

21st April 2019 – 21st April 2026

**“Memory, Pain and the Hope”
Seeking Justice Even After 07 Years**

Centre for Society and Religion (CSR)

This is an English translation of a report originally prepared in the Sinhala language. Therefore, in the event of any inconsistency or ambiguity between this translation and the Sinhala report, the contents of the original report published in Sinhala shall be considered as the accurate version.

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Guidance:

Rev. Fr. Rohan Silva - Executive Director, Centre for Society and Religion (CSR)

Mr. Ruki Fernando - Human Rights Activist

Mr. Suren D. Perera – Attorney at Law

Editor:

Tharindu Jayawardhana and Research Team, Centre for Society and Religion (CSR)

Publisher

Centre for Society and Religion (CSR)

Address – 281, Deans Road, Colombo 10.

Email – info@easterattack.info

Telephone - 0112 695 425

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Preface

As seven years pass since 21st April 2019 the most special day for Christians, Easter Sunday when bombs were detonated in two Catholic churches, one Christian church, three hotels, a lodge, and a house, it appears that the investigations into that terrorist attack are moving toward a positive direction.

As the investigations begin to move in a positive direction because of all the battles fought for justice for seven years, various parties are seen making various efforts to obstruct them.

To prevent such incidents from happening again in the country, it is mandatory to uncover everyone behind this attack and bring them before the law. Various hints were received at the committee headed by Justice Vijith Malalgoda, before the Parliamentary Select Committee, and at the Commission of Inquiry headed by Justice Janak de Silva, that this attack was not one led merely by the extremist terrorist named Zahran Hashim. Similarly, it was the opinion of the officers who supervised the investigations in the early stages of the day of the attack that there was some "hidden hand" above Zahran. Uncovering that hand and bringing them before the law is a major component of the task of achieving justice for this crime.

Justice is a topic with a broad definition. There are many parts to justice, including truth-seeking, criminal justice, and reparations. This report focuses only on the two parts of that broad definition: criminal justice and the right to know the truth. Reparation, which is another major component of justice, was included in the report titled 'Economic and Social Impact on Victims of the Easter Attack' published earlier by the Centre for Society and Religion (CSR).

In the seven-year journey seeking justice for the Easter attack, several investigations were conducted with promises to deliver justice. The information from some of those investigations has not yet been made public. In October 2024, the Centre for Society and Religion sent a letter to the President requesting the publication of all relevant committee/commission reports. It also requested the establishment of a formal mechanism to review all those investigations. Several points mentioned in the letter sent by the Centre for Society and Religion to the President on 04th October 2024, are as follows. The relevant letter we sent even mentioned anticipating threats investigators might face. However, many of the requests made in that letter have not been fulfilled to date, and the continuous pressure and threats directed at investigators can be cited as examples of one result of that. A few points of the letter sent to the President are mentioned below.

"Truth Seeking, Acknowledgment, and Transparency

I. Regarding the Presidential Commission of Inquiry and the Justice Malalgoda Committee that investigated the Easter Sunday attacks, only the final reports have been made public so far. Furthermore, neither the final report nor any other document of the Presidential Committee that investigated the Channel 4 disclosures or the Justice Jayaki de Alwis Committee has been made

public to date. Therefore, we request that all volumes of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry and all volumes of the other investigation committees be published for the reference of interested parties. For everyone's convenience, necessary arrangements should be made to post soft copies of these volumes/documents on the Presidential Secretariat website or another government website so that they can be easily downloaded.

II. Steps must be taken to secure all documents, including all statements and books, related to all investigations conducted so far regarding the attack (Presidential Commissions / Justice Malalgoda Committee / Criminal Investigation Department and Counter-Terrorism Unit investigations / Channel 4 Committee and Justice Jayaki de Alwis Committee). Evidence existing as documents should be scanned and uploaded to a Drive to protect them, and if some documents exist only as a single copy, necessary steps should be taken to keep several copies of those documents.

III. It is necessary to accurately identify which officers and institutions seized the case productions found during the investigation and through which officers they reached their current locations. This information must be accurately documented to ensure the protection of evidence and its credibility for use in judicial proceedings.

IV. If officers who were involved in or supervised the initial investigations have retired, they should be recalled to active service until the investigations are concluded. If officers who were involved in or supervised the initial investigations have been transferred to other locations from where they were previously serving, they should be recalled.

V. A detailed announcement should be issued in Sinhala, Tamil, and English regarding the progress of the investigations conducted so far regarding the Easter incident, and a special press conference should be held to provide answers to problems related to the investigations done so far.

VI. The National People's Power (NPP) announced on 17th April 2023, that a fully empowered commission would be appointed to investigate the Easter incident. Accordingly, the political intent to appoint a fully empowered Mixed Commission consisting of suitable local and foreign experts to investigate these incidents should be declared, and it should be announced that Cabinet decisions regarding this will be taken after the upcoming General Election. Furthermore, to ensure the transparency of the activities of that commission, local and foreign observers should be given the opportunity to observe its proceedings.

VII. A public consultation program should be started on how the future proceedings, including the commission to be appointed regarding the brutal Easter Sunday attack, should be conducted.

VIII. Measures should be taken by anticipating the pressure and threats that could occur to investigation officers, and An impartial environment should be prepared for them to conduct investigations.

Criminal Justice and Disciplinary Actions

i. It is mentioned under point No. 01 of the pledge dated 17th April 2023, that bringing the masterminds and planners behind the Easter Sunday bomb attack before the law is a top priority of the National People's Power government. Accordingly, necessary actions should be taken to uncover the relevant masterminds and planners, arrest them, direct them to a judicial process, and subject them to punishment through a fair trial; priority should be given to that task during investigations.

ii. Currently, investigations related to the Easter attack are being carried out by several investigation divisions, including the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Counter-Terrorism and Investigation Division (TID). Several allegations were leveled in the past, including the removal/transfer of investigators of those investigations and conducting investigations through biased investigators. Therefore, a Special Investigation Bureau should be established to look into this crime, and it should be placed under the supervision of the previously mentioned fully empowered Commission of Inquiry and the newly established Prosecutor's Office.

iii. Taking disciplinary action against relevant persons according to the current findings of the Easter attack. After the Easter Sunday attack occurred, on the advice of the Attorney General, the then Acting IGP Chandana Wickramaratne informed the Police Special Investigation Unit (SIU) to conduct a preliminary investigation into the neglect of duty by the police. According to the preliminary investigation conducted by that unit, it was recommended that it is appropriate to issue charge sheets and take disciplinary action against a group of high-ranking police officers, including Senior DIG Nandana Munasinghe, Senior DIG Deshabandu Tennakoon, Senior DIG Lalith Pathinayake, Senior Police Superintendent A.K.C. Athukorala, Police Superintendent L.M. Sanjeewa Bandara, Assistant Police Superintendent K.M.R.S.B. Kumarasena, and Assistant Police Superintendent (now Police Superintendent) H.B.S.S. Sisira Kumara. Accordingly, based on that preliminary investigation, necessary actions should be taken to start the relevant disciplinary inquiries.

iv. Necessary actions should be taken to issue charge sheets and take disciplinary action against officers, including Senior DIG Nandana Munasinghe, Police Superintendent Sanjeewa Bandara, Senior Police Superintendent Chandana Atukorala, Police Superintendent B.E.I. Prasanna, Chief Inspector R.M. Sarath Kumarasinghe, Chief Inspector Sagara Villegoda Liyanage, for whom the Presidential Commission of Inquiry has recommended criminal prosecution, and against officers including Senior DIG Deshabandu Tennakoon, Assistant Police Superintendent Sisila Kumara, and Police Inspector Chaminda Navaratne, for whom disciplinary action has been recommended.

v. Chapter 21 of the final report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry revealed many facts about the Attorney General's Department as well. Accordingly, necessary actions should be taken to take disciplinary measures against the relevant officers and implement those recommendations.

vi. The Channel 4 network reported, based on a disclosure by a person named Azad Maulana, that a person named Suresh Salle is behind this attack. Similarly, allegations were levelled regarding the failure of the State Intelligence Service (SIS) to prevent the attack and/or the attack itself.

Suresh Salle, who is the subject of many pieces of evidence related to this, was appointed as the Director of the State Intelligence Service after the change of government in 2019. Suresh Salle, who is being exposed by the Channel 4 network, should be immediately removed from the position of Director of the State Intelligence Service, which contains many pieces of evidence related to this attack.

vii. Reappointing the teams that conducted the preliminary investigations related to the Easter attack, restarting the preliminary investigations, and taking immediate steps for that.

viii. Investigation activities related to the Easter attack should be conducted as mentioned before, and the President, as the Commander-in-Chief, has the ability to command the Tri-Forces to provide the necessary cooperation for that.

ix. The testimony of Azad Maulana, who is a witness related to the Easter attack and is currently abroad, should be recorded immediately. Similarly, other witnesses and informants living abroad should be given the opportunity to easily connect and provide evidence or information via video conference or another similar method without any inconvenience.

x. A team including a Senior State Counsel or a Solicitor General should be named to obtain instructions for these investigations of the Attorney General's Department. As mentioned in our proposal previously, since public trust in the Attorney General's Department has collapsed and it is in a conflict of interest, it should be announced that a Special Prosecutor's Office will be established after the General Election to supervise investigations and related prosecutions.

xi. Disciplinary action should be taken against high authorities who have irregularities in the investigation. While this investigation is being carried out, preliminary work should be started to investigate and take formal action against those who tried to change evidence, destroy evidence, or mislead investigations."

It is extremely important to pay attention again to all the investigations conducted so far regarding the Easter Sunday terrorist attack, as well as the statements given by all individuals during those investigations, because although important facts have been revealed in some of those committees and commissions, proper attention has not been paid to them so far.

Accordingly, facts are presented through this report regarding the investigations conducted so far related to the Easter Sunday terrorist attack. The objective of this report is to exert some influence to utilize the existing evidence and other factors related to all these investigations for the investigations currently being conducted, and to reveal the true political objective of some of those investigations.

After journeying for seven years in search of justice, a foundation is now being prepared to have some hope for justice. The foundation for that was the unending struggle that you and all of us carried out for seven years. Therefore, let us continue to exert the pressure necessary to make the year starting from this 21st April 2026 a year in which the hope for justice is fulfilled. Putting aside

grief and fatigue, let us continue to record. We wish that by 21st April 2027, a situation will be built where we can look back on it as a successful journey that has moved somewhat closer to justice. The path to be taken to fulfil that wish will be somewhat difficult. We invite everyone to join in traversing the remaining distance of the path we have travelled for seven years with determination.

Research Team

Centre for Society and Religion

17th April 2026

Chapter One: 08 Investigations – The Story of the Easter Investigations

Several investigations were conducted over the past seven years regarding the terrorist attack carried out on Easter Sunday, 21st April 2019. These investigations are:

1. Justice Vijith Malalgoda Committee
2. Justice Janak de Silva Presidential Commission
3. Parliamentary Select Committee
4. Justice S.I. Imam Committee
5. Justice Jayaki de Alwis Committee
6. Criminal Investigation (April 2019 – November 2019)
7. Criminal Investigation (November 2019 – September 2024)
8. Criminal Investigation (October 2024 – Present)

Among these investigations, the Justice Vijith Malalgoda Committee was appointed by then President Maithripala Sirisena in April 2019. It was not a Presidential Commission, but a committee appointed by the President to find facts. Although this committee lacked formal powers, it recorded statements from a significant number of people following the attack. The Justice Janak de Silva Commission was a Presidential Commission appointed under the Commissions of Inquiry Act. The Parliamentary Select Committee was established following a special resolution passed by the Parliament of Sri Lanka; however, the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA), which was the main opposition at the time, refused to serve as members of this committee.

Following the documentary program aired by the British Channel 4 network in September 2023 regarding the Easter Sunday terrorist attack, the Justice S.I. Imam Committee was appointed. This was a powerless committee appointed by the President. The Justice Jayaki de Alwis Committee was appointed by the President after Ravi Seneviratne (the former Senior DIG in charge of the CID who supervised the initial stages of the Easter investigations) established the National People's Power (NPP) Retired Police Collective, and Shani Abeysekera (the former Director of the CID) participated in its inaugural program. This was also a standard committee without formal powers.

From April 2019 to November 2019, the primary investigations into the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks were centered at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Except for the attack at the Tropical Inn lodge, the CID investigated all other attacks carried out on that day. However, following the Presidential Election in November 2019, the lead officer who supervised the investigations and a group of other officers were removed, and the investigations were conducted by a newly appointed team. After the September 2024 Presidential Election, these investigations commenced once again from a different angle. The current ongoing investigation is based on a

complaint lodged by Father Rohan Silva, the Executive Director of the Center for Society and Religion (CSR).

Detailed facts regarding all these investigations and fact-findings will be presented at length in the future. However, this report does not include information regarding the Jayaki de Alwis Committee, as it was appointed by Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe on 12th June 2024, after it was publicized on 9th June 2024, that Mr. Ravi Seneviratne and Mr. Shani Abeysekera had joined the NPP Retired Police Collective. On the surface, it appeared to be a committee created specifically to target those two individuals.

Chapter Two: The Lie of Military Intelligence Suspected by Nilantha – The Story of the Justice Malalgoda Committee

Following the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks, President Maithripala Sirisena appointed a three-member committee chaired by Supreme Court Justice Vijith K. Malalgoda to investigate the incident. This committee was appointed within 24 hours of the attack. The other members were retired Inspector General of Police (IGP) N.K. Illangakoon and retired administrative officer Padmasiri Jayamanne.

This committee was not a commission established by law with formal powers; rather, it was a fact-finding committee appointed by the President through a letter. The committee published a newspaper advertisement regarding the gathering of evidence and began hearing testimony on 25th April 2019. From then until 31st May 2019, statements were recorded from approximately 60 individuals. Initially, the committee was given two weeks to complete its work, which was later extended by another three weeks. A unique aspect of this committee was that it obtained statements from certain parties before they could formulate a prepared stance on the attacks. On 30th August 2019, Justice Malalgoda told the Parliamentary Select Committee that because witnesses were summoned immediately after the incident, they were forced to provide "fresh" information before they had time to think.

Another feature of this committee was the recording of evidence. These recordings were stored on CDs and handed over to the Presidential Secretariat. The report prepared by the committee consisted of several sections, including an executive summary, the main report, observations, and recommendations. Justice Malalgoda stated before the Parliamentary Select Committee on 20th August 2019, that the report was approximately 140 pages long. Additionally, recorded evidence, notes, and documents seized during the investigation were handed over to the Presidential Secretariat along with the final report on 10th June 2019.

The Secretary to the committee informed all three members via a letter dated 2nd July 2019, that all documents including evidence volumes, written submissions, seized documents, and recordings had been properly handed over to the Department of National Archives. The report submitted to the President was not initially made public; it was only released four years later. As a result of an appeal filed with the Right to Information (RTI) Commission by Dhanushka Silva (then a research team member of the Centre for Society and Religion and currently a lawyer) against the Presidential Secretariat's decision to refuse the information request, the executive summary and recommendations section of the report were released in 2023.

One major observation in the executive summary was that although information regarding Islamic extremism had been received since approximately 2015, those responsible failed to understand the difference between traditional Islamic views and extremism. Another important observation concerned the instructions issued by Senior DIG Nandana Munasinghe (in charge of the Western

Province) to his subordinates after he received intelligence prior to the attack. The executive summary noted that if the instructions in his letter to the relevant DIGs had been followed by the police stations, the scale of the events on 21st April 2019, could have been minimized.

The committee also observed numerical discrepancies regarding those killed in the attack at an early stage. Page 009 of the executive summary notes that the Director General of Health Services testified that as of 05th May 2019, the death toll was 259, with 497 injured. However, police data was different. On page 013, the committee made a critical observation stating there was insufficient evidence to conclude that the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ) was responsible for the attack or that Zahran Hashim was the leader of the NTJ. The report stated: "While the evidence presented to the board confirms the attack was carried out by the group led by Zahran Hashim, there is no satisfactory evidence to conclude that the National Thowheeth Jama'ath is responsible or that Zahran Hashim is the leader of the National Thowheeth Jama'ath".

The committee identified lapses related to the attack under five fields:

1. Intelligence
2. Investigations
3. Communication
4. Operational Procedures
5. Administrative Procedures

The final paragraph of the executive summary stated that the committee was unable to investigate individual connections as expected by the public, though this was mentioned in the recommendations. This indicates that even within five weeks of the attack, there was public suspicion regarding the involvement of "higher hands" or individual connections behind the attack.

The committee presented its recommendations under 24 topics. Since there was little social attention given to this report, a summary of all recommendations is provided below:

1. **Establishment of a National Intelligence Service:** The committee observed a tendency among agencies to try and outperform each other and a reluctance to share intelligence. Lapses were noted in the exchange of information regarding Zahran Hashim and his group between the State Intelligence Service (SIS) and the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), which the committee called a dangerous situation. It recommended establishing a single, completely independent National Intelligence Service for collecting and disseminating national security information. This has not been implemented.
2. **Statutory Establishment of the National Intelligence Service:** As no current intelligence agency is covered by a statutory legal framework, the committee recommended establishing the proposed service through an Act of Parliament.

3. **Reorganization of Armed Forces and Police Intelligence:** The committee recommended reorganizing these units to fit their requirements after the National Intelligence Service is established, but this has also not been implemented.
4. **Positions of Secretary of Defense, IGP, and Head of National Intelligence:** The committee recommended that authorities ensure only officers with maturity, expertise, and commitment to the subject are appointed to these roles. Since then, there have been very few instances where these factors were considered; in most cases, they were ignored, as evidenced by the performance of the appointees.
5. **Sri Lanka Police:** It was recommended that the Minister in charge of Police appoint a committee to study and rectify the lapses identified in the report, but this has not been done.
6. **Preventing the Further Spread of Islamic Extremism:** The committee suggested the government take active measures to rehabilitate those with extremist views and prevent new individuals from turning toward extremism. There is no evidence of such an active program being implemented.
7. **Social Media Activities:** Recommendations included taking measures to control social media to prevent the spread of extremism and ensuring the public receives accurate, neutral information through social, electronic, and print media during such incidents. It also suggested that the Ministry of Mass Media establish a 24-hour special operations room to provide accurate information and that military/police spokespersons ensure the prompt release of the latest information without contradictions between state agencies. These 2019 recommendations were largely ignored until late 2025, when the Government Information Department actively shared information during a disaster, though other spokespersons were less successful.
8. **Legal Provisions:** The committee recommended a strong legal system to prevent the spread of extremism. No new laws have been introduced for this purpose. The CSR believes current laws are sufficient and that the failure to stop the progression from extremism to violence is due to the lack of proper law enforcement, not a lack of laws.
9. **Welfare of Victims:** Given that 259 died and 479 were injured, the committee recommended a program to ensure the long-term well-being of surviving family members, uninterrupted treatment for the injured, livelihood support for the permanently disabled, psychological support for the traumatized (including children), and an environment for affected students to continue their education without hindrance. While some compensation was paid, the state has not taken proper measures for their long-term welfare.
10. **Regulation of Schools Teaching Islam:** The committee recommended bringing all Madrasas back under the Ministry of Education as they were before 1986 and establishing a formal program to regulate other religious schools. No such program is observed.

11. **Formal Procedure for Constructing New Mosques:** A recommendation to create a proper procedure for this has not been implemented.
12. **Establishment of a Ministry for All Religions:** Instead of separate ministries for different religions, the committee recommended one Ministry of Religious Affairs with directors for each religion under one Secretary. Currently, the ministry is titled "Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs".
13. **Building Sustainable Harmony Between Races and Religions:** A program to rebuild trust between ethnicities broken by the attack was recommended. However, during subsequent election cycles and the COVID-19 pandemic, several activities occurred that intensified ethnic discord.
14. **Protection of Traditional Muslim People:** The committee suggested a government program to ensure the safety of traditional Muslims who had faced harassment from a small group of extremists. While no specific program was observed, there were no reports of traditional Muslims being mistreated by extremist groups after the attack.
15. **Formalizing the Issuance of Explosives:** The committee recommended completely reorganizing and making the process for issuing explosives more efficient. It is unclear if this has been implemented.
16. **Regulation of Materials Used to Make Bombs:** A program was recommended to regulate the purchase of substances like Nitric and Urea. It is unknown if this was fulfilled.
17. **Small-Scale Intentional Laboratories:** It was recommended that security forces and the public be made aware of such labs, but this did not happen in practice.
18. **Visa and Citizenship Procedures:** The committee proposed formalizing the visa system and creating a shared computer network between the Department of Immigration and Emigration, the Department for Registration of Persons, and the Sri Lanka Police to share information.
19. **Reorganizing Community Committees:** A recommendation to reorganize police community committees was made, but many remain inactive.
20. **Intelligence Coordination Meetings:** It was recommended that weekly intelligence meetings held by the Ministry of Defense be formalized under a legal framework, which has yet to happen.
21. **Security Council:** The committee insisted the Security Council be made a statutory body under legal provisions. This has not been implemented.
22. **National Security:** The committee recommended that national security never be underestimated and always be given priority regardless of the circumstances.

23. Recommendations Regarding Allegations Against Certain Muslim Politicians: The committee called for a full investigation into allegations that certain Muslim politicians encouraged terrorist organizations. Investigations were conducted under the Gotabaya Rajapaksa government after November 2019, but the allegations were not proven.

24. Need for a Full-Powered Presidential Commission: The committee noted the urgent need to uncover whether the attack was carried out solely by Zahran Hashim's group or if "invisible forces" were behind it, and recommended appointing a full-powered commission representing all ethnicities. Based on this, President Maithripala Sirisena appointed a commission under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, though not under the Special Presidential Commissions of Inquiry Act.

Evidence given by committee members before the Parliamentary Select Committee revealed serious doubts about the accountability of certain officers, even if not explicitly in the final recommendations. Justice Malalgoda stated that they had to include the statement of the Senior DIG of the Eastern Province as an annexure because the officer claimed to know nothing, asserting the area was "very peaceful". Malalgoda expressed shock that a high-ranking officer would make such a statement.

Justice Malalgoda also testified regarding the performance of the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID), stating that, as a specialized unit under a DIG, they could not simply "wash their hands" after sending a report. The TID Director testified that they had sent a report and filed another because they hadn't met the Attorney General, but the committee found that the report only asked for instructions. Justice Malalgoda noted that it is dangerous for the Attorney General to give an opinion without a full file, as the blame would eventually fall on the AG's Department while the Police Department "washes its hands". It was revealed that the TID had only sent a 10-15 page report to the Attorney General regarding Zahran Hashim, not the complete file.

Another noteworthy point was that among nearly 60 witnesses, the only statement that remained unsigned was that of the then-Defense Secretary. After giving his statement, he was asked to return the next day to read and sign it, but he then attempted to change almost his entire statement. The committee informed him that because his statement was recorded, any changes must be provided via affidavit; he never provided one. The committee believed he had almost completely changed his initial stance based on outside advice received later.

Furthermore, regarding the intelligence review meeting on 09 April 2019, committee member and retired IGP N.K. Illangakoon told the Parliamentary Select Committee that Nilantha Jayawardena (SIS) did not discuss the intelligence he had received because the DMI held the stance that Zahran had fled to India. The SIS denied this.

The fact that the DMI maintained Zahran Hashim was not in Sri Lanka while he was actually in the country is a very serious situation. Testimony from committee members suggests that Director of SIS Nilantha Jayawardena provided very critical evidence to this first committee.

CSR's Stance on This Committee:

The evidence provided to this initial committee can be the most authentic, as it was given before parties had a chance to alter their statements to avoid future repercussions. Former President Maithripala Sirisena also stated in the Parliamentary Select Committee that some officers later changed their testimony to escape accusations. Therefore, the CSR considers the evidence given to this committee to be extremely important. The observations regarding the DMI's belief that Zahran was abroad are particularly significant. The CSR emphasizes the importance of providing the statements and recordings of individuals like Nilantha Jayawardena to current investigators. The President should recall these documents from the National Archives and hand them to the CID, and the full report, including the evidence volume, should be made public to satisfy the "Right to Truth"

Chapter 3

Maithripala also Questioned Military Intelligence Activities – The Story of the Parliamentary Select Committee

Following the committee led by Justice Vijith Malalgoda, the Sri Lankan Parliament established a special committee to investigate the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks. A proposal was presented to the Speaker on 09th May 2019, signed by 40 Members of Parliament, and was passed with amendments on 22nd May 2019. Signatories included government MPs as well as opposition members such as Nalinda Jayatissa and Sunil Handunnetti from the National People's Power, Udaya Gammanpila and Vasudeva Nanayakkara from the United People's Freedom Alliance, and Dharmalingam Siddharthan from the Tamil National Alliance.

The Speaker announced the appointment of an eight-member committee on 23rd May 2019:

1. Deputy Speaker J.M. Ananda Kumarasiri (Chairman)
2. Rauff Hakeem
3. Ravi Karunanayake
4. Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka
5. Kavinda Heshan Jayawardena (resigned; replaced by Rajitha Senaratne)
6. Ashu Marasinghe
7. Dr. Jayampathy Wickramaratne
8. M.A. Sumanthiran

Nalinda Jayatissa was also named as a member. A distinctive feature of this committee was that its hearings were open to the media, except in limited circumstances. The committee met 19 times between 23rd May and 20th September 2019, recording statements from nearly 50 individuals, starting with Defense Secretary General S.H.S. Kottegoda and Chief of National Intelligence Sisira Mendis, and concluding with former President Maithripala Sirisena. The report was presented to Parliament on 23rd October 2019.

Key Revelations

A significant point in the report was that the 2018 constitutional crisis had a direct impact on Sri Lanka's governance and security. Evidence received by the committee was classified under eight categories:

- Security and intelligence framework issues.

- Failure to take adequate steps to monitor and control the rise of religious extremism in areas like Kattankudy.
- Government inaction against rising extremism which fostered the growth of Islamic extremism.
- Failure to act on various prior warnings and complaints.
- Lack of trust and coordination between the Police and the Attorney General's Department, resulting in inter-institutional communication gaps.
- The spread of Wahhabism and Arabization within Kattankudy.
- Allegations of political involvement in the Easter attacks.
- Culpability

The committee stated that evidence showed intelligence agencies were aware of the threats posed by the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ), Zahran, and his associates before the attack. Multiple agencies were informed. Senior DIG Nilantha Jayawardena, then Director of the State Intelligence Service (SIS), testified that the SIS provided a list of 94 radicalized individuals on 31st October 2017, followed by another list of 129 names in February 2019. A person named Jameel, who died at the Tropical Inn lodge, was at the top of that list, and six to seven individuals from the 2017 list were killed in the Easter attacks.

Jayawardena further testified that intelligence regarding an imminent suicide blast by Zahran and his followers was received via WhatsApp on 4th April 2019, and in writing on 5th April from two different sources. While the Army Commander told the committee the Army was unaware of these warnings until the attack, the SIS Director testified that the information was sent to the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) on 19th April. The committee questioned why the DMI failed to inform the Army Commander, calling it a serious matter requiring further investigation. This occurred amidst military leadership changes and the reinstatement of Major Prabath Bulathwatte to military intelligence.

Doubts Regarding Military Intelligence

Former President Maithripala Sirisena expressed shock at the DMI's performance, noting that despite having 7,000 personnel and seven regiments, not a single word regarding the incident was reported. He questioned what they were doing and noted that while such matters are not ideal for public discussion, the lack of reports from the country's largest intelligence wing was problematic.

The committee expressed amazement that the military intelligence network, with its strong informant base, failed to gather this information. The report concluded that "the tragedy was the result of actions taken over the years by intelligence wings and parties with hidden interests." It questioned how individuals like Zahran and Rilwan evaded police despite arrest warrants and highlighted the role of "Army Mohideen," who was identified as an associate of Zahran and a

military intelligence informant. The committee questioned why the DMI failed to notify authorities about his activities or those of Zahran's network in the East.

Recommendations

The committee questioned whether allowing the attack was intended to demonstrate a lack of control by the Sirisena-Wickremesinghe government to fuel a demand for a change in leadership. The committee's recommendations included:

1. Security and Intelligence Reforms: Establishing a legal and structured system for national security and the National Security Council.
2. Financial Monitoring: Strengthening the Financial Intelligence Unit and monitoring large or suspicious transactions.
3. Controlling Religious Extremism.
4. Reforming the Attorney General's Department.
5. Media and Information Control.
6. Education Reforms.

CSR's Stance

The Centre for Society and Religion (CSR) observes that the most critical revelation involves the conduct of the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), which even raised the suspicions of former President Sirisena. The CSR notes that despite these findings, a proper criminal investigation did not begin until November 2024, following revelations by Channel 4. The CSR remains skeptical of new legislation proposed by the committee, fearing it may be used for political suppression rather than its intended purpose, and emphasizes that reforms must involve transparent consultation with all relevant parties.

Chapter 4

PCOI Does Not Fully Accept Rohan's 'Abu Hind' Story – The Story of the Justice Janak de Silva Commission

Among the committees and commissions appointed regarding the Easter attacks, the structure that took the longest time and recorded evidence from the largest number of people was the Presidential Commission of Inquiry appointed under the chairmanship of Justice Janak de Silva. According to the law in Sri Lanka, the President can appoint two types of commissions: the first is under the Commissions of Inquiry Act No. 17 of 1948 (as amended), and the second is the Special Presidential Commissions of Inquiry (Special Provisions) Act No. 04 of 1978. A Special Presidential Commission is granted broad powers, including the power to declare civic disabilities based on its findings. Regarding the Easter Sunday terrorist attack, President Maithripala Sirisena appointed a commission of inquiry under the Commissions of Inquiry Act No. 17 of 1948.

The members of this commission, appointed via Gazette Notification No. 2141/88 dated 21st September 2019, were as follows:

1. Court of Appeal Judge Janak de Silva (now a Supreme Court Judge)
2. Court of Appeal Judge Nissanka Bandula Karunaratne (now retired)
3. Retired Court of Appeal Judge Nihal Sunil Rajapaksa
4. Retired High Court Judge Bandula Kumara Atapattu
5. Retired Ministry Secretary W.M.M.R. Adikari

Mr. Buwaneka Herath served as the Secretary to the Commission. The powers of this commission were expanded and publicized again in Extraordinary Gazette No. 2146 dated 22nd October 2019.

Upon appointing this commission, the President issued 13 main orders to it. These included: receiving complaints regarding the 21st April 2019 attack and preceding events; summoning evidence and conducting impartial investigations into received information; identifying those responsible; identifying those who failed to take proper action against extremism; identifying those who committed lapses or neglected their duties; identifying persons and organizations that instigated, abetted, or sponsored actions causing racial and religious discord or inciting the public; understanding the factors and nature of the 21st April attack; and presenting recommendations necessary to prevent such incidents in the future. The Commission mentioned in its final report that it was appointed by the President following a recommendation from the Justice Vijith Malalgoda Committee and a request from His

Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo. Accordingly, the commission decided to provide legal representation for the Cardinal throughout the period of recording evidence.

Following the commission's appointment, a team of officers from the Attorney General's Department was named to support it, and a team from the Sri Lanka Police was attached to record statements and conduct certain investigations before evidence was heard. Representing the Attorney General's Department, Senior Additional Solicitor General Sarath Jayamanne PC raised an objection regarding the hearing of evidence from persons currently in custody or detention regarding the Easter attack. However, this objection was overruled by a majority opinion of the commission members. During this process, the commission's police unit recorded 1,588 statements, and after considering them, 457 persons were summoned to testify. Their evidence was recorded on over 37,314 pages, and 2,377 documents including 206 books and audio-visual recordings were submitted as evidence. Field inspections were also conducted in several locations (including Kochchikade, Katuwapitiya, Kattankudy, Sainthamaruthu, Sammanthurai, and Nintavur). The commission's report, along with the final report, consisted of six volumes:

1. Volume One: Final Report (comprising 32 chapters)
2. Volume Two: Consists of three parts: Part One (Open Evidence), Part Two (Confidential Evidence), and Part Three (Evidence recorded partly in open court and partly in confidence).
3. Volume Three: Documents marked by the commission as 'C'.
4. Volume Four: Documents marked by the commission as 'X'.
5. Volume Five: Documents submitted personally by witnesses or their lawyers.
6. Volume Six: Index of marked documents in the volumes.

The statements recorded by the commission's police unit are not included as a volume. Out of the six main volumes and the police statements, only Volume One (the final report) has been made public so far. Following two appeals filed by the Centre for Society and Religion (CSR) requesting the statements of certain witnesses in Volume Two, the Right to Information (RTI) Commission ruled that the open evidence and the open portions of the mixed evidence must be released to the appellant. However, the Presidential Secretariat and the Attorney General's Department have filed two appeal petitions in the Court of Appeal against this decision.

The Commission noted that Zahran Hashim, leader of the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ), began criticizing Sri Lanka's democratic governance structure in late 2017 and early

2018. It also noted that Zahran connected with a person named 'Abu Hind' allegedly based in India in late 2017. Abu Hind was also in contact with Naufer Moulavi, and they reportedly conversed in Tamil via Threema and Telegram apps. Zahran held his first training camp in late 2017 (November). The report does not clearly state whether the connection with Abu Hind influenced Zahran's shift toward criticizing democratic structures or holding training camps. However, quoting a statement by former Director of the State Intelligence Service (SIS) Nilantha Jayawardena, the commission's final report mentions that 'Abu Hind' was identified as a party likely to have incited the attack. Mr. Jayawardena likely made this statement based on sufficient reasons. Nevertheless, testifying before the commission on 19th January 2021, Professor Rohan Gunaratna claimed that Abu Hind was a code name created by an Indian intelligence agency. He stated:

"I am not privy to what feedback Nilantha Jayawardena gave Q Branch but what I would like to share with you is what I have been informed by the Q Branch about the information that they developed and how they developed that information and intelligence."

'Q Branch operated a virtual persona and I will explain what a virtual persona is. That is security and intelligence services have many methods of collecting information and intelligence. And one of the techniques that they are using is that they will create a virtual personality, that is they will put on the website and say a person who is a beautiful picture of a girl and they may get someone else to communicate as if that person is a girl. And that person will tell anyone they want to trap or lever o.k. like a girl look I really want to meet you please come to the airport and see me. And when that person comes to the airport that person will be arrested. So virtual persona is a person who is created by intelligence services to penetrate or infiltrate threat organizations or enemy organizations or opponents. So Q Branch created several personas that portray that project that they are terrorists or terrorist supporters or terrorist leaders, or terrorist ideologues or terrorist financiers so they will create these characters these virtual characters and these virtual characters are operated by intelligence officers. These intelligence officers know for example if they are penetrating Muslim terrorist organizations they know about Muslim prayer time. So during prayer was they will not communicate to anyone. Then they know when someone greets you say Assalam Aleikkum, then you will say Alaikum Salane Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh Wallabi. So they know all the ways to greet right. Then they know how to address them. So for example if they speak to Rilvan they will sometimes use his Abu name right. Say they may call him Abukithal. If they speak to Zaharan they will use the word Abuveda. So they will know how to engage those people. So these are people who are highly trained to build relationships and to exploit those targets for information and intelligence. So sometimes they will adapt their virtual persona to engage their target meaning the person whom they are eliciting information and build a friendship, build a rapport and sometimes these relationships are very long term relationships. So that is the type of personality the Tamil Nadu Q Branch created in order to penetrate the Islamic State of Sri Lanka.'

‘The name Abuhind. Abuhind is the name that was created by the Q Branch as a virtual persona in order to build contact, relationship with Zaharan and subsequently through Zaharan they were able to communicate with the following personalities. That is Abuhind communicated other than Zaharan, with Zahini Zahini Maulavi, with Rilvan also known as Jalal kithal then with Naufer although Naufer didn’t have the phone number of Abuhind, he spoke to Abuhind a few times, with Milhan. Milhan also didn’t have the phone number but spoke to Abuhind a few times.’

‘Yes in fact when the Indian Service provided the information to the Sri Lankan Service they thought that Rilvan and Jalal kithal are two different people because it is because Zaharan didn’t tell everything to Abuhind. Zaharan was a very cautious man that is why he was so successful in the Easter attack he didn’t divulge say all the targets that he took, for example he mentioned I am going to attack a Church. I am going to attack a hotel. But he didn’t mention that I am going to attack Kingsbury I am going to attack Taj, I am going to attack Cinnamon Grand, I am going to attack Shangri-la. He also didn’t mention that he was going attack a Church in Batticaloa, another Church in Katuwapitiya, another Church in Colombo. So Zaharan didn’t comprehensively reveal his plan to Abuhind but he mentioned to him Abuhind I am going to mount attacks on this particular date.’

While according to Nilantha Jayawardena, Abu Hind was a party involved in inciting the attack, according to Rohan Gunaratna, Abu Hind was merely a name used by the Tamil Nadu Q Branch to gather information. If Abu Hind only gathered information, a serious doubt arises as to whether the Indian Defense Secretary would visit Sri Lanka about a week after their intelligence wing had provided information to Sri Lanka on 4th April regarding an imminent attack. Regarding Abu Hind, the commission ultimately stated that investigations into his identity must continue. If the commission had fully accepted Rohan Gunaratna’s testimony, there would be no need to recommend further investigation. This suggests the commission had some suspicion regarding Abu Hind.

Another important observation of the commission was regarding Sarah Jasmine. The commission mentioned in its final report that it received evidence from two witnesses suggesting Sarah is still alive. One primary piece of evidence is from Zahran’s wife, Fathima Hadiya. Taking this evidence into account, the commission recommended that investigations into Sarah continue.

The commission provided numerous recommendations in its report. While there is a separate chapter for recommendations, important ones were also included within other chapters. It also included recommendations regarding steps to be taken against parties responsible for failing to prevent the attack. A summary of selected recommendations follows:

1. Enforce the law against those who failed to prevent the attack despite receiving information regarding a plot by Zahran Hashim.
2. Establish a dedicated prosecution unit in the Attorney General's Department to handle terrorism-related matters and complaints, provide them specialized training, and ensure they are not assigned other duties. Establish a monthly review meeting mechanism between the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) and other relevant agencies.
3. Implement a quarterly file review mechanism in all sections of the Attorney General's Department.
4. Amend the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and the proposed Counter-Terrorism Bill.
5. Ban several organizations identified as extremist.
6. Closely monitor organizations like Sinhala Ravaya, Mahasohon Balakaya, Sinhale Jathika Balamuluwa, Sinhale Jathika Sanvidhanaya, and the Shiva Senai movement, and take legal action if extremist activities occur.
7. Provide adequate compensation and welfare for victims (2 million LKR for each deceased person).
8. Prosecute those involved in the violence that erupted after the Easter attack and compensate victims.
9. Introduce regulations regarding the establishment of places of worship.
10. Ensure public safety and prevent the recurrence of such incidents.
11. The government must fully regulate airspace, including the use of drone cameras.
12. Create a platform for the public to raise concerns, establish an effective judicial system, and take practical steps to build good governance.
13. Amend Act No. 51 of 2000 to ensure the Sufi Muslim community is adequately represented within the structure of the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU).
14. Create a special police unit at national and provincial levels to protect all ancient religious monuments.
15. Amend laws to allow witnesses in foreign countries to testify without visiting a Sri Lankan mission or institution.
16. Commend Police Sergeant Suminda Nihal Weerasinghe for his bravery during the 26th April Sainthamaruthu incident.

17. Review and amend the Companies Act registration process and prohibit the registration of religious schools under the Companies Act.
18. Provide financial assistance and security for Mohamed Taslim for further treatment in the UK.
19. Reward the next of kin of the late Mr. Ramesh Raju of Zion Church, Batticaloa, for his bravery which minimized the death toll.
20. Confiscate all assets, including businesses, belonging to the suicide bombers.
21. Ensure that two or more investigative agencies do not investigate the same matter without specific permission and that there is coordination between them.
22. Introduce legal provisions to prevent politicians from contacting any police officer during criminal investigations.
23. Provide provisions for the arrest without warrant of persons suspected of involvement in inciting religious or ethnic disharmony.
24. Establish High Courts to hear and conclude all criminal cases related to the Easter Sunday attack and terrorism, provide special protection and training to judges, and hear these cases daily.
25. Investigate and take legal action regarding extremist religious websites and blogs in cyberspace.
26. Regulate all Daham schools, Sunday schools, Ahadiya, and Thakiya schools under a single government institution.
27. Ensure the Ministry of Defense remains under the President, and if the President travels abroad, an Acting Defense Minister must be appointed.
28. Implement an efficient rehabilitation process to deradicalize religious extremists.
29. Free schools from divisions based on Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, or Islamic religions, and ensure every school has a student population representing the country's religious composition.
30. Teach a new subject called 'Religious Education' to all students regardless of their religion (teaching basics of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam as a mandatory subject for grades 1 to 10).
31. Examine all religious books used by national, provincial, and international school students to check for direct or indirect extremist or terrorist literature.

32. Make education in recognized government or private institutions mandatory for all children aged 5 to 18. (Children should not be taught only at home).
33. Make education mandatory up to Grade 13 for all children regardless of gender.
34. Reform syllabi.
35. Change the electoral system.
36. Regulate explosives and weapons.
37. Strengthen extradition laws to take steps for the deportation of terror suspects in foreign countries.
38. Make changes to the financial system and formalize the reporting of financial transactions.
39. Impose visa conditions stating that foreigners must not conduct any religious lectures, discussions, or seminars without specific permission.
40. Regulate the flow of foreign funds to religious places.
41. Establish a National Intelligence Agency and carry out necessary intelligence reforms.
42. Carry out necessary reforms in the Sri Lanka Police.
43. Prohibit the registration of political parties based on religious reasons and beliefs.
44. Create a broad legal framework to prevent the incitement of ethnic and religious hatred.
45. Appoint a Presidential Task Force to conduct an audit of all state lands in the country.
46. Amend the Voluntary Social Service Organizations Act.

Recommendations on Individual Accountability

1. President Maithripala Sirisena: The commission is of the view that Mr. Sirisena has criminal liability for the actions or omissions detailed in the report and recommends the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution under the Penal Code.
2. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe: The commission believes his lenient approach toward Islamic extremism as Prime Minister was a major reason for the government's failure to take active steps. No recommendation for action against him was made.

3. Defense Secretary Hemasiri Fernando: The commission believes he has criminal liability for the actions/omissions described and recommends the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution under the Penal Code.
4. Chief of National Intelligence Sisira Mendis: The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution under the Penal Code.
5. Director of SIS Nilantha Jayawardena: The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution under the Penal Code.
6. IGP Pujith Jayasundara: The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution under the Penal Code.
7. STF Commandant M.R. Latiff: The commission noted it was surprising he did not instruct his intelligence divisions to act on the intelligence received but did not recommend action against him.
8. Senior DIG Nandana Munasinghe: The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends criminal prosecution under the Penal Code or Section 82 of the Police Ordinance.
9. DIG Deshabandu Tennakoon: The commission noted he acted merely as a messenger and failed to perform his duties, recommending a disciplinary inquiry.
10. SP Sanjeewa Bandara: The commission believes he has criminal liability (including aiding the preparation of false documents) and recommends criminal prosecution under the Penal Code or Section 82 of the Police Ordinance.
11. SSP Chandana Atukorala: The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends criminal prosecution under the Penal Code or Section 82 of the Police Ordinance.
12. SP B.E.I. Prasanna (Western Province Intelligence): The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends criminal prosecution under the Penal Code or Section 82 of the Police Ordinance.
13. ASP Sisila Kumara: The commission noted he failed to properly control the police stations under him according to received information, recommending a disciplinary inquiry.

14. Acting OIC Fort, CI R.M. Sarath Kumarasinghe: The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends criminal prosecution under the Penal Code or Section 82 of the Police Ordinance.
15. OIC Fort, CI M. Sagara Villegoda Liyanage: The commission believes he has criminal liability and recommends criminal prosecution under the Penal Code or Section 82 of the Police Ordinance.
16. OIC Katana, Chaminda Navaratne: The commission noted he failed to perform his duties and recommended a disciplinary inquiry.
17. Deputy Solicitor General Azad Navavi: The commission observed he should have supervised the file provided by the TID and recommended the Public Service Commission consider disciplinary action.
18. Ven. Galagodaaththe Gnanasara Thero: The commission believes he partially contributed to the radicalization of Muslim youth. It recommended the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution under the ICCPR Act for speeches made in Maharagama (2013) and Aluthgama (2014) and recommended banning his organization, Bodu Bala Sena (BBS).
19. Rishad Bathiudeen: The commission recommended the Attorney General consider criminal charges under the Penal Code for contacting the Army Commander to inquire about an individual.
20. Chairman of Industrial Development Board, Gamini Jinasena: The commission noted he arbitrarily issued large quantities of scrap to Colossus Pvt Ltd (owned by bomber Inshaf) without proper consensus, causing a 4.6 million LKR loss to the state. It recommended referral to the Bribery Commission.
21. Riyaj Bathiudeen: The commission recommended an investigation following reports of phone calls between him and bomber Inshaf.
22. Dr. Muhammad Suffiyan Muhammad Safraz: He reportedly referred bomber Rilwan to the National Hospital for treatment for injuries sustained during a bomb test in 2018. The commission recommended the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution for failing to provide information under Section 5 of the PTA.
23. Razik Rafaideen alias Abdul Razik: The commission recommended a speedy consideration of criminal charges.
24. Rashid Hajjul Akbar: The commission recommended the Attorney General consider criminal prosecution for conspiring to establish an Islamic State in Sri Lanka.

CSR Stance on the Commission

The Centre for Society and Religion (CSR) acknowledges that this commission conducted a complex investigation over a long period, recording over 1,000 statements and 400 testimonies, and provided important recommendations. However, the CSR disagrees with a small number of recommendations due to the arbitrary and politically motivated actions of Sri Lanka's law enforcement agencies. Laws intended to protect civil and political rights (like the ICCPR Act) have often been misused to suppress those very rights. Furthermore, the PTA has become a tool for rights suppression. The CSR believes implementing certain recommendations within a context where laws like the Computer Crimes Act and the Public Security Ordinance are misused could lead to serious rights violations. Aside from these, the other recommendations should be implemented; yet five years later, a vast majority remain unfulfilled.

The CSR also observes that while very important facts were revealed by certain witnesses, some were not included in the final report. Therefore, the CSR maintains that all volumes of the commission's report, not just the final one, must be publicized for the information of interested parties.

Chapter Five

Clearing the Accused After Hearing Evidence from the Accused Themselves – The Story of the Justice S.I. Imam Committee

On 5th September 2023, the British Channel 4 network aired a documentary program presenting a special disclosure regarding one of the largest conspiracies in Sri Lanka's recent history. It alleged that the attack on 21st April 2019 was not merely carried out by Zahran's gang but was the result of an organized conspiracy with political and intelligence links aimed at a political power shift. Furthermore, it was mentioned that Suresh Salle, who was the Director of Military Intelligence (DMI) and was the Director of the State Intelligence Service (SIS) at the time of the Channel 4 disclosure, was behind it. The documentary was largely based on a statement made by a person named Hanzeer Azad Maulana. Even before an investigation into the Channel 4 disclosure was held, the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defense issued a statement on 9th September 2023, rejecting and condemning the allegations. That statement included the following:

"The Ministry of Defence vehemently denounces the accusation of orchestrating the attack and assisting the bombers against a dedicated senior military officer who has served the nation for 36 years. Major General Suresh Sallay served at the Sri Lanka High Commission in Malaysia as Minister-Counsellor from December 2016 until December 2018. He left for India on 3rd January 2019 and returned to Sri Lanka on 30th November 2019 after completing the National Defence College Course in Delhi. This officer was never in Sri Lanka during the period mentioned in the Channel 4 video documentary. Furthermore, during the said period (December 2016 to November 2019), this officer was not employed in the Intelligence and Security Apparatus of the country, nor did he hold any official responsibilities in those fields. The Ministry of Defence also reiterates that no terrorists involved in the Easter Sunday attack have ever been on the government payroll. Therefore, the Ministry of Defence categorically refutes these outrageous allegations and expresses profound dismay at Channel 4 for promulgating such a malicious and unsubstantiated narrative."

At the time Channel 4 made the relevant disclosure, Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe was both the President and the Minister of Defense of Sri Lanka. Accordingly, after the Ministry under Ranil Wickremesinghe issued statements in all three languages rejecting the Channel 4 allegations, he himself appointed a committee on 11th September 2023, to investigate the claims. The committee was as follows:

1. Retired Supreme Court Justice S.I. Imam – Chairman
2. Retired Air Force Commander Jayalath Weerakkody – Member
3. President's Counsel Harsha A.J. Soza – Member

The Presidential Secretariat provided this committee with a CD containing the Channel 4 video along with their appointment letters, which stated that the report on the allegations must be handed over to the President by 31st October 2023. This committee met for the first time on 14th September 2023. It was a committee with no powers, and the committee noted this in its report:

“We had our first meeting on 14th September 2023. We considered the scope and ambit of our mandate and found that our mandate (vide annex marked Y) is limited, and that we were a fact-finding committee. We had no power to compel the attendance of anyone to testify before us. The meetings of the committee were invariably at the Presidential Secretariat.”

The committee sent notices to 12 individuals to obtain information, but only a few appeared to provide statements. Additionally, on 29th October 2023 notably just two days before the deadline to submit the report the committee published a newspaper advertisement asking the public for information on the whereabouts of Azad Maulana and his address. The committee also recorded in its report that the Ministry of Defense had already rejected the allegations.

Regarding the failure to obtain a statement from Hanzeer Azad Maulana, the committee stated:

“We have made every effort to trace the whereabouts of Azad Maulana, but we have not been successful. The email sent to him to his last known address has not even been opened. Azad Maulana has failed to appear before us and testify regarding the allegations he has made in the Channel - 4 broadcast..”

In reality, the committee failed to locate Azad Maulana and provide proper notice; it was not a case of Maulana refusing to appear. The committee identified 24 allegations presented by Azad Maulana through Channel 4, which are summarized below:

- (i) There was a direct relationship between a senior Sri Lankan intelligence official and the terrorist group which carried out the bombings;
- (ii) A plan was hatched to create chaos and fear to bring back to power Mahinda and Gotabaya Rajapaksa; they are two brothers who had ruled Sri Lanka for a decade but who had been ousted from power a few years ago;
- (iii) A senior Sri Lankan intelligence agent met with the suicide bombers prior to the Easter Sunday attacks and Azad Maulana claims to have seen this meeting;
- (iv) The attack was not planned in just one or two days. It has been planned for two or three years. It was a very big plan;
- (v) Zaini Hashim Maulavi was held in prison on charges of religious extremism. His brother Zaharan was in hiding, and recruiting followers for the National Tawheed Jamaat or NTJ. The NTJ was an Islamic extremist group who wanted to turn Sri Lanka into a caliphate. They want death, death, death. They want to go to paradise. Pilleyan says we can use this group and that they are not interested in anything in the world. They have been released three months later;

(vi) In January 2018 on the orders of Pilleyan a meeting has been organized between Suresh Sallay and the above group;

(vii) Suresh Sallay is a soldier who became a spy. The Rajapaksas championed his career. He was promoted through the ranks, and appointed Director of Military Intelligence. After the Rajapaksas lost the 2015 elections, Suresh Sallay was posted to Malaysia by the new government. He was still seen as fiercely loyal to his former bosses who influenced him behind the scenes.

(viii) As told by Maulana to the Investigators Pilleyan had requested to arrange a meeting between Suresh Sallay, and the man he had helped to free from prison referring obviously to Zaini Hashim Maulavi.

(ix) The exact location where the meeting was to be held is Karadiyapuval. Azad Mautana states he gave the information to the group to come to the aforesaid place which is a big coconut farm. One house) is there. The said meeting is alleged to have been held in February, 2018.

(x) Intelligence Officer Suresh Sallay was there when he arrived. They waited for NTJ members to turn up. They came in a white van.

(xi) Six people get off from the vehicle. Azad Mautana states Zaini Hassim Maulavi shook hands with him, and introduced his brother Zaharan, and referred to him as the Amir (Leader) of their group. Azad Maulana states he introduced Sallay;

(xii) The meeting had lasted three hours. After the meeting, Suresh Sallay had said Rajapaksas need unsafe situation in Sri Lanka, and that is the only way Gotabaya can become President;

(xiii) Azad Maulana states that at the place where the meeting took place, a huge quantity of explosives had been stashed. A powerful explosive called 'urea nitrate' over 100 kg in weight was found; this information came from a muffled voice, but the identity of the person was not disclosed;

(xiv) The safe house or training base referred to above was managed by Zahran, and they were members of the NTJ Group;

(xv) The police had enough information to arrest Zahran and his NTJ followers, but military intelligence reports later found to be baseless, stifled the investigation at every turn;

(xvi) If military intelligence had not misled, the CID would definitely have found out that the NTJ was involved in the Easter Sunday attack;

(xvii) Rumours of a pending attack were circulating abroad. Two weeks before the said bombings Indian Intelligence had warned the Sri Lankan counterparts that Zahran was planning an attack;

(xviii) A top police official read the warnings, and he tried to raise an alarm; he had sent a memo to the security services - the intelligence even specified Catholic Churches as possible targets. Shortly after the attacks the top government officials said the warnings never reached them nor the President;

(xix) On Easter Sunday morning, about 200 miles away on Sri Lanka's Eastern Coast Maulana states he received an unexpected telephone call from Suresh Sallay. Azad Maulana states he was told to go to the Taj Samudra Hotel, and to take into his vehicle a person who is waiting for him. Azad Maulana had been instructed to take his phone and to drop him off where he wanted. But Azad Maulana had informed Suresh Sallay that he was in Batticaloa;

(xx) The CCTV footage from the Taj Samudra Hotel showed a member of Zahran's NTJ group in the restaurant at 8.50 in the morning. He was wearing a backpack laden with explosives. Azad Maulana states that he now believes that he was the man whom Suresh Sallay wanted him to meet in the Taj Samudra Hotel;

(xxi) The person who was in the restaurant in the Taj Samudra Hotel was the person who exploded the bomb in the Tropical Inn Hotel, Dehiwala killing himself and two others;

(xxii) Azad Maulana states the police were prevented from interrogating Suresh Sallay by military intelligence because he was Gotabaya Rajapaksa's most trusted confidante in the intelligence services;

(xxiii) Suresh Sallay played a huge role in the Easter Sunday bomb attack. He facilitated it. He knew about the suicide bombers especially Zahran, and his involvement;

(xxiv) After taking office as President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa derailed the investigation into the bombing;

It is noteworthy that this committee primarily investigated these allegations through the statements of the two main individuals accused. The committee stated in its report:

“Considering the aforesaid allegations made in the said Channel 4 broadcast regarding the Easter Sunday bombings in April 2019, we find that the persons against whom the said allegations have been directly and specifically made are Sivanesathurai Santhirakantian (Pilleyan) and Suresh Sallay. According to the said statement of Azad Maulana the plans for the said Easter Sunday bomb attacks were orchestrated for the benefit of former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to win the Presidential Election. Except for hearsay statements that the Rajapaksas wanted an unsafe situation for Gotabhaya to become President, Azad Maulana's statement did not manifest any evidence of Gotabaya Rajapaksa's involvement in the plans for the said Easter Sunday bomb attacks in April, 2019. Azad Maulana did not appear before us to explain and clarify his statement. The evidence of Pilleyan and Suresh Sallay did not support the allegations of Azad Maulana. We did not, therefore, send any notices requesting the former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to testify before us. He did not respond to the general press notice either. We, however, sent notices to Pilleyan and Suresh Sallay, and they testified before us..”

The report shows that the committee's attempt to investigate the Channel 4 allegations relied primarily on the testimony of the accused. It is impossible to expect a person involved in such a serious matter to admit guilt, even if the allegations were true. Azad Maulana's background was

confirmed by Pillayan's testimony; Pillayan admitted that Maulana had been his secretary, as Maulana claimed. Pillayan also noted they were close associates. Justice Imam's committee report states:

"When Pilleyan was Chief Minister, Azad Maulana had been his Co-ordinating Secretary. His private secretary was Nandakovan who was later shot dead. After Nandakovan's death Azad Maulana had become Pilleyan's private secretary. It appears from the evidence of Pilleyan that he had been Chief Minister till 2012. Azad Maulana had been an Executive Committee Member of the TMVP from 2012 to 2022. Azad Maulana had left the country in 2022. Pilleyan's evidence is that Azad Maulana had also worked as an agent for American Waters in the Eastern province.

Pilleyan was questioned regarding the variations of Azad Maulana's name. He confirmed that the name Hanzeer Azad Maulana and its variations refer to one and the same person. Pilleyan stated that he has not seen the Channel - 4 programme. He states that he has read the Channel - 4 broadcast translated and written in Tamil. A part of the Channel - 4 CD programme was played on the screen (vide transcript annexed marked Xi), and he identified Hanzeer Azad Maulana. Pilleyan said that Hanzeer Azad Maulana has been to foreign countries many times during the period 2015 to 2020. Even pilleyan has travelled to foreign countries with Hanzeer Azad Maulana, It appears from the evidence that Pilleyan and Hanzeer Azad Maulana have been close to each other.

Pilleyan had not felt that Azad Maulana had connections with Zahran, but there was a bomb blast in which Zahran's brother Rilvan was involved, and a doctor from the same village where Maulana is from treated the wounded Rilvan. It appears that Azad Maulana had helped the doctor to escape from Sri Lanka. Rilvan is the youngest brother of Zahtan. He lost a hand when he was checking a motorcycle in Batticaioa, and a bomb exploded. Five days after the Easter bombings, Rilvan was killed, according to Pilleyan, along with Zahran's family and children in the Sainthamarathu explosion. Azad Maulana and the doctor who treated Rilvan are from the village of Marathamunai. The doctor's name is Dr. Shafras. He is a neighbour of Azad Maulana at Ebenezer Road (place), Dehiwela and at Kattankudy. It is thus reasonable to state that Azad Maulana was probably in league with Zahran. This may be a reason why Azad Maulana does not wish to live in Sri Lanka."

The CSR observes that it is unlikely Pillayan, who knew so much about Maulana, was unaware of these links. Further investigation should have focused on whether Pillayan denied Maulana's links to Zahran because revealing them would expose Pillayan's own connections to those parties. Instead, the committee simply relied on Pillayan's statements.

After analyzing Pillayan's statement, the committee described the statement of the other accused, Tuan Suresh Salle. Most of that analysis included events mentioned by Salle that were not directly relevant to him. For example, Salle testified about Nilantha Jayawardena transmitting intelligence to others; if the committee needed that evidence, they should have obtained it from the relevant parties, not Salle. Regarding the Channel 4 allegations, the committee concluded:

“Sallay was out of the country from 2016 to 2019 November. Sallay's alibi is an irreversible fact. There is no evidence at all to show any involvement on the part of Sallay with Zahran or the members of the National Tawheed Jamaat whose mission in life is death during the aforesaid period and thereafter.”

“Azad Maulana made a fatal blunder in making allegations against Sallay as though he was in Sri Lanka during the material times. The alleged meeting in the coconut estate at Karadiyapuval is demonstrably a hoax. The video clip of the Channel - 4 telecast does not show Sallay at the meeting at Karadiyapuval nor a big coconut farm. Sallay is not seen in any part of the video clip in conversation or interaction with either Zahran or the members of the National Tawheed Jamaat. At the time of the bomb attack in April, 2019, Sallay was in New Delhi following a course in defence studies.”

The committee cleared Salle, stating that Maulana made a serious error claiming Salle was in Sri Lanka during that period. They called the Karadiyapuval meeting a fabricated story, noting that the video did not show Salle at a coconut grove or in conversation with Zahran. However, the report itself mentions Salle returned to Sri Lanka in December 2018. Research by the CSR team shows Salle returned from Malaysia in December 2018 during the 52-day constitutional crisis and left for India on 3rd January 2019. The committee failed to investigate whether Salle engaged in such discussions during this specific time he was in Sri Lanka.

Furthermore, while the committee looked into phone records between Maulana and Pillayan, and Maulana and Zahran, there is no mention of checking for records between Zahran and Suresh Salle or Maulana and Suresh Salle. The report mentioned:

“Chief Inspector Wijayalath Arachchige Sujeewa Gunawardena from the Prevention of Terrorism and Inquiries Division was called specially to ascertain the frequency of telephone calls between Zahran and Azad Maulana, and also Pillayan and Azad Maulana, and the location from which and the period during which such calls were made and received. Nothing useful to our mandate emerged from this endeavour.”

The committee investigated the Wanathawilluwa land by questioning a police sergeant rather than the lead investigators. Based on his statement about the construction date of the house on that land, the committee concluded Maulana's statement was false. However, they did not record statements from actual witnesses associated with the land or verify if the location Maulana mentioned was indeed the Wanathawilluwa site.

The committee presented 05 recommendations:

1. The Security Council should meet as often as possible to evaluate the country's security.
2. Intelligence Units should meet before Security Council meetings to weigh information.
3. Appropriate action should be taken against Azad Maulana for making false allegations via Channel 4; investigations should confirm if he had links to suicide bombers.

4. Security forces must take timely action to prevent damage and loss of life when threat information exists and inform target institutions.
5. Procedures and responsibilities of high-level intelligence services must be clearly defined to ensure compliance.

Only the third recommendation relates to the committee's actual mandate; the other four fall outside its scope.

CSR Stance on This Committee:

The CSR believes this committee was appointed after a Ministry under the President had already reached a predetermined stance. The committee itself admitted it had no power to summon individuals. It cleared the accused based on their own statements and those of a few irrelevant parties. Therefore, the CSR is not satisfied with this committee. The CSR maintains that a full criminal investigation into the Channel 4 allegations is necessary. Although the report was handed to President Ranil Wickremesinghe, he did not publicize it; it was released by former MP Udaya Gammanpila. The CSR demands that all statements and documents related to this committee be made public.

Chapter 06

First Information Regarding Zahran-Pillayan Received in May 2019 – The Story of Criminal Investigation from April 2019 to November 2019

Following the 21st April attacks, the primary criminal investigation was centered at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Additionally, various police stations conducted investigations into other incidents related to the attack as they were recorded. During the initial stage of the CID's investigation, the departmental structure was as follows:

1. Senior DIG Ravi Seneviratne – Senior Deputy Inspector General in charge of the CID.
2. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) – DIG in charge of the Criminal Investigation Department Range.
3. SSP Shani Abeysekera – Director of the CID.

Among these three, Shani Abeysekera, as the Director of the CID, served as the primary supervising officer for these investigations. The officers conducting investigations under his supervision were:

1. Investigation into the Shangri-La Hotel blast: Police Superintendent (SP) P. Ampavila.
2. Investigation into the St. Sebastian's Church blast, Katuwapitiya, Negombo: SP J.P.D. Jayasinghe.
3. Investigation into the Cinnamon Grand Hotel blast: SP Nuwan Asanka.
4. Investigation into the Kingsbury Hotel blast: Assistant Police Superintendent (ASP) B.D.H. Kalanasiri.
5. Investigation into the St. Anthony's Shrine blast, Kochchikade: ASP B.S. Theresa.
6. Investigation into the Zion Church blast, Batticaloa: ASP M.L. Siriwardena.
7. Investigation into the Mahavila Gardens blast: ASP I.U.K. Lokuhetti.

Regarding the blasts on 21st April the Inspector General of Police (IGP) assigned the investigation of the Tropical Inn lodge blast in Dehiwala to the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID). On 1st July 2019, CID Director Shani Abeysekera forwarded the excerpts of the initial investigations conducted by the department to the Attorney General. Information regarding 23 suspects arrested in connection with the investigations was included in that initial investigation report.

1. Mohamed Ibrahim Mohamed Nauffer: Indictments have been filed under case numbers HC TAB 2972/21 in the Colombo High Court, HC 4485/21 in the Kegalle High Court, and HC 107/21 in the Puttalam High Court.

2. Mohamed Ibrahim Sadik Abdullah: Indictments have been filed under case numbers HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo), HC 4409/20 and HC 4485/21 (Kegalle), and HC 107/21 (Puttalam).
3. Mohamed Ibrahim Shahid Abdul Haq: Indictments have been filed under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo) and HC 4485/21 (Kegalle).
4. Mohamed Sharif Adam Lebbe alias Gafur Mama: Indictments have been filed under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo), HC 3421/21 (Batticaloa), HC 4409/20 (Kegalle), and HC 107/21 (Puttalam).
5. Mohamed Anwar Mohamed Rizkan: Indicted under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
6. Mohamed Mansoor Mohamed Sanasdeen: Indicted under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
7. Mohamed Ramesh Mohamed Sajid: Indicted under HC 4485/21 (Kegalle), HC 107/21 (Puttalam), and HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
8. Abdul Manas Mohamed Piridavus: Indicted under HC 3421/21 (Batticaloa) and HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
9. Mohamed Sawair Mohamed Hasan: Indicted under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
10. Fatima Shifana Umarkatha: No information found regarding prosecution.
11. Umar Mohamed Iqbal: No information found regarding prosecution.
12. Abdul Latheef Mohamed Safi: Indicted under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
13. Abdul Kader Fatima Hadiya: Indicted under HC 653/21 (Kalmunai).
14. Fazrul Rahman Mohamed Zahran: No information found regarding prosecution.
15. Husenur Rizvi Kalith Sameer: Indicted under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
16. Mohamed Akram Ahakkam: Indicted under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
17. Insaf Iftikar: Indicted under HC TAB 2972/21 (Colombo).
18. M.M.U. Rahuman: No information found regarding prosecution.
19. M.F.M. Dushan: No information found regarding prosecution.
20. Mohamed Yusuf Altaf Ahmed: No information found regarding prosecution.
21. Aftab Ahmed: No information found regarding prosecution.
22. Yusuf Mohamed Ibrahim: Indicted under HC 3072/22 (Colombo).
23. Mohamed Ibrahim Ijaz: Indicted under HC 3072/22 (Colombo).

Following this initial report, the CID reported facts to the Attorney General's Department regarding further suspects. Several fundamental matters concerning the dealings between Zahran Hashim and Pillayan (later disclosed by Channel 4) specifically regarding Pillayan and Zahran's brother, Shaini, getting to know each other in the Batticaloa prison and requesting mutual assistance were received by the CID within a short period after the commencement of the criminal investigation. This initial information was received in May 2019. The CID obtained this information while recording a statement from a suspect who was in custody at the time (and against whom indictments have now been filed in the High Court).

According to the Fundamental Rights petition filed by former CID Director Shani Abeysekera in the Supreme Court, the testimony provided by him and Senior DIG Ravi Seneviratne before the Presidential Commission of Inquiry, and confirmations made by the Centre for Society and Religion (CSR) research team through other sources, it was revealed during the initial investigation phase itself that there was some direction or "higher hand" above Zahran in the Easter attacks, and that several suspicious incidents had occurred. However, following the election of Gotabaya Rajapaksa in the November 2019 Presidential Election, CID Director Shani Abeysekera was removed from his post even before the Prime Minister and Cabinet were appointed. Furthermore, certain other investigators were also changed. Details regarding these changes will be discussed in the next chapter

Chapter Seven

05 CID Directors in Two Years! – The Story of Criminal Investigation from November 2019 to October 2024

A decisive change occurred in the investigations conducted by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) regarding the Easter Sunday terrorist attack in November 2019, following Gotabaya Rajapaksa's victory in the Presidential Election. Representing the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna, Gotabaya Rajapaksa won with 6,924,255 votes (52.25%), defeating his main rival, Sajith Premadasa, who received 5,564,239 votes.

Following this victory, then Acting IGP Chandana Wickramaratne issued a letter dated November 20, 2019, recommending the immediate removal of Shani Abeysekerathe most senior, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in the Sri Lanka Police at the time from his position as Director of the CID. He was transferred to serve as the Personal Assistant to the DIG of the Kandy District. While the National Police Commission approved his removal, they ultimately transferred him to be the Personal Assistant to the DIG of Galle instead of Kandy. Subsequently, Senior DIG Ravi Seneviratne retired on 31st December 2019.

W. Tilakaratne, who had served for a long period in Mahinda Rajapaksa's security division, was appointed to the post of CID Director previously held by Shani Abeysekera. On 24th April 2024, Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa stated in Parliament that 30 officers involved in the Easter Sunday investigations were transferred following the change of government.

During the Gotabaya Rajapaksa administration, Sarath Weerasekera was appointed as the Minister in charge of Police, with retired Major General Jagath Alwis serving as the Ministry Secretary. Later, retired DIG Palitha Siriwardena who was in charge of the Mawanella area during the Buddha statue vandalism incident was appointed as an advisor/coordinator to the Ministry Secretary. While serving as the SSP in charge of the Kilinochchi Division, Senior DIG Sarath Kumara had previously recommended to the IGP that Siriwardena was unfit for a divisional head position following a preliminary investigation into illegal excavations in Puthukkudiyiruppu. Despite this, once Siriwardena joined the Ministry of Public Security, he summoned the Easter investigation files from the CID for review and held discussions with officers regarding the probes.

A group of officers who had previously been removed from the CID due to various allegations and investigations, along with a team of new officers, were newly attached to the department. Key individuals included:

1. ASP Meril Ranjan Lamahewa: On 11th May 2012, then IGP N.K. Illangakoon issued a charge sheet against him for failing to appear in court on 4th April 2012, for the Bharatha Lakshman Premachandra murder case (B 3932), despite making notes that he attend. He was suspended on 10th April 2012, by DIG Gamini Dissanayake. Although he later returned

to the CID, he was removed again from investigations and the department based on recommendations by then Attorney General Jayantha Jayasuriya due to "disgraceful behavior" during the Avant-Garde investigation. After the 2019 election, he was recalled to the CID and placed in charge of an investigation related to the Easter attacks.

2. IP Niroshini Hewapathirana: While she was previously at the CID, then Director Shani Abeysekera had filed a complaint against her with the Bribery or Corruption Investigation Commission. Following an investigation into several other matters, she was transferred out of the department. However, after the 2019 election, she was recalled to the CID and assigned to Easter investigations.
3. IP Induka Silva: He was previously transferred out of the CID after an investigation was launched into his failure to conduct an investigation assigned by the IGP (related to Palitha Siriwardena). His Fundamental Rights petition against this transfer was rejected by the Supreme Court. On 5th March 2019, a complaint was filed against him at the Bribery Commission, and his own wife sent a letter to the CID regarding his disgraceful behavior. The CID was also notified by relevant police stations regarding his sister's arrest for heroin and his brother-in-law's conviction in seven heroin-related cases. Furthermore, on 19th November 2016, the SSP of Nugegoda reported to the DIG of Western South that this officer was involved in filing a false complaint at the Welikada Police. After being recalled to the CID post 2019, he was assigned to Easter investigations. He handled the preliminary work for the controversial third DNA test of Sarah Jasmine and was the officer who reported facts to the court to initiate investigations against Shani Abeysekera and Ravi Seneviratne after they joined the NPP Retired Police Collective.

Notably, several directors were transferred during Gotabaya Rajapaksa's short tenure:

1. Shani Abeysekera
2. W. Tilakaratne
3. Prasanna Alwis
4. Nishantha Soysa
5. Rohan Premaratne

The *MediaLK* website reported on 17th October 2020, that the National Police Commission had appointed a fourth CID director within a single year. SSP G. Nishantha de Soysa was appointed to replace SSP A.R. Prasanna J. de Alwis, who was moved to the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID). A Senior DIG told *MediaLK* that the Police Commission should clarify whether these removals were due to officers not following the government's will or due to performance issues. Just before 21st April 2021, Nishantha Soysa was also removed and replaced by SSP Rohan Premaratne.

During this period, the CID carried out several controversial arrests, including:

1. Hejaaz Hizbullah
2. Riyaj Bathiudeen
3. Rishad Bathiudeen
4. Azath Salley

The CID reported to the Fort Magistrate's Court, citing statements from DIG Prasad Ranasinghe, that Tuan Suresh Salle (then Director of the State Intelligence Service) had questioned the delay in these arrests. Salle reportedly informed them that President Gotabaya Rajapaksa had blamed the CID for the delay in arresting Rishad Bathiudeen.

A significant milestone post2019 was the sudden announcement on 29th March 2023, by police spokesperson Nihal Thaldewa that Sarah Jasmine had died in the Sainthamaruthu blast. As the September 2024 Presidential Election approached, CID's focus shifted toward investigating Ravi Seneviratne and Shani Abeysekera. The complainant in that case was retired DIG Palitha Siriwardena, who had supervised Easter investigations during Gotabaya Rajapaksa's presidency, and the investigation was assigned to Induka Silvathe very officer Abeysekera and Seneviratne had previously recommended for removal for failing to perform his duties.

Chapter Eight

Hope for Justice – The Story of Investigations After October 2024

A glimpse of hope regarding justice for the Easter Sunday terrorist attack began to appear in October 2024, when the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) launched investigations based on a complaint lodged by the Centre for Society and Religion (CSR) concerning the revelations made by the Channel 4 network. Father Rohan Silva, the Executive Director of the Centre for Society and Religion, directed the relevant complaint to the Ministry of Public Security on 4th October 2024. After the complaint was referred to the then Acting Inspector General of Police Priyantha Weerasooriya, it was forwarded to the Criminal Investigation Department for further investigation.

Accordingly, Chief Inspector P.V. Madhava Gunawardena, the Officer-in-Charge of the Special Branch of the Criminal Investigation Department, reported facts to the Fort Magistrate's Court on 11th November 2024, under case number B/35882/24, stating that an investigation was being conducted into the relevant complaint. Subsequently, after reporting further facts regarding the investigation on 15th November, the CID acted to obtain court orders preventing Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan alias Pillayan and former Director of the State Intelligence Service (SIS) Tuan Suresh Salle who were accused in the Channel 4 revelations from travelling abroad without the court's permission.

Thereafter, the Criminal Investigation Department, which conducted extensive investigations, reported the progress of the investigations to the court on February 18, 2025; April 12, 2025; April 22, 2025; April 29, 2025; July 07, 2025; July 21, 2025; July 23, 2025; August 04, 2025; August 18, 2025; September 01, 2025; September 10, 2025; September 15, 2025; October 01, 2025; October 17, 2025; October 28, 2025; November 12, 2025; November 23, 2025; December 23, 2025; January 07, 2026; January 21, 2026; February 11, 2026; March 05, 2026; March 11, 2026; and March 26, 2026. According to the facts reported to the court, it appears that the Criminal Investigation Department focused on several key matters during this investigation:

1. Misleading investigations into the murder of police officers in Vavunathivu.
2. The Sainthamaruthu attack.
3. The fate of Sarah Jasmine after the Sainthamaruthu attack.
4. The third DNA test of Sarah Jasmine.
5. Conspiracy events related to the Easter Sunday attack.
6. The connection of Suresh Salle.

Currently, three suspects have been arrested in connection with this investigation. According to facts presented to the court and announcements made by the police, those suspects and the reasons for their arrest are as follows:

- Yasinbawa Jegilpass, Police Sergeant of the State Intelligence Service related to the incident of introducing a jacket concerning the Vavunathivu murder.
- Suwandarala Sudunilamege Sarath Samantha, Inspector of Police and former Officer-in-Charge of the Batticaloa District Intelligence Unit regarding the introduction of a jacket in the Vavunathivu murder case.
- Tuan Suresh Salle, former Director of the Military Intelligence Directorate and former Director of the State Intelligence Service for aiding and abetting the Easter attack and influencing the misleading of investigations.

Observation of facts reported to the court reveals that statements have been recorded from over 100 individuals so far regarding this investigation. It is also observed that re-investigations have commenced into many matters that had not been investigated until now. Accordingly, a glimpse of hope is showing regarding the Easter investigations and criminal justice.

Chapter 9

41 Cases!

In response to a request for information from the Centre for Society and Religion (CSR), the Attorney General's Department informed that 41 cases have been filed in the High Courts regarding the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks and related matters.

Serial No.	Case Number	Number of Suspects
1	Batticaloa HC 3421/21	4
2	Kegalla HC 4409/20	3
3	Kandy HC 32/21	1
4	Puttalam HC 78/21	2
5	Puttalam HC 148/21	1
6	Nuwara Eliya HC 69/21	1
7	Negombo HC 308/21	2
8	Kalutara HC 268/21	1
9	Nuwara Eliya HC 75/21	1
10	Galle HC 5673/21	1
11	Nuwara Eliya HC 78/21	1
12	Kalmunai HC 658/21	1
13	Nuwara Eliya HC 88/21	1
14	Kandy HC 301/21	1
15	Batticaloa HC 3437/21	1
16	Puttalam HC 188/21	3
17	Vavuniya HC 3058/22	1
18	Galle HC 5749/22	1
19	Kandy HC 95/22	1
20	Kuliyapitiya HC 73/22	1
21	Kurunegala HC 237/20	1

22	Gampaha HC 251/20	1
23	Nuwara Eliya HC 57/22	1
24	Kegalla HC 4485/21	16
25	Puttalam HC 107/21	6
26	Batticaloa HC 3487/22	1
27	Kalmunai HC 653/21	1
28	Colombo HC TAB 2972/21	25
29	Colombo HC 3885/22	1
30	Colombo HC 3886/22	6
31	Hambantota HC 44/22	1
32	Nuwara Eliya HC 52/22	1
33	Nuwara Eliya HC 51/22	1
34	Kandy HC 142/22	1
35	Kalmunai HC 688/22	1
36	Hambantota HC 02/23	1
37	Hambantota HC 61/22	1
38	Batticaloa HC 3476/22	1
39	Hambantota HC 64/22	1
40	Colombo HC.TAB 2899/21	1
41	Colombo HC.TAB 2900/21	1

Among these cases, the one with the highest number of defendants is the case against 25 accused, which is being heard before a Permanent Trial-at-Bar in Colombo. The proceedings for the case regarding the indictment filed by the Attorney General against the 25 accused on 10th August 2021 began on 1st September, 2021 before a Permanent Trial-at-Bar. On 4th October 2021, 24 of the 25 accused were presented to the court from prison, and indictments were served to them. Thirteen of the accused informed the court that they did not have legal representation. When the case was called again on 23rd November 2021, all the accused were presented to the court, including the

15th accused, Mohammadu Hanifa Zainul Abdeen alias Abu Hind, who had not been presented previously. Accordingly, the indictment was served to him. This case was called again on 12th January 2022. On that day, lawyers were appointed at state expense for the nine accused who lacked representation; meanwhile, the lawyer appearing for the 9th accused, Mohamed Sajith alias Abu Naja alias Sajith Moulavi, reported that a group claiming to be from the police had visited the suspect's house to inquire about the lawyer.

Because the indictments and related files in this case are extremely voluminous, the court permitted the submission of summaries of the charges, noting that it was impractical to read every charge separately; these summaries were submitted on 3rd March 2022. The case was initially heard at the Colombo High Court, but later a venue on Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo, was provided for the Trial-at-Bar. However, due to limited space, the trial was relocated again to a site on Adhikarana Mawatha, Colombo 12 (the building that served as a temporary Supreme Court during its renovation). The trial is currently being conducted at that location.

The accused in this case are charged under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). A few months ago, the Trial-at-Bar decided to hear this case daily, as permitted by the PTA and the Judicature Act. Following this decision, lawyers for the accused informed the court that they could not participate in the trial if it were held daily, as it would cause grave injustice to other cases they had undertaken. Consequently, they withdrew from the trial. Currently, only two accused have legal representation, while the remaining accused do not.

Although Suresh Salle and Rohan Gunaratna were named as the first witnesses in this case, the Attorney General did not lead their evidence. Testimonies have been recorded from a significant number of other individuals so far. Meanwhile, several "voir dire" inquiries were held to determine if confessions allegedly given under the PTA were provided voluntarily. One accused passed away during the trial, and the proceedings now continue against 24 accused.

The current bench for case No. HC (TAB) 2972/21 is as follows:

- High Court Judge Navaratne Marasinghe – Chairman
- High Court Judge Sujeewa Nissanka – Member
- High Court Judge Ramanathan Kannan – Member

By the time this High Court case was adjourned on 10th April 2026, for the Sinhala and Tamil New Year holidays, it had been called for trial on 170 days.

Additionally, a highly discussed event in the recent past was the case of Mohamed Yusuf Mohamed Ibrahim, a well-known spice merchant. Investigators state that two of his children were suicide bombers in the 21st April attacks, and his daughter-in-law was the woman who reportedly died detonating a bomb at Mahavila Gardens. Following that incident, Mohamed Yusuf Mohamed Ibrahim and two other family members were arrested. Indictments have been filed against them under HC 3072 in the Colombo High Court, and the trial is currently ongoing. The accused are:

- Mohamed Yusuf Mohamed Ibrahim
- Mohamed Ibrahim Ijaz Ahmed
- Mohamed Ibrahim Ismail Ahmed

This case was last called on 30th January 2026. Two witnesses who appeared were advised to return on the next date, which is scheduled for 26th May 2026.

Furthermore, a case regarding the Wellampitiya copper factory has been filed in the Colombo High Court under HC 3886/22 against six defendants. This case was last called on 3rd February 2026, and is scheduled to be called again on 14th May 2026.

The Attorney General has also filed a case before a Trial-at-Bar against six individuals regarding the hiding of explosives in Wanathawilluwa. That case is being heard in the Puttalam High Court and is scheduled to be called again on 30th April 2026.

In addition to the cases in the High Court, the case in the Colombo Magistrate's Court where Tuan Suresh Salle was named as a suspect regarding the Channel 4 complaint has also been widely discussed. An army intelligence officer, who was summoned to the CID to record a statement for that investigation, has filed a writ petition in the Court of Appeal to prevent his arrest. Additionally, Tuan Suresh Salle has also filed a writ petition in the Court of Appeal requesting to suspend his being named as a suspect.

Chapter 10

Matters Requiring Further Investigation

There are a number of matters regarding the Easter Sunday terrorist attack that still require further investigation. The Centre for Society and Religion (CSR) will present new facts and findings regarding these in a separate report; however, the points highlighted by the CSR a year ago, on 17th April 2025, and the matters where investigations have since commenced, are mentioned here. In that previous report, in depth information was presented regarding five matters that had not been extensively investigated:

1. Matters related to Abdul Latheef Mohamed, who died in the bomb explosion at the Tropical Inn lodge in Dehiwala.
2. Matters related to Abu Hind, who was in contact with Zahran.
3. Matters related to Pulasthini Mahendran, alias Sarah Jasmine, who is suspected to have escaped during the attack in the Bolivarian Village in Sainthamaruthu, Kalmunai, and matters concerning the Sainthamaruthu explosion itself.
4. Matters related to the statements made by Hanzeer Azad Maulana while abroad through the Channel 4 network.
5. Failure to act according to the warnings received before the attack.

Of these five points, investigations have already commenced regarding the third and fourth points. However, the other matters still require further investigation. In addition to these, there are numerous other points that must be probed to uncover the connections behind the Easter Sunday terrorist attack.

The following is the complete report previously published by the CSR regarding the matters requiring further investigation:

Abdul Latheef Mohamed Jameel

There are a number of suspicious matters regarding Abdul Latheef Mohamed Jameel, who attempted to detonate a bomb at the Taj Samudra Hotel during the series of brutal Easter Sunday attacks and later died when the bomb exploded at the Tropical Inn lodge in Dehiwala. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that intelligence agencies had focused on Jameel since 2015. As reported so far, the State Intelligence Service (SIS), the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), and the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) had all been searching for, investigating, or monitoring Jameel prior to the attack. Although these three agencies/divisions conducted inquiries into Jameel as revealed thus far, they failed to obtain advanced warnings of the attack through him or to prevent the attack. Based on information revealed at the Presidential Commission of Inquiry, the Presidential Committee chaired by Justice Vijith Malalgoda, the Parliamentary Select Committee, and information obtained from other sources, the following matters regarding Jameel require further investigation:

1. The Security Manager of the Taj Samudra Hotel testified before the Presidential Commission that it was standard practice to send a list of names of persons who had checked into the hotel by midnight to the SIS and the Presidential Security Division (PSD) every morning between 7:00 AM and 8:00 AM. Jameel arrived on the evening of 20th April 2019, and reserved a room at the Taj Samudra. The list of room reservations as of midnight on 20th April was sent to the relevant divisions by the manager early on the morning of the 21st. Accordingly, it must be investigated whether the SIS identified Jameel's name as a person they were already collecting information on in that list early that morning, and if so, what steps were taken regarding it.
2. The Hotel Security Manager also stated to the Presidential Commission that it is generally mandatory to enter the National Identity Card (NIC) numbers of everyone reserving a room into the hotel database. However, it was later revealed that Jameel's NIC number was not in that system. An investigation is needed to determine whether Jameel's NIC number was never entered or if it was deleted by someone after being entered. If it was not entered initially, it must be determined whether this was an oversight or if it happened due to the notification or influence of someone; if it was removed after being entered, it must be investigated who did it and for what reason.
3. Evidence was presented at the Presidential Commission that a suspicious individual visited the Taj Samudra on 17th April 2019, prior to Jameel's arrival on 20th April. That individual, who arrived at 1:45 PM, was later identified as Inshaf (the Shangri-La bomber). Since a proper investigation has not been conducted into whether other suspicious persons visited the hotel before or after the attack in addition to Inshaf's visit on 17th April this must be further investigated.
4. Jameel, who reserved a room and entered it at approximately 4:17 PM on 20th April 2019, left the hotel and returned on the morning of 21st April 2019. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that after arriving in the morning, he went near the room and then returned to ask for a new key card to open the room. No further investigation was conducted into what happened to the card originally issued to him; therefore, this matter must be investigated.
5. CCTV recordings showed that after Jameel returned to the Taj Samudra on the morning of 21st April 2019, and just before he left the hotel (either because the bomb failed to detonate or for some other reason), he received phone calls between 8:51 AM and 8:54 AM. Since the identity of the person who gave those calls to Jameel has not been revealed, it must be investigated.
6. During investigations, Jameel's wife, Fathima Shifana Umakatha, stated that Jameel sent her a voice message at 8:30 AM on 20th April 2019, saying he was going on 'Hijra'. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that the sounds of small children could be heard in those voice messages. It must be investigated who the children heard in the background

of that voice message were, and at which location and on what date those voice messages were recorded.

7. Umarkatha, Jameel's wife, stated during investigations that she deleted the mobile phone number from which that voice message was sent. She also mentioned that the voice message did not come from Jameel's regular phone number. Therefore, an investigation is needed to determine whether this voice message was sent by Jameel himself or if a previously recorded audio clip was sent by another person, and what the number used to send it was, as these facts have not yet been uncovered.
8. On the evening of 21st April 2019, officers of the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) examined CCTV footage at Jameel's house regarding the moment he left on 19th April, and the officers removed the DVR machine. When it was taken, footage from 31st March 2019, until the moment the machine was disconnected on the evening of 21st April had been recorded. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that the video portion from 8:00 AM on 19th April 2019, to 2:30 PM on 21st April 2019, was missing from the removed DVR. Officers stated to the Commission that the relevant video footage might have been deleted while the DVR was being used for investigations after being removed. It must be investigated how only the section from the day Jameel left home until the TID officers removed the machine was deleted from the total CCTV footage, and those deleted scenes must be restored to investigate Jameel, his household members, and the people who visited the house during that time.
9. Although facts were revealed that Jameel, who left the Taj Hotel on the evening of 20th April 2019, went to a house in Panadura and then travelled to Stamp Tower on Templers Road, Mount Lavinia, at 7:33 PM with two others, no investigation has been conducted into who those two individuals were. Therefore, an investigation must be held regarding this.
10. The Maulavi of the Ebenezer Church (Mosque) observed Jameel holding a mobile phone while inside the mosque on 21st April 2019. However, a private security officer named Amir, who searched Jameel as he was leaving the mosque, stated that he did not have a mobile phone at that time. An investigation must be conducted to determine why the mobile phone Jameel had inside the Ebenezer Mosque was missing when he came out, and whether any individual took that phone, and if so, who it was.
11. It must be investigated whether the mobile phone Jameel had at the Taj Samudra Hotel and the mobile phone he had at the Ebenezer Mosque were the same device.
12. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that Jameel stated he was staying at the mosque until someone else arrived. An investigation must be conducted to identify the person for whom he was waiting.

13. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that shortly after the series of bomb blasts on 21st April 2019, the Director of Military Intelligence directed a team of military intelligence officers to Jameel's house. It was also revealed that those intelligence officers called the private security member who searched Jameel near the Ebenezer mosque and told him to come near a Havelock Buddha statue; the security officer, suspicious that they might be trying to harm him because they did not show up when he went there, immediately went to the Wellawatte Police. Since no investigation has been conducted into this matter, one must be held.
14. An investigation must be held to determine what happened to the T-56 firearm seen in the footage allegedly recorded on 20th April 2019, showing Jameel, Zahran, and others with firearms and other weapons, and if it was discarded somewhere, who did it.
15. Furthermore, those recorded images were later found in the Kalmunai area and handed over to the TID by officers of the Akkaraipattu Police. When asked who brought those images to that area, TID officers told the Presidential Commission they suspected the Batticaloa bomber (Zion Church bomber) might have taken them. However, this was not revealed during the investigation into the Batticaloa bomber. Therefore, an investigation must be held to find out who brought the equipment containing these images to that area. Additionally, the banner seen in the background of these recordings was found in the Kalmunai area on 26th April 2019; it must be investigated who brought that banner to that area.
16. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that while Suresh Salle was the Director of Intelligence, an Army Intelligence agent was directed into the JMI organization (of which Jameel and three other bombers were members); while serving as a member of JMI, the Army Intelligence Directorate, with the support of a foreign intelligence service, provided a house for that agent to hold JMI discussions. It was also revealed during investigations that some of those discussions were recorded. No formal investigation has been conducted regarding the matters discussed therein or the failure to uncover and thwart their plans while an agent was placed as a JMI member. Therefore, a formal investigation must be held.
17. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that the DMI informed the Army Commander and the Security Council that Zahran went to India in December 2018. An investigation must be held to determine if Zahran actually went to India or if that story was fabricated to prevent the disclosure of Zahran's activities (including discussions) in Sri Lanka during that month. If he did go to India, it must be investigated where he went and whom he met.

Mahavila Gardens and Other Connections

1. Fathima Jiffriya, the wife of Mohamed Ilham (a JMI member and bomber), reportedly died in an explosion at Mahavila Gardens along with her three children and three officers of the Colombo Crimes Division. During the evidence hearing of the Presidential Commission, there was talk that an individual escaped from that house before the explosion. A formal investigation must be conducted to see if a person indeed escaped, and if so, who it was and what they were doing at that house.
2. The aforementioned Fathima Jiffriya's mobile phone was found by investigation teams abandoned in another house; investigations must be conducted using that phone.
3. It was revealed at the Easter Commission that Jameel and Ilham began associating in 2014, and Ilham changed after associating with Jameel; consequently, Ilham's father, the businessman Ibrahim, banned Jameel from coming to the house. It was also revealed that Jameel, Ilham, and others visited the Sri Lanka Thowheed Jamath (SLTJ) mosque in Maradana during this period. The origins of Hastun (Katuwapitiya bomber) and his wife Pulasthini Mahendran (Sarah) are also the SLTJ mosque. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that before the Yahapalana government came to power in 2015, SLTJ leader Abdul Razick was summoned to the office of Western Province Senior DIG Anura Senanayake to discuss with military intelligence officers, and was also summoned to the Ministry of Defense for discussions. This was also confirmed by DIG Palitha Siriwardena in a public discussion. Although the connection between the Easter Sunday attack and the activities of the SLTJ should have been fully investigated from 2013 onwards, no such investigation has occurred. Therefore, an investigation must be held.

Abu Hind

Nilantha Jayawardena, the Head of National Intelligence, stated before the Presidential Commission that Abu Hind might have worked to incite this attack. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that Abu Hind spoke with Rilwan and Naufer Moulavi in addition to Zahran. During parliamentary debates during Ranil Wickremesinghe's presidency, the then-government stated that Abu Hind was merely a pseudonym used by a foreign intelligence service to obtain information. However, as revealed at the Presidential Commission, Abu Hind is a key participant or witness to this attack. Nevertheless, the identity of Abu Hind has not been revealed to date. Therefore, an investigation must be conducted to identify Abu Hind and uncover information including whom he worked under.

Pulasthini Mahendran alias Sarah Jasmine and the Sainthamaruthu Explosion

The explosion in a house in the Bolivarian Village, Sainthamaruthu, Kalmunai, occurred on 26th April 2019. The entire process related to this explosion is suspicious and consists of several matters that have not yet been investigated:

1. There are discrepancies in the statements given by police officers to the CID, the statements given to the Presidential Commission, the notes made in the travel logs of senior officers,

the notes in information books, and the statements given to the Human Rights Commission regarding the incident at this house. Therefore, all those statements must be studied and the discrepancies investigated.

2. On the very next day after the explosion, 27th April 2019, the Headquarters Inspector (OIC) of the Kalmunai Headquarters Police (the station covering the area) submitted a 'B' report to the Kalmunai Magistrate's Court reporting that 16 people died in the explosion. However, two days later, the OIC of another police station the Ampara Headquarters Police reported to the same court that 17 people died in the Sainthamaruthu explosion. An investigation must be held into the basis on which the Headquarters Inspector reported that 17 people had died when no new information regarding the deceased had been found and post-mortem reports only detailed 16 deaths.
3. The survivors initially reported from this attack were Fathima Hadiya (Zahran's wife) and her daughter. Police first recorded a statement from Hadiya while she was being treated for injuries on the morning of 03rd May 2019. That statement was recorded over three days, and it was only at 5:19 PM on 05th May 2019, that it was revealed Sarah Jasmine was present at the Sainthamaruthu house at the time of the explosion. It must be investigated whether the Ampara OIC's earlier report of 17 deaths was intended to convince people that Sarah Jasmine had died, and if Sarah's presence was discovered before Hadiya revealed it, how that was discovered.
4. An investigation must be held into how the Ampara Police reported to the court that Sarah had died when there was no evidence, and her DNA had not been confirmed.
5. Zahran's wife stated before the Easter Commission that a woman with the appearance and voice of Sarah Jasmine spoke to her at that location after the Sainthamaruthu attack. She also stated this to CID officers. Therefore, a formal investigation must be held.
6. Officers and civilians present at the scene stated that a motorcycle had fled the area during the Sainthamaruthu explosion. No investigation has been held into who fled on that motorcycle; one must be conducted.
7. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that an individual escaped after the explosion, and although the military fired in that direction, they could not catch him; it was also revealed that someone's escape was recorded on CCTV. A formal investigation must be conducted to uncover the truth.
8. Fathima Hadiya stated at the Presidential Commission that one of Zahran's brothers was alive after the bomb explosion and that a gunshot was heard later. A formal investigation is needed to see if someone who reached the location after the explosion murdered and burned the brother who had survived the blast.

9. On that day, a woman in a trishaw died from military gunfire on the bridge entering the Bolivarian Village. Although there were rumors in the area that she was involved in finding the house for Zahran's group, no formal investigation was held. The court was informed that she was shot for driving despite orders to stop, and further investigations were halted. Therefore, a formal investigation into this woman's death is required.
10. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that tracer bullets were fired during the shooting from the Sainthamaruthu house. It has not been revealed how this group obtained tracer bullets, which are primarily used in military operations to identify locations; therefore, a formal investigation is needed.
11. The firearm found in the hand of the deceased person in front of the Sainthamaruthu house was a firearm issued to the Sri Lanka Police. A formal investigation is needed into how that firearm reached that person.
12. Information was presented to the Presidential Commission that Siyam of Kalmunai also escaped from the house during the explosion, but it was mentioned that no confirming evidence was found. Therefore, an investigation into this matter is needed.
13. CID investigations revealed that a SIM card was obtained using Sarah Jasmine's NIC in 2020, but those investigations were halted halfway. The purchase of that SIM card must be investigated.
14. Furthermore, Sarah Jasmine's NIC was handed over to CID officers by the Ampara Divisional Officer several days after the Sainthamaruthu attack. There is no mention of such an NIC being in the initial list of items found at the crime scene. It must be investigated whether this NIC was provided later as part of a conspiracy to convince authorities that Sarah died at that location.

Azad Maulana and Channel 4 Revelations

The CID has commenced investigations based on a complaint by the CSR regarding Hanzeer Azad Maulana's statement. Former MP Udaya Gammanpila publicized the committee report appointed by President Ranil Wickremesinghe to look into these statements. That committee report noted a suspected connection between Azad Maulana and Zahran's group. It also mentioned that in August 2018, the doctor who treated Zahran's brother Rilwan and Azad Maulana lived in the same village (Maruthamunai), that Maulana helped the doctor go abroad, and that both had houses in Ebenezer Place, Dehiwala. While investigating the total Channel 4 disclosure, the following must also be probed:

1. Azad Maulana alleges that Suresh Salle called him on 21st April 2019, and told him to pick up Jameel. As previously mentioned, Jameel's bomb did not explode at the Taj Samudra, and he received a call between 8:51 AM and 8:54 AM. After that call, Jameel left the hotel, went to the Tropical Inn, left his bag, and then went to the Muslim Mosque in Ebenezer

Place, Dehiwala. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that he stayed there for a long time waiting for a friend. As the Presidential Committee noted, Azad Maulana owns a house in Ebenezer Place. Therefore, it must be investigated whether Jameel went from the Taj Hotel to the Ebenezer Mosque to meet Azad Maulana or his representative.

2. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that a person named Mohamed Alliyar Marshuk Rila called Dr. Safraz (who treated Rilwan) from a foreign country at 1:38 AM on 27th August 2018, and then sent photos of the injured Rilwan from a local number, after which the doctor advised admitting him to the National Hospital. It was also revealed that Zahran Hashim visited the doctor's house in December 2018 with the aforementioned Marshuk Rila and two others. The doctor's mobile phone was taken into CID custody on 19th September 2019. Therefore, an investigation must be held into the people who spoke to the doctor regarding Rilwan's issue and the group that visited the doctor's house with Zahran in December 2018.

Failure to Act on Prior Warnings

In addition to the four main points above, an investigation must be held into the failure to act according to the intelligence received on 21st April 2019. It was revealed at the Presidential Commission that, following information received on the evening of 20th April 2019, that Christian churches would be targeted. Colombo DIG Lalith Pathinayake called Colombo South SP Nishantha Soysa at 7:19 PM and instructed him to provide security to churches and increase mobile patrols. The Archbishop's House is located within the Colombo South division. A special investigation must be held into why information regarding this attack was not provided to the Archbishop's House despite these instructions.