

Suu Kyi Injured, Diplomats Confirm Clash on Friday Left Burmese Activist With Face and Shoulder Wounds

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Washington Post Foreign Service
Thursday, June 5, 2003; Page A22

JAKARTA, Indonesia, June 4 -- Diplomats confirmed today that Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi suffered a facial wound and an injured shoulder and is being held in a military camp after she and her supporters were caught in a violent clash Friday with assailants controlled by the Burmese military.

The Nobel peace laureate and opposition figure was being detained in the Yemon military camp about 25 miles outside Rangoon, the Burmese capital, diplomats said. Late tonight, U.N. officials decided to send a top envoy to Burma on Friday to reinforce the message that Suu Kyi should be released.

Three diplomats in the region, including one from a Western embassy in Rangoon, confirmed a report that Suu Kyi, who was arrested Saturday along with at least 18 supporters and colleagues, was injured when a brick or rock was thrown at the car she was traveling in. Her shoulder may have been dislocated or broken when it was struck by the projectile, they said. One diplomat said she was injured on the side of her face.

Reports that Suu Kyi, 57, leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD), was seriously wounded overstated the extent of her injuries, a diplomat said. It was unclear whether she has been treated by a doctor.

Deputy Foreign Minister Khin Maung Win on Tuesday assured diplomats in Rangoon that Suu Kyi was in good health. "People were just incredulous at their assertions," said a Western diplomat who attended the briefing.

U.N. envoy Razali Ismail will travel to Rangoon on Friday, though some officials in Washington and other capitals had urged him to delay the trip if he was not guaranteed access to Suu Kyi. Others, however, said his visit would pressure the government to release the charismatic leader, whose NLD crushed the military-backed ruling party in 1990 parliamentary elections but was prevented from taking power. Suu Kyi has spent much of the last 14 years under house arrest, including a 19-month period that ended a year ago.

"The safety of Aung San Suu Kyi is a factor that increasingly has to be taken into account in the decision that the U.N. makes about Razali's visit," a diplomat in Southeast Asia said. This diplomat said Razali might be one of the few international figures who could intervene to ensure that greater harm does not come to Suu Kyi while in detention.

In Washington, lawmakers called for a ban on all Burmese imports to send "a clear signal that Burma's human rights violators will be punished severely," said Rep. Tom Lantos

(D-Calif.), co-chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. "The brutal treatment and arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi cannot stand."

Lantos was joined by House International Relations Committee Chairman Henry J. Hyde (R-Ill.) and more than 20 other lawmakers; Sens. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) are supporting a similar measure, according to news service accounts.

Exiled dissidents say that according to witnesses, Suu Kyi's convoy was stopped late Friday by several trucks carrying government supporters in Dipeyin, about 400 miles north of Rangoon. The government has said only that the clash lasted about two hours until police intervened.

An exiled dissident who has regular contact with NLD members inside Burma, also known as Myanmar, said that according to a witness who was injured and escaped, Suu Kyi's convoy was attacked by soldiers and security forces using sharp bamboo sticks.

"He was shocked," said Bo Kyi, joint secretary of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners in Mae Sot, Thailand. "He never thought such brutal methods could happen. He said they beat the activists with hatred."

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