

Blast Survivors Praise God for the Promise of Heaven

More than 100 families were affected by the bomb attack in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Twenty-nine church members of Zion Church were killed.

We met the wife of Pastor Thirukkumaran, whose son, Thirukkumaran Shalom Malkiya, age 11, was killed in the attack.

"I agonize over the loss of my young son who never even had the chance to experience much life in this world," Thirukkumaran's wife said. "He was a happy, contented son who never said [anything] bad, who had many friends and few enemies, if any. These killers have shaken our peace and left our family and many others in great distress, though we did nothing to harm them. I saw many children die as I was working in the Sunday school, and now these images will stay for me forever. I thank God that I will see my son again one day because of the promise of heaven and pray that no one else ever has to suffer the deep loss I have had to endure."

British Pakistani Christian Association's National Executive for Sri Lanka, Anton Kyanq, gave the family some money to help with the cost of their son's funeral and the time they have taken off work to console one another. Brother Kyanq prayed with the family and will provide biblically based trauma counselling as is necessary. We will be offering payments in lieu of wages lost through loss or injury to a breadwinner and help with ongoing medical costs.

Since our last report, police have now arrested over 60 suspects involved in the intricate planning of the pernicious attacks. Some of the arrests have been from the new migrant Pakistani Muslim population and others are well established wealthy to middle-class citizens.

Individuals involved seemed well educated and one even studied in the U.K., which is concerning as such people would not seem to be vulnerable—also suggesting that radicalization is through all ranks of Sri Lanka's Muslim community and potentially widespread. Read more ([here](#)).

Kyanq is currently meeting with victim of the bomb attack from Zion Church in Batticaloa, and we are beginning our aid package for victims today.

Wilson Chowdhry, chairman of the British Pakistani Christian Association, said his organization is hosting a prayer vigil Thursday to honor the victims.

Both Ilford and Newham branches of Emmanuel Christian Centers will sponsor the event.

"We hope people from all walks of life will join our solidarity event and show support in particular for our anguished Sri Lankan community," Chowdry said. "In our cosmopolitan city of London, such attacks cause outrage to the many different people of all faiths or none, who are horrified by the twisted ideology that seeks to destroy our peace. Global Christian persecution is on the rise, and I urge the U.K. to take seriously their review of the matter under the auspices of Jeremy Hunt. Foreign aid budgets and diplomatic engagement must bring peace to a broken world by first eradicating Islamism and other far right movements so that from a stable bedrock of safety, more harmonious societies can ferment."

He added: "Christ is our healer, and we look to him at difficult times such as this, choosing to simply pray for our persecutors in hope they will change their hearts."

Pastor Kanagaratum from Ilford Emmanuel Christian Fellowship said, "Though extremists have struck at Christians during our most holy of celebrations, we cannot let their evil ideology win. Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to 'Love our neighbor,'

and we must extend a hand of peace despite the disappointment, hurt and anger we feel. "Today we mourn the death of our martyrs, but one day we will be reunited with them in more glorious surroundings as we revel in the presence of our God."