



NATIONAL CHRISTIAN EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE SRI LANKA

2019 Easter Sunday Bombings

Interventions by the NCEASL

Background:

Sri Lanka was rocked by a series of explosions reported on the morning of Easter Sunday (21st April), targeting three churches and three five-star hotels in Sri Lanka. St Anthony's Church, Kochchikade, St Sebastian's Church, Negombo, Zion Church in Batticaloa, as well as Shangri La, Cinnamon Grand and Kingsbury hotels in Colombo were the targets in a number of bombings, the first of which is reported to have taken place at approximately 08:45 a.m. The explosions targeted Easter Sunday worship services and Easter breakfast buffets organised by hotels. Malcolm Ranjith, Archbishop of the Catholic Church, announced that all evening services in Catholic churches in the Colombo district had been cancelled. A 12-hour island-wide police curfew was subsequently imposed.

On the 22nd of April, the Police and the Government Analyst confirmed that all attacks were perpetrated by suicide bombers. The death toll currently stands at 253, with around 500 injured. Investigations are still ongoing, and the Criminal Investigation Department is reported to have arrested 30 individuals thus far.

The explosion at the Zion Church in Batticaloa, a member church of the NCEASL, occurred at around 09:10 a.m. on the 21st of April and resulted in the deaths of 28 people. According to an NCEASL source, 14 children under the age of 14 were victims of the attack. The remains of 12 victims have been released to their families and a number of funerals have already taken place. While official figures are yet to be revealed, initial reports state that over 100 worshippers were killed at the St. Sebastian's Church in Negombo and many others at the St. Anthony's Church in Kochchikade.

(A) Meeting immediate needs: Emergency assistance

Considering the heinous nature of these attacks, the immense grief caused to the families of the demised, and the impoverished backgrounds of the aggrieved persons, the NCEASL is hoping to provide emergency assistance to victims of the attacks. Accordingly, the NCEASL is currently monitoring and assessing the situation and carrying out a needs analysis to identify specific needs of affected families and individuals.

At present, the NCEASL is providing Rs. 50,000.00 for 30 families to cover funeral expenses of deceased loved ones and Rs. 15,000.00 each for 59 individuals injured for

medical expenses. In addition, the NCEASL is also hoping to provide emergency assistance to victims of the church attacks in the form of:

- (1) Monthly rations to families who lost their breadwinners**
- (2) Counselling and mental health support for affected families; and**
- (3) Medical assistance for those injured in the attack**

Through the above emergency measures, the NCEASL hopes to:

- Support families without breadwinners to stay afloat and meet day-to-day needs in the immediate aftermath of the incident
- Assist victims to deal with trauma and other psychological effects stemming from the attack and
- Provide medical assistance to those injured to seek medical treatment for injuries sustained

(B) Meeting long-term needs: Recovery, restoration, and strengthening the security of churches

In light of the current suicide attacks on churches by radical Islamist elements, and the consequent future threats posed to other churches, the NCEASL is also hoping to carry out initiatives to re-assess security measures for Christian places of worship in vulnerable areas. This will include measures to:

- Assess threats and the current security levels of churches in vulnerable areas, identifying gaps in security needs
- Tighten security measures at Christian places of worship

Accordingly, in the coming weeks, the NCEASL will assess threats with experts, identify security needs and implement measures to tighten the physical safety of churches. Moreover, with regard to victims of the church attacks, the NCEASL will continue to assist victims following the immediate period, providing:

- (1) Regular support to affected families who have lost breadwinners**
- (2) Psychosocial assistance for those suffering from trauma; and**
- (3) Long-term medical aid**

With regard to long-term impact, through the above measures, the NCEASL is aiming to:

- Assist victims to gradually rebuild their lives through monthly assistance beyond the emergency period
- Assist victims with physical injuries and those suffering from mental trauma and psychological challenges to gain full health or reach a better physical and mental state; and
- Tighten security levels of churches in vulnerable areas

Support:

Those who wish to support the work of the NCEASL in meeting emergency and recovery needs of the victims could send in their contributions to the following bank account:

Account Number: 200230044106

Account Name: NATIONAL CHRISTIAN EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE OF SRI LANKA.

Address: No: 95, GALLE ROAD, DEHIWALA, 10350, SRI LANKA.

Bank Name: NATIONS TRUST BANK PLC

Bank Address: 242, UNION PLACE, COLOMBO-02,

Bank code and the branch code: 7162 023

SWIFT Code: (8 or 11 digits) NTBCLKLX

For local deposits, kindly mention “**Easter Sunday**” in your deposit slips. Also, please state the need toward which you would like to contribute.

For more details please contact us on legal@nceasl.org.

Thank you.

YAMINI RAVINDRAN

Head of Legal and Advocacy

NCEASL

GODFREY YOGARAJAH

General Secretary/CEO

NCEASL

23 April 2019, 1200h