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Kurdish rebels vow to continue fighting, reject call to surrender

Tehran, Iran (Reuter)—Kurdish insurgents vowed yesterday to continue fighting, rejecting a call for surrender from Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

"We have decided to defend ourselves, and we will fight," a senior member of the outlawed Kurdish Democratic party (KDP) said in a telephone interview from the rebel capital of Mahabad, which the government has promised to recapture.

Earlier yesterday, Ayatollah Khomeini set stiff conditions for ending the 2-week-old Kurdish conflict on Iran's northwestern border, insisting that the insurgents put down their arms and saying the KDP leaders would be punished as traitors.

A fragile unofficial truce between thousands of Kurdish guerrillas and a besieging Army force was broken last night after Ayatollah Khomeini rejected a Kurdish peace bid.

Jamshid Haqgu, the governor of the border province of West Azerbaijan, said in a telephone interview that Kurdish guerrillas attacked an army base north of Mahabad last night, and a sergeant was killed.

The KDP, which is leading the Kurdish

uprising, said guerrillas hit the Jaldian base outside the town of Naghadeh with incendiary bombs, and smoke still could be seen rising from the barracks.

A column of army tanks has been parked outside Naghadeh for the last five days, ready to strike at the mountain stronghold of Mahabad.

The guerrillas, who are dug in along the passes leading to Mahabad, say they are equipped with tanks, antiaircraft batteries, antitank weapons and artillery.

Speaking from the provincial capital of Jrumieh, Mr. Haqgu said the Kurds used artillery and mortars in last night's attack. There was some fighting in the area yesterday but it was not serious, he added.

In another rebel stronghold, Baneh, near the Iraqi border south of Mahabad, Kurdish sources said half the town's women and children were sent to the frontier area as a precaution in case government forces attacked.

As hopes faded for a negotiated settlement, there were reports of atrocities in the Kurdish war.

Tehran newspapers quoted Ayatollah

Sadegh Khalkhali, the religious judge sent to punish the insurgents, as saying the rebels cut the genitals of captured Islamic revolutionary guards in the border town of Paveh two weeks ago.

At least 77 persons, most of them alleged rebels, have been executed in the Kurdish region since Ayatollah Khomeini's arrival.

Revolutionary guard headquarters in Tehran issued a statement saying counter-revolutionaries dressed in guard uniforms abused women and children in the Kurdish areas. A spokesman said some men who probably stole the uniforms of dead guardsmen raped women and young girls in the Kurdish mountain town of Saqqez, which fell to government forces last weekend.

Four more alleged Kurdish rebels were executed in two western Iranian towns yesterday, the official Pars news agency said. Pars said four hostages executed by the Kurds earlier this week in the border town of Sardasht were teachers of the Koran and had not even borne arms, but Kurdish sources said the four had killed Kurds.