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Philippine Daily Inquirer

First Posted 22:01:00 01/21/2008

MANILA, Philippines -- He told them to stop firing, but they did not listen.

Recalling the 1987 massacre on Mendiola bridge, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim pointed on Monday to the rifle-toting Philippine Marines -- and not the police -- as the ones who shot at the protesting farmers, killing 13 and wounding more than 80 others.

Lim, then chief of the Western Police District (WPD), received his share of the blame in the massacre near Malacañang 21 years ago and was included in charges filed by the victims' families. But on Monday, he clarified

his role in the security plan and said he was "not responsible" for firing at the crowd under "Oplan Yellow."

"Under Oplan Yellow headed by General Ramon Montano, who was the chief of the Capital Regional Command, the district directors were given different tasks. As WPD commander, my responsibility was to guard the boundaries of Manila," he said.

The CapCom, through Oplan Yellow, he said, took over the security of Malacañang and its vicinity.

When the 10,000 militants from Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City entered Manila peacefully, Lim said he returned to headquarters to rest but received a phone call from Camp Crame asking him to relay a message to Montano.

"There were reports of armed men who infiltrated the rally. My instruction was to relay the message," he said.

Upon arrival at the Capcom post where he was met by Montano, Lim said he was also told by the general to tell Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas leader Jimmy Tadeo to form a 15-man group that would meet with then Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo in Malacañang.

This indicated that negotiations were supposed to take place between the two camps.

"They (Marines) were occupying the Mendiola Bridge, they were all Marines," he said, describing the scene. "The police were at the foot of the bridge, they were on the road

... on the flat ground. When panic erupted at the foot of the bridge, all the troops there were Marines. They were about one company there," he said.

He then called WPD Deputy Superintendent Edgar dula Torre and a Colonel Francisco to relay Montano's orders on Tadeo's 15-man team.

"A few minutes after they walked away, there was a huge explosion ... it might have been pillbox. The marchers ran towards Mendiola Bridge. They attacked. The Marines panicked and when they saw the advancing marchers at the foot of the bridge, they opened fire. Pandemonium broke loose," he said.

Hurrying back to the top of the bridge, Lim said he confronted the soldiers who began firing at the protesters.

"I said stop firing, stop firing. But the Marines were not listening to me. I saw the commander, a certain Major Jaymalin. I approached him. I told him, 'you better order your men to stop firing.' The Marine major was the commander so he ordered his men 'Stop firing.' So, it stopped. In the Marines, they would not follow orders unless these orders come from their commander," Lim said.

However, in an extensive 2006 report on the Mendiola Massacre that appeared in a major daily, the head of the Marine Civil Disturbance Control Battalion was "Major Felimon Gasmin" from Fort Bonifacio, not Jaymalin as recalled by Lim.

Lim, in his recollection, said the firing lasted less than five minutes, and stressed that it began when the explosion believed to be from a pillbox was thrown by the farmer's group.

"They had not yet met Tadeo when the blast happened. It came from the rallyists, maybe it was their signal because they ran afterward," he said.

When the smoke cleared, 13 farmers lay dead on the pavement while scores were injured from bullets or truncheons.

Immediately after the bloodshed, President Corazon Aquino issued Administrative Order No. 11 creating the Citizens' Mendiola Commission to investigate the killings.

The commission, said Lim, was where "Major Jaymalin" admitted giving the order to the soldiers to fire.

"Major Jaymalin admitted giving the orders. He gave the orders to fire because the farmers were approaching them. He reasoned that he was thinking of the safety of the soldiers because they would be overrun," he said.

The commission's findings, however, only recommended the prosecution of four unidentified uniformed men based on tapes and video footages where they were seen firing at the farmers.

It also recommended the prosecution of the officers of WPD and the Integrated National Police field force, including Lim; Dula Torre; the INP commander, Major

Demetrio de la Cruz; the INP chief, Colonel Cesar Nazareno; and Marine Civil Disturbance Control battalion commander, Major Felimon Gasmin.

Lim was also named as respondent in a P6.5-million damage suit filed by the victims' families, but it was dismissed in 1988 by the Supreme Court en banc, which cited the government's immunity from suit.

To those who continue to say that he had farmers' blood in his hands, Lim said: "They are voicing their erroneous comments not on facts and evidence. There were cases filed against us civilly and criminally, but they were dismissed."

For Tuesday's commemoration of the Mendiola massacre, the mayor said he directed the Manila Police District director, Chief Superintendent Rosales that all officers and men "should be disarmed" to avoid a repeat of the killing.

"If you bring a gun, you can expect immediate retaliation by gun. ...if you will be verbally abused, let it pass from your left ear to the right," he said.