

18 Saudi Arabians killed in Afghan fighting

ISLAMABAD, Aug 8: The Soviet-backed Afghan authorities said on Wednesday their forces killed 18 Saudi Arabian nationals in fighting against rebels in the eastern province of Nangarhar, reports Reuter.

11 troops, bandits killed in NWFP

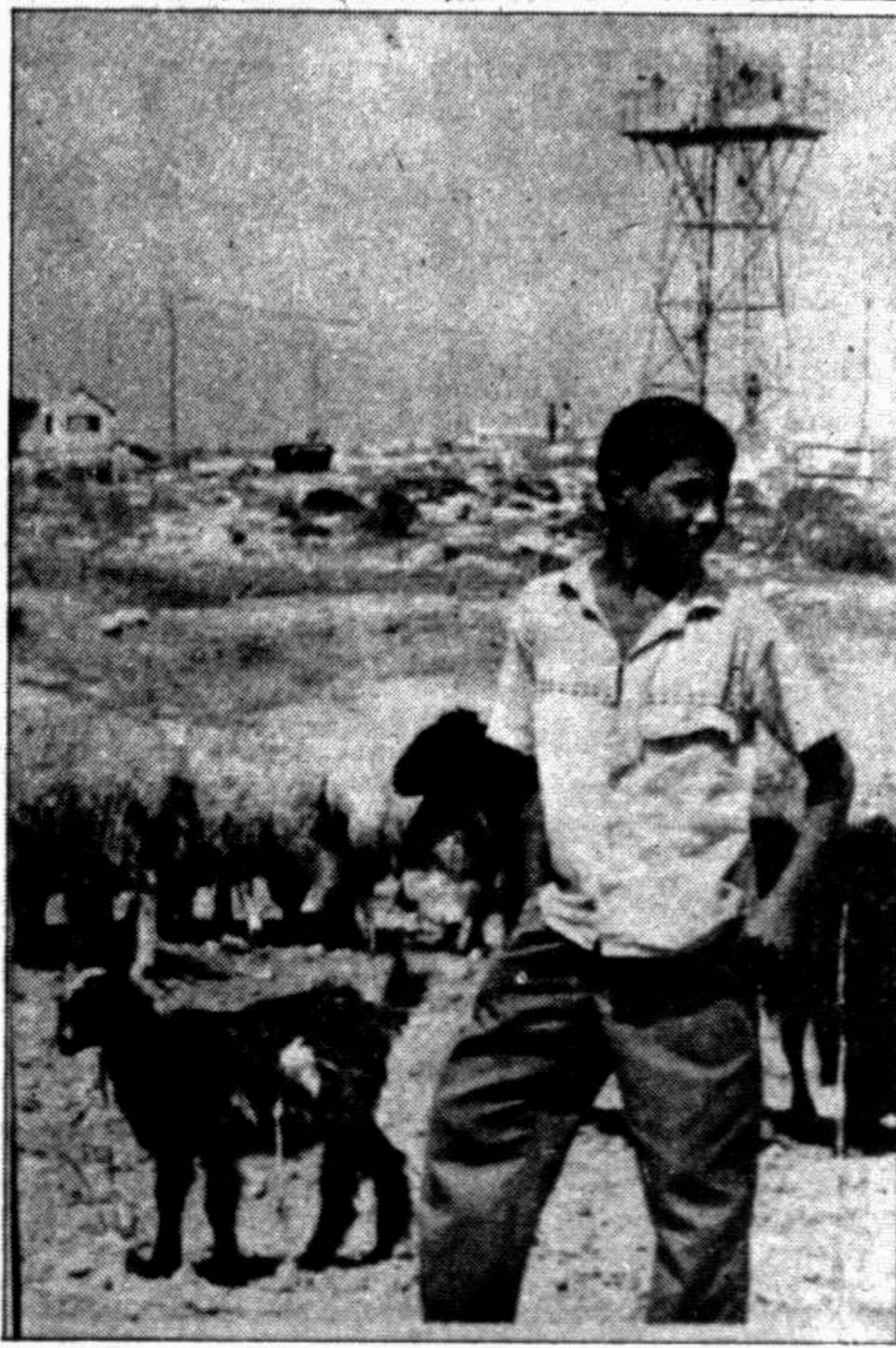
PESHWAR (Pakistan) Aug 8: Eleven paramilitary soldiers and bandits were killed as security forces swept through a lawless tribal area on Pakistan's North West Frontier flushing out criminals, the government said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Soviets permitted to buy handguns

MOSCOW, Aug 8: Soviet citizens may for the first time be permitted to buy handguns and other weapons for "self defence" under proposed legislation drafted by the interior ministry, Interfax news agency has reported, reports AFP.

Court orders US govt to hand over secret papers to Noriega

MIAMI, Aug 8: A federal judge ordered government Wednesday to turn over classified documents at the heart of Manuel Noriega's efforts to show he worked with US intelligence agencies in Central American drug deals, a source said, reports AP.



West Bank: A young Palestinian shepherd watches his flock next to the new settlement of Eshkolot (water tower seen in the background) 06 Aug. The settlement, an old military base, was given to Jewish settlers late 05 Aug, as part of the Israeli Housing Ministry policy. Israel refuses to accept any territorial concession despite its participation in a Middle East peace conference.

Pakistan disowns links with retired general Gen Beg asks Sharif not to push Opposition to the wall

ISLAMABAD, Aug 8: Pakistan's Army Chief on Wednesday appealed for politics of tolerance and said the Nawaz Sharif government should not push political opponents to the wall, reports Reuter.

Zayed completes 25 years as Abu Dhabi ruler

ABU DHABI, Aug 8: Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayan, the biggest shareholder in the disgraced Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), this week completed 25 years as ruler of the wealthy Gulf emirate of Abu Dhabi, reports AFP.

America ... involving the intelligence communities," he said. Diane Cossin, spokeswoman for the US attorney's office, said she would not comment on details of the ruling.

Thousands storm ships to leave Albania, 12 die in scramble

VIENNA (Austria), Aug 8: At least 12 Albanians died Wednesday trying to swim to ferries under gunfire from security forces in the Adriatic port of Durres to escape their impoverished nation, Albanian state television reported, says AP.

Australia to cut further flow of immigrants

CANBERRA, Aug 8: Australia may accept fewer immigrants if the intake strains community welfare services, Immigration Minister Gerry Hand said yesterday, reports Reuter.

Sino-Vietnam talks begin

BEIJING, Aug 8: China and Vietnam began rare official talks in Beijing today, a further sign that two of Asia's last communist powers are putting aside their differences in the face of a worldwide retreat from socialism, reports Reuter.

Off the Record

Muscles from Brussels LOS ANGELES: Actor Jean-Claude Van Damme, the so-called "Muscles from Brussels" and champ of martial arts movies, hopes his new offering will help kick his beefcake image and show audiences he can act, reports AP.



Charles, Di on a second 'honeymoon'

NAPLES (Italy): The Prince and Princess of Wales boarded a private yacht moored in Naples harbor and set sail Wednesday on a vacation British press reports described as a "second honeymoon," reports AP.

\$250m libel

NEW YORK: Millionaire Donald Trump announced plans Wednesday to sue the New York Post for 250 million dollars for publishing what he said were "false and defamatory stories" about him, reports AP.

BRIEFLY

US Attorney Gen to resign: US Attorney General Dick Thornburgh will resign soon and be replaced at least temporarily by Deputy Attorney General William P Barr, the White House said Wednesday.

Quayle blasts Castro: Vice President Dan Quayle on Wednesday called Fidel Castro the "world's greatest human rights violator" and said the US trade blockade of Cuba will stay in place until free elections are held in Havana, AP reports from Brasilia.

Kidnappers to free 2 newsmen in Beirut: Lebanese kidnappers plan to release two captive journalists, an American and a Briton, within 24 hours, the wife of a British hostage said on Wednesday, Reuter reports from London.

Israel urged to seize peace potentials: King Hussein urged Israel on Wednesday to seize "the last chance for peace" and negotiate a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem, AP reports from Amman.

Call for returning Marcos body: More than 70 per cent of the members of the Philippines House of Representatives have called on President Corason Aquino to allow the body of Ferdinand Marcos to be returned from Hawaii for burial, AP from Manila says.

Sheikh Zayed and other members of his family own 77 per cent of BCCI, which was shut down by Britain and other countries for alleged fraud but given four months last week to avert liquidation of its British operation.

Sheikh Zayed is a wise but also a tough man," commented an Arab diplomat who has met the Bedouin leader several times. "He will certainly not let a problem like BCCI upset him."

Sheikh Zayed's wealth is not known but bankers estimate the Abu Dhabi government's overseas assets at more than 50 billion dollars.

The investments were built from oil revenues, which have exceeded 500 billion Dirhams (150 billion dollars) over the past 10 years.

Money also played a major role in keeping together Abu Dhabi and its six partners in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), of which Sheikh Zayed has been President since it was created in 1971.



Sheikh Zayed became ruler of Abu Dhabi on August 6, 1966, replacing his brother Sheikh Shakhboub, whom the family found unfit to rule. Sheikh Shakhboub died two years ago.