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11 Slain by Grenades At Cambodian Rally

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

PHNOM PENH — A grenade attack outside Parliament, apparently intended for an opposition leader, killed 11 persons and wounded more than 100 here Sunday. Government leaders immediately condemned the violence.

The president of the opposition Khmer Nation Party, Sam Rainsy, suffered a shrapnel wound in the leg. A bodyguard who shielded him was killed.

The attack came as Mr. Sam Rainsy was leading about 200 supporters in a demonstration against the ruling Cambodian People's Party outside the National Assembly. Mr. Sam Rainsy has accused the party, led by former Communists, and its vice president, Hun Sen, of corruption and dictatorship.

King Norodom Sihanouk sent a message of condolence from Beijing to the families of the victims, condemning those behind what he called "the brutal act."

Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the first prime minister, called the incident "totally unacceptable and barbaric," while a spokesman for Mr. Hun Sen, the second prime minister, said the explosion was the work of terrorists and demanded an immediate investigation.

"The perpetrators of this heinous crime are deplorable and must be condemned

vehemently," said a statement from Prince Ranariddh's cabinet.

The attack followed predictions of worsening political violence as parties maneuver for legislative elections set for November 1998.

Mr. Sam Rainsy appeared at a press conference shortly after the attack, his clothes stained by blood and one lens of his glasses cracked. He attributed the attack to the police and army "terrorists" he said were taking orders from Mr. Hun Sen's party.

Mr. Hun Sen "should be sentenced and arrested," he said. "This is a terrible setback for the democratic process in Cambodia. It bodes ill for the national elections."

The wounded, estimated to be at least 112, included a U.S. citizen, Ron Abney, 55, of the International Republican Institute, a democracy advisory group.

Initial accounts said three grenades were thrown from a car that drove past the crowd, but Mr. Sam Rainsy said grenades came from several directions. One was thrown by a person in the crowd near him, he said. Another came from behind a wall and two others came from the car.

Two reporters from local newspapers were reported killed. A correspondent for China's Xinhua news agency and four Cambodian journalists were hurt. (AP, Reuters).