

NEWS DIGEST

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Martial law set in Indonesia

■ **Thousands flee as world leaders call for Indonesia to provide security.**

DILI, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia imposed martial law in East Timor early Tuesday as thousands of refugees fled the capital and anti-independence militias continued a wave of terror, torching homes and reportedly slaughtering hundreds of civilians.

World leaders indignantly called for Indonesia to make good on its pledge to provide security in the provincial capital, Dili. But witnesses said Indonesian troops were aiding the militias and trying to intimidate journalists and U.N. workers into fleeing the territory.

Stung by international criticism, President B.J. Habibie signed an order imposing martial law. It wasn't until Monday that senior officials even acknowledged security had broken down in East Timor.

"There are many dead," military spokesman Brig. Gen. Sudrajat said Tuesday. "Nothing is working, and there are so many refugees."

With the military already out in force on the island, it was not immediately clear what effect the order would have. However, it would formally give the armed forces full control over the province where civilian administration has virtually collapsed.

The Clinton administration on Monday joined several other governments in urging Indonesia to quell the disorder or invite in outside forces to keep the peace.

The city spiraled into chaos after the announcement Saturday that East Timorese had voted overwhelmingly in favor of independence from Indonesia in a U.N.-supervised referendum.

Bands of pro-Indonesian militia set houses ablaze, fired rocket-propelled grenades and bazookas and shouted through megaphones for those remaining in the city to get out. Witnesses said militiamen and Indonesian troops loaded people onto trucks and sent them to West Timor.

"There is very clear evidence of collusion between elements of the (Indonesian) security forces and the militias to deport East Timorese forcibly to West Timor and elsewhere," said Mary Robinson, the U.N. high commissioner for human rights. "An integral part of this campaign is to terrorize the population with the most gruesome abuses of their fundamental rights."

Portuguese President Jorge Sampaio said the U.N. Security Council was responsible for the deteriorating situation.

"The international community, which knows how to intervene in cases of serious human rights violations, must adopt the same measure under the

“*There is very clear evidence of collusion between elements of the (Indonesian) security forces and the militias to deport East Timorese forcibly to West Timor and elsewhere.*”

MARY ROBINSON

U.N. high commissioner for human rights

threat of witnessing a people's genocide," he said.

Indonesia invaded the former Portuguese colony of East Timor in 1975 and has held it in an iron grip ever since. It is estimated that 200,000 civilians were killed in the past 25 years.

Refugees streamed into West Timor at a rate of 1,000 per hour Monday, the International Committee of the Red Cross said in Geneva. Some 25,000 people had already been forced from the capital, it said.

Pro-Indonesian militiamen killed more than 170 people Monday, according to the East Timorese International Support Center, based in Darwin, Australia.

Witnesses reported seeing soldiers escort militiamen during an attack on thousands of refugees hiding in the home of Bishop Carlos Belo, East

Timor's spiritual leader and the winner of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize.

The militia fired at the refugees, killing at least 39, and left Belo's house burning out of control, said pro-independence leader Manuel Carrascalao. That death toll could not be independently confirmed. Belo was at home during the attack, but was uninjured. He was later evacuated to the eastern town of Bacau.

U.N. officials evacuated 300 of its elections workers Monday, but left some 400 delegates in Dili.

President Clinton focused on the issue Monday with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Clinton spokesman Barry Toiv said the two "discussed ways to encourage Indonesia to do what is required to bring security to East Timor," Toiv said.

Clinton's statements on clemency upset officials

NEW YORK (AP) — Angered by Hillary Rodham Clinton's statements opposing clemency for imprisoned Puerto Rican nationalists, Rep. Jose Serrano (D-N.Y.) said he would no longer encourage the first lady to run for fellow Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan's U.S. Senate seat.

"I'm rescinding my encouragement of her candidacy," Serrano said in Monday's New York Times. "Because to me, this is as important as Ireland is to the Irish, Israel is to the Jews."

Clinton, who has not yet declared her candidacy for the Democratic nomination, said Saturday that President Bill Clinton's offer of clemency for 16 FALN members should be withdrawn because they have not renounced violence.

The Clintons have come under fire from Republican critics and some law enforcement officials who claimed the

president's clemency offer was aimed at helping his wife garner votes among New York's 1.3 million Puerto Ricans.

Clinton's statements caused reactions of anger and amazement among several Puerto Rican leaders, but none more than Puerto Rican-born Serrano.

"This is an action that will make people go out and make sure that she's not our next senator," Serrano told the Times. "Maybe it's time to go out and find out who else is interested."

Serrano's office was closed for the Labor Day holiday on Monday, and he could not immediately be reached for comment.

Three other Puerto Rican officials — New York State Assemblyman Ruben Diaz Jr., City Councilman Jose Rivera and Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer — did not go as far as Serrano in threatening to pull their support but expressed disappointment.

Israel bans torture during interrogation

JERUSALEM (AP) — Setting a landmark in Israel's decades-old conflict between democracy and security, between respecting human rights and protecting citizens from terrorism, the Supreme Court on Monday banned the use of torture in interrogations.

The ruling came just one day after two car bombs went off, just the latest of dozens of attacks that have killed hundreds of Israeli civilians in recent years.

Shin Bet security agents will no longer be allowed to tie Palestinian suspects with their hands behind their backs to a rail under an air conditioner in the middle of winter.

They will no longer be able to grab suspects from behind and shake them violently, a practice that led to the death of at least one Palestinian. They will no longer be permitted to force Palestinians into the dreaded "shabeh" position, bent backward over chairs, hands and legs shackled beneath, or be allowed to put a putrid, choking hood over their heads.

For Fatima Hreizat, 65, from the West Bank town of Hebron, the decision came too late. Her son, Abu Samed, died in 1995 while under interrogation. Hanging laundry outside her house, she said simply: "If there wasn't any torture, he would be alive."

Still, Defense Minister Efraim Sneh worried that the ruling would deprive the Shin Bet of tools it needs to extract the information needed to prevent extremist attacks.

Joyce Boim agreed. In May 1996, a Palestinian shot and killed her 17-year-old son David as he stood in front of his school.

"These things may be torture, they may be horrible, but what did they think ... when they drove by and shot my son," Boim said.

On Sunday, two car bombs were

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Israeli immigrant

set off in the northern Israeli cities of Tiberias and Haifa. The three men killed in the attacks were apparently the bombers.

Boim, who immigrated to Israel in 1985 from New York with her family, said Israel must use any means necessary to prevent attacks.

"If this is what it takes, how many lives have been saved by getting confessions even with these methods? Hundreds of lives were saved," she told The Associated Press.

Investigating an incident in which Shin Bet agents looking for a bomb beat a Palestinian to death after removing him from a bus he hijacked, an official commission ruled in 1987 that agents may use "moderate psychological and physical force" to extract "ticking bomb" confessions. Human rights groups charged that gave the green light to torture.

The methods banned by the court are not used only to prevent imminent attacks, said Eitan Fellner, director of B'Tselem, a human rights group.

Though they unanimously banned the practices, the justices noted that the state still has the right to defend itself. If the Shin Bet believes it must torture a suspect to reveal the location of a "ticking bomb," the torturer would be put on trial, but a court might accept the argument that physical force was necessary.

World and Nation Datelines

■ **Yugoslavia**
Three Serbs killed during shootings in ethnic clash

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) — Russian peacekeepers trying to break up an ethnic clash killed three Serbs on Monday after the Serbs disregarded an order to stop beating two wounded ethnic Albanians and instead started shooting at the Russians, NATO said.

NATO spokesman Maj. Roland Lavoie said the shootings early Monday in the American sector were under investigation but that the Russians acted under the rules of engagement, which allow peacekeepers to use force to defend themselves.

According to Lavoie, Russians rushed to an area northeast of Gnjilane after a firefight erupted between Serbs and ethnic Albanians near Korminjane village. One Albanian was killed, and two others were wounded in the gun battle, Lavoie said.

■ **Russia**
Islamic rebels invade republic of Dagestan

MAKHACHKALA, Russia (AP) — Government tanks and artillery Monday bombarded but failed to dislodge hundreds of Islamic insurgents who invaded the southern Russian republic of Dagestan for the second time in a month.

At least 14 members of the government security forces were killed in fighting Sunday and Monday in Novolakskiye, a village in western Dagestan. The rebels surrounded a police station for hours Monday until Russian tanks broke through. There was no immediate word on rebel casualties.

The death toll reached 50 from a rebel bomb attack Saturday night that demolished an apartment building for military families in central Dagestan, Russian news agencies reported. Scores of people were injured, and 58 remained hospitalized Monday.

■ **Virginia**
Dennis' storm waters fail to quench parched East Coast

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — The remnants of Dennis spread rain across the mid-Atlantic states on Monday, but authorities said days of precipitation and flooding weren't enough to cancel the devastating drought.

Once a hurricane, then a tropical storm and now downgraded to a tropical depression, Dennis spawned minor flooding in Virginia and threatened to cause showers in Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania.

Although heavy rains drenched parts of North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey and New York Sunday, much of the East remains parched.

It would have been more helpful if the quick and heavy downpours were spread out more evenly, said Jim Poirier, a Weather Service meteorologist in Mount Holly, N.J.

The hard, dry ground can only soak up so much water, and the rest just runs off into storm drains and streams.

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