



CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES

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CPA Strongly Condemns Recent Violence in Ampara and Urges Swift Action by Authorities

28th February 2018, Colombo, Sri Lanka: The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) strongly condemns the recent attacks on a mosque and several places of business in Ampara on the 26th of February and urges the relevant authorities to take action to prevent the spread of violence and to hold perpetrators to account within the existing legal framework in Sri Lanka.

CPA notes the systematic hate campaigns that have targeted minorities in the post-war context and that despite complaints against such incidents and as highlighted by CPA, the existence of adequate legal provisions in the Sri Lankan legal framework, perpetrators have almost never been arrested and prosecuted. Furthermore, there is also abundant video evidence related to such incidents, often disseminated by those claiming to be the perpetrators themselves or by those associated with the perpetrators. In this context of continued failure by the Police, CPA strongly urges the Prime Minister, as the Minister of Law and Order, to ensure that the Police fulfills its responsibilities without fear or favour.

Whilst there has been condemnation by key actors in government, including by President Maithripala Sirisena who condemned the recent incident when he spoke yesterday (27th) at the launch of National Policy on Reconciliation & Co-existence, words must be followed by action to prevent any future violence, eradicate impunity and provide confidence to minorities that this government is committed to coexistence and reconciliation. Inaction at this pivotal juncture in our 70th year of independence will retard the prospects for genuine peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.