



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE

FRETILIN

Media Release

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Baby seriously injured in attack on Fretilin rally

Doctors in Dili are expected to decide today whether an eight month old baby girl seriously injured in an attack on Fretilin supporters will need to be evacuated to Darwin for treatment.

Jessica Quintao Lima is in the intensive care unit of Dili's Guido Valaderes National Hospital after being hit in the head by a rock yesterday.

The Fretilin convoy she was travelling in was stoned by people wearing the blue and white t-shirts of Democratic Party (PD) presidential candidate Fernando de Araujo "Lasama".

Fretilin spokesman Arsenio Bano said the unprovoked attack took place near the heliport at Kampu Alor as Fretilin supporters made their way to a rally for Fretilin-backed presidential candidate Francisco Guterres Lu Olo at Kampu Motocross Delta Manleuana on the western edge of the city.

Speaking after visiting the hospital last night, Bano said doctors would decide today whether injuries to Jessica Quintao Lima, the grand daughter of prominent Timorese businessman Oscar Lima, were sufficiently serious to require her evacuation to Darwin.

Bano said the girl was one of at least 33 people including women and children taken to hospital after being injured in repeated attacks on the Lu Olo rally.

As well as Jessica Lima, three other people who attended the Lu Olo rally remained in hospital overnight, including two women who received intensive care treatment for facial injuries caused by stones. Bano said three Fretilin supporters were hit by "Ambon arrows", steel darts fired from slingshots.

Bano, a member of the party's Central Committee and National Political Commission, said attacks on Fretilin took place at Fatuhada (at least three separate incidents), the Heliport at Kampu Alor, Lecidere, GMT gymnasium, Democracy Field, Balide, Matadouro, Delta Comoro (at least two incidents), Taci Tolu and Jardim Colmera, with some of the attacks involving identifiable supporters of other presidential candidates.

"The attacks at Lecidere and Delta Comoro were instigated by people wearing the t-shirts of Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT) candidate Xavier do Amaral; the attacks at GMT Gymnasium were instigated by people wearing the t-shirts of Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) candidate Joao Carrascalao and the attacks at Democracy Field, Fatuhada and Delta Comoro were instigated by people wearing the t-shirts of Lasama of PD," he said. United Nations police were reported to have arrested only two of the people involved in attacks on Fretilin convoys.

Bano said yesterday's attacks against Fretilin were completely unacceptable and a continuation of violence against party supporters which began last year during the crisis aimed at overthrowing the elected Fretilin government.

“All presidential candidates had signed a code of conduct agreeing to strive to make this a non-violent election. Candidates specifically promised not to impede other candidates or their supporters from conducting electoral campaign activities,” he said.

“Our rally was entirely peaceful, but yet our supporters were attacked in an attempt to provoke a reaction and escalate the situation. A small number of our supporters were forced to react in self defence.

“It is disappointing that the leaders of PD, ASDT and UDT did not do a better job of restraining their supporters yesterday.

“Fretilin does not condone any form of violence and whoever is suspected of committing crimes should be brought before the courts,” Bano said.

Bano said Fretilin had gone out of its way to avoid trouble yesterday, including switching the route of its convoys at the last minute to avoid a PD rally.

Meanwhile, 16 Fretilin supporters were injured in an ambush of Fretilin vehicles heading home to Ermera from the Dili rally. Bano said three Fretilin members hit by “Ambon arrows” on the road to Ermera had to be rushed to hospital in Dili.

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