

□ A youth throws stones at an overturned police truck during a street fight.

□ A man beaten by troops near the Great Hall of the People stage

Official media trains guns on 'small group' of plotters

CHINA'S official media yesterday attacked a "small group" they accused of plotting to overthrow communist rule and said the group had help from the highest level of the party.

The front-page article, printed in every major newspaper in the Chinese capital and read in full on state television and radio, also accused the plotters of getting help from abroad.

The newspapers did not refer to an attempt by troops to capture Tiananmen Square early yesterday to end a three-week occupation by students.

"The chaos created by an extremely small group was planned long ago," said the article, unusual in that it was signed by the government's Propaganda Department and given nearly an entire page in the eight-page *People's Daily*.

"The objective of this extremely

small group was to negate the leadership of the Communist Party and negate the socialist system."

The article did not name embattled Communist Party Chief Zhao Ziyang, but said that during a six-week campaign for democracy, students had obtained detailed information of Central Committee meetings.

"During the student campaign, an extremely small number of people who knew top secrets of the Central Committee, sent emissaries to universities and Tiananmen Square ... to stir up trouble.

"Sometimes, only hours after the Politburo met and before any official statement had been made, matters which were discussed were revealed at universities."

"Opposing views of Central level leaders were leaked to the masses and

this created serious ideological chaos."

The article also defended martial law, declared in parts of Beijing on May 20, calling the measure "misunderstood".

Mr Zhao, a 69-year-old reformer and once the protege of senior leader Deng Xiaoping, has not been seen in public for more than two weeks and is widely believed to be the loser of a bitter power struggle with party hardliners.

The article also said those responsible for chaos were helped by unidentified elements both at home and abroad. It did not elaborate.

The attack did not mention China's most prominent dissident, astrophysicist Fang Lizhi, but it hinted that he was linked to the turmoil.

It referred to academics guilty of "bourgeois liberalism", a catch-phrase for Western ideas that has been used

against Mr Fang in the past. It appeared to refer to his open letter early this year calling for the release of China's best-known political prisoner, Wei Jingsheng, who was jailed in 1979.

Ren Wanding, another dissident who said this week he feared arrest, was specifically attacked for calling the government guilty of using "high pressure" tactics.

Meanwhile, state television quoted China's official trade federation as calling for action against a newly-formed workers' organisation that has not been sanctioned by the government.

Workers have formed an association which they say should promote co-ordination among labourers. Its leaders have said three members were jailed briefly and released last week.

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