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YUGOSLAVIA: Anniversary of Riots in Kosovo

Some disturbances by Albanian nationalists are likely in Kosovo this month and in April on the third anniversary of massive riots by ethnic Albanians, but the overall security situation is calm. On Thursday a bomb exploded in Pristina, the provincial capital, and on Wednesday Albanian nationalists tried unsuccessfully to firebomb a local headquarters of the Communist Party. The day before, as part of a continuing crackdown, a judge had sentenced seven Albanians to long prison terms for "hostile propaganda."

The number and intensity of disturbances has declined each year since the riots and the trend probably will continue this year. Nevertheless, Albanian nationalists, encouraged by Tirana's propaganda, will try to demonstrate the strength of their demand that Kosovo should become an independent Yugoslav republic rather than remain a province of Serbia. Serb leaders, with the backing of some federal officials, will hold party leaders in Kosovo responsible for any nationalist excesses during demonstrations. The Serbs are particularly concerned that protests could accelerate emigration from Kosovo and southern Serbia by Serbs and Montenegrins.

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