



Updated Fact Sheet on the Easter Sunday Attacks (4/21) in Sri Lanka by Sri Lanka Tourism Promotions Bureau and Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

What happened?

A series of coordinated bombings on Easter Sunday (21/4/19) occurred in the cities of Colombo, Negombo and Batticaloa in Sri Lanka, killing at least 250 people (death toll revised down from 359 by authorities on 25/4/19) and wounding 500 others.

Who was targeted?

The attacks were the deadliest in the island nation since the end of its civil war 10 years ago, and targeted three churches, three luxury Hotels, one Guest house and a private residence. Nearly all victims were Sri Lankan, many of them Christian worshippers attending Easter Mass.

According to the latest information released from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 40 foreign nationals died in the Easter bombings

The fatalities were:

- 01 from Bangladesh
- 02 from China
- 11 from India
- 03 from Denmark
- 01 from Japan
- 01 from the Netherlands
- 01 from Portugal
- 02 from Saudi Arabia
- 02 from Spain
- 01 from Switzerland
- 02 from Turkey
- 06 from the UK
- 01 from USA
- 02 holding US and UK nationalities,
- 01 holding Swiss and Dutch nationalities
- 01 holding Dutch and Sri Lankan nationalities,
- 02 holding Australian and Sri Lankan nationalities.

Who is responsible?

Authorities have asserted that the attacks were carried out by two little-known Muslim organization named National Thawheed Jamaath. Islamic State (ISIS) claimed responsibility for the attacks in a video published on 23/4/19 via its Amaq news portal.

Video exists of the suspected suicide bombers in training with ISIS and pledging support. An island wide manhunt was successfully in operation and 80 suspects are currently in custody.

How can tourists get information about safety, family members, new travel considerations etc?

Emergency local and international hotlines have been set up to assist any traveler impacted by the attacks or any tourist seeking more information on the current situation.

Tourist Board local hotline 1912
Foreign Ministry hotline +94 11 2323015
Travel Information center at BIA
0112252411
0112252861 ext 3359

Why is Sri Lanka Tourism promoting the destination in this crisis?

Sri Lanka Tourism is the custodians of the industry that supports a majority of Sri Lankan families both directly and indirectly. We must forge forward through our profound sadness and despair because millions of our fellow countrymen are depending on us for their daily livelihood.

Sri Lanka has paid a heavy price for our freedom and peace of mind we treasure and are now so tragically deprived of; as we mourn, we must move forward.

Is the country safe for tourists?

Sri Lanka Tourism would like to reassure the world that the safety of every Sri Lankan and tourist is now the government's highest priority; the police, tourism police along with the full force of the national Tri forces have jointly implemented comprehensive new security protocols to ensure their safety across the island including all important tourist sites.

What was done to support the tourists affected in the attacks?

- Sri Lanka Tourism immediately deployed our teams to the affected hotels and hospitals;
- we met every single person affected and we stayed with them where necessary;
- The injured were taken to hospital
- Those who required surgery or any advanced treatment received it
- We ensured that steps were being taken to reunite families that were separated
- We helped family members recover the remains of loved ones who were deceased
- We helped provide emotional care and support
- We ensured that the guests residing at the affected hotels were given new accommodation where necessary
- We have set up local & international access hotlines
- We have set up help desks at affected hotels, hospitals & the airport
- We are facilitating all local arrangements for family members who wish to travel to Sri Lanka to recover or reunite with loved ones
- We have organized free shuttle services from the airport into the city during curfew

What do the travel advisories that have been issued by various governments mean to tourists?

The following countries have revised their travel advisories; Australia, Canada, USA, Belgium, UK, Netherlands. We are working closely with all relevant authorities to support all foreign nationals in the country.

Sri Lankan Police and emergency forces are working tirelessly to ensure the safety and security of all tourists currently in Sri Lanka. This is absolutely our first priority.

Tourists can direct any questions and concerns to the 24-hour emergency support desk as below:

- Emergency local hotline number to assist tourists currently in Sri Lanka 1912
- Emergency hotline to assist families of affected foreign nationals;
- Foreign Ministry hotline +94 11 2323015
- Travel Information center at BIA
- +94 112252411
- +94 112252861 ext 3359

How vulnerable is Sri Lanka against international terrorist threats?

Sri Lanka's national security has never been threatened by external terror groups before this attack on its churches and city hotels. International terror groups are not known to have a base in Sri Lanka. The scale and nature of this attack is inconsistent with any of our previous domestic incidents.

What new safety protocols are in place for the protection of tourists?

Sri Lanka tourism is working with the government of Sri Lanka and all other security agencies to ensure that new security protocols are rolled out across the island for the safety and security of everyone;

- New security protocol briefings for hotels and resorts
- Increased security at all hotels, resorts, places of worship, shopping malls, restaurants and other attractions
- Increased security at all our heritage sites, beaches, cultural attractions and other places frequented by tourists
- Road checkpoints
- Increased security at the airport
- Additional tourism police presence

Are there any tourists still touring the island?

We had and continue to have many tourists and tour groups in all the popular destinations across the island. Many people have elected to stay in the island after the attacks and are reassured of our commitment to their safety.

We have welcomed many tourists since the attack on Sunday and are looking forward to ensuring that they are safe and comfortable.

Are the tourist attractions closed?

All tourist attractions and hotels are open and operational. Security forces are deployed all over the island and extra precautions are being taken for important tourist sites. A new safety briefing has also been issued to hotel operators.

What about major beaches and cultural tourist sites in Sri Lanka?

All the popular beaches in the South of Sri Lanka, the Cultural Triangle, Galle Heritage City, Trincomalee, Pasikuda, Arugambay, Jaffna in the North, and all Wildlife parks are all operational and unaffected by the terror attacks.

Are there restrictions on public movement?

No, all the roads are open. All restaurants, shopping malls, Museums, Bars, Cafes, boutiques and other commercial, government and private establishments are all open.

Has a police curfew been imposed? What does a Curfew mean for travelers?

A general night-time Police curfew was imposed in Sri Lanka in the days following the attacks. The curfews were declared to aide in the arrest of suspects, 80 suspects have been arrested so far and with the swift action of the security forces.

The curfews were an immediate response plan and the situation is returning back to normal now.

Do police checkpoints mean there is a heightened security risk?

No, Police checkpoints have been deployed across the island for the safety of everyone in Sri Lanka.

What does the social media ban mean?

A temporary social media ban was in place to mitigate the spread of fake news. The temporary ban was revoked as things are getting back to normal.