



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Evangelical Fellowship of India condemns in strongest terms the terror attacks on innocent people in Sri Lanka**

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**22<sup>nd</sup> April 2019, New Delhi**

The Evangelical Fellowship of India condemns in the strongest terms the terrible and dastardly terrorist attack on innocent people in Sri Lanka on Easter Day, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

News so far confirms the death of nearly 300 people and many more injured as a result of eight blasts.

The terrorist attacks targeted three Churches in Negombo, Batticaloa and Colombo's Kochchikade district as well as Shangri-La, Kingsbury and Cinnamon Grand hotels in the capital city. Two more explosions took place even as the police were trying to locate the people responsible. Even though 13 people have been arrested by the police, it remains unclear, as to who was behind this attack.

The maximum casualty was inflicted on the Christian community as the faithful had gathered together for the Easter services. The blasts on Churches left the pews and walls covered in blood and lives that will never be the same again, after losing their loved ones in this manner.

We stand in solidarity with all peace-loving people in Sri Lanka and extend our condolences to all affected by these terror attacks. A special mention must be made of our colleagues at National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri-Lanka (NCEASL), who are on the ground helping with the relief operations. Some members of the Alliance lost their loved ones too in this attack and we pray for God's peace and comfort for them in this hour of grief.

EFI calls on all member Churches and bodies to continue to pray for the victims and their families and for peace to return to the island nation. Terrorism and senseless killing sprees are a blot on our collective humanity and need to be dealt with firmly and surely.

This targeting of people during passion week and Easter day, is not a recent phenomenon. In 2017, at least 45 people were killed in Egypt as two Churches in

Tanta and Alexandria cities were bombed by ISIS on Palm Sunday while one of the services was being led by the Coptic Pope Tawadros II, who was thankfully unharmed.

On March 27, 2016, on Easter day, at least 75 people were killed, and hundreds were injured in Lahore, Pakistan, as a result of a bomb explosion near a Church cause by the group Jamaat-ul-Ahrar. The blast killed many children.

On April 8, 2012 in Kaduna, Nigeria, on Easter Sunday, a car bomb that went off near a Church killed at least 41 people. The attack was carried by Boko Haram.

In our own country while there have been no bomb blasts targeting Churches so far, Easter, Good Friday and Christmas Days are often the days when most violent attacks take place against Christians and in many cases worship services are disrupted and Christians are arrested.

Incidents like these put us face to face with the reality of evil in our world today. They are proof that religiously motivated violence and terrorism are not only firmly present in our world but are increasing. And this is why hatred needs to be rejected outright. Because hate, being evil, gives birth to death and destruction. This is amply clear by all the terrorist attacks in the world whether they be in India, Pakistan or even Christ Church in New Zealand.

#### **Issued by**

**Rev. Vijayesh Lal  
General Secretary  
Evangelical Fellowship of India**