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## Sri Lanka

**Total area:**

65,610 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population:**

21,203,000 (2016)

**Literacy:**

90%

**Official languages:**

Sinhala, Tamil

**GDP (PPP) per capita:**

\$13,012 (2017 est.)

**Life expectancy:**

75 years

**Religions:**

69% Buddhist, 8% Muslim, 7% Hindu, 6% Christian, 10% other religions

### Prayer points

**Farming skills develop sustainable food sources**

Our Leprosy Mission partner in Sri Lanka, Reverend Joshua Sivagnam, recently attended a ten-week farming and training course in the UK. This special training teaches people from the developing world how to 'grow their way out of poverty.' Pray that Revd. Joshua will have many opportunities to share these new skills in Sri Lanka. Pray too that people affected by leprosy will be blessed as they learn how to develop sustainable food sources. (The Leprosy Mission England and Wales - December 2019)

**Solidarity following Sri Lankan bombings**

We remember those who have had their lives ended in the Easter Day bombings. Pray for those families and communities who have lost loved ones, for the injured and those who are caring for them. Pray for the work that has to be done to restore peace. (Global Connections - June 2019)

**Leprosy awareness programmes**

Despite decades of conflict in Sri Lanka in the 1990s, there is now much to praise God for in terms of the unity and co-operation between faith leaders, who are now working closely to co-ordinate leprosy awareness programmes in their communities. Pray for pastors as they lead these interfaith activities, that people may see the love of Christ through their actions. Pray for favour and encouragement for all the churches involved and the three main partners: Alliance Development Trust, Kaveri Kala Manram and the Peoples Forum for Change, as they serve people affected by leprosy through ongoing 'acts of love'. (The Leprosy Mission England and Wales - June 2019)

**Mobile medical clinics provide counselling**

Mobile medical clinics were recently carried out in two villages within an unreached area of Central Asia. Over 450 people were seen in the four days the clinic ran and individuals were able to share

their health and life concerns. Many who came to see the psychologist had problems which caused ill health and depression. The team remarked how many of these individuals had sad eyes. But, once they had the opportunity to share their stories away from others in the community, they could see ways to solve their problems. At the clinic, miracles were happening: sad eyes became bright! Counselling gave them hope for the future. Pray for these people to begin a journey with Christ as a result of the medical help they received from believers. (Reach Beyond - December 2018)

### **Free from shame**

Akira and her mother, Felshiya, live in a poor, remote coastal village in Sri Lanka. The community was plunged into desperate poverty after the 2004 tsunami. Here leprosy is so feared that when Felshiya was diagnosed, her husband fled, leaving his wife and daughter to fend for themselves. Give thanks that Felshiya received support and kindness in her time of darkness - she no longer feels ashamed and is empowered to build a new life. She was granted permission to farm a small plot of land, where she grows vegetables, coconut palms and papaya trees. Pray that the harvest this year not only feeds the family, but also a surplus to sell at the local market. Pray that others in similar situations will feel loved, supported and hopeful for the future. (The Leprosy Mission England and Wales - May 2018)

### **Isolated Missionary Workers**

Continue to pray for the people of Sri Lanka. The country's evangelical population is growing in its missionary vision as it sends out more workers across the continent but opposition from local religious leaders is proving difficult. Ask the Lord to guard His work and His people. Pray too for the pastoral care of Sri Lankan missionaries overseas. Our partners have sent ten workers out so far. All are in isolated situations. (AsiaLink - July 2017)

### **Massive landslides**

Three villages were buried by massive landslides due to the excessive rain which was triggered by Cyclone Roanu. Over 100 people have died from flooding across Sri Lanka and more than 400,000 have been badly affected. About 185,000 of those who have lost their homes are being housed in temporary shelters. Pray for the people of Sri Lanka as they recover from these awful floods and for the work of BMS as they seek to provide for the needs of many vulnerable people throughout the world. (BMS World Mission - July 2016)

### **Community-based rehabilitation**

Pray for people affected by leprosy in Sri Lanka: that new incidences of leprosy will be detected early and that the conflict disrupting leprosy services will cease. Give thanks for TLM's relationships with partner organisations Kaveri Kala Manram (KKM) and the Alliance Development Trust and pray that they will continue to flourish. Pray that the Mobilising Communities project with the government anti-leprosy campaign will be effective in reducing stigma and providing community-based rehabilitation (such as livelihood development, safe water provision, self-care, and empowerment) to 40 leprosy-affected communities in the Mannar and Jaffna Districts. Pray that KKM's vision for community self-sustainability through cultivation of a coconut plantation and using the abundant natural resources of the land will be realised. This will provide funds for their work with communities affected by leprosy. (The Leprosy Mission England and Wales - November 2015)

### **Tamil language radio**

A listener to Tamil language radio programmes broadcast from Australia wrote: "One day I was tuning into the radio, when suddenly I heard a Tamil programme, and was happy. We are 15 blind people who listen to your programme regularly. The reception is very clear, and we like your songs and sermons. We can't watch television programmes; we depend only on programmes like yours. Please come to Pondicherry to our church and share the Word of God in our church as well." Pray that radio broadcasts into India will bear fruit for God's Kingdom. (Reach Beyond - July 2015)

### **Students in Sri Lanka**

A staff member of Fellowship Of Christian University Students (FOCUS) says, "I love student ministry because it is the one ministry in Sri Lanka that addresses every sphere of life and because these young men and women can so influence a bruised and broken society towards shalom". Please pray for students to see that Jesus should impact every sphere of life: personal, economic, social and political. (IFES - May 2015)

### **Increasing persecution**

In June, a pastor and three members of his congregation were hospitalised following a mob attack in Sri Lanka's Mannar district. The Christians had gathered at a home in Madu village for a meeting with police to discuss threats made to Christians who had attended a prayer meeting there the previous day. As the Christians waited for the police, some 150 villagers surrounded the house and started to abuse them. Around 40 people then stormed the house, beating the pastor unconscious and assaulting other Christians. Police arrived only after the mob had fled. Pray for God to restore those who have been injured or traumatised by recent attacks. Pray for Christians in Sri Lanka to stand firm in their faith amidst increasing persecution. (Release International - July 2014)

### **Longing to return home**

Following decades of conflict, the people of northern and eastern Sri Lanka now have peace. However, thousands of people are still displaced, longing to return to their own land. The government has now made this possible for a community affected by leprosy outside Jaffna. The war's destruction and the passing of time have meant their land has returned to jungle; they have no water supply, houses, toilets or electricity. Pray for this community, that the necessary funds will be raised to support their return; that they will be able to fully integrate into the surrounding community; that the physical and emotional scars of war will heal and that God's peace will reign. (The Leprosy Mission England and Wales - May 2013)

### **Pastor and wife brutally beaten**

A senior pastor and his wife were ambushed and brutally beaten by a large mob in one of several recent attacks on believers in Deniyaya, which has a Christian minority of about 500 people. The attackers, said to include five Buddhist monks and a local official, beat and threatened to kill the couple unless they ceased their ministry in the Deniyaya area. Eventually, the pastor and his wife managed to escape and summon police protection. Despite their injuries, they decided not to go to hospital for fear of further attack. Pray for God's peace to fill Christians in Sri Lanka, a mainly Buddhist nation where many consider Christianity to be a Western import. Pray specifically for Christians targeted in recent attacks in the south of the country. Pray that their ministries will grow and that their witness will draw many to Christ. (Release International - September 2012)

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