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# Sri Lankan Blast Kills an Official

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLOMBO, [Sri Lanka](#) (AP) — A Sri Lankan government minister died Tuesday in a roadside bombing. The government blamed Tamil rebels for the assassination, the first of a top Sri Lankan official in 19 months.

The attack was almost certain to intensify the civil war between government forces and rebels that has been raging across northern Sri Lanka. President Mahinda Rajapaksa implied that the government would retaliate.

Rasiah Ilanthirayan, a military spokesman for the rebel group, the [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam](#), did not respond to calls.

The bomb tore through a car carrying D. M. Dassanayake, the minister of nation building, just north of Colombo, said Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara, a military spokesman. Mr. Dassanayake, who died of head injuries and other wounds, had been coordinating efforts to rebuild Sri Lanka's Eastern Province after government forces drove the rebels from the area in July.

The blast killed another man and wounded 10, officials said.

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