

# Martial law imposed for Fijian coup crisis

Government officials have been held hostage for 10 days, and the army cuts access to the parliament

By Rohan Sullivan  
The Associated Press

SUVA, Fiji — Moving to end Fiji's crisis, the country's army commander imposed martial law Monday night and began to isolate the rebels who have been holding the prime minister and other government officials hostage for 10 days.

The commander, Commodore Frank Bainimarama, announced he had assumed control of Fiji and that President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara had quit after running the country since the coup began May 19.

"I have, with much reluctance, assumed executive authority of the country, and henceforth declared martial law," Bainimarama said at a news conference. He said soldiers will restrict access to the parliamentary compound where the insurgents are holding Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry and more than 30 members of his government.

Coup leader George Speight is a member of the ethnic Fijian majority. He wants Chaudhry, Fiji's first prime minister from the Indian minority, removed from power and Indians barred from leading the country again. Fijians of Indian ancestry make up 44

percent of the population of 813,000 on this Pacific island, but control much of the nation's commerce in this country 2,250 miles northeast of Sydney, Australia.

By cutting access to the parliamentary compound, the military hopes to isolate the rebels from supporters who have come and gone freely.

"The country will be run by a military government," Bainimarama said. "The primary objective of this government is to take the country toward peace and stability and the well-being of Fiji at the earliest opportunity."

Shortly before the commander spoke, the military imposed a 48-hour curfew in the capital, Suva. In a show of force, numerous troops and police patrolled the streets.

Although Bainimarama's military previously had expressed support for President Mara, the troops had taken little action. The strategy changed Monday, one day after a mob supporting Speight killed a policeman and knocked Fiji television off the air. The death of the policeman was the first fatality in the hostage crisis.

Earlier Monday, negotiators had met again to seek a resolution to the standoff, but no progress was reported. The streets in Suva were largely quiet after police advised people to stay home and schools to close.

# U.N. peacekeeper force gains additional troops

Rebel forces in Sierra Leone have stolen weapons, vehicles and uniforms from the understaffed U.N. force

By Clarence Roy-Macaulay  
The Associated Press

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone — West African leaders agreed Monday to send 3,000 troops to Sierra Leone to help U.N. peacekeepers who have suffered rebel attacks and seen their colleagues kidnapped.

A statement released Monday by the West African heads of state meeting in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, did not specify how many troops would be sent to boost the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone.

But officials at the weekend conference said on condition of anonymity that leaders had endorsed a proposal made by regional defense ministers two weeks ago to send 3,000 soldiers, most of them Nigerian.

The statement also called on the United Nations to put the force in Sierra Leone under West African command and change its mandate from "peacekeeping to peace enforcement."

Hopes for peace were also boosted by the release Sunday of what was believed to be the last of 500 U.N. personnel held captive for more than three weeks by the Revolutionary United Front rebels.

The RUF rebels signed a July peace accord but reignited the conflict earlier this month as a

Nigerian-led West African intervention force known as ECOMOG pulled out of the country to make way for the U.N. force.

Western countries had refused to give financial backing to ECOMOG because of alleged human rights abuses committed by the force. Rights groups and U.N. officials agree, however, that rebel atrocities far outweighed ECOMOG crimes.

The now nearly 11,000-strong U.N. force has been expected to reach 13,000 troops by the end of June. The new West African contingent will bring the total closer to the 16,500 recommended by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The U.N. mission has been troubled since it began late last year. At least 11 peacekeepers have been killed and 25 to 30 wounded, U.N. force commander Maj. Gen. Vijay Kumar Jetley said Monday. Rebels have also robbed peacekeepers of their weapons, vehicles and uniforms.

Despite the setbacks, Jetley insisted Monday his peacekeepers were using "force when necessary" and had inflicted major rebel casualties when attacked.

"The rebels are still licking their wounds," Jetley said. "The RUF is in a total state of demoralization at the moment." He did not elaborate.

No fighting was reported Monday, Jetley said, but state-run radio said government forces had captured the key town of Lunsar, about 60 miles east of Freetown.

**All Ways Travel**  
 • Book Soon for Summer •  
 New York - \$350.00\*  
 London - \$499.00\*  
 Hong Kong - \$669.00\*  
 Bangkok - \$709.00\*  
\*tax not included, restrictions may apply. Subject to change without notice.  
**Eurail Passes issued onsite!!!**  
 E-mail: awt@luv2travel.com  
 1200 High St.  
**338-4199**  
 Student Travel Experts

**75¢ OFF 50¢ OFF**  
 Foot long Sub Half Sub  
Expires 6/12/00  
**SUBSHOP**  
 1225  
**ALDER**  
**345-2434**  
Not valid with any other discounts or coupons.  
 MON-FRI 10AM-10PM • SAT 11AM-9PM • SUN 12PM-9PM



Don't get stuck paying someone else's utility bill!

# School's Out For Summer.

Before you move, don't forget to stop your water and electric service. It's quick and easy to stop your EWEB service on the web at [www.eweb.org](http://www.eweb.org), or by calling 484-6016.

We'll come out and read your meter right away. Have a great summer!

**www.eweb.org**  
 The Power is in Your Hands. **EWEB**

I'm so sore tonight.  
 Maybe it's because I benched 310 this afternoon.

I bet you **WILL** be sore tomorrow.

Yeah. Would **YOU** mind giving me a massage later?

I don't know, I'm pretty busy. You should just **RIDE** the bikes next time, and you won't be so sore.

Yeah, I probably should.

It always helps **ME** to warm down.

Uh huh. Yeah, I like running too.

No, are you deaf? I said you should ride the bikes!

Oh, right. Sure, I heard you.

**CONSENT DOESN'T MEAN HEARING WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR.**

Sponsored in part by the EC Brown Charitable Trust.