

International

Militiamen attack refugees at ICRC compound

Indonesian Army enacting terrifying 'Plan B' in E Timor

JAKARTA, Sept 6: Pro-Indonesia militias in East Timor Monday attacked the Red Cross compound and the home of Nobel laureate Bishop Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, both packed with thousands of refugees, sources said, reports AFP.

Indonesian soldiers and militiamen were marching screaming refugees at gunpoint and herding them onto trucks to drive them out of East Timor, journalists said.

East Timor police spokesman Captain Widodo told the Antara news agency that Belo was unhurt and in Baucau, 115 km east of Dili where he was meeting with Baucau Bishop Basilio do Nascimento.

He said Belo had left on a helicopter and would be back later Monday.

A group of Aitarak militias, who had come from around the

Dili residence of the bishop, attacked the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) compound at around 11:00 a.m. (0300 GMT), a source in close contact with the Red Cross said.

Some 2,000 refugees had been inside the compound, while about 5,000 were at the residence of Dili Bishop Belo, the source said.

"We strongly condemn the attack," a Red Cross source in Jakarta said. Militiamen fired shots at the ICRC compound and while it was not immediately clear if there were any casualties, the attack caused "intense panic," the first source said.

A British journalist who was staying in a seaside hotel next to the ICRC compound said soldiers and militiamen had herded the screaming refugees, most of them women, to the

beach across the street.

"As I left (the hotel) I saw hundreds of refugees marching at gunpoint on the beach, marching towards the east surrounded by military, I repeat the military and not the militiamen," the journalist said.

Dutch journalist Tjitske Lingsma told CNN from Dili that militiamen "fired into the ground and into the air" when they entered the bishop's residence.

Religious and pro-independence sources in Dili said it was believed one of Bishop Belo's secretaries had been killed in the attack.

"There are 6,000 refugees in his garden. They fled into the house. The militiamen then forced them out, and at the moment the militiamen are negotiating with the bishop," Lingsma said.

She said it was believed the militiamen wanted to take the

refugees by truck to Indonesian West Timor, in line with a process she said was going on elsewhere in Dili and other parts of East Timor.

Church and pro-independence sources said later they heard the refugees were being loaded onto two navy vessels in Dili harbour.

The journalist said the forced evacuations were part of Aitarak militia commander Eurico Guterres' avowed aim of partitioning East Timor after it voted overwhelmingly for independence a week ago.

A source with the UN Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), which Monday was evacuating non-essential staff from Dili, cited reports that the Indonesian police and military "are pressuring internally displaced persons to move to sanctuary and safety in western Timor".

The reports said they were "loading them in trucks and moving them out in order to support official contentions" that they are fleeing of their own volition, the UNAMET source told AFP.

The Indonesian army, having lost its battle to retain East Timor through the ballot box, is enacting an apocalyptic "Plan B" of mass evacuation and mass murder, Western sources said Monday.

Events of the past 72 hours, which have seen army-backed pro-Jakarta militias opening fire on refugees and herding them onto trucks heading out of East Timor, were part of a pre-conceived strategy to lay waste to the territory once independence was chosen in last week's vote, they said.

A Western intelligence source told AFP the plan's main objective was to partition the former Portuguese territory through a forced population shift to Indonesian West Timor.

"The plan will also see members of the East Timorese resistance, their supporters and the small intellectual elite -- mainly students -- eliminated," he said.

"Plan B" will further target members of the Roman Catholic church which most East Timorese follow and which is seen by the armed forces as an arm of the pro-independence movement, he said.

The Nobel laureate bishop of Dili, Carlos Felipe Ximenes

Belo, fled his residence in the capital as militiamen attacked it Monday, driving some of around 5,000 refugees covering in the grounds out onto waiting trucks, witnesses said.

Part of the alleged Indonesian army plan is nearing completion. Foreign journalists, poll observers and United Nations officials in Dili and elsewhere are being driven out of East Timor through fearful militia intimidation.

Observers say the intimidation has been calculated in stopping largely short of physically hurting foreigners, which could prompt stronger action from the international community as it dithers over whether to send in armed peacekeepers.

Western specialists said "Plan B" had the code-name "Operasi Sапu Jagad" (Operation Total Cleansing) and became operational in March, when militia violence began to reach Dili.

Indonesian military behind killing

The UN is compiling eyewitness evidence that the Indonesian military orchestrated a campaign of killings by pro-Jakarta militias in East Timor, according to a leaked report published in Australia Monday.

Citing leaked United Nations' assessments, the Sydney Morning Herald said 14,000 soldiers under officers hand-picked by Indonesian Defence Minister General Wiranto had condoned and in some cases directed attacks by anti-independence militias.

The military had also ordered the 8,000-strong Indonesian police contingent to remain passive during many assaults, with open threats to their families if they intervened, the paper said.

170 killed in violence

At least 170 people died at the hands of Indonesian military and their militia allies in strife-torn East Timor, according to an unconfirmed report here Monday.

Citing local contacts, East Timorese International Support Centre spokeswoman Maria Do Ceu Frederic said 77 people had died Monday in three villages outside the capital, Dili.



United Nations personnel leave Darwin Airport Monday after being airlifted from the East Timor capital, Dili. The troubled capital had been turned into a ghost town and the Indonesian Army accused of orchestrating a campaign of terror. —AFP photo

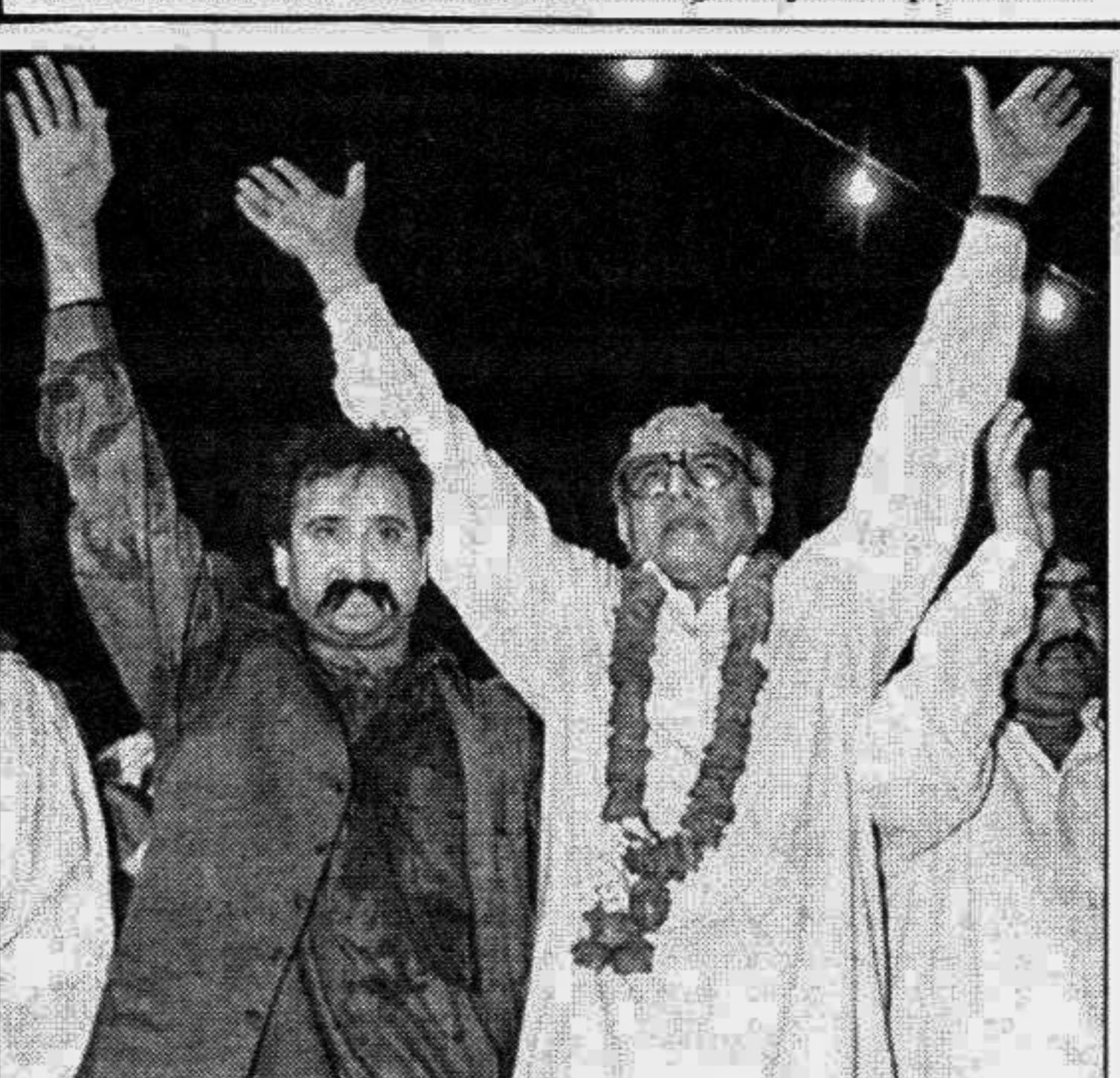
BRIEFLY

Azeri leader detained in US: A leading opposition figure from Azerbaijan has been detained by US immigration authorities. Russia's Itar-Tass news agency reported on Sunday, citing officials in the former Soviet republic, Reuters says from Moscow.

Rasul Guliyev, Azerbaijan's Parliament Speaker from 1993, became a sharp critic of President Heydar Aliyev after stepping down in 1996. He is wanted in Azerbaijan on corruption charges, which he has said are politically motivated. Tass said he had been detained by US immigration officials on Friday. Azeri officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

Thai, Filipinos clash in Taiwan: About 200 Thai and Filipino labourers fought each other with pipes rocks and gasoline bombs at a construction site in central Taiwan early Monday, injuring 18 people, police said. AP reports from Taipei.

A dispute over the use of telephones shared by the workers sparked the violence at the Formosa Plastics industrial complex in Yunlin county, about 200 kilometers (125 miles) south of Taipei, local television reported. The fighting followed two minor clashes between the Thai and Filipino workers at the site last month. Two workers, whose nationalities were not immediately known, were hospitalised Monday with severe head injuries and 16 others suffered light injuries, police said.



Former Pakistani president Farooq Leghari (R), along with his party organiser Shoaib Adil, waves to supporters during an anti-government rally in nearby Rawalpindi, some 25 km from Islamabad Sunday. Leghari strongly criticised Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Kashmir policy, asked the government to resign and to announce fresh polls in the country. —AFP photo

DPRK urges US to abide by promise on nuclear reactors

SEOUL, Sept 6: North Korea on Monday urged the United States to keep its promise to build two nuclear reactors for the communist state in return for the mothballing of its suspect atomic programme, reports AFP.

The pointed call came a day before the United States sits down with North Korea in Berlin for talks focussing on a possible easing of US sanctions if Pyongyang agrees to freeze its missile programme.

If the construction of the light water reactor (LWR) project is delayed, the United States will be held wholly responsible for it, the North's Rodong Shinmun warned, according to the Korean Central News Agency.

Under a landmark accord signed in 1994, the North promised to freeze its nuclear

programmes in return for the reactors from the Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO), an international consortium consisting of the United States, South Korea, Japan and the European Union.

The LWR construction is an unavoidable commitment of the United States under the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)-US Agreed Framework," the Rodong Shinmun said.

The paper also accused Washington of taking an irresponsible stance on implementing the terms of the 1994 agreement.

However, the United States is assuming such an attitude as insisting that it is not to be held responsible for the delay of the construction as other KEDO nations procrastinate on the project," it said.

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