

22 die, 40 injured in fighting in Kurdish town

Tehran, Iran (Reuter)—Twenty-two persons were killed and 40 injured in heavy fighting yesterday between armed demonstrators and Islamic revolutionary guards in the Kurdish town of Marivan, the official Pars news agency said.

The agency quoted helicopter pilots returning from the town to the Kurdistan provincial capital of Sanandaj as saying: "Marivan looks like a town destroyed by war."

The pilots had flown into Marivan, near the Iraqi border, to pick up wounded.

Pars said the fighting had gone on for almost eight hours and quoted the commander of the Sanandaj Army Division as saying a cease-fire had been reached at dusk.

The commander said 15 of the wounded were in critical condition.

The Fedayeen guerrilla movement reported earlier yesterday that at least 11 persons had been killed in the clashes.

A Fedayeen spokesman said by telephone from Sanandaj that the fighting had started when guards opened fire on the crowd from revolutionary committee buildings.

He said the Fedayeen had the names of 11 dead and 17 injured. But a spokesman for the pro-government Kurdish leader in Sanandaj, Ahmad Moftizadeh, said the death toll might be as high as 20.

The Fedayeen said the demonstrators, made up of peasant farmers and Kurds seeking autonomy for their homeland, had taken over the committee buildings and apparently were in control of the town.

All telephone communication with Marivan was cut shortly after the fighting.

The spokesman for Mr. Moftizadeh said a helicopter had flown to the town to investigate the fighting and bring out wounded.

An Army division is based at Marivan

but it was not known whether it had intervened in the fighting.

The spokesman said demonstrators accused the revolutionary committee in Marivan of supporting feudal landlords trying to regain land lost to peasants in a 1963 land reform. Ten landlords were killed last month by peasants.

Hashem Sabaghian, the Iranian interior minister, said before the outbreak of fighting yesterday that plotters were creating problems for Iran on its border with Iraq, and that Iraqi Kurds were crossing into Iran for fear of being arrested in their own country.

But he added in an interview with the

newspaper *Ettela'at* that the situation in the oil-rich southern province of Khuzistan was even more dangerous.

Mr. Sabaghian said smugglers were ferrying arms to what he described as counter-revolutionaries in the Arab-populated province. "We will resist these plotters with all our might," he said.

Admiral Ahmad Madani, the governor of Khuzistan, said counter-revolutionaries and imperialist agents were disrupting the province, where several revolutionary guards and Arabs have died in clashes over the past few days. He called on guards to take energetic action against anyone found near installations.