

Police mutiny in west Nepal over rations

A group of armed policemen mutinied in a barrack in west Nepal over inferior quality of rations and held several officers hostage, media reports said Monday.

About 200 lower rank policemen of the Armed Police Force beat officers and were holding them inside their barracks in the town of Nepalgunj, about 400 km west of the Nepali capital, Kantipur newspaper reported.

'The policemen revolted against their officers accusing them of treating them badly and of providing inferior quality of rations,' the newspaper said. 'Some of the officers, including the head of the battalion were beaten by the disgruntled policemen.'

It is believed that the mutineers were holding as many as 17 officers hostage and were unwilling to talk with the government officials, the newspaper said.

'The revolting policemen did not allow a team of home ministry officials and high ranking police officers to enter the barracks and the situation inside remains unclear,' the newspaper said.

They seized mobile telephones from the officers to prevent them from communicating with people outside the barracks. They had also locked up the main gates.

'The revolting policemen were shouting slogans and the situation was not favourable to go inside the barracks and take stock of the situation,' Deputy Inspector General of Police Rajkumar Rana said.

Rana was one of the members sent to the area by the government to talk with the lower rank policemen.

The incident came less than a day after the armed police were involved in a similar incident in Parbat district, about 250 km west of Kathmandu.

The incident however, ended peacefully.

The Armed Police Force, an independent para-military force was set up in 2001 to fight the escalating Maoist insurgency.

The force currently has more than 15,000 men. With the end of Maoist insurgency, the force is increasingly used for riot control and border security.

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