

Pray for Sri Lanka

**31 January -
6 February 2021**



‘It is all of our worst fears realised.’ This was the reaction of Hilmy Ahmed, vice-president of the Sri Lanka Muslim Council, when Gotabaya Rajapaksa was elected president in November 2019. Since then Sri Lanka has taken an anti-democratic turn, reverting to authoritarian rule, and religious minorities have found themselves increasingly oppressed and discriminated against. Meanwhile, measures to counter the COVID-19 pandemic have occasioned a greater military influence in government. Find out more at csw.org.uk/srilanka

Sunday 31 January

The president’s brother, Mahinda Rajapaksa, is Prime Minister. Both men face allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity for their roles in the country’s long civil war, which ended in 2009. Pray that they will be held accountable for their actions and that justice will be served.

Monday 1 February

Today is the beginning of World Interfaith Harmony Week. Pray for a spirit of tolerance and understanding between all Sri Lankans of different faiths and beliefs.

Tuesday 2 February

On Easter Sunday 2019 churches and hotels across Sri Lanka were bombed, killing more than 250 people. As the second anniversary of the attack approaches, ask God to comfort and strengthen those who lost loved ones in the bombings.

Wednesday 3 February

‘She hasn’t stepped out of her house...She is really scared.’ One woman reported that her friend was terrified to leave the house, following a spate of anti-Muslim attacks in the aftermath of the bombings. Pray that peace will reign in Sri Lanka.

Thursday 4 February

‘You will be secure under a government that is just and fair. Your enemies will stay far away. You will live in peace, and terror will not come near.’ (Isaiah 54:14 NLT) Pray this verse over Sri Lanka today, as it celebrates its Independence Day.

Friday 5 February

Under the Gotabaya Rajapaksa government, journalists, lawyers, human rights defenders and civil society organisations have come under strict surveillance, intimidation and repression. With nationalist religious groups giving support to the government, the rights of religious minorities may face further restrictions. Pray that the country will instead move towards true religious freedom, where everyone’s rights are protected - regardless of their religious beliefs.

Saturday 6 February

Heavenly Father, you have placed leaders in authority, so we ask you to fill the hearts of those who lead Sri Lanka with a love of peace and justice. May they understand the vital role of freedom of religion or belief in a democratic and pluralistic society, and work towards creating a country where everyone is truly free to believe. Amen.

CSW everyone
free to believe

CSW is a human rights organisation advocating for freedom of religion or belief, and as Christians we stand with everyone facing injustice because of their religion or belief.