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Mine blast kills 64 on bus in Lanka

Prompts waves of military attacks on Tamil targets; rebels deny involvement

AFP, Colombo

A landmine which ripped through a bus Thursday killed 64 passengers and injured 39 in the deadliest attack on civilians in Sri Lanka since a 2002 truce, sparking military strikes on Tamil rebel positions.

The military launched long-range artillery retaliation after blaming the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the carnage in an ethnic Sinhalese district in the island's North-Central province.

The rebels denied involvement in the blast and said it was aimed at discrediting them.

The spiralling violence renewed fears that the island is sliding back to war after peace broker Norway last week failed to arrange a face-to-face meeting between Colombo

and the LTTE.

Policy Planning Minister Keiheliya Rambukwella, the government's spokesman on defence-related issues, said at least 58 people including two Buddhist monks were killed while another 45 escaped with injuries.

Hospital sources said six more people had died in hospital, raising to 64 the total number of dead.

The bus packed with villagers was heading to Kebitigollewa town when it was torn apart by the powerful blast. Casualties were high as it was overcrowded with people travelling to a weekly market, Rambukwella said.

"This is a most barbaric terrorist act of the Tigers," he said, accusing the LTTE of carrying out the attack.

"It was not a case of a mistaken target where they thought soldiers were travelling in this bus,"

Rambukwella told a press conference.

"The military does not use this route and the LTTE knew that it was a civilian bus," the minister said.

"This is not a declaration of war but an act of terrorism. As far as the peace process and the ceasefire agreement are concerned, they are still on, but we have to re-look at it seriously in a proper context."

The separatists also condemned the blast.

"The LTTE condemns this attack on the civilian bus," they said in a statement. "Directly targeting civilians, as the Kebitigollewa Claymore attack has, cannot be justified under any circumstances."

Military spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe said the bus was hit by a Claymore mine, or a side

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SHAZNEEN CASE

Hasan proven mastermind of killing
Prosecution says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution in the death reference and appeal hearing of Shazneen murder case yesterday said it was proved in the trial court that Hasan masterminded the rape and killing of Shazneen which the circumstantial evidence also supports.

Deputy Attorney General ABM Walur Rahman in his argument

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EX-DIG'S 'CHILDREN'
DNA test could not be done

UNB, Dhaka

The DNA test of former DIG Anisur Rahman, his wife Anwara Begum and seven children could not be carried out yesterday, as Anwara Begum was absent due to her illness.

Anisur Rahman and the seven children were present at the DNA

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JMB chief, Bangla Bhai remanded again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman, its second-in-command Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai and three other Majlis-e-Shura members were again placed on a four-day fresh remand yesterday in a case filed for printing seditious leaflets and books on jihad.

Metropolitan Magistrate

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Prayer Timing

June 16

	Azam	Jamiat
Fajr	4:05	4:40
Juma	12:30	1:15
Asr	5:00	5:15
Magrib	6:50	6:55
Esha	8:15	8:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Non-government primary school teachers demonstrate for nationalisation of their jobs at Zero Point in the capital yesterday after breaking through police blockade in front of the High Court.

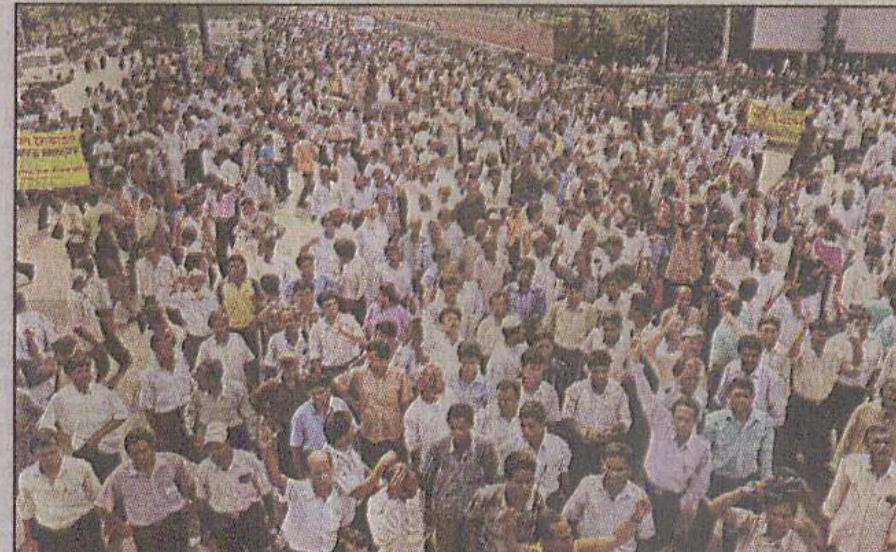


PHOTO: STAR

NY avenue corners to be named after Bangladesh 9/11 victims

UNB, Dhaka

The Council of the City of New York (NY) has decided to rename the southeast corner of the 3rd Avenue and Ovington Avenue after Shakila Yasmin and Nurul Haque Miah, two Bangladeshi victims of the 9/11.

The council took the decision following a request by Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury, according to a foreign ministry press release.

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NEXT ELECTIONS

Denmark to take note of political parties' anti-graft stances

Danish state secretary says

MONJUR MAHMUD

Denmark will be closely looking at how political parties place the corruption issue in the campaign for next general election and what promises they make in addressing graft.

"There is a clear commitment from Bangladesh government to combat corruption and misuse of funds. But there are lots of criticisms from many quarters that the government has not taken the lead as stated," Carsten Staur, state secretary of the ministry of foreign affairs of Denmark, told The Daily

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7



Carsten Staur

Pry teachers set for non-stop strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of government primary schools will go on an indefinite strike across the country from tomorrow demanding elimination of wage discrimination and introduction of school-based examination system at the primary school level.

They also announced that they will go on a hunger strike till death from June 24 in the capital to force the government to meet their demands.

Under the banner of Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association, around 1,80,000 teachers will keep 37,000 government primary schools under locks and keys till their demands are met.

The tougher programme was announced from a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday, where thousands of teachers from different parts of

the country gathered carrying banners, festoons and placards. They also submitted a memorandum to the prime minister through Acting Speaker of the Parliament Akther Hamid Siddiqui.

At the rally, leaders of the association vowed to continue their strike at government primary schools until their demands are met.

Prof Abdul Kalam Azad, president of the association, said the teachers of government primary schools face severe wage discrimination compared to the wages of government employees of equivalent ranks but the government is continuing to neglect the logical demands of the government primary school teachers.

"There is no other choice left for us other than going on an indefinite strike as the government did not take any measure to meet our demands even after we had

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

সেবাপৰ্ক
১৬-৩০ জুন ২০০৬

"নিশ্চিত মুনাফা বৃদ্ধির সুযোগ নিন,
আমান্তর রাখুন"

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Fajr	4:05	4:40
Juma	12:30	1:15
Asr	5:00	5:15
Magrib	6:50	6:55
Esha	8:15	8:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

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