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Deborah Tyroler

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Fragmentation Grenade Explodes In San Salvador's Mercado Central

by Deborah Tyroler

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On June 23, unidentified persons exploded a fragmentation grenade in San Salvador's Mercado Central, causing three deaths, and injuries to at least 50 adults and children. A woman who was shopping in the market at the time told Salpress-Notisal on condition of anonymity that at about noon an air force helicopter flew over the marketplace. She said she noticed an object falling from the aircraft, and immediately thereafter heard the intense explosion. On Friday afternoon, the government issued a communique blaming the guerrillas for the incident, asserting that urban commandos had attempted to sabotage a nearby gasoline station. In an interview with a local radio station, Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes, leader of the Authentic Christian Movement (MAC) categorically dismissed the possibility that the rebels were responsible for the incident. On June 24, rebel station Radio Venceremos reported that the armed forces high command was responsible for the explosion at the Mercado Central. The incident in the market, said the FMLN, was part of a series of actions the government of President Alfredo Cristiani has undertaken to turn "the population against the rebels." (Basic data from Notimex, 06/23/89; 06/26/89 weekly report by Salpress-Notisal)

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