



# DON'T BE EXTREME



**PUBLISHED BY:**

ALL CEYLON JAMIIYATHUL ULAMA (ACJU)  
No. 281, Jayantha Weerasekara Mawatha,  
Colombo - 10, Sri Lanka.



**DON'T BE EXTREME**



**PUBLISHED BY:**

ALL CEYLON JAMIIYATHUL ULAMA (ACJU)  
No. 281, Jayantha Weerasekara Mawatha,  
Colombo - 10, Sri Lanka.

**TITLE** : Don't Be Extreme

**EDITION** : First Edition - 2022

**COPIES** : 1000

**PAGES** : X + 24

**PUBLISHED BY** : ALL CEYLON JAMIYYATHUL ULAMA (ACJU)  
No. 281, Jayantha Weerasekara Mawatha,  
Colombo - 10, Sri Lanka.

**ISBN** : ISBN 978-624-6022-06-8

# CONTENTS

<b>MESSAGE</b>	II
- Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs	
<hr/>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	IV
- All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama	
<hr/>	
<b>FOREWORD</b>	VII
- Reasons to publish this booklet	
<hr/>	
<b>CAUTION NO. 01</b>	
<b>Negative impacts of evil ideologies</b>	01
- How to identify those who follow extremist and terrorist ideologies?	
<hr/>	
<b>CAUTION NO. 02</b>	
<b>Beware when seeking Religious Knowledge</b>	08
<hr/>	
<b>CAUTION NO. 03</b>	
<b>Beware of the information available on the internet about Religion</b>	10
<hr/>	
<b>Guidelines on reporting suspicious religious teachings</b>	13
<hr/>	
<b>Advice to rehabilitate those who have been misled by distorted religious teachings</b>	15
<hr/>	
<b>Main characteristics of religious extremism</b>	17
<hr/>	
<b>Clear signs of extremism</b>	19
<hr/>	
<b>Islamic fundamentals that have been distorted by extremists and terrorists</b>	22

# MESSAGE

The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama has been offering many services and conducting many programs for decades now, taking into consideration the needs of the Sri Lankan Muslim community. As such, it has come to light that it is highly important that fractions of the youth must be rescued immediately from being victims of wrongly understanding the religion and treading towards extremist attitudes. The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama has taken plenty of calculated measures to contain and curb this danger, in order to protect the Muslim community at large. Among such efforts, this booklet titled “Don’t Be Extreme” stands out.

Islam completely denounces and rejects extremism and terrorism. Anyone who eagerly learns Islam would clearly know that even the words extremism and terrorism do not have any place in Islam. However, it is evident that campaigns with misleading and false claims portraying Islam to be a religion promoting extremism and terrorism, have emerged recently. One could see that even verses of Al-Quran and the sayings or acts of Prophet Muhammadh (peace be upon him) are also distorted and given incorrect and misleading interpretations, attempting to establish that such false claims as the truth. These untrue claims gain ground on social media. Not only non-Muslims, but even Muslims who do not possess a deep knowledge of the religion fall prey to this trap. As a result, we now see the misled Muslims committing extremist and terrorist atrocities in some parts of the world.

The unfortunate Easter Sunday terrorist attacks which took place on 21st April 2019 caused a great shock and trauma to all those effected. Such acts of violence are completely against Islamic fundamentals and values. Also, it undermined and caused a great damage to the invaluable commitments and contributions of the entirety of the Muslims of Sri Lanka, who have been living peacefully for more than a thousand years in this country.

As such, the Muslim religious scholars, community leaders and Masjid administrators have a duty they cannot default on, which is to present the real and correct clarifications on Islam, in order to protect the Muslim community – specially the youth – from wrong ideologies. This book will be instrumental for that purpose. We also appreciate All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama for hosting island-wide awareness programs based on the contents in this booklet, publishing it as well.

Thus, we invite Muslim religious scholars, community leaders and Masjid administrators to contribute to this timely cause. We have to make sure that the Sri Lankan Muslims are extending their fullest cooperation to establish national security, territorial integrity, sovereignty, development and progress in this country, just like our forefathers did in the past.

**A. B. M. Ashraff**

Director - Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs  
The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama

# ABOUT ALL CEYLON JAMIYYATHUL ULAMA

The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama was established in 1924, even before Ceylon gained independence. It is an incorporated body under Act no. 51 of 2000 of the Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. Closing in on a hundred years of existence, the ACJU has a membership of more than 8000 Islamic religious scholars.

## VISION

To build an exemplary and complying Muslim community enriched with the Islamic values and teachings and contributing to uplift Deenul Islam and working towards the betterment of the community and the nation.

## MISSION

Providing spiritual, ethical and moral guidance to all levels of the Muslim community based on Islamic teachings, and contributing towards the development of educational, economic, social and cultural aspects of the community and nation, whilst building unity among community and coexistence with all ethnicities.

## OBJECTIVES

- To provide spiritual guidance to all levels of the Muslim community based on Islamic Teachings
- To work towards building individuals and families enriched with ethical and moral values
- To work towards the welfare of the Ulama and enhancement of the Islamic Religious Education
- To contribute towards the development of educational, economic, social and cultural aspects of the community and nation
- To work towards upholding unity among community
- To develop peaceful coexistence with all ethnicities
- To instigate all necessary efforts and activities to attain the objectives and goals of ACJU

## **VALUES**

- Islamic
- Sri Lankan Identity
- Moderation
- Accommodative
- Diversity & Pluralism

Accordingly, we have persisted for more than nine decades in our quest in producing productive citizens, through religious, social and cultural acts/processes. The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama has had an unblemished record of being apolitical since its inception, and has worked tirelessly to serve the people of the country, specially the Muslims.

It is noteworthy that we have given priority for social welfare work during the past two decades.

Our organization works fervently to nurture the citizens of our country with great qualities such as discipline, truth, mutual understanding, protecting and helping others, respect, affection, in order to build the educational and economic status, and also to enhance humanity beyond ethnic, religious divides. Our ongoing projects stand testament to our efforts and objectives

## **SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION**

The ACJU has extended help and support to the people of our country, whenever we have faced environmental disasters such as Tsunami, floods, landslides etc., regardless of differences based on ethnic, religious, language and regional aspects. We continue to run such projects as and when necessary.

## **EDUCATION AND YOUTH AFFAIRS DIVISION**

Under the theme of 'Education for All', our Education unit has implemented many projects that focus on the development of schools and for the development of students' education. We identify students who are hailing from a poor economic background and provide them with essential school supplies.



Our Division for Youth Affairs, among its many projects, gives priority to make awareness on prevention of illicit drug usage, eliminating extremism and supporting the emergence of a generation that is devoid of extremism, while it also gives professional guidance and vocational training.

### **DIVISION FOR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS**

Islam contains the great teaching that women shall be respected and be treated justly. Islam has given all kinds of rights to women in a methodical way. Islam has extended her the right to education too. The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama has planned to and works towards ensuring women's rights, and also to nurture their education and discipline.

### **HARMONY CENTRE**

Muslims live amicably and peacefully amidst the communities of Buddhists, Hindus and Christians. Our organization constantly provides with guidance for the Sri Lankan Muslim community to conduct themselves peacefully and cordially. As part of such efforts, we conduct many programs which are centered around mosques, in order to improve the cooperation between ethnic groups, and to direct the Muslim community towards social welfare activities. It is noteworthy that, to support the above efforts, we have published declarations denouncing all acts of extremism and encouraging the community for coexistence.

### **BUILDING A RIGHTEOUS COMMUNITY**

Additionally, an important mission is currently in process to transform our citizens into righteous and good citizens, with the help of 'Maktabs' i.e. Islamic primary religious schools island-wide, and also with the assistance of the 'Fatwa Division' which is established for the purpose of providing non-binding religious opinions and guidance based on Islamic Religious teachings.

### **DIVISION FOR BRANCHES AFFAIRS**

ACJU currently has an island-wide network of 164 - District and Divisional Branches, in order to carry out our services smoothly and successfully.

# FOREWORD

We have published some publications against terrorism and extremism since 2014, and have published a series of booklets titled 'Islam Bheethikawa' which clarifies misconceptions and allegations hurled against Quranic verses. However, this is the first guide we publish with the purpose of protecting our community from the dangerous jaws of extremism.

All religions and philosophies promote mercy and peace, and they do not encourage extremism, terrorism or violence. As such, Islam too encourages coexistence, harmony and moderation. But it is common sense for even an ordinary person that it is not suitable to assess a person's religion through his violent nature. Such persons live according to their own accord and cannot expect them to represent the religion.

Usually, if a person inclines towards extremism, terrorism and violence, one of the main reasons for that could be, a step taken by him as revenge for an injustice against him or his community. Therefore, injustice must be eliminated from this world, and Islam emphatically teaches us that our responsibility must be to put our effort against injustice via ethical means and not through violent means.

But many people are confused with the meaning of the word 'Jihad'. Jihad is an Arabic word for 'Struggle' which means to strive for excellence and goodness, against all forms of evil. However, in the Islamic context, 'Jihad' does not only mean struggle. It is an act of worship, in expectation of rewards from and the happiness of Allah. Thus, it is correct to state that all good efforts in expectation of Allah's satisfaction comes under the purview of 'Jihad'. Another perspective would be to consider Jihad as an effort to establish justice without going against the rules of the religion, amidst oppression, harassment and difficulty. The fifth article in the series of "Samaaja Sanvaada" (Social Dialogue), published by the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama, has more details on this topic

## WHAT IS TERRORISM?

Terrorism could be interpreted as engaging in violent acts that terrorize and instigate the public in order to fulfill political motives and personal ideologies. This is completely denounced in Islam, as these are directly against the teachings of Islam. Islam does not allow the public being disturbed by any means, even during the times of war. According to Islamic perspective, a war is a phenomenon that needs to happen between two armed forces, and it shall not be between the public and an armed force, and it shall also not directly affect the general public and their rights. This includes not causing any damage to the food produce, water resources, hospitals, roads and other amenities that are for the benefit of the commoners.

Extremism is when a person or a group verbally or operationally goes against the basic values of democracy, rule of law, personal freedoms and tolerance towards other beliefs.

Religious Terrorism is an area that is completely against the teachings of Islam. A devout Muslim who has understood Islam in its true essence and lives with such understanding, will always respect followers of other religions and their cultures, and he will always work towards the welfare of the society he is part of. Religious extremism / terrorism is completely violative of the above said, and an attempt to fulfill personal and political theories or desires of individuals.

This book will direct you to focus on the following.

- 1) Explaining the steps required to prevent someone from being attracted to ideologies of extremist and terrorist groups.
- 2) Identifying terrorist groups that are operating secretly and understanding their ideology.
- 3) Instructions / advice as to how to approach and handle persons who have fallen victim to the ideologies taught by extremist / terrorist groups.

- 4) Instructions / advice for parents who are willing to understand Islam better and who want to give attention to the religious activities their children are engaged in.
- 5) Verses from the Holy Quran has been included through out this booklet in order provide the correct Islamic Teachings.

The perspectives we have presented in this booklet are based on the knowledge we gained from As this booklet intended as a general guide for the public, the all examples cited in this booklet may not be necessarily similar.

RRG (Religious Rehabilitation Group) and the studies conducted on extremists.

Furthermore, this guide has been certified by the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs. We are grateful to all those who helped and supported us in making this endeavor a successful one. May the Almighty Allah recognize this attempt as a good effort.

### **Head Office**

All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama

# REASONS TO PUBLISH THIS BOOKLET

We vehemently condemn the series of brutal terrorist attacks that took place on Easter Sunday i.e. 21st April 2021, which was unleashed at churches and tourist hotels in Colombo, Negombo and Batticaloa. This incident paved way for an extremely tough time period for Sri Lankan Muslims. Also, we offer our sincerest condolences to the families who lost their loved ones and who were injured due to the attacks. We are committed to maintain and enhance peace and coexistence among all communities.

These attacks were cruel and brutal, but they were cowardly at the same time. It is also evident that the attackers targeted the Christian community. The churches attacked were located in Christian majority localities, and also were places that hosted a lot of people representing communities at the Easter Sunday mass barring ethnic differences. Amongst these places, the Church at Kochchikade, Colombo is respected and a place of worship for all communities in Sri Lanka. Moreover, some luxury hotels also were targeted by the attackers. These bomb blasts were well coordinated and planned, which prompted the death of 259 innocent civilians and more than 500 individuals suffered injuries.

This series of attacks was perpetrated by namesake Muslims, whose ulterior motive was to pave way for a series of brutal attacks against the people of the country. This atrocity was completely against the fundamentals and teachings of Islam, and we are suspicious that some people who wanted riots to ensue in the country were behind masterminding these attacks using misguided Muslims. The security forces were able to trace the network of these suicide bombers, and even their acquaintances. The investigations revealed that the persons arrested were individuals belonging to a terrorist organization, and that they had links with foreign terrorist organizations. The security forces were able to conduct more raids, paving way for more arrests from the said illegal organization.

We eagerly wish and pray that such brutal series of events shall never be repeated.

# CAUTION NO.1

## NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF EVIL IDEOLOGIES

Investigations and research on the terrorists arrested in connection with the terrorist attacks took place in 2001 in Singapore and members of the same responsible terrorist organization arrested in other countries, revealed one important aspect, which established that these individuals were attracted to the said terrorist organization due to some distorted interpretations of religious ideologies, which were used for their personal gains.

We have been unfortunate enough to witness terrorist attacks happening frequently in various places of the world, which disturbs world peace and unity, especially after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York City on 11th September 2001. It is evident that the attackers are broadening their range of attacks and targets every now and then. It is also clear that these terrorists are trying extremely hard to entice the Muslim community towards committing violence and they use distorted religious ideologies to fulfill their ambitions. While inviting the Muslim community to join hands with them to commit violent acts, they emphasize that they do all these for the utmost purpose of protecting Islam and their fellow Muslim brethren.

Individuals, who are misled, confused and misguided through the campaigns and distorted ideologies preached by terrorist organizations, commit acts of terrorism as a result of it. Terrorist attacks in Madrid and London in the recent past can be shown as examples to this effect.

It is now evident through investigations that the attacks were carried out by individuals who were not part of any particular terror group, and that they had committed these acts of terror because of the impact of ideologies preached by various terrorist groups. This is a very dangerous situation. Since these ideologies and opinions can be easily "injected" into a person without him being aware of it, one must be very careful.

## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

*As much as you protect yourself from the wrong and misguided ideologies preached by extremists and terrorists, it is also our responsibility to protect our family members, relatives and acquaintances from the same. If they fall prey to such dangerous extremist and terrorist ideologies, it will result in severe damage to the peace and harmony of this country, and no one will be able to stop them from being severely punished by the laws prevalent in the country.*

*In order to be safe from it, you ought to know as to how such ideologies are spread and how people are enticed towards it. When you have such awareness, it will make it easier for you to identify such suspicious people from our own community.*

**—And, desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.” (Al Quran 28:77)**

## HOW TO IDENTIFY THOSE WHO FOLLOW EXTREMIST AND TERRORIST IDEOLOGIES?

It can be recognized, to a certain extent, based on some characteristics that a certain individual is becoming prey to extremist and terrorist ideas. Listed below are a few of them:

01. Members of groups spreading extremist and terrorist ideologies, do not generally make mention of their ideology at the beginning. However, outwardly they include general subjects relating to religion in their sermons, in order to create an appeal towards them among the ordinary population. Similarly, indicating that they alone follow the religion of Islam in the correct manner, they exert maximum effort to incline the ordinary population towards them by characterizing to the ordinary population that they are on the right path. Nevertheless, this is not their true goal; rather it is a ruse to gather members for their terrorist and extremist ideologies

02. They do not spread extremist and terrorist ideologies openly, and also make mention of the likes of good qualities namely Akhlaq which are contained in the religion of Islam; and therefore, nobody takes any steps to oppose them due to the idea that they are preaching beneficial things. These terrorist groups conducts itself in this manner in order to check if an individual is passionate towards his religion and to ensure that he does feel anything suspicious about this group.
03. If the members of these groups become aware that you are an individual who displays interest in attending classes and is enthusiastic in listening to lectures relating to religious knowledge, they gradually attain closeness to those like you. Thereafter, they would state that there is a class where you can obtain clarifications on deeper religious matters than the classes you are currently attending and that these classes are conducted in private, without much publicity, and thereby attempt to take you to that class.
04. Those bearing extremist and terrorist ideas conduct secret classes for those who become prey to their ideology, and via these classes they attempt to feed their poisonous ideologies to individuals who do not have a deep knowledge about religion. However, these classes are not conducted in Masjids (Muslim mosques) or halls or publicly or in open places.
05. Because of the large number of people who visit Masjids and public places and the inability to gather a limited crowd there, and since the aim is not to give out public advise or to make a large number of people prey to these terrorist groups, classes are conducted secretly in houses by convening a limited crowd as such. However, it should be noted that none of the teachings of Islam are secret in nature. They are subjects clear and general to the whole world.
06. Once you show interest towards this and start attending such classes, you will be able to witness the deviation from religious



topics and the conducting of lectures on terrorism which is their real aim. Gradually they start speaking of the injustice and harassment taking place towards the Muslim brethren worldwide. Of course, it is not a wrong or extremist act to discuss such matters in a balanced, moderate and reasonable mindset with the aim of functioning within a legitimate framework. Similarly, these cannot be interpreted as terrorist policies either. Nevertheless, this is not the underlying purpose of these secret classes. Their requirement is to slowly deviate from religious matters and place focus on extremism and terrorism and provoke the emotions of the participants, create rage within them and thereby channel them towards various barbaric acts of terrorism.

07. After verbally explaining the injustice, exploitation and atrocities being perpetrated against Muslims around the world, they also show related video visuals time to time, as well as, footage of attacks by certain militant groups who have been operating against the injustices being carried out targeting Muslims.
08. After it is evident that the participants of the secret classes are showing interest towards these, you will be asked if you would like to make some contribution towards the efforts being made against the injustices being inflicted on Muslims around the world. They do not ask whether you would like to go to war at the beginning itself. Instead, they ask if you would like to make some contribution towards it. This contribution can be in the form of money or some service or some operation.
09. Once you like it and start making your contribution, they will make mention of the failure and slowness of the steps they have taken and gradually preach about the importance and glory of armed military effort, as well as the limitless rewards that will be earned in the Hereafter by sacrificing one's life for the sake of Islam.
10. They will claim that in the face of the injustices perpetrated against Muslims in countries such as Palestine, Kashmir, Iraq, Myanmar

and Afghanistan, armed military effort is, at present, an obligatory responsibility (Fard Ain) of every Muslim. They will emphasize that it is therefore essential to go to those countries, and if that is not possible, that you should then be prepared to launch an attack against the supporters of such injustices in the country you live in.

11. Moreover, it is taught in these classes that the Crusaders namely the Jews and the Christians always conspire to destroy Muslims. They also state that these enemies are responsible for all the suffering experienced by Muslims at present and in the past.
12. Furthermore, they request that attending these classes be kept as a secret. They also express that since the enemies of Islam do not like to see Muslims comprehending Islam in the correct manner and engaging in military effort by following Islam sincerely, them becoming aware of such can have negative consequences and that it is therefore best to carry out these activities in secret.
13. For the purpose of maintaining confidentiality, they will request you to ensure that nobody is following you when you are coming to attend this class, and to not note down the matters that are being discussed orally in this class, and to not disclose those matters to anybody else.
14. Similarly, since ordinary Muslims have not understood such profound matters, and have deviated from the correct path of Islam and are in a state of ignorance (Jahiliyya), they will also highlight the importance of isolating yourself from such Muslims. Also, they will profess that all non-Muslims are our enemies in general, and that they harbour feelings of hatred and jealousy towards us, and that therefore we too should hate them in return, while warning that doing otherwise by freely mingling with them and being amicable would scathe your purity.
15. They will often claim that your knowledge of Islam is far superior to the knowledge of others since you get a more accurate explanation of Islam through the special classes you attend

here. They will also state that the Islam you know is complete as opposed to other ordinary people who have been preached only incomplete teachings.

16. They will state that since the teachings of Islam you have been taught is superior, the teachers who are teaching you too are wiser than other scholars.
17. Thus, they will frequently attempt to distance the general public from other religious scholars by insulting them and highlighting their weaknesses.
18. Once in a while, special guests from abroad too attend these classes and conduct lectures and make presentations on political problems and religious issues.
19. They will also state that, at present, most Muslim countries and states do not enforce Islamic law and serve as mallets to the enemies of Islam.
20. They therefore urge that Muslim governments should not be obeyed and that obedience or pledging allegiance to them is not a characteristic of a devout Muslim.
21. They will state that you should always be prepared for armed military effort against non-Muslim governments as well as Muslim countries which do not function according to Islamic teachings.
22. They will advise that in the event you live under a non-Muslim government, you should not engage in state service and that such engagement would seem to amount to an allegiance of support to the non-Muslim government.
23. They will also ask of you to enter into and declare an oath (Bai'at) to establish your credibility and continued loyalty to this group. After you have entered into an oath as such, while not allowing you to join any other organisation or group, they will warn that refusing obedience to them would amount to a grave sin which is in contravention of religion.

For more information on the ideologies of terrorist and extremist groups and their arguments, visit the website <http://www.rrg.sg> of the RRG (Religious Rehabilitation Group) located in Singapore and <http://counterideology.multiply.com>.

***“Whoever kills a believer deliberately, his reward is Jahannam (Hell) where he shall remain forever, and Allah shall be angry with him and shall cast curse upon him, and He has prepared for him a mighty punishment.” (Al-Quran 4:93)***

# CAUTION 02

## BEWARE WHEN SEEKING RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

Although those involved in extremist activities may appear to be individuals who follow religion in a very devout manner, studies have confirmed that the majority, save a handful, do not spend their personal lives in this way and that they have shallow knowledge of religion. The majority of them are individuals who had not been religious during their youth and had not studied the religion in depth. Due to this in itself, they are in a state of remorse and regret. Likewise, they ail with a strong desire to do something great for Islam within a short time-span. After trapping such individuals in the snare of these terrorist groups, they are channeled towards committing horrific acts of terrorism by deceiving them into believing that it is a meritorious deed that entails great reward. As described earlier, while the process of capturing them is carried out very gradually and systematically, after attending these classes the participants firmly grasp what has been taught. Thereafter, once their connection with this group becomes very deep, there arises a situation where they cannot remove themselves.

### FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

Obtain the religious knowledge you require from the correct reliable sources. Seek the guidance you need from only qualified religious scholars.

Ensure that the religious classes and seminars that you and your loved ones participate in are being held in public places openly and that they are organized by religious organisations which are accepted by and registered with the government.

If, otherwise, these lectures are being organized in houses or private places, confirm that the religious scholars who are conducting such programme are qualified.

## **WHAT AND HOW?**

In the event that you are uncertain, contact the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU).

### **ADDRESS -**

281, Jayantha Weerasekara Mawatha, Colombo 10.

**Hotline Fatwa Division** - 0117490420

**Email address** - fatwa@acju.lk

***“So, by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you.”  
(Al Quran 3:159)***

# CAUTION 03

## BEWARE OF THE INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET REGARDING RELIGION

*No terrorist organisation can continue to be in existence without the support of people. In order to influence people, their ideology must be carried among the people. While there were restrictions and barriers for groups like this from the beginning itself, the internet proved to be a blessing for them since it enabled the global spreading of any destructive ideology without much restriction, within moments, without revealing their identities and in a secure manner.*

*The internet is a very ideal technology for terrorist groups who target both youngsters who express a desire to gain religious knowledge due to the facilities provided by the internet for obtaining information and the eagerness the youth show towards utilising it today, as well as, individuals who are in a state of remorse for their sins and therefore yearn and are thirsty to do something for the sake of religion.*

*Thus, individuals who do not possess a deep knowledge about religion- especially youngsters- are at a quite high tendency to fall prey to distorted religious teachings which are violent, extremist and consisting of incorrect interpretations. This is not said merely on the basis of conjecture. It has been identified beyond doubt that it is the distorted interpretation of religious ideologies published on the internet which has led most individuals to terrorism. Several individuals who had been planning to join the armed gangs after being enticed by terrorist groups operating in foreign countries have come under the scrutiny of the Sri Lankan security officials.*

*“And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.” (Al Quran 49:9)*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**

As advised above, obtain the religious knowledge that is required from only qualified religious scholars. Always keep in mind that the knowledge gained from unknown individuals over the internet is not as reliable as knowledge gained directly by meeting prominent religious scholars in your area. Nevertheless, not all the information available on the internet can be doubted. For instance, the matters published on the internet by eminent religious scholars who live in Sri Lanka and via the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU) are trustworthy. Further, it also fits the background of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country like Sri Lanka. Meanwhile, it should also be borne in mind that, although certain religious facts published on the internet by some trustworthy foreign sources are correct, they do not align with the Sri Lankan background.

## **WHAT AND HOW?**

When browsing the internet to find religious matters and information, inquire and thoroughly verify the validity and credibility of the relevant organisations and private individuals.

Correct religious knowledge can and should be obtained only from only reliable sources. The information otherwise obtained from unknown individuals or sources, cannot be trusted to be true or correct. Therefore, the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU) can be contacted to verify the validity and credibility of the relevant scholars and organisations, when seeking religious knowledge.

Similarly, it is necessary to be vigilant in relation to the subject of individuals who publish religious information on the internet using false or fictitious names and religious organisations which do not function from a permanent place and are not officially registered.

In order to obtain religious information and facts which you cannot obtain from the religious scholars in your area, reliable and prominent religious organisations and commonly used religious texts maybe



referred. Any doubts persisting in relation to any information should be clarified and the assistance of the most trusted sources such as All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU) could be sought at:

**ADDRESS -**

281, Jayantha Weerasekara Mawatha, Colombo 10.

**Hotline Fatwa Division** - 0117490420

**Email address** - fatwa@acju.lk

# GUIDELINES TO REPORT ON SUSPICIOUS RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS

If there are individuals or organisations who seem suspicious or preach religious ideas which are of a kind that would cause harm to religious and racial harmony, it is necessary to meet them and request them to change their attitudes. Otherwise, it is essential to make a complaint about them to the relevant officials. This is a duty of all peaceful and good citizens.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said the following in relation to this:

“Whoever among you sees evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then with his tongue (i.e.: by asking that it not be done). If he is unable to do so, then with his heart, and that is the weakest level of faith.”

## **IN THE EVENT THAT YOU INTEND TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS ENGAGED IN DELIVERING SUSPICIOUS RELIGIOUS SERMONS, KINDLY ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. The All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU) can be contacted to primarily confirm that the teachings are of distorted interpretation, violent in nature and hinder unity. Also, when making such complaint, it would be appropriate to present printed evidence such as handbooks distributed by those individuals or groups. Public statements should not be made without evidence or confirmation of facts. Doing so may stir unrest amongst the general public, and in the event that the relevant party is innocent, there is room for them to take legal action against you.

2. After verification of all factors, it is possible to make a prior appointment and visit the ACJU and meet an officer. Otherwise, the evidence and complaint can be sent in through post.

3. It is necessary to submit relevant information and evidence such as printed material or CDs along with the complaint. Additionally, it

is also necessary to provide the full address of the place where the relevant individual or organisation is functioning, and the details of the preachers along with photographs where possible. It is possible to hand in the complaint and the relevant evidence to the ACJU directly in person, or by post or in any manner one wishes to do so. It is also necessary to give the full particulars of the complainant inclusive of name and address in order to contact in case the complainant needs to be summoned as a witness when inquiry takes place.

4. If you become aware of an individual or group who is preaching in a manner which instigates terrorism or poses a threat to the national security, you can then inform the same to the security division by contacting them on their hotline or visiting them directly.

*“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.” [Al-Quran 41:34]*

# ADVICE TO REHABILITATE THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN MISLED BY DISTORTED RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS

If there are individuals among your family and friends who you suspect to be having connections with individuals or groups who conduct suspicious, misleading and distorted religious sermons, the following steps could be taken:

01. Find out if there is evidence to the effect that the matters preached to them are true and correct. This can be clarified from a suitable religious scholar. Once it is proved that this is wrong and untrue, explain the same to the relevant individuals and attempt to guide them to the right path.
02. If necessary, the relevant relative or friend can be brought to All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU) where arrangements can be made to meet a religious scholar, through whom matters can be explained to him. Advisory services in relation to this are provided through the branches of the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU). He will then be able to compare the matters being explained to him with the wrong information he has come to know, and thereby arrive at an understanding as to what is true and what is false.
03. Give him books, CDs, etc. which contain true and correct facts. Likewise, refer him to well-known websites where such information is available.
04. Further, advise him to perform the prayer named Salat-al-Haaja and pray to Allah for guidance to the right path.
05. Pray to Almighty Allah for the guidance of the person concerned to the right path.
06. Even if he does not listen to you, do not break ties with him or corner him. If you do so, he will quickly be drawn into the wrong path, and likewise, he will lose out on the good advice he receives.

07. However, inform the security divisions without delay, if you feel that the situation is so serious that your efforts are not fruitful, and that the said individual is a threat to the peace and security of the country. They would then take necessary action immediately.

***“Do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption.”***  
***(Al Quran 7:74)***

## **FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED**

Islam strictly forbids all kinds of violence and acts of terrorism. Although it is done under the guise of religion or in the name of faith, it has no approval in Islam. It is the responsibility of every Muslim to prevent anything that is forbidden and condemned in Islam. When it is evident that there is room for terrorist activity which may pose threat to lives or there is instigation in relation to it, not preventing it is a wrong punishable by Allah, neglect of responsibility and a huge sin. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of the citizens, to inform the relevant authorities when they become aware that a Muslim or a purportedly Islamic group is about to carry out a wrongful act, and informing as such to the authorities is not an act of betrayal as these terrorist groups claim it to be. Making such complaint is a favour to the misguided ones and does not entail jeopardy to them since they can be freed from terrorist activities via this.

## **REMEMBER**

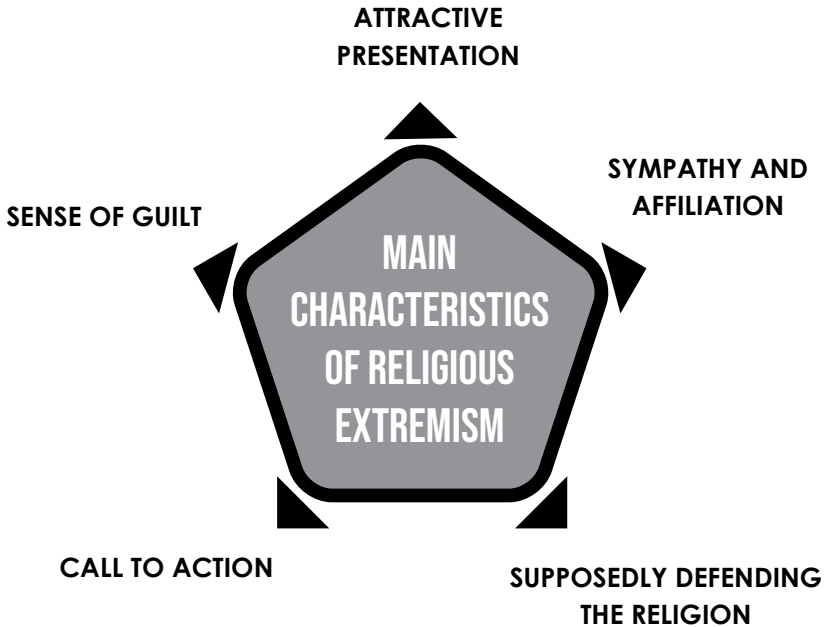
When those engaged in wrongful acts which could pose danger to the nation and its people are brought under the scrutiny of the relevant authorities, they are separated from their families and kept under detention. Bear in mind that if it is proven that one was involved in terrorist activities, the convicts could even be sentenced to death.

***“Do not go beyond the bounds in your religion.”***  
***(Al-Quran 4:171)***

# MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

Vulnerable individuals to radical influences typically turn to their friends or the internet for religious knowledge.

In their pursuit to their religiosity they accept whatever information without verifying and checking its authenticity with the relevant clerics or scholars.



## ATTRACTIVE PRESENTATION

Content that seemingly makes sense – Well designed and eye-catching materials. Proactive materials to attract and sustain interest and attention.

## **SYMPATHY AND AFFILIATION**

Images of sufferings, use of music and video games, and reading of current affairs in a manner that makes sense with misinterpreted textual evidence and Fatwas.

## **SENSE OF GUILT**

Triggering feelings of sympathy and affiliation, radical ideology also tends to tap on a person's emotions.

## **SUPPOSEDLY DEFENDING THE RELIGION**

Narrations from Islamic history was used out its context

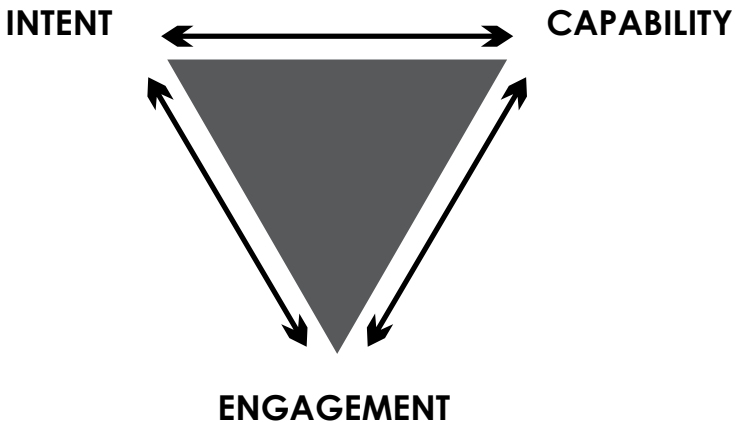
## **CALL TO ACTION**

Radical materials not only promote ideas – they also contain practical and actionable information that vulnerable individuals could follow.

# CLEAR SIGNS OF EXTREMISM

A terrorist or radicalized individual cannot be profiled based on traits such as ethnicity, gender, age, or socio-economic status. Nevertheless, published studies of individuals involved with terrorism suggested that they exhibit certain tell-tale signs during the radicalization process. These signs, which are not exhaustive, can help to approximate the extent an individual is vulnerable to radical influences, so that he could be identified early, counselled and return to mainstream society without inflicting harm on themselves or others.

Lloyd and Dean (2015) suggest that a person who is radicalized can be assessed from three different angles:





**INTENT** – THE MINDSET ASSOCIATED WITH THE READINESS TO PERFORM OR CONTRIBUTE TO AN EXTREMIST ACT OR BEHAVIOR.

- Expressing his belief that violence can be justified under some circumstances.
- Dehumanising the enemy (those deemed responsible for the plight of the fellow believers).
- Expressing hatred towards those who do not share his beliefs, showing us-versus-them mentality.
- Idolising glorifying terrorist personalities or promoting terrorist ideologies.

**CAPABILITY** – THE EXTENT THE INDIVIDUALS HAVE THE KNOW- HOW TO PERFORM AN ACT OF TERRORISM

- Being secretive in his actions or activities.
- Expressed desire to purchase/scout for terrorist-related paraphernalia.
- Meeting individuals, including via online platforms that promote terrorist narratives or provide operational advice on conducting terror attacks.
- Making plans to travel to conflict areas or expressing his desire to participate in acts of violence overseas or locally.
- Boasting about his contacts with known terrorist personalities and/or recruiters.

**ENGAGEMENT** – THE PROCESS WHERE INDIVIDUALS BECOME INVOLVED OR IDENTIFY WITH AN EXTREMIST GROUP, CAUSE OR IDEOLOGY.

- Expressing anger, grievances and sympathy towards the plight of his fellow believers overseas and sees a need to redress such injustice.
- Feeling that his faith and fellow believers are being victimized by people of other faiths and sees a need to defend against such threats.

- Positive emotions (i.e. feeling inspired) from terror attacks and/or actions of terrorist groups (beheadings, celebrating attacks on civilians, etc).
- Expressing difficulties on living in secular states arising from tensions within that his actions are inconsistent with his religious beliefs.
- Expressing feelings of religious and/or cultural isolation and surrounds self only with a small group of like-minded individuals.
- Sudden and significant inclination for deeper religiosity, especially if the increased religious observance is accompanied with limited theological understanding.
- Shares extremist materials with others without being asked (including sharing or reposting of radical content on social media).
- Preoccupation with listening to radical preachers and/or frequenting websites that carry terrorist narratives.

# ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALS THAT HAVE BEEN DISTORTED BY EXTREMISTS AND TERRORISTS

Extremists have misinterpreted Islam and its concepts to implement their agendas and this has caused misunderstandings about Islam all over the world. Following are few examples:

## **JIHAD:**

**Correct interpretation** – Jihad is an Arabic Word for 'Struggle'. It means to strive for excellence and goodness, against all forms of evil.

## **Islamic scholars categorize the term Jihad into five parts:**

- 1) Jihad of the mind (Jihad-Bin-Nafs/ Jihad-Bil-Qalb)
- 2) Jihad by the word (Jihad-Bil-Lisan)
- 3) Jihad by knowledge (Jihad-Bil-Ilm/ Jihad-Bil-Qalam)
- 4) Jihad by effort (Jihad-Bil-Yad)
- 5) Jihad by the sword or Jihad of self-defence. (Jihad-Bis-Saif)

## **1) JIHAD OF THE MIND**

Islam assertively teaches that the greatest Jihad is fighting against one's inner cravings and trying to make the heart clean of negative attitudes such as hatred, jealousy, rage, lust, greed etc. and instill love, sympathy, benevolence etc. But the western media never highlights such Islamic assertions and their sinister objective of this concealment is very clear.

## **2) JIHAD BY THE WORD**

This kind of Jihad is raising voice against injustices and corruptions. Islam hails standing against a despotic ruler as one great form of Jihad. Again, western media is totally silent about this aspect of Jihad too.

### 3) JIHAD BY KNOWLEDGE

This form of Jihad is fighting against injustice with the knowledge one has i.e. using oratory, literary skills etc. In fact, this effort of ours too could be termed as a Jihad of this kind which we do to eliminate erroneous understandings and bring communities closer.

### 4) JIHAD BY PHYSICAL EFFORT

This is striving to help people by physical efforts such as helping people in distress, natural disasters, epidemics, poverty, performing religious obligations such as Hajj/Umrah, caring for parents and the old and weak etc.

### 5) JIHAD BY THE SWORD OR JIHAD OF SELF-DEFENCE

There are only two possible ways to make an effort with swords or other weapons for peace, justice and fairness. It is obligatory to ensure that the teachings of the Qur'an related these occasions are strictly adhered.

'Jihad Difaee' – also known as 'Battle for security', is waged, for the protection of a State or a society, against the attackers, in the event of an attack. This battle should not be waged unless under the leadership of a State or people.

'Jihad Iqdami' - or 'progressive struggle', is a military action against crime, lawlessness, wickedness and terrorism carried out under an Islamic State. In such situations, it is imperative for an Islamic State to take action against such crimes without violating the laws of nature. Furthermore, this law does not apply to Muslims living in a non-Islamic state without the state patronage of their country. (Holy Quran – 2:218)

**False** – Extremists promote the idea of Jihad Musallah (armed struggle) as a 'Holy war' they believe that an armed struggle is inevitable and is the only way to achieve their objectives, one of which includes the establishment of Darul Islam, and Islamic State which will eventually lead to the establishment of Khilafah Islamiyya, an Islamic Chaliphate.

## **AL-WALA WAL-BARA:**

**True** – Islam relates ‘Al Wala’ to love for the sake of Allah, his messenger, fellow believers and those worthy of Allah’s pleasure. ‘Al Bara’ is interpreted as devoid of infidelity, transgression or anything that is destructive. All human beings are the creation of God, so we should practice Ta’awun (Getting to know and help one another). Islam teaches peace and love for all – not ‘Us and Them’ – and rejects the idea that everyone is either a friend or an enemy.

**False** – Extremists believes that ‘Al Wala wal Bara’ means that Muslims must befriend and care for other Muslims only. They believe that all non-Muslims must be subjugated.

The Extremists also divide the world into groups of people:

1. Muslims who agree their worldview,
2. Enemies who oppose them, including other Muslims.

## **TAKFIR:**

**True** – Muslims are forbidden to accuse other Muslims of betraying their religion. This act is known as Takfir (Labeling Muslims as infidels) in Islam, someone who practices Takfir actually turns himself into an infidel.

**False** – Some Extremists wrongfully regard fellow Muslims who do not subscribe to their Extremists ideology as Kuffar (infidels). They falsely accuse these Muslims of being Non-believers through the act of Takfir.

## **INTHIHAR:**

**True** – Inthihar (Suicide) is forbidden in Islam. There is no justification for suicide bombing as all lives are sacred.

**False** – Some Extremists attempt justify the use of suicide attacks as a means to achieve their violent agenda. They dream of dying as a Shahid (Martyr), who will be rewarded in the afterlife but this is contrary to the Islamic Teachings.

We have published some publications against terrorism and extremism since 2014, and have published a series of booklets titled 'Islam Bheethikawa' which clarifies misconceptions and allegations hurled against Quranic verses. However, this is the first guide we publish with the purpose of protecting our community from the dangerous jaws of extremism.

All religions and philosophies promote mercy and peace, and they do not encourage extremism, terrorism or violence. As such, Islam too encourages coexistence, harmony and moderation. But it is common sense for even an ordinary person that it is not suitable to assess a person's religion through his violent nature. Such persons live according to their own accord and cannot expect them to represent the religion.

ISBN 978-624-6022-06-8



9 786246 022068



No. 281, Jayantha Weerasekara  
Mawatha, Colombo 10, Sri Lanka.



[www.acju.lk](http://www.acju.lk)



[info@acju.lk](mailto:info@acju.lk)



@ACJUNews



@ACJU.Official



+94 117 490 490