

Cyber-attacks: The evolving threat landscape in Sri Lanka's National Security

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Abstract

The 21st century Digital Age where the availability and accessibility of information reaching unprecedented levels has expanded the contexts from which national security challenges can emerge. Sri Lanka being ranked among the top 10 countries in the Asia Pacific impacted by the growing threats to cyber-attacks unveils the vitality to protect its availability of critical infrastructure. Moreover, as a developing nation currently it has a greater possibility of facing an unforeseen vulnerability in cyber-attacks owing to its greater dependence on critical infrastructure, industrial automation and cyber based control systems especially with the adoption of 'E- Sri Lanka Development' initiative. Although Sri Lanka claimed its complete territorial sovereignty by eradicating the LTTE terrorists there remains a question whether the country is ready to face emerging threats in the new domain of cyberspace. The objective of this research is to identify the sectors of national security in Sri Lanka that are more prone to cyber-attacks. Moreover, it reviews how the existing law is deficient and what needs to be done to improve network intrusions threatening the National Security. Examining the existing law with globally accepted cyber intrusion analytical models denoted that a comprehensive legal framework is needed to address cyber-attacks. The study is based on qualitative research with the aim of gathering insights on the subject matter including both primary and secondary data. The study found out that, the vulnerability of business and industries to cyber-attacks is increasing and will continue to increase in future, adoption of internet and mobile banking in the banking sector is causing cyber security breaches where banks hardly report for the fear of losing public confidence and inadequate preventive mechanisms and privacy laws to detect cyber-attacks. Sri Lanka's paradigm shift from eradicating LTTE and securing its physical borders, to cyber space has become the newest national security breach infringing its Political, Economic, Social and Technological spheres.

Key words: National Security, Cyber-attacks, Sri Lanka, Intrusion analysis

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