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"Darfur rebels say govt attacks despite truce"

By Opheera McDoom

KHARTOUM, Oct 29 (Reuters) - Darfur rebels accused Sudanese government forces of attacking an area along the border with Chad in violation of a unilateral ceasefire the government declared at the opening of peace talks in Libya.

Rebels from two factions, which did not attend the talks, said on Monday the government had attacked the Jabel Moun area along the Chad-Sudan border on Saturday, the very day the government announced a ceasefire.

"At the same time they were announcing that there is a ceasefire there was aerial bombardment in Jabel Moun," said Justice and Equality Movement commander Abdel Aziz el-Nur Ashr.

Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) commander Jar el-Neby confirmed there had been an attack in Jabel Moun but offered no details.

A Sudanese army spokesman, however, denied the reports.

"We have no government forces there and it is not in our benefit to bomb anyone," he said.

The reports of violence came after two days of U.N.-African Union-mediated talks in Libya aimed at ending 4-1/2 years of violence in western Sudan. The absence of three main rebel factions, however, undermined any hope a peace deal would emerge from the gathering.

International mediators have stressed the weekend discussions were just the start of what will be a long peace process and they hope to persuade those rebels who have boycotted the process to join.

But the SLA's Neby expressed scepticism the Sudanese government was interested in peace.

"This ceasefire is just propaganda," he said. "We know the government is still preparing and gathering its troops in Darfur."

Ahmed Adam, a rebel commander in West Darfur near the site of the attack, said about 40 cars of militia and government troops had engaged rebels in fighting south of Jabel Moun in the past two days but then had withdrawn.

"They bombed two days ago ahead of the attack ... we expect them to

attack again from the north," he said.

The African Union, which monitors the region, was not immediately able to confirm the attack. It does not have a base in the rebel-controlled region.