

Kurds halt Doc Number: KP000105

Iranian

advance

**400 troops repelled,
15 slain as clash
at Mahabad nears**

Miandowab, Iran (AP)—Kurdish rebels yesterday repelled 400 soldiers advancing on the Kurds' mountain stronghold of Mahabad, according to witnesses. In another action, the Pars news agency said, Kurds ambushed a truckload of the government's revolutionary guards headed for Mahabad, killing 15 and wounding 2.

In Tehran, the state radio reported government troops had defeated the autonomy-seeking Kurds in two cities not far from Mahabad.

The witnesses said an Iranian Army column, with armored personnel carriers, light tanks and artillery, moved into the southern approaches to Mahabad and was advancing on the rebel city when the Kurds opened fire from their mountain positions. They reported the rebels kept the troops under fire for about eight hours

Kurdish rebels repel 400 Iranians, witnesses report

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ment troops and supplies to Mahabad from the major Army garrison and airfield at Sanandaj, 125 miles to the south, reporters there said.

"We are going to go into Mahabad Monday," an Army officer said in Miandowab.

A soldier who returned to this Kurdish town with the retreating Army column said, "We had to come back because the Kurds were hitting us very hard and the going got really rough."

No civilian traffic was permitted on the national highway and the side roads.

Early yesterday, rebels ambushed an Army truck carrying 25 revolutionary guards toward Mahabad, killing 15 and wounding 2, the news agency Pars said. Yesterday afternoon, at the funeral for the slain guards in the Kurdish town of Naghadeh, six persons were injured when a grenade was thrown into a group of mourners, Pars said.

The news agency said that early yesterday, Kurdish rebels also killed two doctors on patrol with government troops outside Saqqez, which the Army recaptured from rebels eight days ago.

Kurdish sources said the outlawed Kurdish Democratic party in Mahabad

was organizing small festivities to keep up the morale of the more than 100,000 inhabitants of the city.

In Tehran, the state radio reported that a spokesman for the chief of staff, Gen. Mohammad Shaker, said government forces, assisted by the Air Force, "victoriously" entered Piranshahr, 12 miles from Mahabad, after pounding the area with artillery. It did not say whether the Air Force fired on the insurgents. One soldier was killed, several were wounded and "heavy casualties [were] inflicted on the rebels," the radio said.

The government claimed that as the rebels retreated in the Piranshahr area, they passed through a village and "beheaded two men and took one woman hostage." The government did not identify the village.

In further action, the radio said, a government detachment from Miandowab advanced on Bukan, 30 miles southeast of Mahabad, and "eliminated all resistance." It said residents of the area welcomed the government forces. There was no independent confirmation of the government claims.

There were no reports of fighting outside the western region of **Iran** where most of the Kurds live.