

Tourist arrivals...

which was targeting to increase its earnings to US \$ 5 billion this year, from US \$ 4.4 billion in 2018.

However, the Finance Ministry has estimated that the terrorist attacks, which targeted the churchgoers and patrons of three star-class hotels in Colombo, could cost the industry a US \$ 1.5 billion loss. The government has launched a tourism industry relief package, which includes a one-year loan relief for the industry, to revive the hard-hit sector, which contributes to over 5 percent of the country's GDP.

Tourism authorities estimate that a full recovery of the sector would at least take 12-13 months based on the average recovery periods of similar terrorist attacks on tourists destinations. According to the data released by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, for the month of June, the arrivals from Asia and Pacific accounted for 54 percent of the total tourist arrivals.

Europe accounted for 32 percent of the total traffic, America 9 percent, the Middle East 4 percent and Africa one percent. Country wise, India, Australia, the United Kingdom, China and the Maldives were Sri Lanka's top five international tourist-generating markets in the month of June.

Over 15,000 Indian tourists visited Sri Lanka in June, although it was half the number of Indians visited Sri Lanka in June 2018. Region wise, arrivals from Asia and Pacific fell 60.5 percent YoY to 33,924 visitors. Tourist arrivals from China