

FII: Coup attempt

19 May 2000

Information Bulletin N° 01

The Situation

The Prime Minister of Fiji and members of his parliamentary group are being held hostage by armed gunmen who entered the Parliament building early this morning. Members of the opposition party were told to leave the building. Shortly after, the leader of the armed group made a public statement announcing a takeover of power.

Opposition supporters marched through Suva shouting anti government slogans and damaging shops on their way to the Parliament complex. Rioting and looting has been reported in Suva City and the police were said to be outnumbered.

Shops and businesses have closed in Suva City and in Latoka and Nadi, although no trouble has been reported there. Both Suva and Nadi airports have increased security and operations are unaffected. Fiji Telecom reports that its phone service has been put out of action, thus preventing international calls.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

In preparation for possible injuries, two Fiji Red Cross First Aid posts have been set up near the Parliament building, following a joint assessment by the Fiji Red Cross Society and the Federation Pacific Regional Delegation which is located in Suva. The Regional Delegation has advised that all delegates and staff in Suva are safe and well.

Needs

It has not been possible yet to identify any needs. National Societies will be kept informed as information becomes available.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Hiroshi Higashiura
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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

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