democracy and Sri Lankan cultural identity have worked against the tradition of religious tolerance and accommodation. In this context, although technically speaking, there is nothing to prevent minorities to participate in mainstream politics in Sri Lanka and hence being in their own kinship structures into play, the fore-grounding of a majoritarianism inscribing Sinhala as state language and Buddhism as a state religion automatically marginalizes religious and ethnic minorities from attaining a central role in determining religious hegemony.

Buddhist extremism coupled with weakening social cohesion and growing domestic violence has emerged as major challenge to the ruling party to build reconciliation among the different communities in the post war Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka society has been poisoned too. Fanatic Buddhists have successfully ruined tolerance among the Sinhalese people for four years in a row with the help of hate speeches and violence**.**

Contemporary Sri Lanka's secular civil society is under siege. Recent years have witnessed a spate of death threats being issued by Buddhist Fundamentalists on innocent and moderate of Muslim. A gang lead by Buddhist monk Muslim textile shop (Fashion Bug) attacked in Colombo District injured several people including a journalist. And also after Ramzan festival of Muslim in 2013, at Grandpass mosque was attacked. In addition to that two business establishments were set on fired in Kalutura and Kegalle District in May 2014.(Thinakkural:2014) In sum, rising Buddhist extremism fueled by Buddhist monk have deeply divided political society with vicious political antagonism.

The coordinated series of mosques flatten and threat on Muslim within of Sri Lanka's from 2009, which was little more than the visible tip of the menacing iceberg that threatens this luckless country. Sinhalese society that foster terrorism have eventually themselves fallen prey to this scourge. Sri Lanka cannot be an exception, though the country's political leadership has sought to cover up the realities of state complicity with flat denials of state support to extremism and terror, even as they have sought to mark the steady spiral towards Buddhist extremism, lawlessness and disorder.

History of Sri Lanka is religious and ethnic conflict of history of Sri Lanka. After end of war against LTTE by government of Sri Lanka, religious tension has been increased in the recent past. The so-called Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist movement, whose aims protect the Sinhala-Buddhist people, emerged after war against LTTE in 2009s targeting the minority. The BBS very is an important among the one. Moreover, another Buddhist extreme group emerged as protectors of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Its so-called all activities like that safeguarding the Buddhism create religious tension among the minorities' communities.

Religious discrimination had begun in the constitution of Sri Lanka when it was created. According to the constitution of Sri Lanka, Foremost place given to Buddhism and its duty of the government of Sri Lanka protect the Buddhism in Sri Lanka. If we look around the constitution, when constitution was drafted, Buddhist nationalist influences the government to insert Buddhism. Buddhist nationalist activities have begun from the constitution to do their illegal activities. From 2009 onward religious places attacked by some element of Buddhist extreme. Especially Muslim religious places targeted and destroyed and it's brought before in UNHRC in 2014. International organization and big power express serious concern about the minority rights in Sri Lanka. Neither action have been taken by the government or nor any one brought before the law or arrested those who behind the violence. It obvious that laws not rule in Sri Lanka, and the perpetrators who promoting the violence have been protected by higher authority of Sri Lanka.

12. CONCLUSION

Muslims in Sri Lanka have a long history and have both contributed to the development of the country and gained from it. They also have historical grievances against successive governments over human rights violations, discriminations and obstacles to development. Five years after the end of the war, the country continues to be divided in ethnic and religious terms. The government that has failed to listen to the voice of fear and distress of the ethnic and religious minority of Muslim communities.

Fundamentally, the Sinhala hegemonism belief is that the entire island belongs to Sinhala Buddhists only and the minorities' existence in the island is to be considered a major threat against them. Therefore, following the war against LTTE in the north, the present post-war period is deemed to be the ideal stage to grab the Muslim through violence and intimation. The next step will inevitably be an attempt to erase the Muslim ethnic and cultural identity completely. This development will lead to the annihilation of the Muslim population from the island. Hence, it can be concluded that ethnic cleansing and Signalization is thus a vital component of the genocidal agenda of the Sinhala state.

The Muslims are the exaggerated party in the post conflict of Sri Lanka. They have never resorted to violence to achieve their aims. With the new post war conflict in the Island, they again are caught in the crossfire. As the BBS and other hard-line extreme Buddhist groups replaces the LTTE as a threat, and Muslims once more face serious insecurity and concerns about Sinhalese nationalism. The government needs to address the Muslim issue more directly, instead of merely manipulating their concerns for political advantage.

However, growing frustration among young people, some of whom are increasingly attracted to a fusion of politics with Islamic ideas, poses a potential threat. The best way to deal with these tensions is for the government to demonstrate a serious commitment to a solution.

In the case of Sri Lanka, in contrast, the political dynamics are moving in the opposite direction, reifying a more and more Buddhist and Sinhala vision of the state with an understanding of democracy that is dictated by the majority. In the foreseeable future the potential for more conflict in Sri Lanka is hence increasing dramatically.

A security response is not sufficient, however. In order to effectively address the problem, political, religious and community leaders need to condemn extremist rhetoric. Those who are spreading messages of intolerance and hatred must not go unchallenged. Otherwise, this issue could come to define the new Myanmar, tarnishing its international image and threatening the success of its transition away from decades of authoritarianism.

Lastly, it is necessary to mention that Sri Lanka's inter-religious tensions might represent one of the country's biggest challenges to reconciliation a full democratization, not only because of the biased elective government representation, but also because of the terrible humanitarian consequences this religious nationalism has on the country's deprived minorities. To resume, as Sri Lanka is emerging from thirty year of ethnic conflict, authoritarian rule, a new era towards democracy, good governance and innovation is being opened and we ought to hope that its new president will find a way to use Sri Lanka in its most constructive, fruitful and tolerant ways.

Recommendations

Abuses perpetrated by BBS and other Buddhist extreme groups should be considered criminal acts and investigated and prosecuted as such.

The government must reform laws and policies to end discrimination against minorities. Security officers and law enforcement personnel should be sensitized and trained to implement and enforce such changes.

Recognize the Sinhalese, the Tamils and the Muslims as equal 'cultural nations' constitute the democratic 'political nation' of Sri Lanka. A cultural nation is a group of people based on language, tradition, culture or religion who consider themselves to be distinct and equal in dignity and rights to other cultural nations in a political nation

References

[1] Ameerdeen.V,(2006), *Ethnic Politics of Muslims in Sri Lank*a Kandy,, p. 104;

[2] Ameer Ali,(1997),The Muslim Factor in Sri Lankan Ethnic Crisis, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Oct 1997, Vol. 17 No 2, pp. 253-267.available at*http://tamilnation.co/tamileelam/Muslims/ameer.htm*

[3] Chaminda Weerawardhana,(2013), Sri Lanka's BBS: an old specter in new garb? Available at : *http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/chaminda-weerawardhana/sri-lankas-bbs-old-spectre-in-new-garb/* (Accessed on,1/12/13)

[4] Colombotelegraph,(2014), Muslim ministers and mps write to president on Buddhist extremist threats to Muslims, available at *: https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/Muslim-minsters-and-mps-write-to-president-on-buddhist-extremist-threats-to-Muslims/*

[5] Colombo Telegraph,(2014), Pope Denounces Religious Extremism In Sri Lanka,/ *https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/pope-denounces-religious-extremism-in-sri-lanka/*(Accessed on 14/05/2014)

[6] Darni Rajasingham & Senanayake,(2012),'Dambulla Mosque Crisis: Needed a Policy for Multiculturalism and Social Interaction' *Polity,* Vol.6 No. 3&4, Colombo.

[7] (Department of Census and Statistics-Population by religion according to istricts, 2012,*http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2011/index.php?fileName=pop43&gp=Activities&tpl=3).*

[8] Eye Sri Lanka,(2013), Organization of Islamic Cooperation expresses concern over Sri Lanka's ethnic tension, available at

[9] *http://www.eyesrilanka.com/2013/03/20/organization-of-islamic-cooperation-expresses-concern-over-sri-lankas-ethnic-tension/*(Accessed on 2014/05/23)

[10] A.M. Faaiz.A.M,2014, Rescuing Patriotism From the Extremists,/ *http://groundviews.org/2014/04/09/rescuing-patriotism-from-the-extremists/* (accessed 0n 2014/04/11)

[11] Fowsar.M, Lecturer in political Science, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, *interviewed* on 2014/05/12.

[12] Ground view(2013), The Political Economy of Prejudice: Islam, Muslims and Sinhala-Buddhist Nationalism in Sri Lanka Today: Some Reflections available at *http://groundviews.org/2013/03/20/the-political-economy-of-prejudice-islam-muslims-and-sinhala-buddhist-nationalism-in-sri-lanka-today-some-reflections*,(Accessed on 1/12/13)

[13] Hasbullah.S.H, Muslim Refugees: The Forgotten People in Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict (Research Action Forum for Social Development, 2001).

[14] International Crisis Groups,(2007), Sri Lanka's Muslims: Caught in the Crossfire Crisis, Group Asia Report N°134.

[15] ICG, Asia Report N°253 | 13 November 2013.

[16] Issadeen. M.L., Senior lecturer in philosophy, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, *interviewed* on 2014/05/12.

[17] Jehan Perera,(2014), The Interdependence Of Security And Votes, *https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/the-interdependence-of-security-and-votes/*

[18] Jehan Perara:2014, The Interdependence Of Security And Votes, Colombo Telegraph, - *https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/the-interdependence-of-security-and-votes/*

[19] Jaffna Muslim: There are many articles and reports regarding violence and hates speeches against Muslim. You can collect news from 2011 and most of news in Tamil, *www.jaffnamuslim.com.*

[20] Jaffna Muslim 2012*, www.jaffnaMuslim.com*

[21] Katy Daigle, (2014), Hard-line Sri Lanka monks rally against Muslims, *http://www.3news.co.nz/Hardline-Sri-Lanka-monks-rally-against-muslims/tabid/417/articleID/328119/Default.aspx,* (Accessed on 15/05/2014)

[22] Kunaratnam.V, Senior Lecturer in political Science, Eastern University of Sri Lanka, *interviewed* on 2014/05/13.

[23] Neil De Votta,(2007), *Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalist Ideology: Implication for Politics and Conflict Resolution in Sri Lanka*, East-West Center, Policy Studies No,40, Washington.

[24] Sunday Observer, 2000, "The Maha Shanga and the Nation".March 19, Colombo.

[25] Neil De Votta,(2002), Demography and Communalism in India*, Journal of International Affairs*, 56(1), :53-70.

[26] Nirmanusan Balasundaram,2013, Sri Lanka: The intentions behind the land grabbing process**,**available at *http://www.jdslanka.org/index.php/2012-01-30-09-31-17/politics-a-economy/314-sri-lanka-the-intentions-behind-the-land-grabbing-process,*Accessed on 2013/12/01).

[27] Pramod Kumar. G,:2013. Attacks on Muslims: Is Sri Lanka now an anti-minority state? Available at *http://www.firstpost.com/world/attacks-on-Muslims-is-sri-lanka-now-an-anti-minority-state-693521.html?utm_source=ref_article*(Accessed on 12/01/2014).

[28] Saro Thiruppathy and Camelia Nathaniel,(2013), The Cessation of Halal is A Violation of Human Rights? Sunday Leader, *http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2013/03/17/the-cessation-of-halal-is-a-violation-of-rights, /(*Accessed on 15/05/2014)

[29] *Sunday Leader*,(2014), Pope Concerned over Extremists in Lanka.

[30] *Sunday Leader*, 2013/09/27

[31] *Sunday Times*:2014), 27/4/14.

[32] *Sunday Times*,(2014), No tattoos please, we're Buddhists — but casinos no problem, (2014/04/27)

[33] Sunday Times, 27/4/14.

[34] *Tamil Guardian*,(2014), Muslim parliamentarians write to Rajapaksa about hate campaign of Buddhist groups, (2014/05/02)

[35] *The Island*,(2014), Saving Sri Lanka from the monkish terror(2014/04/27)

[36] *The Island*,2013/08/12.

[37] *The Island*,2013/08/16.

[38] *Thinakkural*, 2014/05/25

[39] The News:2013), Sri Lanka urged to protect Muslims**,** http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-1-206337-Sri-Lanka-urged-to-protect-Muslims(Accessed on 2014/03/12)

[40] Urmila Phadnis, "Political Profile of the Muslim Minority of Sri Lanka", *International Studies* (New

[41] Delhi), Jan-Mar 1979, vol.18, no.1

[42] Uyangoda Jeyadeva,(1996), ' Militarization, Violent State, Violent Society: Sri Lanka'. In Kumar Rupashinge and Khawar Mumtaz,(eds), *Internal Conflict In Sri Lanka,* Sage Pub, London.

[43] Uyangoda, J. (ed.) (2007) *Religion in Context, Buddhism and Socio-Political Change in Sri Lanka.* Colombo: Social Scientists 'Association.

[44] Waruni Karunarathne,(2014), BBS on the War Path, *Sunday Leader*, 2014/04/14

[45] www.news.lk, 2013/04/18