

After Bombs, London Is Stunned and Bloodied, but Oddly Stoic

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LONDON, July 7 - Bomb explosions tore through three London subway trains and a red double-decker bus in a deadly terror attack today, killing at least 37 people in coordinated rush hour carnage that left the city stunned, bloodied but oddly stoic.

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Alexander Chadwick/Associated Press

In an image provided by commuter Alexander Chadwick, passengers evacuated from a subway tunnel near Kings Cross station in London. [More Photos >](#)

Only one day after the British capital erupted in joy at winning the 2012 Olympic competition over such cities as Paris and New York, commuters packed in the city's subways - the Tube - were plunged into the city's perennial nightmare of a subterranean bloodbath. The city center was paralyzed. Police in yellow slickers sealed off streets. Bus services halted and the entire subway network closed down as rescue workers and paramedics went deep below ground to look for the dead and wounded.

Above ground, an explosion tore open the roof of a No. 30 double-decker bus with such force that it threw debris 10 feet into the air. The blast was so powerful that, hours later, the police could not estimate the number of dead. Neither, said Deputy Assistant Commissioner Brian Paddick, was it clear whether the explosions were suicide bombings.

The attack - deadlier than the 1998 Omagh bombing in Northern Ireland that claimed 29 lives - coincided with the first full day of deliberations among the leaders of the world's most industrialized

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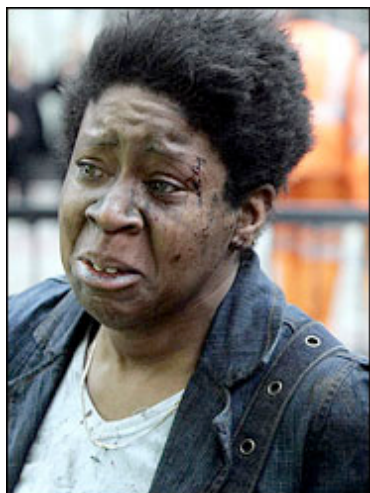


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Edmond Terakopian/Associated Press
 People outside the Edgware Road station after the explosion there. [More Photos >](#)

countries far to the north at the Gleneagles golf estate in Scotland. The tactics in the bombings - a coordinated strike against rush-hour transport systems - bore a close resemblance to the attack last year in Madrid that claimed 191 lives.

A group describing itself as affiliated with Al Qaeda took responsibility for the attack on an Arabic-language Web site but British police said they were unable to confirm the authenticity of the claim. The group called itself the Secret Al Qaeda Jihad Organization in Europe and said the attacks were to avenge British involvement in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Prime Minister Tony Blair, who had been playing host to the summit and seemed high on a wave of successes capped by the Olympic decision, cut short his stay in Scotland, leaving the seven other Group of 8 leaders - including President Bush - as he flew back to head emergency ministerial meetings here.

"It is reasonably clear that there have been a series of terrorist attacks in London," a shaken Mr. Blair told reporters before he left Gleneagles, speaking after several hours in which the authorities had spoken only of a power-surge on the subway lines and shied from blaming the attacks on terrorism.

"Just as it is reasonably clear that this is a terrorist attack or a series of terrorist attacks, it is clear that it is designed and aimed to coincide with the opening of the G-8," he said. He added that it was "particularly barbaric" that the attacks coincided with a gathering designed to combat African poverty and global warming.

"The terrorists will not succeed," he said. "Today's bombings will not

weaken in any way our resolve to uphold the most deeply held principles

of our societies and to defeat those who would impose their fanaticism and extremism on all of us. We shall prevail and they shall not."

In a recorded message later from his office at 10 Downing Street to the nation broadcast after he returned to London, a somber Mr. Blair declared: "This is a very sad day for the British people. But we will hold true to the British way of life.

"The purpose of terrorism is just that - to terrorize people and we will not be terrorized."

He promised "the most intense police and security service action to make sure that we bring those responsible to justice." He praised "the stoicism and resilience of the people of London."

British officials have been forecasting a major terror strike on London since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, in New York and Washington. Since Britain sided with the United States in the war in Iraq, this land has seen itself as a potential target.

Immediately after the attacks, authorities in the United States and Europe increased security precautions on mass transit systems. In Gleneagles, President Bush drew the comparison between the aims of the G-8 summit and the bombers.

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Richard W. Stevenson contributed reporting from Auchterarder, Scotland, for this article, and Timothy Williams, Christine Hauser, Vikas Bijaj and Shadi Rahimi contributed from New York.

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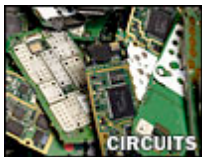
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