

Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka kill nearly 300



Colombo, April 22 (RHC)-- In Sri Lanka, nearly 300 people were killed and more than 500 injured after a series of bomb attacks tore through churches and luxury hotels across the island nation on Sunday. A first round of deadly attacks hit busy Easter services at Catholic churches in the heart of Sri Lanka's minority Christian community in and around the capital Colombo, as well as a Protestant church in the eastern city of Batticaloa.

According to reports, as many as 37 explosive artifacts were found throughout the country before they exploded. Bombs also went off in three luxury hotels in Colombo, with another blast striking a hotel near a zoo south of the capital, and a final blast at a private home believed to be tied to the attackers.

Government officials blamed a local Islamist extremist group called the National Thowheed Jama'ath for the attacks, prompting a nationwide curfew for more than 21 million people. Authorities also shut down all social media sites in the wake of the attack -- including Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's telecommunications minister said a government memo circulated by Sri Lanka's top police official 10 days earlier warned of a possible attack, but that the warning was ignored.

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