Peru: Report On Escalating Violence

John Neagle
On Oct. 13, government news agency Andina reported that in the past week more than 64 people died in clashes between government troops and rebels. Fourteen Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerillas were killed Oct. 13, and a policeman wounded in a battle near Antauta, 590 miles southeast of Lima. According to a government spokesperson, the mayor of Tingo Maria, a jungle city 240 miles northeast of Lima, was fatally shot by guerrillas Oct. 12. On the same day, rebels assassinated the mayor of Jauja, 120 miles east of Lima. On Oct. 10, rebels killed the mayor of Ananea, 610 miles southeast of Lima, in addition to the town’s police chief and nine policemen. The assassinations bring the number of mayors killed in political violence this year to 27. Police said Sendero Luminoso rebels destroyed two electricity pylons in the central highlands on the evening of Oct. 12, causing a total blackout in and around Huancayo. During the blackout, rebels attacked with dynamite bombs an army barracks, two police posts, government offices, banks, schools and the local newspaper El Correo in Huancayo. In one of the 40 explosions reported by police, one child was killed. Two policemen were attacked and killed. Rebels dynamited seven electricity pylons near Huaraz, 190 miles north of Lima in the Andes. On Oct. 15, 30 people were killed in a guerrilla ambush of two trucks near the town of Tocache, 260 miles northeast of Lima. Among the dead were 17 civilians, three soldiers and 10 guerrillas. News reports said most of the rebels were killed when army troops aboard helicopters came to the aid of the ambushed patrol. Tocache is located in the Upper Huallaga river valley. On Oct. 16, police reported that 210 people had died thus far in October in clashes with rebels. (Basic data from AP, 10/13/89, 10/16/89; DPA, 10/16/89)

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