

Widow of assassinated candidate to seek Sri Lankan presidency .
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Widow of assassinated candidate to seek Sri Lankan presidency

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COLOMBO, Sri Lanka – The widow of Sri Lanka's top opposition leader was named yesterday to replace her husband as a candidate for president, two days after he died in a bombing at an election rally.

Two more people died of injuries yesterday, raising to 54 the number killed in the bombing Sunday night.

The discovery of pieces of a cyanide capsule at the bomb scene cast more suspicion on Tamil Tiger rebels. The rebels, who often wear cyanide capsules around their necks to prevent being captured alive, have denied responsibility.

Investigators say the bombing was a suicide attack. The severed head of a woman who might have been the assassin was found 30 metres from the platform where Gami ni Dissanayake had just addressed

the crowd.

Dissanayake was the main opposition candidate for Nov. 9 presidential elections. His 50-year-old widow was chosen by his United National Party to replace him.

Srima Dissanayake has little experience in politics. But she might pose a tough challenge to the governing party – whose presidential candidate is Prime Minister Chandrika Kumaratunga.

Kumaratunga's government opened peace talks with the rebels this month but suspended them after the bombing.

A state funeral for Dissanayake is planned for Saturday.

Kumaratunga's People's Alliance ousted Dissanayake's party from the government in parliamentary elections in August, ending the United National Party's 17 years in power.

