

ABSTRACT

On April 21st 2019, with the attacks of Easter Bombings (4/21 incident), Sri Lanka faced increased outbreaks of extremism and terrorism, being completely unprepared neither in terms of practically combating these phenomena, nor in terms of their theoretical conceptualization. This dissertation for Master of Laws attempts to analyze comprehensively the extremism phenomenon. The study includes a broad legal framework and analysis of legal and policy initiatives in this regard which describes how constitutional framework needs to be strengthened against violent religious extremism, particularly those that emphasize militant theology and different types of religious tensions that naturally arise, and the special attributes of the “sectarian” type. So, in this context two major case studies will be analysed, namely; the Buddhist extremist group Bodu Bala Sena and Muslim extremist group Thawheed Jamaath Association. Sects are adept at tempting people both spiritually and materially. Where governments and economies function poorly, sects often become major suppliers of social services, political action, and coercive force. In this connection with the context of Easter bomb attacks in Sri Lanka, it is reasonable to unify and harmonize approaches to combating extremism while strengthening legal framework of the country. The research is based on the conclusions made after considering both quantitative and qualitative views of general public, legal practitioners, constitutional experts. The thesis has tried to provide a balanced, unbiased approach in suggesting constitutional provisions that may be introduced after considering the two ends of religious freedom and strengthening national security in order to prevent religious extremism.