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Sri Lanka: Amnesty International condemns killing of civilians

Amnesty International condemned the indiscriminate killing of two civilians and the wounding of at least 13 civilians in Colombo yesterday in the first suicide bomb attack in the capital for a year.

The suicide bomber, believed to be a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), was apprehended by plain clothes policemen in Chitra Lane, in the Narahenpita area of the city, when he blew himself up.

It is thought that the bomber may have intended to target the Prime Minister, Ratnasiri Wickremanayake, who was on his way to attend a ceremony nearby.

The attack has come at a time when the country is preparing for parliamentary elections on 5 December. In the run-up to earlier parliamentary elections on 10 October 2000, at least 24 civilians were killed in two separate attacks on election rallies by LTTE suicide bombers.

The organization is appealing to the LTTE not to carry out direct or indiscriminate attacks on civilians.

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For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

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