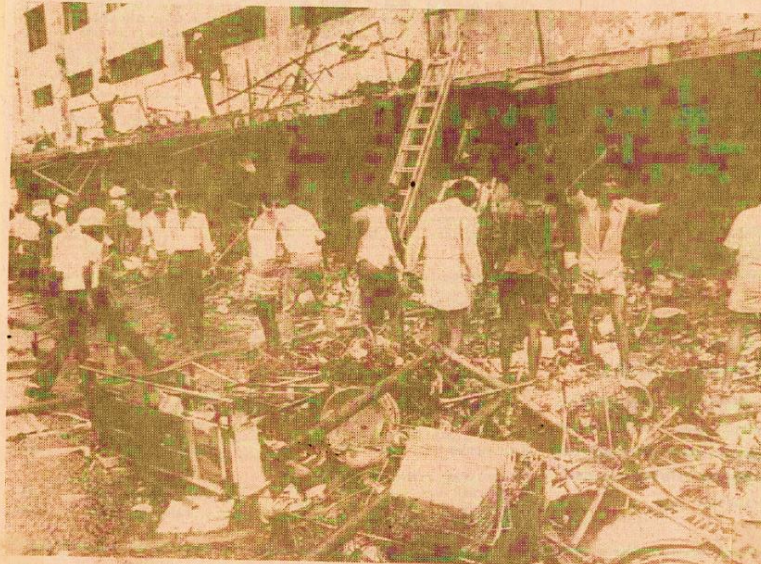


100 Sri Lankans die as bomb rips into bus station. (22, April 1987) *The New York Times*

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100 Sri Lankans Die as Bomb Rips Into Bus Station



Workers searching the rubble left after a large bomb wrecked the main bus station in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

A Rush-Hour Explosion Sends Crowds Fleeing — Burning Vehicles Race From Colombo Center

By BARBARA CROSSETTE
Special to The New York Times

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, April 21 — A powerful bomb ripped apart the main bus station at rush hour tonight, scattering shattered bodies and the bloodied fragments of vans and buses across more than a hundred square yards of a busy bazaar area.

Government officials said more than 100 people might have been killed. At Colombo General Hospital, 68 bodies and 213 seriously wounded victims were brought in within an hour of the blast. No casualty figures were available at other hospitals, but tonight the national television networks were calling urgently for blood donors.

[The bomb killed as many as 150 people and wounded about 200, Health Ministry officials told The Associated Press.]

Billowing Black Smoke

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, which occurred four days after a massacre of 127 people by Tamil separatist guerrillas in an ambush in northern Sri Lanka. On Monday, 15 villagers in the same area were killed in what appeared to be another Tamil attack.

Three reporters, including this one, and a photographer were leaving the office of the Minister of National Security, a few minutes' drive from the site of the attack today, when the blast occurred at about 5 P.M. Black smoke was billowing over the railroad station known as the Fort.

Road Choked With People

For the last several hundred yards between the railroad station and the bus stand, the road was choked with hundreds of people surging toward the disaster site. Offices had just closed, and many people were on the way to trains or buses. Others, in a city that has known little urban violence, wanted to see what had happened.

When a taxi could go no further, blocked by crowds and stalled traffic, the reporters ran toward the site of the bombing. The scene was one of unbelievable carnage, with human heads and limbs and the victims' possessions strewn over a wide area.

Buses raced away in all directions, scattering crowds as they bore away the dead, the injured and the terror-stricken survivors. In one bus, a driver leaned on the horn and screamed incoherently through the blown-away front of his vehicle.

Buses Catch Fire

Several buses, fueled for their homeward journeys, caught fire, adding to the destruction. Within 20 minutes, the police had begun closing the area, pushing back the crowds.

Colombo, the capital, was put under curfew as of 8 P.M. The Government expressed fear that Sinhalese mobs, assuming that the bombing was the work of a Tamil separatist group, would seek to avenge the deaths. In

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