

Bosnian Serbs continue Muslim evictions



SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — Bosnian Serb troops forced Muslim families from their homes in northeastern Bosnia. The families told of being threatened, beaten and robbed. Hundreds of men were rounded up and arrested.

The women, children and mostly older men arrived Sunday in Tuzla, a government-held town in the northeast. U.N. officials said 128 Muslims were expelled from Bijeljina and Janja, 30 miles northeast of Tuzla. Seven more came from Brcko, also in the northeast.

Muslims have long been harassed in the Bijeljina region. The town on the Drina River border between Serbia and Bosnia was one of the first seized by the Serbs when they started the Bosnia war in April 1992 over Muslim-Croat moves to secede from Yugoslavia.

"Suddenly they smashed

into our apartment, they started beating me and forced us to leave," said Majida Mujic, a 36-year-old woman from Bijeljina.

Local Serb authorities began picking up people in Bijeljina on Friday, forced them to sign papers turning over all possessions and drove them toward Tuzla, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees officials said.

When they reached government-controlled territory, the Muslims were robbed of whatever they had left, said Ron Redmond, UNHCR spokesman in Geneva. "Shots were then fired into the air to frighten these people, and they were pushed across the front lines at the town of Satorovici," 20 miles north of Tuzla, he said.

"On the bus I was threatened with a knife, one of them hit me with his boot in the stomach," said Biba Dzafic, 60. "They demanded that I give them all my jewelry and mon-

ey. They told me they would cut my throat if I didn't give it to them."

Dzafic said she turned over all her valuables. Osman Besirovic, 57, said he was forced to turn over 1,300 German marks (about \$800).

Red Cross workers in Bijeljina reported "hundreds of people rounded up, beaten up and arrested" Friday, said Lisa Jones, the agency's spokeswoman in Sarajevo.

It was the third wave of expulsions from Bijeljina following large-scale evictions in September and January, said UNHCR spokesman Kris Janowski.

Throughout Bosnia's war, people of rival ethnic groups have been forced from their homes to create ethnically pure areas. Although all sides have been accused of this "ethnic cleansing," the brunt of the blame has fallen to the Serbs.

Rwandan refugees flee as rebels claim victory

KIGALI, Rwanda (AP) — Tutsi rebels declared an end to Rwanda's civil war Monday, said they planned to install a new government and told refugees they could stop their terrified flight out of the country.

Millions fled toward uncertain safety in neighboring nations, fearing the rebels would try to retaliate for the slaughter of about 200,000 to 500,000 people — most of them Tutsis — by Hutu militias. However, little evidence has emerged of widespread reprisals against the Hutus by the Tutsi minority.

"There is no need for anyone to flee Rwanda. We guarantee all Rwandans stability and security," Maj. Gen. Paul Kagame of the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front said Monday.

After 14 weeks of ethnic bloodshed, the Tutsi-dominated rebels said they had swept away the last Hutu government resistance and that a truce was in place. The rebel leader said he hoped the end of the fighting would halt the desperate human flight out of Rwanda.

Between Wednesday and Sunday, up to 1 million Hutu civilians and soldiers had already pushed into Goma, Zaire, from the northwestern Rwandan town of Gisenyi.

And refugee officials said late Monday that an estimated 1.9 million more Hutus were streaming toward the southwestern Rwandan border town of Cyangugu and had started another exodus into Bukavu, Zaire, 60 miles south of Goma.

About 100,000 people crossed at Bukavu on Sunday and Monday. If the rest of the 1.9 million on the move cross into Zaire, nearly 3.5 million Rwandans — about half of the estimated prewar population of 8 million — would be living in refugee camps in neighboring countries.

Before last week's mass flight, more than half a million made their way into the country's other neighbors: Tanzania, Burundi and Uganda. Hundreds of thousands more are displaced within Rwanda.

Leaders of the rump Hutu government had apparently encouraged the latest human flood through Rwanda's southwestern corner, where French forces have declared a humanitarian protection zone, said Fernando del Mundo, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva.

"The refugees are saying they are moving because their leaders told them they can no longer protect them," del Mundo said. "Despite the assurances from the French, they are responding to what their leaders are saying."

In the capital, Kigali, Kagame declared that the war with the Hutu government was over, but suggested the rebels still might confront French troops protecting the area where Hutu government leaders were hiding.

"We have captured all of Rwanda up to the French protection zone and a cease-fire is effectively in place," Kagame said.

He called the refugee flight "a very unfortunate situation that must be reversed."

"Among them are innocent people," Kagame said. "Others can't forget they have a lot of blood on their hands and will have to answer for it."

The rebels want the French to arrest the leaders of the Hutu government. The French say their 2,500 troops have a U.N. mandate to carry out a humanitarian mission, and arresting government leaders is not part of that mandate.

The rebels have been suspicious of the French intervention from the start, because France rescued the Hutu government from a rebel offensive last year.

French Col. Didier Bolelli said the rump government has fled into Zaire from Cyangugu. He said he did not know where in Zaire the government ministers had gone.

Rebel soldiers, meanwhile, worked to clean the bombed and shattered parliament building in Kigali for the inauguration of Faustin Twagiramungu as prime minister and Pasteur Bizimungu, announced Monday as the new president.

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