

Rebels released 30 more U.N. hostages

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (AP) — Rebels released 30 United Nations (U.N.) hostages Sunday, boosting hopes that the remaining personnel held captive in Sierra Leone would be freed soon.

The development brought the number of remaining U.N. captives to fewer than 100 from about 500 ini-

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— Lance Cpl. Elias Mwanza U.N. hostage

tially captured in early May. Some 143 hostages were flown Friday and Saturday from Monrovia to Freetown, the capital.

U.N. spokesperson David Wilmhurst said the 30, all Zambians, were flown to the Liberian capital of Monrovia. Liberian officials said they had arrived from the remote northeastern Sierra Leonean town of Pendemu, where rebels handed them over.

Dressed in military uniforms and clutching bottles of mineral water, the former hostages expressed relief and joy. Most were in good physical condition, although some were being treated for malaria, minor in-

juries and fatigue, Liberian medical officials said.

"I feel very happy. I thought we were never going to reach this place. Thank God we are here," said Lance Cpl. Elias Mwanza, who suffered a jaw and other injuries.

Mwanza said some of the captors had tormented the hostages while others were more kind and promised not to kill them "because we are their African brothers."

Pvt. Goma Justin, who had deep cuts on his foot from stepping on broken glass, described his captivity as "rough."

Despite the releases, fighting between rebels and pro-government forces was reported over the weekend at the strategic crossroads of Rogberi Junction, about 50 miles east of Freetown, Wilmhurst said. He had no further details.

Meanwhile, West African heads of state were gathering for weekend meetings in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, to discuss the crisis in Sierra Leone.

The rebels have killed tens of thousands of people and intentionally mutilated many more during the 8-year-old civil war. The conflict reignited earlier this month when the Revolutionary United Front rebels took the U.N. peacekeepers hostage and began advancing toward Freetown.

Associated Press Television News cameraman Miguel Gil Moreno de Mora and Reuters correspondent Kurt Schork were killed Wednesday in a rebel ambush. South African cameraman Mark Chisholm and Greek photographer Yannis Behrakis suffered light injuries in the same attack.

Eritrea's civilians flee fighting, peace talks loom over 2-year war

ASMARA, Eritrea (AP) — Fighting raged Sunday between the Horn of Africa's warring neighbors on the eve of peace talks — opening a new front in Eritrea's smoldering humanitarian crisis.

Infantry and artillery clashes in what's become the heaviest fighting in the 2-year-old border war threaten to uproot 200,000 people around the central city of Mendefera, the United Nations warned. The 2-week-old Ethiopian offensive already has sent nearly one-seventh of Eritrea's people fleeing north, some into neighboring Sudan.

Trucks, buses and vans commandeered by the government poured into the grounds of a school about 20 miles north of Mendefera, disgorging hundreds of evacuees, mostly women and children, each carrying a bulging, plastic bag or two of their belongings.

Boys clambered off the high-paneled, open-backed trucks first.

Parcels, babies and women — clasp their skirts to protect their modesty — followed.

"We have only these pieces of clothes," said 70-year-old Bisrat Berhe, pinching the hem of her skirt as she crouched under the eaves of a primary school that

in the past day had become home to 18,000 Eritreans.

At least 6,000 new arrivals were expected by day's end, said Simon Nhongo, a U.N. official.

Eritrea said last week that fighting already had dislodged 555,000 of its 4 million people.

Ethiopia's military now is pursuing the retreating adversary miles deep into Eritrea — putting its citizens into panicked flight ahead of the advance.

Increasingly punished by the latest offensive, Eritrea agreed last week to withdraw from all disputed territory and return to talks set for Monday in Algeria on resolving the neighbors' 2-year-old war over their poorly delineated border.

Ethiopia has made plain its bargaining strategy for the talks.

"We shall negotiate while we fight and we shall fight while we negotiate," Prime Minister Meles Zenawai told African diplomats in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, last week.

Sunday morning, Ethiopian warplanes bombed a newly completed power plant near the port city of Massawa, Eritrea's Foreign Ministry said, calling the attack "vandalism and senseless destruction."

Ethiopia said the planes attacked a military installation, not a power plant.

For its part, Ethiopia accused Eritreans on Sunday of shelling its forces near one of the eastern border from which they had pledged to withdraw, Reuters said.

In Addis Ababa, Ethiopians rallied by the hundreds of thousands to celebrate the ninth anniversary of the overthrow of the military regime that ruled Ethiopia, which in 1991 still included the province of Eritrea.

The ralliers — grizzled veterans of the guerrilla war against Benito Mussolini's forces alongside young men in uniform — had new triumphs to celebrate as well.

"The invading Eritrean forces have been demolished!" President Negasso Ghidada told the crowd, listing towns and territories retaken by country's forces in past days.

On the eve of talks in this David-and-Goliath struggle, which pits a country of 4 million — Ethiopia — against one of 61.7 million — Eritrea — vaunted Eritrean army seems, at least for the moment, to have misplaced its slingshot.

Fiji rebels reject latest offer to end hostage crisis

SUVA, Fiji (AP) — The leader of rebels holding the former prime minister and 30 others hostage in Fiji on Sunday rejected an offer to end the crisis — but said there could be a peaceful resolution within days.

Rebel leader George Speight said he expects a new offer within two days that could lead to the release of the captives.

He told Australian television that he "would not be surprised if it is over this week."

Meanwhile, late Sunday in the Fiji capital of Suva, 200 rebel supporters, some carrying guns, defied roadblocks, vandalized a local television station and fired shots into the air.

A police officer died from gunshot

wounds Sunday night, a hospital spokesperson said on condition of anonymity. It was unclear when or where he was shot, and the death could not be immediately confirmed.

In an effort to end the 10-day crisis, President Ratu Sir Kamiseva Mara on Saturday fired the democratically elected government and said the rebels would likely be granted immunity from prosecution.

But Speight rejected the offer, insisting Mara resign and that Fiji's 1997 constitution, which indigenous Fijians blame for giving too much power to the nation's ethnic Indian minority, be scrapped.

Mara, a figurehead who normally

holds little government power, said he would appoint a caretaker administration by today and rule the Pacific nation until then through state-of-emergency powers.

Speight and about 60 gunmen have been holding Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry and more than 30 members of his government hostage since storming the parliament compound on May 19.

Chaudhry, elected last year, is the country's first leader from its minority Fijians of Indian ancestry.

Speight claims to be acting on behalf of the Pacific island nation's majority indigenous Fijians, and wants to reduce the powers that Indians can

hold in the government.

A reporter for Australian television who was allowed briefly to see Chaudhry said he saw no signs of physical abuse.

Earlier Sunday, rebel guards holding automatic weapons opened the gates of parliament to let in some 150 supporters for a 90-minute Methodist church service.

Afterward, Speight stood for minutes shaking hands with supporters.

Main trading partner Australia, well as New Zealand, the United States and the United Nations have condemned any deal that replaces the elected government as giving in to terrorism.

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TAMU OUTDOORS	EVENT DATE	REGISTRATION	REC FITNESS	INTRAMURALS	REGISTRATION
Rock Climbing Day Trip	June 10	May 29-June 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On Sale Now—Unlimited Aerobics Passes \$50. 20 Punch Pass \$30, 10 Punch Pass \$15. One Class \$2. Need Motivational Help?—Sign up for a session with a Rec Sports Personal Trainer at Member Services. Personal Fitness Profile—\$10 if purchased with Personal Training Session or \$20 if purchased separately. Register at the Member Services Desk in the lobby of the Rec Center. Contact DeAun Woosley at 862-3995 for more information. Tai Chi—Register May 30-June 5 at Member Services, \$30 for six weeks of classes to be held Tues. and Thurs at 6 p.m. Classes begin June 6. Massage Therapy—\$35 for Rec Members and \$45 for non Rec Members. Appointments can be made at Member Services. Contact Paula Opal at 845-3076 for more information. 	3-on-3 Basketball	May 29-June 5
Intro to Climbing Clinic	June 11	May 29-June 8		Slow Pitch Softball	May 29-June 5
Kayak Roll Instructional Clinic	June 13	May 29-June 12		Sand Volleyball	May 29-June 5
Lead Climbing Clinic	June 13	May 29-June 12		Indoor Soccer 1/2 ct.	May 29-June 5
Hiking Day Trip	June 18	May 29-June 14		Racquetball	May 29-June 5
Kayak Stroke Clinic	June 20	May 29-June 20		Golf	May 29-June 5
Horseback/Hiking Day Trip	June 24	May 29-June 20		Tennis	May 29-June 5
Intro to Climbing Clinic	July 8	June 19-July 6		•Intramural sports registration closes at 6:00pm. on closing date	
Kayak Roll Instructional Clinic	July 11	June 26-July 10			
Fly Fishing by Canoe Day Trip	July 15	June 26-July 11			
Kayak Workshop	July 15-16	June 26-July 17			
Kayak Open Practice Session	July 18	June 26-July 17			
Bat Watching Canoe Trip	July 20	June 26-July 18			
Rafting Day Trip	July 22	June 26-July 18			
Intro To Climbing Clinic	July 23	June 26-July 20			
Rock Climbing Day Trip	July 29	June 21-July 25			
AUGUST BREAK TRIP					
Sail/SCUBA the Bahamas	August 19-25	Now-June 15			

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