

Gunmen open fire at an election rally in Sri Lanka, 1 killed

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Colombo: Unidentified gunmen opened fire at an election campaign rally in the Sri Lankan capital here today, killing a woman and injuring 12 others. The attack took place soon after Finance Minister Ravi Karunanayake left the venue in Bloemendhal area.

The gunmen reportedly come in two vehicles and sprayed bullets into the crowd.

Today's incident is the first major incident of violence ahead of the August 17 polls to elect a 225- member parliament for a five year term.

The campaigning so far has been largely peaceful although the police said that over 200 people had been arrested since July 13 for breaching of election laws.

Sri Lanka elections have been marked with increased number of violent incidents since late 1990s.

The August election is to be monitored by European Union poll monitors. A team of observers from EU nations have already been deployed in all 22 electoral districts.

- PTI