

Truck bomb kills 102 in Lanka

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka suffered its worst ever suicide attack yesterday when suspected Tamil Tiger rebels detonated a truck packed with explosives next to a convoy of sailors, killing at least 102 people and wounding 150 more.

The government said the "barbaric" act, which coincided with increased international efforts to restore a 2002 truce, meant the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was not interested in negotiations scheduled to take place next week in Switzerland.

The bombing occurred about 170km northeast of Colombo at a transit point for security personnel coming to and from the front line of the drawn-out conflict in the restive

northeastern district of Trincomalee. "Suicide bombers drove a truck packed with explosives into the area where there were about 15 buses," a police official in nearby Sigiriya town told AFP by telephone. "We have two helicopters to evacuate the wounded".

Doctors said that 98 bodies were at the nearby Dambulla hospital while four more people died while being taken by road to a hospital in the major town of Kurunegala.

"This barbaric attack on unarmed sailors shows that the Tigers are not worried about international opinion," said government defence spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella, who is also the minister of policy planning.

"We are keen on negotiations, but the Tigers are not."

The military moved to carry out retaliatory air strikes against the Tigers, but an Israeli-built Kfir war plane crashed shortly after take off from a military base here, officials said.

They said the aircraft crashed into the Negombo lagoon, but the pilot ejected to safety and was rescued by helicopters.

There was no immediate comment from the Tamil Tigers, who last week fiercely resisted a major military onslaught, killing at least 133 soldiers and wounding 500 in two hours of fighting, according to government figures.

The first suicide truck bombing against the security forces was in 1987 when an explosives-laden

Police back rape charge against Israeli president

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli President Moshe Katsav was fighting for his political life yesterday after police recommended he be indicted on charges including rape, the most serious ever faced by a national leader.

Under enormous pressure to resign from his largely ceremonial post, Katsav cancelled an appearance to open the new session of parliament after several lawmakers threatened a boycott.

The bland 60-year-old career politician, who rose from obscurity to become head of state in 2000, is immune from prosecution while president but could be charged if impeached by the Knesset.

On Sunday, police said that a weeks-long investigation had produced enough evidence to

MISSION REGROUP Outlawed parties busy recruiting new cadres

Cadres to work for major political parties during polls to evade 'crossfire'

AMANUR AMAN, back from Chuadanga, Meherpur

Several outlawed parties in the country's southwestern region are recruiting fresh 'cadres' in an attempt to reorganise themselves and increase their strength ahead of the next parliamentary election.

And after recruitment, the outlaws are pushing these cadres into different political parties to work with them for the upcoming polls and camouflage their real identity to escape 'crossfire' deaths.

Besides, top leaders of these outfits are also maintaining close

contacts with some top political leaders of the region, including lawmakers, who earlier used the outlaws' strength to manipulate different elections particularly parliamentary polls.

Sources including those close to the outlawed parties said the outfits are taking to such tactics in the context of 'crossfire' killings of many of their cadres, changing situation of underground politics in the country and their planned role in the next general election.

The outfits are three factions of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) -- PBCP-Janajuddho,

PBCP-Red Flag and PBCP-Communist Juddho -- Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF), Gono Bahini (GB) and New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP).

They have already collected a good number of 'cadres' in the last several months.

Now, a number of such cadres are working as activists of different political parties, mostly in the ruling BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami. Several leaders of the main opposition Awami League (AL) are also maintaining close links with leaders of the outlawed parties, sources said.

Two more Huji men shown held in Ramna blast case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two more Huji (Harkatul Jihad) members arrested in connection with the bomb attack on the British high commissioner were shown arrested in the Ramna Batamul blast case and were placed on a seven-day remand yesterday.

They are -- Hafiz Syed Nayeem of village Syedpur under Jagannathpur upazila of Sunamganj and Badrul Alam



PHOTO: STAR

People hoping to spend their Eid vacation at their homes outside the capital stand in long queues to buy train tickets in advance at the Kamalapur Railway Station in the city yesterday.

More world leaders hail Prof Yunus

STAR REPORT

More messages congratulating Prof Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank on winning the Nobel Peace Prize 2006.

UK Minister for Development Gareth R Thomas MP has greeted Prof Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank for winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

In a message received in Dhaka yesterday, Gareth Thomas said, "I am delighted to hear that Prof Muhammad Yunus and Grameen

Abbas, brother sued for killing AL leader

Govt drops cop murder case against them

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Public Works and Housing Minister Mirza Abbas, his brother DCC Ward Commissioner Mirza Khokan and four others were sued yesterday for killing an Awami League (AL) leader last month.

Meanwhile, the government on Sunday withdrew the Constable Abu Naser murder case filed against Abbas, Khokan and three

others in February 2001.

Judge Mohammad Momin Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court on Sunday transferred the case to the Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court for its quick disposal.

After hearing on the government withdrawal petition, Judge Mohammad Nazrul Islam granted the petition saying that the case

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Sehri, Iftar timing

Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
23	17		5-34
24	18	4-37	5-33
25	19	4-38	5-33

Prayer Timing

October 17

	Azan	
Fajr	4-37	4-47
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-34	5-54
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

