

Islamic State claims responsibility for Sri Lanka bombings as death toll passes 320

From [Moulvi Zahran Hashim](#), an extremist local cleric who incited his followers to violence with fiery sermons on his social media channels.

At the same time, AFP agency reported that two Muslim brothers carried out two of the hotel suicide blasts. The brothers, sons of a wealthy Colombo spice trader, blew themselves up as guests queued for breakfast at the Shangri-La and Cinnamon Grand hotels in the capital Colombo.

.Police sources also reportedly revealed that they had foiled a fourth planned hotel attack.

Mr Wijewardene told the Sri Lankan parliament the massacre was carried out by the obscure local National Thawheed Jamaath group along with another group called the JMI, an apparent reference to a little-known radical Islamist group in India called the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen.

Some experts have pointed out that the sophisticated nature of the attacks suggest that they would have required preparation that began before the Christchurch atrocity.

The Sri Lankan authorities are still investigating how local militants gained the training and equipment to carry out an assault that is now considered to be one of the worst global terrorist atrocities since the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington.

One theory is that Sri Lankan extremists could have been

assisted by returning fighters from Iraq and Syria. It also emerged on Tuesday that Sri Lankan police are holding a Syrian national in custody for questioning over the Easter Sunday attacks.