

# ***Baseless Accusations Against Me***



**Hajjull Akbar**

Former President of Sri Lanka Jama'athe Islami (1994 - 2018)

2021.03.11



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## ***Content:***

1. Introduction
2. I was taken away for questioning and was accused
3. I led an open life
4. Difference of views in Islam or religious disparities prevailing in the country never triggered intolerance in me
5. My approach towards Islam
6. False accusation of Islamic State
7. Islamic State: Response for accusation
8. I too am opposed to this notion
9. About the evidence brought against me in the Commission
10. Information have been provided to the Intelligence Agencies
11. Allegations they made against me over Sadik
12. Al Hasanaath did not entice Jihad
13. How extremists are created? Testimonies of extremists
14. My acquaintances never envisaged me as an extremist
15. Popular attitude too is against extremism
16. How can an Islamic State possibly be established
17. Situation of Hajjul Akbar
18. In conclusion ...

## 1. Introduction

Who is the mastermind behind the Easter attack? The report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Easter Sunday Attack did not say anything about this 'mastermind'. It has been said 'The background to the April 21 attack has been totally obscured in the report. Therefore, the report cannot be accepted'

With this unacceptable background in mind:

In one instance it was referred to as 'extremist thinking'. In another instance the name of a person was connected to it. At another time Islamic organizations are portrayed as the mastermind without being specific. And some say 'Zahran' is the mastermind.

This shows that there is a distinct confusion about who is behind the attacks. There seems to be a tendency to just blame someone and do away with this headache.

However, there is the comforting belief that there are people in the country who are well aware of the facts.

They are the investigators and the judiciary. They do not simply blame anyone for the sake of closing the file and put an end to the matter. Instead, they would strive hard to establish the actual facts. They are the ones who believe and know the methods that would disclose the truth. I present the facts about myself for the view of such professionals.

***Rasheed Hajjul Akbar***

***2021.03.11***

## **2. I was taken away for questioning and then arrested**

Many have criticized the report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Easter Sunday attacks from various angles and many say it cannot be accepted.

I was one of those who were shocked by that report. Observing the allegations levelled against me in the report, it seems to ignore my true position and create a false horrible image of me.

There is one thing that needs to be pointed out here: I had already been arrested and subsequently released in 2019.

Those who arrested me then did not lay any charges against me. Instead they merely said that I was being taken for questioning and then they proceeded to arrest me.

The day after I was taken away, some Sinhala newspapers published the news about me in the darkest possible light. Reading them one would believe that all the allegations against me have been already proven

beyond a shred of doubt. It was then that people who know me began to speak out that the allegations were all false and outrageous. They emphasized my true position and extensively wrote and spoke for me.

The same allegations are being leveled against me and I am revisiting the nightmare that I believed was over.

It is clear that these allegations are merely based on preconceived notions based on conjecture.

As such, I categorically deny these allegations. In fact I have already faced these allegations, and was released by a court of law after the same allegations were thoroughly investigated.

### **3. I led an open life**

I am now nearing 60 years. So far I have lived in Sri Lanka, apart from going abroad on short trips that lasted no more than one week or less. All my studies, career and life have been in Sri Lanka.

My primary education was in Nawalapitiya St. Mary's College up to Ordinary Level. Then I pursued my education in Islamic Studies at Jamiah Naleemiyah in Beruwala. After spending seven years there, I served as an Imam in Madampe Jumua Masjid. Following the establishment



of the Islahiyyah Arabic College in 1987 in Madampe, I served as a teacher and later as its principal. During this period I became a member of the Sri Lanka Jamaathe Islami (SLJI) and worked in Islahiyyah until 1994. In 1994 I was elected President of the SLJI. Then I left Islahiyyah and held the leadership position of the SLJI until 2018. I am currently one of the members of the Executive Committee of the SLJI. This is the summary of my life. There is no such thing as a vague or obscure period in my history.

During my tenure as President of the SLJI, I have travelled abroad on short trips for various legitimate purposes, such as

- ❖ Acceptance of official invitations on behalf of the SLJI and participating in conferences. All costs were borne by the convention organizers. Visas for such trips were issued by the respective governments.
- ❖ Participating as a resource person in religious and cultural events organized by Sri Lankan Muslims living abroad during Ramadan or summer holidays. (Such events are organized with the permission of the Ministries of Religious and Cultural Affairs of those countries).
- ❖ Pilgrimages such as Hajj and Umrah.

I have disclosed all these facts during the questioning which can be verified through relevant government

institutions. Accordingly, my life has been an open book without a single day that I could not account for.

During my school days or career, or when I worked with the SLJI, I was very close to my community. At no point did I live in secret. My writings, speeches, activities, interactions have all been transparent.

Not only that, I have never been involved in any crime or offence in my life till today. No charges have been filed in connection with any wrongful activities. None of my contacts with others have been illegal or unlawful.

#### **4. Difference of views in Islam or religious disparities prevailing in the country never triggered intolerance in me**

Of course, there were individuals who disagreed with me on religious matters. It is a well-known fact that religious groups and sects that nurture different views are common among every faith. And these differences of opinion are normal and here to stay. Islam is no exception.

I have been publicly criticized by a handful of people upon these differences of opinion. However, I did not plummet into a state of intolerance so as to disparage my critics publicly. Zahran had been one who harshly criticized me and the SLJI organization. He proclaimed that I will be damned in hell. He contacted me over the

phone and invited me for a public debate to prove him right. I declined his invitation because I was not in the mental state to partake in a public debate about Islam. That phone conversation between me and Zahran was recorded by Zahran himself and uploaded on YouTube. A copy of the upload was submitted to the Commission. This proves more than anything else that Zahran and I were never in the same wave length.

The Commission's report accuses me of being religiously intolerant and for engaging in hate speech. I am not known for indecently criticizing Islamic organizations or criticizing other religions. There is no evidence of such criticisms. Thousands of people who know my writings and speeches bear witness to this fact.

If I had been a writer and speaker in Sinhala language, I think that a greater majority would have known this fact.

## **5. My approach towards Islam**

I must say here that there was a reflective style in my speech and writing regarding Islam. My tendency is to insist that every Muslim should put his religion first in his life. That is, to learn Islam as much as possible. I have emphasized that every Muslim has an obligation to implement this effectively. However, I have never been of the opinion that such obligation should be carried out in violent ways or in an illegal manner. On the contrary, my

expectation was that Muslims should set an example so that even non-Muslims would have good faith in Islam. I have criticized the practices and cultures of Muslims that turn this expectation into disappointment. Also, I have never forced any Muslim to practice any of the teachings of Islam. It is not only regrettable but also incredible that my investigators have not come across these openly available facts about me.

## **6. False accusation of Islamic State**

Another allegation made against me is that I said that Sharia law should prevail here.

One of the allegations made against me is that I said all Sharia laws are being taught in Arabic Madrasas and that I said it should be implemented in this country and instigated the Muslim community towards the establishment of an Islamic state

In fact this is what I said about teaching Sharia in Arabic Colleges:

In Sri Lanka, religious laws that can be applied by individuals in their lives are taught in Madrasas (Example: Laws relating to prayer, fasting, Zakat, Hajj, family life, businesses, Other kinds of laws such as criminal laws are often not taught as they are irrelevant in the context of Sri Lanka. In some instances Sharia Criminal laws are taught with the emphasis that they cannot be enforced

in a non-Muslim country like Sri Lanka. I explained this before the Commission but there could have been issues in what they understood due to my poor command of the Sinhala language. Later I obtained the service of a translator upon the advice of my legal counsel. However, the notion I support or instigate people towards an Islamic state in this country could be denied due to several reasons as follows:

## **7. Islamic State: Response for accusation**

First of all I must say with responsibility that this is something against SLJI principles.

SLJI would have been the first organization to take action against me had I been of this twisted mindset and if I had been enticing others towards this wholly unacceptable rebellious notion. The following incident provides practical proof of this:

Ayatollah Khomeini overthrew Shah's pro-US monarchy in Iran in the 1980s. At that time, naturally the wave of support for Ayatollah Khomeini was strong in many parts of the Muslim world.

Haji Yusuf, then an ex-president of the SLJI, personally took a pro-Ayatollah Khomeini stance. He said the SLJI should also take that position.

Supporting Iran's position against US imperialism and accepting Khomeini as a revolutionary Muslim leader to be followed are two different matters. Frontline members of the SLJI and its president were of the opinion that the second position of supporting the Iranian leadership could not be taken by the SLJI. The conflict between the ex-leader and the others could not be resolved. When it was finally decided to expel him from the organization, he himself resigned from membership and left the organization.

In fact, I did not have any connection with the SLJI during the time of Iranian revolution. I became a member of the SLJI only during 1987

How could the SLJI accept its leader rebelling against their own country or advocating such ideals while being an organization that has explicitly displayed its firm principle of not approving association even with a rightful revolution against a despicable and proven tyrant? This is why I said that it is the SLJI that would have kicked me out of the organization if at any point they thought that I was fostering such corrupt ideals.

## **8. I too am opposed to this notion**

I deny this accusation against me from yet another angle. In fact, this is another separate incident that proves the point again.

The central character of the incident was one Moulavi

Abdul Gafoor Muhammad Natheer. When Islahiyyah Arabic College was started in 1987, he was appointed as its first Principal by the Board of Management of the College. At that time I was a teacher under him in the institution.

Although Moulavi Natheer was executing his duties well in the beginning, his ideals changed for some reason later on. He gradually began to instil students with some different ideals.

‘We should openly preach Islam to non-Muslims of this country. Muslims should adhere to Sharia Laws only. We need not respect the laws of the country; there is no need for us to get driving licenses, identity cards, birth certificates, marriage certificates etc. Muslim children should not be sent to government schools or obtain secular education. Islamic education is sufficient for Muslims’ is what he taught the students.

Many students came to me and complained that such extremist ideas were being propagated among the students. I took the matter to the administration of the College. The administration too foresaw the problem and immediately fired Natheer from his post of principal.

Even after he was fired, some of the students were haunted by Natheer’s ideals. The administration saw the urgent need of eradicating such dangerous thoughts from the minds of the contaminated few and the task was given to me.

To this day, I am glad that I could clear the confusion of those students to the extent that out of the 24 students in the college at that time no one supported his ideals afterwards.

After Natheer Moulavi was expelled from Islahiyyah, he gathered a few people in Puttalam in an attempt to spread his extremist ideals. But not a single member of SLJI or SLISM followed him.

This took place during 1988/89.

This incident was brought up when I testified before the Commission. It is also mentioned in the report of the Commission. Still, the Commission's report has incredibly managed to portray me as an extremist.

## **9. About the evidence brought against me in the Commission...**

As far as I know the following were the people who testified against me in front of the Commission.

- ❖ Evidence given by Gnanasara Thero against us: When the monk was testifying he had criticized several Muslim organizations. (Total of 43 along with SLJI) and asserted they should be banned.

Many Muslim organizations jointly sent a protest letter to the Commission in this regard. As a result



he was summoned to the Commission and those organizations, including the SLJI, were given an opportunity to cross-examine him.

Gnanasara Thero was cross-examined by SLJI's lawyer Mr. N. M. Shaheed and the attorney asked, 'Did you know that Hajjul Akbar, the former leader of the SLJI was arrested, interrogated and acquitted by a court of law of all charges levelled against him?' Gnanasara Thero said: 'Yes.' and the lawyer asked 'If so, do you agree that he is innocent and that his organization is blameless?' To this the monk responded by saying that 'Bringing to the attention is our job and it is their job to discover the truth'

Gnanasara Thero knew nothing about the SLJI. He didn't get information about the SLJI from its own sources or people but was driven by unknown persons who fed the clueless monk with erroneous information.

- ❖ Another person who testified against me and the SLJI was one who posted comments his Facebook page that were derogatory of Islam and its Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This person was allowed to cross-examine me but the Commission did not inform me about this in advance.

While cross-examining me that person said that I had been a speaker, in a programme for students held in a mosque in Madampe, Chilaw, in 1995 and in that programme I had asserted the need to bring about an

Islamic rule in Sri Lanka. He further said that when he questioned me how was it possible while Muslims were a minority? I replied saying that Muslims were a minority when they ruled India.

I denied the particular allegation and said that I could not recall exact details of a particular program that took place in 1995. However, I explained him about the incident of Islahiyyah Arabic College principal Natheer Moulavi and how I strived to clear the confusion of the students.

- ❖ Other persons who testified against me may have been members expelled from both the SLJI and its affiliate, the Sri Lanka Islamic Students Movement (SLISM). I was told by officials that they had levelled criticisms against me when I was in the CCD and TID during the investigation.

My brother Moulavi Ibrahim and Munsif, who were members of SLJI, were expelled from it. In addition, a total of 15 members were expelled from SLISM. All of them were expelled from these organizations for the following reasons:

Sadik Abdullah is a son of my brother Ibrahim. Sadik had been the national organizer of SLISM and he was the culprit behind the incident of damaging the Buddha statue and was later arrested. Following the ethnic riots in Aluthgama in 2014 against Muslims, Sadik used to say that Muslims too should take to the street in retaliation

during such attacks.

He also spoke to me about this. But I said that these issues must be dealt with through legal means and practical methods. I also insisted violence is not the answer pointing out that it is against Islam as well as against the law of Sri Lanka. I also said that resorting to violence is contrary to the constitution of our organization. I thought he was talking to me just as a topic for discussion.

Meanwhile, Sadik Abdullah had been secretly sowing dissent among members of the organization aiming to create distrust in the leadership. Sadik had also clandestinely attempted to create a circle that would rally behind his ideals.

When some SLISM members, including Sufiyan, the then leader of the SLISM got wind of the sinister attempt, they brought the matter to the attention of three senior members of the SLJI.

The three who explored the issue saw this could potentially create division in the organization but it was least of their worries. They advised the SLISM leadership to expel Sadik Abdullah from the organization. The SLISM Central Council that immediately convened decided to remove Sadik Abdullah from the organization and annul his membership. All the members of the organization were informed of this decision with strict instruction to sever all ties with Sadik Abdullah.

These events took place in 2015, about three and a half years before the Buddha statue smashing incident.

- ❖ Shortly after this, his brother Shahid Abdul Haq was expelled from SLISM. A further 13 persons (a total of 15 persons) who maintained contacts with Sadik also were meticulously identified and removed from SLISM. A list of their names has been provided to the Commission.

Sadik's father, Moulavi Ibrahim, criticized the SLISM and refused to accept Sadik's expulsion from the SLISM. He also criticised those who advised Sadik's expulsion. Following this fiasco, SLJI too came under his fierce and constant criticism.

Subsequently, Moulavi Ibrahim, who was a member of the SLJI, was also expelled from the organization. This took place about 8 months before the Buddha statue damaging incident.

Documents relating to those expulsions too have been submitted to the Commission.

Munsif, another SLJI member who maintained contact with Sadik too was expelled around the same time as Sadik.

Both the SLJI and SLISM provided details of such expulsions to the Commission. If they had testified against us, it is most probably due to some kind of vengeance against us.

## **10. Information have been provided to the Intelligence Agencies**

We do not know what Sadik Abdullah did after he was kicked out of the SLISM. However, we later learned that he was conducting classes by gathering many youngsters. So we decided that it would be best to inform the intelligence agencies about him and we proceeded to do so in 2015 itself. An explanation in this regard has been provided to the Commission in writing.

## **11. Allegations they made against me over Sadik**

In the meantime, few of the investigators who questioned me about Sadik Abdullah's behaviour said I am the one responsible for his actions.

They accused me of making the travel arrangements to send Sadik to Turkey and Syria and said that then I became fearful and planned his expulsion.

I provided the following responses for the above allegations of theirs.

- SLJI and SLISM are not financially equipped to send any person abroad for education.
- Sadik told me as his uncle that he was going to Turkey for a three month course. He said he had

made arrangements for the trip. According to the SLISM, he also received an unpaid leave from SLISM for that three-month period.

- I later learned that when Sadik returned to the country about four months later, the SLISM Central Committee discussed and reinstated him.
- Sadik's leave from SLISM and re-joining is not a matter for me to make decisions about. The SLISM does not consult me regarding such matters. SLJI did not spend funds for him in any case. I did not put in any money for him personally or through SLJI for this trip either. It is also noteworthy that although Sadik was my nephew, he has never engaged in any work with me or for me on any occasion.
- I knew Sadik went to Turkey because he is a relation and not because I had any influence or interest over him.
- The fact that he went to Syria from Turkey came to light after his arrest from his own confession to the police. The confession was published in the media.
- I did not make Sadik get involved in any of the SLJI activities and I did not have any need to.
- I deny the charges made against me with regard to Sadik upon the above facts.

## 12. Al Hasanaath never enticed Jihad

Another piece of evidence they have put forward to assert that I am an extremist is the SLJI monthly magazine Al-Hasanaath. They accuse Al-Hasanaath of promoting Jihad. They produced some of the articles published in Al-Hasanaath to prove their point.

It is true that Al-Hasanaath published news and articles condemning the aggressions against Muslims in countries around the world such as Palestine, Afghanistan and Bosnia and how Muslims fought against those occupiers.

Naturally, such was the sentiment of all Muslims world over during such struggles of oppressed Muslims. However, then the emotion faded. It was preserved within the pages of Al-Hasanaath because it was in print form. Those who read the writings of the day also knew that it was written with the context of those very days in mind. They did not preserve them as syllabus to conduct classes.

In the novel context that has developed against Islam and Muslims in the wake of the Easter tragedy, it is inevitable that a misunderstanding would arise when one brings such articles written in a different time and different context. Some incredibly conclude that what was written back then is responsible for the extremist activities that have developed today. We responded to such allegations in various forms that are given below in brief:

- Those articles were written at the time as important

global political events and about sufferings of Muslims but they were not written as enticements to make Jihad in Sri Lanka.

- Articles published in Al-Hasanaath emphasized reconciliation, coexistence, and law-abiding attitudes when Sri Lankan Muslims were victims of violence.
- Al-Hasanaath has also published articles that expose Islamic extremist outfits such as ISIS. Al-Hasanaath has never written in support of Islamic extremist organizations.

In addition, I think it is appropriate to mention another matter that was not said before the Commission.

We supported what the world supported in that context. For example, the United States even propagated the Afghan war against Soviet Russian occupation as Jihad. The current Prime Minister Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa too has been a supporter of the Palestinian cause and had been the President of the Palestine-Sri Lanka Friendship Association. In a context where the sense of liberation of the Afghan people and the Palestinian people is thus supported by all, how can it be considered a crime that we speak and write about those issues simply because of the context of the time and since we are an Islamic organization?

Another thing we tried to explain to the Commission was that Al Hasanaath Magazine is a print media. If the



media does not come out with current and hot news no one would read it. Stale news does not sell.

In this context, it is an absurd argument and unacceptable accusation that the extremists who have emerged today were created by the Al-Hasanaath's past articles. We completely deny it.

### **13. How extremists are created? Testimonies of extremists**

The extremists' own confessions are another proof that al-Hasanaath did not create any of them. The extremists have made these confessions clear during their campaigns and interrogations. They say that they were triggered by the injustice and violence unleashed against Muslims.

Such confessions have also appeared in the Commission's report. That is the reason for the Commission's recommendations that organizations such as the Bodu Bala Sena should be banned and legal action must be taken against Gnanasara Thero. Sinhala extremist organizations too drive Muslim youths towards retaliatory violence. The Commission acknowledges that this has been the cause.

The reasons for Zahran's attack are stated on pages 144 and 145 of the Commission's report. They are quoted from Zahran's speech at a house in Mount Lavinya before the attack. He mentions 10 reasons for the attack in Sri

Lanka asserting the following points.

- A picture of a pig on which Allah was written was carried during a protest in Kuliypitiya.
- Rev. Gnanasara Thero falsely claiming that Allah has a rebirth.
- Tearing and burning copies of Qur'an which is loved more than one's life.
- Destruction of Muslim mosques.
- Destruction of the economy and houses of Muslims and forcible takeover of their lands on false charges.

Zahran also has mentioned attacks made on Muslims in Digana and Beruwala.

It is stated in the report of the commission, Vol 1 page 15 as follows:

'In this context it is evident that the emergence of extremist groups within the majority community in turn causes further tensions amongst other communities, which leads to a vicious cycle of greater fragmentation of the Sri Lankan identity. More importantly, such actions by majority extremist groups nourish the narrative of IS sympathetic and other Islamic extremist groups. In the final message recorded by Zahran before the attack, such actions on the part of Rev. Galagoda aththe Gnanasara Thero as well as other extremist groups are given as reasons for the Easter attack.

It is mentioned in the article of Vidivelli page no: 7 dated 05.03.2021 entitled How statue smashing occurred in Mawanella? as follows (Quoting the Report of the Commission)

***'Sadik and Shahid were ordered by Zahran to cause damage to Buddha statues in Mawanella. The order was issued in retaliation for Sinhala attacks on Muslims in Sri Lanka.***

The Commission's report quoted Sadik as saying the following in the same article:

***Sadik said Zahran commanded him to smash the Buddha statues. Sadik was driven to such a vicious act by being shown a photo of a demonstration organized by the Bodu Bala Sena in Kuliypitiya. The protesters displayed a banner with a picture of a pig with the word "Allah" written under it.***

Commission Report – Vol 1, page 112

Similarly, on 10.09.2019 Lankadeepa ran a story about Vanathavillu on page 18. The following feature was reported as a message highlighted with pictures of Shahid conducting classes for the youth:

***'The leader has said that the Buddha statues should be smashed because they have attacked mosques.'***

Similarly, on 2021.02.27, in the most recent YouTube video Chamuditha asks Gnanasara Thero the following

question:

'When Zahran took oath in Mount Lavinia a day before the Easter attack he said: "My head transformed after Gnanasara Thero staged a riot. (Magey Oluwa Venus Wuna)" What is your response to this? '

No matter what the monk replied, they themselves have mentioned the real reason for provoking wayward youths.

The bungles of two kind of extremists (Muslim extremists and Sinhala extremists) are now being blamed on an innocent third party.

## **14. My acquaintances never envisaged me as an extremist**

I deny the charge of extremism against me from yet another angle. My current age is 60. This accusation seeks to undermine the reputation I have strived to establish within my community through my entire life.

I am remarkably well known and respected within my community. It is my writings and speeches that have earned me this recognition for which I thank the Lord. In other words, my good reputation is the outcome of my righteous thoughts that have benefited my community and the country.

There is a large circle of thousands of people who know me through my thoughts and ideals, who are familiar with

me, who have benefited from me, who have helped me to benefit. Do the testimonies of such people carry no weight in evaluating a man? This is a giant question for me. I think great importance has been given to the testimonies of many who really do not know me, who disagree with me for some reason, and who have committed crimes against the law of the land.

Many community leaders came to see me the day after I was released. There were a large number of prominent, reputed and respected people among them who know me very well.

The attempt to ensnare me in the April 21 extremist calibre of the likes of Zahran and Sadik while ignoring the reputation of my really close acquaintances is nothing but a slap in the face of justice.

## **15. General attitude too is against extremism**

Sri Lankan Muslims generally maintain good relations with the Tamil people in the Tamil majority areas and with the Sinhalese people in the Sinhalese majority areas. Muslims, by nature, do not like to cause conflict with other communities.

My community would have been my number one enemy if I had been the one who fragmented the Muslims by demanding the establishment of an Islamic state. My

community would have rejected me forthwith as it did against Zahran's extremism even refusing to accept his body for burial in a Muslim burial ground. And on the other hand, there is plenty of evidence that my community has approved my writings, speeches and thoughts that are based on non-violence.

***When I was arrested on 25.08.2019 for the first time, everyone witnessed how many became concerned and worried and how they spoke, wrote, prayed and pleaded for my release.***

Unfortunately, other communities did not get to know me and they believed the lies spread by the Sinhala media. One of the reasons is that the Sinhala media does not know about me. However, Muslims do not believe those lies as they know me well.

In addition, in today's world of science and research, there are many methods for identifying the truth about a human being especially when he has been open and honest as me.

## **16. How could an Islamic State possibly be established? you tell me...**

I deny the charges against me from yet another perspective.

What is this so called conspiracy of mine to establish

an Islamic state? What were the forces behind me? Who was the team that collaborated most closely with me on this gigantic matter? If someone asks these questions the answer will be nothing. The reason is that such a group can never be the SLJI. I have said before that if I had been involved in trying to establish an Islamic state they would have been the first to take action against me and I could not have pulled off such a colossal thing without the SLJI getting wind of it.

Not only that but the notion of 'Islamic State' is not at all in the constitution of the SLJI. It is noteworthy that the SLJI has adhered to its constitution to the letter ever since its inception.

I have been elected as the head of the SLJI by its members for 24 consecutive years during elections that are held every four years. They chose me again and again even though I had said many times that I would like to step down. I was finally able to step down only after the amendment was introduced that prevents a person from being elected for more than two consecutive terms for the leadership of the SLJI.

My phone contacts were scrutinized when I was arrested. The conclusion of that study too was that I had no relationships with outlaws.

If they have investigated what were their findings? With whom I would have supposedly carried out this massive conspiracy? They inquired about my contacts with

politicians in the Muslim community. It was confirmed to them that I had no close contact with any of them.

They raised another suspicion. They alleged that I placed several persons in high-ranking government institutions in order to pull off the incredible plot. I asked them if I was such an influential person who could seat persons of my choice in high government offices. Not only that, I gave them a list of all the members of the SLJI and asked them to see if a single person is serving in a top official capacity. They naturally drew a blank.

***The perimeters of activities are explicitly indicated in the SLJI's constitution under the heading 'Guiding Principles'. Our operational limits are defined as 'We will never engage in party politics', 'We will operate independently and will not maintain any binding relationship with any foreign or domestic organization' and 'We will abide by the law of Sri Lanka'.***

I ask you how an Islamic State can be established in Sri Lanka with so many constitutional restrictions and lack of inclination.

No weapons our way is only to act legally. No politics - no binding relations with any local or foreign organization. No demonstrations - we do not have affluent or high-ranking officials in the government. Hard liners such as Sadik do not approve of us and we do not approve of them either.

It is ridiculous to imagine how a person like me and



an organization such as ours could even think about an Islamic state in its wildest dreams.

## **17. Situation of Hajjul Akbar**

The report of the Commission states that Hajjul Akbar does not have a Moulavi certificate. He has no other educational qualifications other than the B.A. He is not a rich man. And he is not someone who has the power or strength to clash with others.

It is incredible that I have been termed an extremist when I have even severed ties with my own brother Ibrahim and his family because they nurture extremist ideals.

I would have tried to de-radicalize Sadik Abdullah if he had not gone to the point of no return. Sadik set up a group secretly and already had started to function and there was nothing I could do to bring Sadik back to his senses. I went to his house and tried several times to save him but it did not succeed. It is my longing and expectation that they will return towards rational ways and thoughts.

I would like to work day and night considering it as the primary task if an opportunity comes to free Sadik and colleagues from extremist ideals.

Some investigators who listened to my religious lectures said that I can accomplish such a task. I said I am ever ready for such a mission.

I am not talking like this because of the turmoil caused to me by the report and its allegations. I am aware of the reality that world events do not always turn out well. However, that reality sometimes goes so far as to suggest that one person is being sacrificed for the sake of someone else. These realities, however, cannot be ignored. Reality may be proven in another era. Until then patience is the ideal garb for the righteous.

## 18. In conclusion ...

I share some expectations in the hopes that someone will realize the truth

- Punishments should be given to the perpetrators of the crime.
- Prevent those who maintain contact with criminals from doing so, in order to prevent them from becoming criminals in the future.
- Approaching skeptics in an open manner in order to lead them to a non-skeptical situation

Changes that are designed for the Muslim community should be delivered in an inclusive manner so that they too would feel that they are Sri Lankan citizens. Then they would not regard them as forced changes.

**The better future of the people is the better future of the country.**