# SINGAPORE INCREASES SECURITY IN PLACES OF WORSHIP

- Harsh Mahaseth

There has been an increase in the number of threats of attack at places of worship in Singapore. This step comes after a Singaporean youth was detained for planning to attack civilians inside the Maghain Aboth synagogue on Waterloo Street. Another similar incident was reported in January, where a young Singaporean boy was detained for his intention to plan, attack, and kill civilians inside two mosques. Speaking to reporters, Law and Home Affairs Minister K. Shanmugam raised concerns regarding such attacks and the need to review the security at places of worship. Mr. Shanmugam noted that "these places must remain welcoming and cannot be turned into fortresses."

Shanmugam also said, "I think the security measures may have to be stepped up a bit to balance off the risks that are increasing…it has to depend on how the threats evolve… But my own sense is that not all religious sites will have to be protected to the same level, some face a higher threat level and they may have to take some additional measures."

The government has been careful in its approach to the sensitive issue, with some concrete ideas to protect places of worship. Different places might require different levels of security, with some places potentially requiring more hardware and patrol in a more discreet way.

The minister also highlighted the importance of civil vigilance. He stated that while the Internal Security Department has been able to pick up signs of self-radicalization, there is a need for the citizens to also be vigilant and help one another.



Picture Courtesy: Visit Singapore

Picture Courtesy: Yahoo! News