Emergency in Sri Lanka

Why in news?

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- Sri Lanka declared an island-wide state of emergency.
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- This was to curb growing anti-Muslim violence in the country’s Central Province.
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What is the situation in Sri Lanka?

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- The violence, according to police sources, was triggered by the death of a 41-year-old man.
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- He succumbed to injuries inflicted by a group of Muslim men, following a road rage incident.
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- The suspects were arrested immediately after the incident and remanded.
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- However, the incident triggered a series of anti-Muslim attacks.
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- The violence is provoked reportedly by Sinhala-Buddhist extremist group.
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- A series of arson attacks targeted dozens of mosques and Muslim-owned shops and homes in Kandy, located in the Central Province.
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- Two mosques and shops were vandalised in Ampara.
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- Ampara is a district with a near equal population of Muslims and Sinhala-Buddhists.
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Why was Emergency declared?

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- There were concerns of mishandling of the whole situation.
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- The police and the Special Task Force were accused of a delayed and inadequate response.
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- The Sri Lankan government was criticised for “pandering to extremist forces” in the Sinhala majority community.
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- The move to declare emergency is seen as a “confidence-building measure”.
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- The emergency allows the government to deploy the army in case of any violent clashes.
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- Procedurally, the emergency will lapse in two weeks unless the parliament votes to extend it.
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What is the significance?

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- This is the first time that emergency had been reimposed after it was in force for 40 years from 1971 during the civil war.
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- The latest unrest underlines the new political and ethnic dynamics in Sri Lanka.
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Source: The Hindu

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