Patna - A land mine blast killed three wedding guests and critically wounded six when their bus triggered the device during a break in the festivities Wednesday, and police said they suspected communist rebels had planted the mine to target police or local politicians.

(13.04.2004)

In the overnight wedding ceremony in Kohila village in Bihar state, some guests went out for a drive in a minibus, local Superintendent of Police Baldeo Prasad said by telephone.

The bus ran over a land mine apparently laid by the rebels for police patrols or politicians campaigning for coming national elections. The outlawed Maoist Communist Center has called for an election boycott.

The village is located in the Newada district, some 65 kilometers (40 miles) east of Patna, capital of Bihar. The wounded were admitted to a nearby hospital in serious condition, Prasad said.

The rebels mostly target government property, rich landowners and police, who they say collude to exploit landless farmers and rural laborers. They are fighting for a socialist government in the state.

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