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UK



Islamic groups warn of Indonesia violence



Megawati leads the most populous Muslim nation

By **BBC Jakarta correspondent Richard Galpin**

Radical Islamic groups in Indonesia have warned they will attack American targets in the country if the United States takes military action against Afghanistan.

The warning comes as Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri prepares for talks with her US counterpart, George W Bush, in Washington on Wednesday.

As the leader of the world's largest Muslim country, Megawati is expected to come under particular pressure to support American plans to retaliate against Afghanistan for harbouring Osama Bin Laden.

Bin Laden has been named as the prime suspect in last week's terror attacks in Washington and New York.

A group of nine hard-line Islamic organisations gave the warning at a news conference in Jakarta just a few hours before President Megawati was due to meet Mr Bush.

They said they would be following the word of God if they fought back following any American military strikes against fellow Muslims or



Police stepped up security at the US embassy immediately after last week's

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[The BBC's Richard Galpin reports from Jakarta](#) says the warning should be taken very seriously

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The leader of one of the groups had earlier told the BBC they would attack any American organisations, including businesses. He added they would also search for US citizens living in Indonesia.

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Bin Laden links

These hardline groups only have a small following, but they are capable of provoking considerable violence and there are fears some may have links with Bin Laden's network.

But even leaders of the mainstream Muslim organisations, with tens of millions of followers, are concerned about the prospect of American military action in Afghanistan.



Laskar Jihad movement in the Moluccas claims to have been helped by Bin Laden

They believe this should only be done after first providing clear evidence that Bin Laden was responsible for last week's attacks in the US.

All this puts President Megawati in an extremely difficult position in her talks with President Bush.

He will be hoping for a clear statement of support from her for planned military operations in Afghanistan. It is particularly important for him to have moderate Muslim countries on his side.

He is also likely to press Megawati to clamp down on Islamic extremists in Indonesia.

Although she strongly condemned the recent attacks, it is not clear how much further she would be willing to go, especially as her coalition government includes a number of conservative Islamic parties.

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