

World news

Bhagwan returns to Oregon to face charges

PORTLAND (AP) — A federal prison plane carrying Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh hopscotched across the West on Thursday as the Indian guru continued his cross-country journey back to Oregon to face immigration charges.

The 53-year-old guru, whose sect claims 500,000 followers

worldwide, was arrested Oct. 28 in Charlotte, N.C. in what federal authorities maintained was an attempt to flee to Bermuda. Rajneesh and six disciples had flown from the sect's Central Oregon commune-city, Rajneeshpuram, on two Learjets.

A federal magistrate in

Charlotte ordered Rajneesh held without bond and he was flown to Oklahoma City on Monday.

After spending three nights there, Rajneesh, clad in a tan jumpsuit, boarded the federal Boeing 727 early Thursday along with 60 other prisoners.

The plane then made stops in Tucson and Phoenix, Ariz. and Long Beach, Calif. to drop off prisoners. The jet then headed for Vandenberg Air Force Base to deliver inmates for the federal prison at Lompoc, Calif., said Andy Richards, at the Long Beach Airport tower.

Julio Gonzales, the Los Angeles-based U.S. marshal for

California's central district, said the plane carrying Rajneesh was to make a second stop in Southern California and then fly on to Portland.

A federal court hearing would be set for Rajneesh after his arrival in Portland, U.S. attorney's office spokesmen said.

The guru's attorneys were filing a motion Thursday in U.S. district court in Portland seeking Rajneesh's release, said Rajneesh's spokeswoman Ma Prem Isabel. Attorneys have said they would seek a "creative" bail agreement, since federal authorities consider him a flight risk.

U.S. Marshal Stuart Earnest of Oklahoma City said Rajneesh's health was not a factor in the delay in Rajneesh's trip. Originally, authorities thought Rajneesh would continue his trip west on Tuesday.

Rajneesh and seven disciples face federal charges in Oregon accusing them of covering up sham marriages between some American followers and foreigners who came with him to the United States. The guru also is charged with lying to immigration officials to conceal his intent to remain permanently in the United States after he arrived in this country in 1981.

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Hostages rescued from rebels

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Soldiers blew down walls of the

Palace of Justice with dynamite Thursday and rescued up to 48

hostages held by leftist rebels. Officers said they found 50 bodies in the burned-out building after "annihilating" the guerrillas.

Survivors said the guerrillas shot to death six Supreme Court judges, including the chief justice.

Jorge Antonio Reina, a driver for the court, told radio station Caracol that he saw guerrillas kill four magistrates.

"They shot magistrate Manuel Gaona Cruz here," he said, touching a finger to his forehead. "They made him lie down on the floor and that's where they shot him even though he was insisting that they should try to negotiate" with the government.

Reina said the guerrillas earlier had killed three other judges.

Another former hostage told radio station RCN that guerrilla leader Andres Almarales had killed the court's chief justice, Alfonso Reyes Echandia, and auxiliary magistrate Maria Ines Ramos.

Reina said the rebels decided Thursday morning to kill the justices when it appeared the guerrillas' situation was hopeless.

The reports could not be independently verified, and there was no confirmation that the bodies of the justices had been identified.

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