We Muslims And CAIR Condemns Attacks on Christian Worshippers and Others in Sri Lanka as 'Outrageous, Despicable'

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
**CAIR Condemns Attacks on Christian Worshippers and Others in Sri Lanka as 'Outrageous, Despicable'**
 **(WASHINGTON, D.C., 4/21/19) -** The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, today condemned a series of attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka that reportedly left more than 200 dead and more than 450 injured.

**SEE:**[Sri Lanka bombings: 207 dead, hundreds injured in church, hotel explosions on Easter Sunday](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001NkpzwtJRjDGFmJLHPjmziDfiBvANrvyEOLXDmjwEOrhpgoi4jD8WS0wO-5kem4VTQ8l2-XQ7e3S17cHNJl9S6mHbvDYWoOivg9-pg8r5ZtIsF7ujc-Yk0gSm_0-77gy79eBzgHIP51gdDFDvf8F3WEP6Jz1FkYdEpv3fGrlaPRUtf6RUwRDvfhygdHFBITHbSB_PGcKFk_DXzjoT3hQ2BoD3kwfT5y37roXePuL4X3plAF4hSKbbnfEYNMlaqi7XBmfNmWJOK5P47jrx7JvFmn59t5Nk-iljRglx014HWuM=&c=Yx0pO7HXHPwbuTn0rgttMLque0BwAvKGA2OazY4P2JmjoTIhYjE3Rw==&ch=Rv1EoXjR3GAt9JLgCGvoWm3SHmGiMgOkqlw-C0Fgp9rNQ_4oLGvuGQ==)

In a statement, **CAIR National Executive Director Nihad Awad said**:

"Today's savage attacks on Christian worshippers celebrating Easter Sunday and others in Sri Lanka are outrageous and despicable. May God heal those injured, comfort the loved ones of those killed, and bring those responsible for this crime to justice. American Muslims stand with our fellow citizens of all faiths in condemning such acts of violence wherever they take place and whomever they target. Today, we join people around the world in saying, *Pray for Sri Lanka*."

CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties and advocacy organization. Its mission is to enhance understanding of Islam, protect civil rights, promote justice, and empower American Muslims.

La misión de CAIR es proteger las libertades civiles, mejorar la comprensión del Islam, promover la justicia, y empoderar a los musulmanes en los Estados Unidos.

**END

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Assalamu Alaykum.

Close to 300 Christians celebrating their holiest day, Easter, were murdered by suicide terrorists, and about 500 were injured in Sri Lanka on Sunday.

We stand in solidarity with Sri Lankan Christians and convey our deepest sorrow. May God give comfort to their loved ones and may He bless the injured with a quick and lasting recovery. May Sri Lanka, a lush, green, beautiful country, follow New Zealand's example by rising above hatred. Ameen.

Minorities throughout the world are under attack. We must work with each other. This is why we provided media outlets with press contacts from the Christian Sri Lankan community early yesterday morning.

We stand in fellowship with Sri Lankan Muslims who have been under attack for several years and have[informed the Sri Lankan](https://default.salsalabs.org/Tc5c4e6b0-8ac2-4871-8c25-a69207356bb3/707f6cab-ee42-40be-b136-9525f734fb77) government of the existence of an extremist group three years ago. May God protect them.

Suicide bombing in Sri Lanka has been mainly carried out by the Tamil Tigers, who are Hindus. In fact, they have been described as the inventors of modern-day suicide bombings.

**Christian and Muslim relations in Sri Lanka**

* Christians and Muslims are both minorities in Sri Lanka who have coexisted peacefully with each other. There has been no conflict between the two faith communities.
* They both have a very supportive relationship with each other to counter Buddhist extremism.They work together to develop a peaceful society in Sri Lanka through interfaith meetings and peace councils.

**Sri Lankan Muslims**

* Sri Lankan Muslims have been under attack by Buddhist extremists for years.
* Sri Lankan Muslims constitute over nine percent of the country's total population.

**Buddhist Extremism**

* Buddhists constitute a majority of Sri Lanka with 70% of the population.
* The past government of Sri Lanka supported the Buddhist extremist movement, called Bodu Bala Sena, which has carried out attacks on Sri Lankan minorities, especially Muslims.
* The current President, Maithripala Sirisena, has taken a strong stand against Sri Lankan Buddhist extremists.
* Muslims have been attacked by Buddhist extremists in Sri Lanka multiple times, most recently in 2018.
* Connected to global as well as regional Islamophobia networks, there have been campaigns against Muslims eating halal food in Sri Lanka.

**The Indian Connection**

* The Sri Lankan government, within 24 hours of the attacks and without much investigation, is now blaming a Muslim group in Sri Lanka. However,[the](https://default.salsalabs.org/T54f11de7-db3d-4db1-a618-069d2956e8ed/707f6cab-ee42-40be-b136-9525f734fb77)[Washington Post reports](https://default.salsalabs.org/T9b7f3537-f988-42fc-b46f-2393ef76604b/707f6cab-ee42-40be-b136-9525f734fb77) that this allegation is based on information provided by the Indian intelligence agencies. Indian media listed names of suspects 30 minutes after the attack.
* The New York Times documented[the Indian connection](https://default.salsalabs.org/T471b7138-c120-4c07-9261-9a3075588c27/707f6cab-ee42-40be-b136-9525f734fb77)as early as Oct 15, 2014 in an editorial entitled “Deadly Alliances Against Muslims”. The piece warned against the alliance between the Hindu extremists and Buddhist extremists, collaborating with each other against the Muslim community.
* India’s Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, and Indian President Ram Nath Kovind are both card-carrying members of Indian fascist organization RSS, whose leader killed Mahatma Gandhi.
* The Tamil Tigers, who carried out a 30-year long insurgency in Sri Lanka, were initially trained by the Indian army. However, when India withdrew its support Rajiv Gandhi, the prime minister of India, was killed in 1991 by a Tamil suicide bomber connected to the group.

**Is it possible that a Muslim extremist group is emerging in Sri Lanka?**

* Knowing the [world of ISIS](https://default.salsalabs.org/T4a0a5076-65e1-4b16-b29d-9515e0d6454c/707f6cab-ee42-40be-b136-9525f734fb77), it is quite possible.
* Muslims in Sri Lanka have warned the government as recently as three years ago about a very small fringe Muslim organization which uses extremist language, although it has no history of violence.

All minorities are under attack around the world. It is critical for governments to protect minorities around the world, whether Muslims, Christians, or any other faith or minority group.

It is also important for scholars to dwell on the rising nationalism which is merging into fascism. Indian Hindu Nationalism, which has caused [Genocide Watch](https://default.salsalabs.org/T046c6cc2-723f-44b6-8056-282b75ef88a5/707f6cab-ee42-40be-b136-9525f734fb77) to issue a genocide warning for the Indian state of Assam, the Chinese mix of Communist and nationalist chauvinism that has sent 2 million Uighur Muslims to the concentration camps, and White Nationalism are all similar in their world outlook to ISIS ideology.

We people of faith must pray that God keeps all innocents safe and guide all oppressors to the path of peace and co-existence.

God controls the world, we don’t. However, we have a responsibility to act and the freedom to speak up.

Peace.

Sound Vision