

Sikh captives reported shot after battle

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From Associated Press and CP

AMRITSAR, India — Soldiers shot several captive Sikhs at point-blank range last week after tying their hands behind their backs, a doctor and a police official said yesterday.

"Two of the Sikhs whose post-mortem examinations I conducted had their hands tied at the back," said the doctor, a Sikh who normally works in nearby Jullundur.

"Some of my other colleagues conducting post-mortems also came across young Sikhs who had been shot this way," said the doctor, who did not want to be named.

The police official, also a Sikh, said at least 13 Sikhs were tied up and shot by soldiers. Their turbans were removed and used to tie their hands before they were killed by a single shot in the forehead, he said.

Civilian and military sources say at least 1,000 Sikhs and 220 soldiers died last week when troops stormed the Golden Temple to flush out Sikh extremists blamed for more than 400 deaths in Punjab this year.

In New Delhi, the Government yesterday defended the attack and said Sikh militants had received support from Pakistan.

"It is quite clear now that it was a very deep-seated conspiracy to create terror in Punjab with the help of certain foreign powers and ultimately to try for a separate state," Home Ministry spokesman M. K. Wali told reporters.

A statement released at the news conference said the extremists pursued their goals "with the active encouragement, connivance and assistance of certain foreign powers." It said the militants were trained in northern Kashmir state and Pakistan in facilities billed as "religious training camps."

Punjab borders Pakistan, which has fought three wars with India since 1947. Many of the arms seized from the temple were smuggled from Pakistan, the Government says.

A local reporter in Amritsar said he saw a dozen Sikh youths arrested in the temple who were forced to walk along the hot pavement on their bare knees. "The soldiers repeatedly kicked and punched them," said the reporter, who also asked for anonymity.

The Jullundur doctor, an eye

Sikh captives shot by army

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specialist who had never done a formal post-mortem, headed a team that conducted 400 post-mortem examinations. Most of the bodies were riddled by multiple bullets wounds and bore scars inflicted by bombs, he said.

"It was a virtual massacre," he said. "A large number of women, children and pilgrims were gunned down."

The doctor said most bodies were brought to the morgue in municipal garbage trucks. "It has been a nightmare," he said. "When I sleep at night I dream of all those decomposed bodies . . ."

Some dead militants, particularly the temple guards, carried identity cards, but police tore up the cards to avoid having to notify relatives of the deaths," he said.

In Ottawa, External Affairs Minister Allan MacEachen said Canada would be "generous" if an international move to give humanitarian aid to India develops. After tomorrow, Canadian citizens attempting to enter India will require visas, Mr. MacEachen said. An estimated 200,000 Sikhs live in Canada and many have expressed concern about the fate of relatives in the country.

There are an estimated 50 Cana-

dian citizens in the Punjab, but Mr. MacEachen said Ottawa has "no reason to believe at the moment that there is any cause for apprehension."