

Pakistani policemen stand guard at the blocked off Indus Highway in the Spina Thana area near Darra Adam Khel yesterday after the military launch the operation against militants. Democratic White House contender Barack Obama said that he would launch military strikes on extremist targets inside Pakistan if the Islamabad government is unwilling or unable to act.

'I yelled, Bush smiled', says Karzai

AFP, Washington

Afghan President Hamid Karzai on Friday thanked US President George W. Bush for freeing his country from the Taliban for improving the quality of life -- and for weathering bouts of yelling. "I have yelled at times, I've been angry at times, but you've always been smiling and generous, and that's so nice of you," Karzai told his host at the White House, thanking him for "your patience with me and some of our habits." The US president, who laughed in response, said "no question it's difficult" to stabilise and rebuild Afghanistan, but emphasised that he saw much "progress and promise and hope" for the strife-torn country. Karzai noted that Bush leaves office in January, and told him that Afghans grateful for the 2001 US-led toppling of the Taliban Islamist regime will remember his fondly -- and invited him to come see for himself.

28 die in latest northwest Pakistan offensive

AP, Islamabad

Pakistan's security forces pounded militant positions near strategic areas in a tribal region bordering Afghanistan, killing 25 suspected insurgents in a new round of a military offensive that also left three troops dead, officials said. The battle in the Bajur tribal region comes as the nuclear-armed, Muslim nation struggles to recover from a massive suicide attack at the Marriott Hotel in the capital. Police said Saturday the death toll in the blast a week ago in Islamabad had risen by one to 54. On Friday, security forces cleared militant compounds near Bajur's Rashakai and Loi Sam areas, army spokesman Maj. Murad Khan said, confirming the death toll. He said two of the three soldiers killed were officers. The weeklong military operation in the Bajur tribal region has

already killed more than 1,000 militants and some 66 soldiers, and officials say it could be another two months before the militant stronghold is under government control. American officials say the tribal regions have turned into sanctuaries for al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters involved in attacks on US and Nato forces in Afghanistan. The US has praised Pakistan for its Bajur offensive, saying it has helped reduce violence on the Afghan side of the porous border. Pakistani officials say the insurgents had a stranglehold on the region prior to the offensive, basically setting up a parallel government. The militants had converted schools into Islamic courts, imposed taxes on the timber and marble industries, and even arranged their own traffic control system. "All families were asked to give their one male child to this move-

ment, and this was done forcibly, and if somebody doesn't do it, his house would be destroyed," said Maj. Gen. Tariq Khan of the paramilitary Frontier Corps. In a briefing of reporters visiting the region Friday on an army-organised trip, Khan showed photos of militant tunnel systems and trenches and said Bajur had become a "centre of gravity" for all sorts of insurgents from throughout the region. "My timeframe for Bajur is anything from between one-and-a-half to two months to bring about stability," Khan said. The Bajur offensive, which began in early August, and ongoing military action in the northwest's Swat Valley have been coupled with a string of suicide bombings that the Pakistani Taliban claimed as revenge. Analysts and experts say the Pakistani Taliban or al-Qaeda could have been behind the hotel blast in

Islamabad as well, though the top Pakistani Taliban commander has denied a role. So far only a little-known group calling itself Fedayeen al-Islam, or Islam commandos, has claimed credit, calling on Pakistan to stop cooperating with the US war on terror. The blast wounded nearly 270 people. Khadim Hussain, an Islamabad police official, said the death toll had risen to 54. At least two Americans were killed in the blast, an US State Department contractor remains missing, the American embassy said. Since the hotel blast, foreign aid missions and diplomats in Pakistan have reviewed security measures. On Friday, a group of diplomats met with Rehman Malik, the head of Pakistan's Interior Ministry, to get a briefing on enhanced security measures for their missions and personnel.

US seeks to ease tension with Pakistan

AFP, Washington

Chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff Admiral Michael Mullen Friday sought to ease tensions with Pakistan after an incident on the Afghan-Pakistan border, urging calm cooperation. "Now more than ever is a time for teamwork, for calm," Mullen said, adding he had received reassurances from Pakistani military leaders that they had no intention of firing on US forces. "It's time to recognise that we all, Pakistan, Afghan, American, and others in the region share a stake in the safe and secure Pakistan," he added. US military officials said Thursday that Pakistani and US troops had exchanged fire along the Pakistani-Afghan border after two US military helicopters came under fire. Rear Admiral Gregory Smith said Pakistani soldiers at a border

checkpoint were observed firing on two US OH-58 Kiowa helicopters covering a patrol of Afghan and US troops about a mile and a half inside Afghanistan. "The ground forces then fired into the hillsides nearby that checkpoint, gained their attention, which worked," Smith told AFP by telephone. "Unfortunately, though, the Pak unit decided to shoot down a hillside at our ground forces. Our ground forces returned fire." But Mullen said: "Despite the violence of the last few days, ... I remain convinced that Pakistan's military leaders understand the nature of the threat and are working hard to eliminate it." Tensions have escalated with Washington since a September 3 ground attack by US forces inside Pakistan, the first of its kind since 2001, left about 15 people dead. It prompted Pakistani military leaders to vow

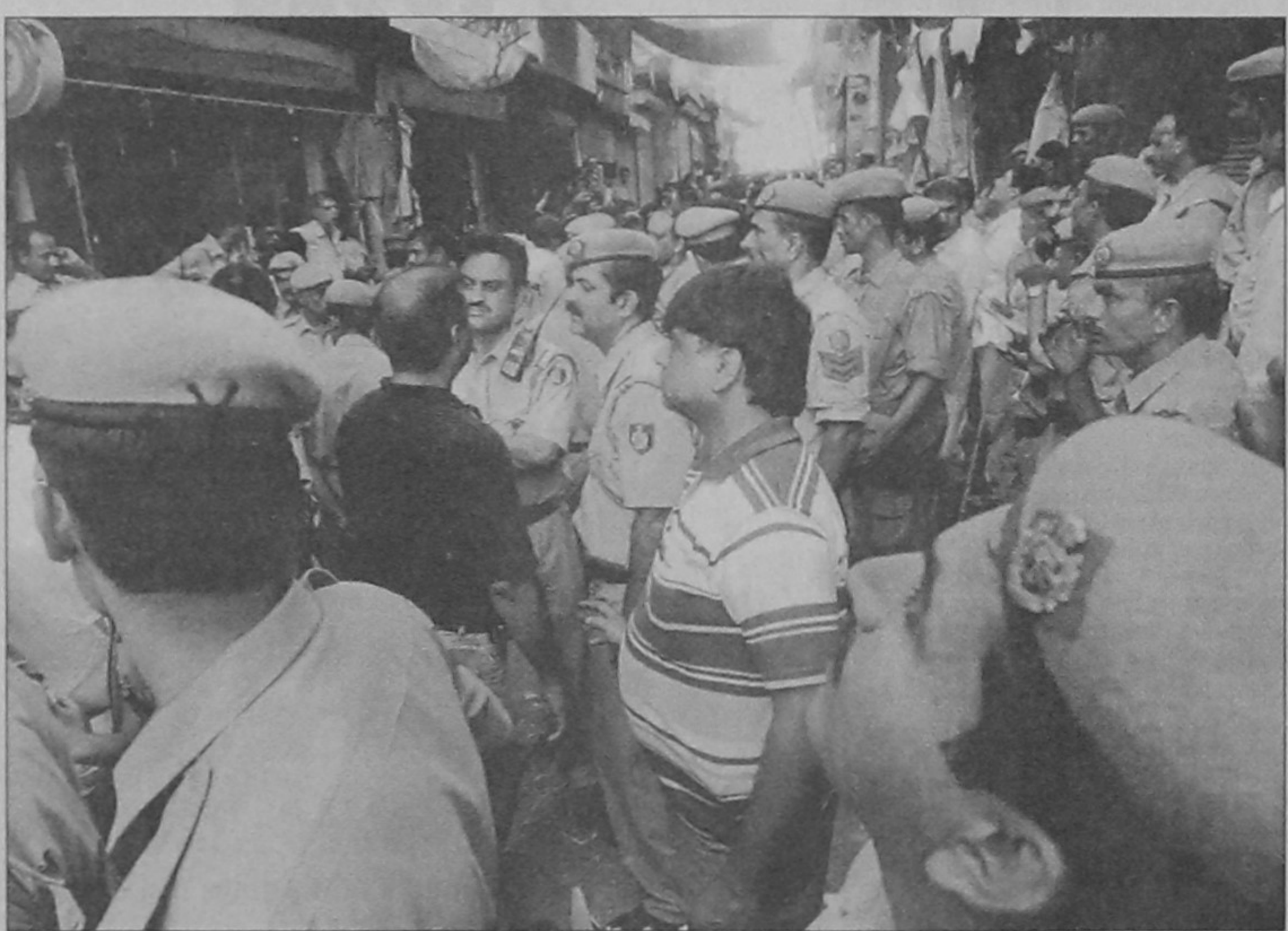
to defend their country against all outside force. Following Thursday's exchange of gunfire, new Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari told the United Nations that Islamabad would not tolerate violations of its sovereignty, even by its allies. "Just as we will not let Pakistan's territory to be used by terrorists for attacks against our people and our neighbours, we cannot allow our territory and our sovereignty to be violated by our friends," Zardari said, without citing the United States or the border flareup. On Friday Mullen stressed: "These things take time. We've learned ourselves you don't take an army that was built to fight a conventional war and turn it into an effective counterinsurgency force overnight. "And you don't defeat extremists or their ideologies solely with military power."

Pakistan, US close to accord on neutralising militant groups

PTI, Islamabad

Pakistan and the US are close to reaching "a wider understanding" on how to neutralise militant groups and leaders like Lashker-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Muhammad Saeed and Jaish-e-Mohammed's Maulana Masood Azhar who had been protected by the "secret establishment" here. Diplomats and politicians of the two countries held discussions on this and other highly sensitive issues during President Asif Ali Zardari's visit to New York to participate in the UN General Assembly. The two sides "are close to reaching a wider understanding" on these issues, including "the key question of how to neutralise the militant jihadi outfits hitherto protected by the secret establishment in Pakistan", officials close to the negotiations were quoted as saying by 'The News'.

The two countries held "detailed discussions on the mechanics of what needs to be done in this regard", they said. Talks between Pakistani officials and President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and US military generals were focused on how "jihadi lashkars thriving in Pakistan with their leaders, including ex-Lashker-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, Jaish-e-Mohammed leader Maulana Masood Azhar and their likes, could be put out of business", the report said. The Pakistani side understands US concerns but "since the PPP leadership is new and is still trying to get full civilian control over the secret agencies and their sponsors in the civil and military establishment, a perception of not being able to deliver on key issues has developed", insiders said.



Indian police attempt to secure the area around the site of a blast in New Delhi yesterday. At least one person was killed and a dozen others wounded in a bomb attack in a crowded shopping area in the Indian capital.

High level UN talks set to grapple with Myanmar issue

AFP, United Nations

Ministers from UN Security Council permanent member states and mostly Asian nations are to hold their first meeting yesterday aimed at pushing for reforms in military-ruled Myanmar. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for the informal talks on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly amid little signs the military rulers will embrace political reforms, one year after a bloody crackdown on pro-democracy protests. Yet, officials said the first ministerial meeting of Ban's so-called "group of friends on Myanmar" would raise the profile of the long-standing international demand for the junta to hold a dialogue with the democratic opposition and

polish up its human rights record. "The fact that these countries are attending at the ministerial level and have agreed to this meeting shows that they are putting the Myanmar issue as a high concern," Ban's spokeswoman Choi Soung-Ah told AFP. The group's envoys at the UN headquarters in New York had met several times since its first meeting in December last year. The group comprises permanent Security Council members United States, Britain, France, Russia and China as well as Australia, European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Norway, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. An observer from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) will also be present.

Furious spinning on TV after McCain-Obama presidential debate

AP, Washington

It was hard to tell if there were more disagreements voiced during the presidential debate between John McCain and Barack Obama or after it on television. The networks' pundits moved quickly Friday to put into perspective a debate seen by tens of millions of Americans, although a clear winner didn't emerge. It was a reflection of cautiousness, the closeness of the race and the influence of furious spinning by both campaigns. "There was no knockdown, and maybe no knockdown, but McCain was on the offensive throughout," commentator William Kristol said on Fox News Channel. His fellow panelist, Juan Williams, quickly retorted, "I

thought Barack Obama put John McCain on the defensive all night." David Gergen, CNN analyst, said, "McCain needed a clear victory tonight and I think that eluded him." Said Fox's Chris Wallace, "I think the McCain campaign is very happy tonight." And they weren't even the professional spinners, who try to buttonhole reporters backstage with opinions about as predictable as the sun rising every morning. It has become a cliché of debate nights, a room television networks know they should avoid but can't seem to help themselves. Another useless TV trick: those meters that can be twisted up or down to show how a voter is responding to a particular passage.

Mostly, they looked indecipherable. Obama's campaign put forward vice presidential candidate Joe Biden for post-debate interviews, and he appeared on all the news networks. His Republican counterpart, Sarah Palin, was nowhere in sight. Several commentators noted how Obama said at a number of points that McCain was right about something, which could either be construed as a sign of weakness or one in which he was willing to lead in a bipartisan manner. McCain pounded home the point that there were several things his opponent didn't understand about the world. "McCain very often seemed like he was condescending, seeming like he was lecturing Barack Obama," CNN's Gloria Borger said.

Britain voices worry over Lanka battle

AFP, London

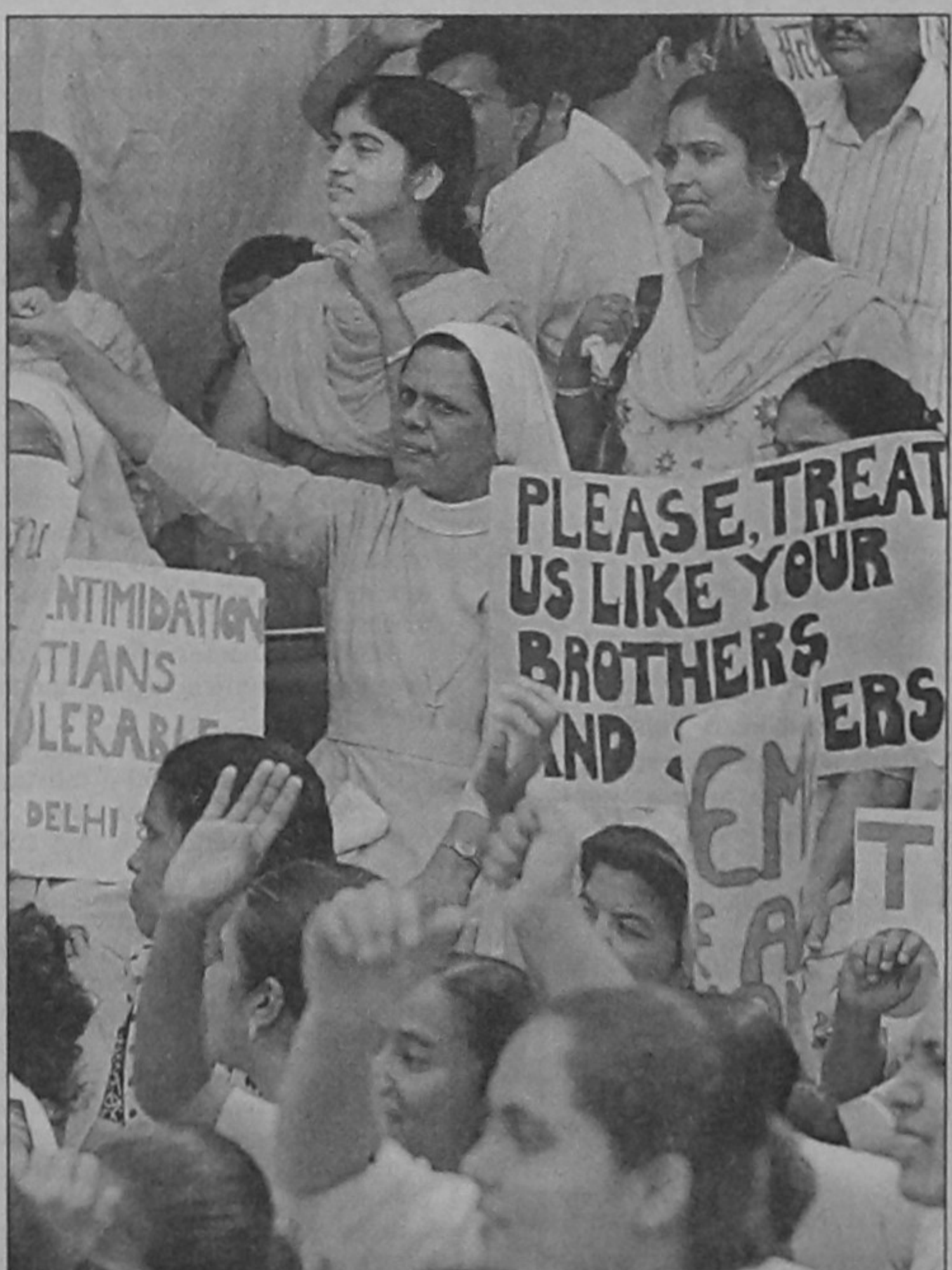
Britain voiced deep concern Friday about the situation in Sri Lanka, where government forces have advanced to the outskirts of the northern Tamil Tiger rebel capital. The Foreign Office called for access to be kept open for aid agencies, and urged the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels to act urgently to allow free movement of civilians. "The recent increased hostilities in the north of Sri Lanka are of acute concern to the UK government," said junior Foreign Office minister Mark Malloch-Brown and aid minister Shahid Malik in a joint statement. "We welcome the government of Sri Lanka recognising its responsibility to provide humanitarian assistance to civilians affected by the conflict and its continued co-ordination with humanitarian agencies," they added. But they said: "We urge the LTTE to take urgent action to

allow free movement of civilians. "We call on both parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law to enable free access for humanitarian agencies and the protection of civilians affected by the conflict," they added. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown discussed the situation with Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse in New York on Friday, in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly, the Foreign Office added. The Sri Lankan government, which pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire in January, wants to capture the LTTE capital Kilinochchi, in what would deal a major military and psychological blow to the rebels. The Tamil Tiger rebels have been fighting for an independent homeland for the Tamil minority since 1972. Tens of thousands have died in the conflict. Aid organisations say recent fighting has forced around 230,000 people from their homes.

India joins Japan in renewed push for UN reform

AFP, United Nations

India joined Japan on Friday in calling for more determined efforts to reform the United Nations as the two Asian powers pitched for permanent seats in the Security Council. Speaking at the UN General Assembly, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh criticised scant progress made since world leaders decided three years ago to forge an "agenda for early and meaningful reform" of the world body. "The composition of the Security Council needs to change to reflect contemporary realities of the 21st century," he said. "We must acknowledge frankly that there has been little progress on the core elements of the reform agenda," Singh said. He then called for "more determined efforts to revitalize the General Assembly to enable it to fulfil its rightful role as the principal deliberative organ of the United Nations," he said. On Thursday, Japan's new prime minister Taro Aso emphasised "the absolute imperative" of council reform, in his address to the General Assembly. "We must bring about the early reform of the Security Council through an expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent memberships," he said.



Indian Christians hold placards as they shout slogans during a protest in New Delhi yesterday to draw attention to continued anti-Christian violence in the southern Indian state of Karnataka and the eastern state of Orissa.

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**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

NHN is in the process of establishing a pool of pre-selected qualified personnel in the following category to fill its immediate and future manpower needs.

Sl. No.	Name of Position	Sl. No.	Name of Position
1.	Consultant (G-2) Medicine/Surgery/Gynae. & Obs	11.	Radiographer
2.	Senior Scientific Officer	12.	Store Assistant
3.	Medical Officer	13.	Dental Assistant
4.	Medical Officer (Dental Surgery)	14.	Scientific Assistant
5.	Scientific Officer	15.	Anesthesia Assistant
6.	Store Officer	16.	Telephone Operator
7.	Accounts Officer	17.	Report Processor
8.	Staff Nurse	18.	Electrician
9.	Assistant Nurse	19.	OT Assistant/Dresser
10.	Lab Technician	20.	Lab Attendant

The salary is a consolidated package inclusive of basic pay and fringe benefits. Other service benefits are as per NHN Service Regulations. All appointments will be made on contractual basis for a period of three years and further renewable subject to organizational need and satisfactory performance. Selected candidates shall have to work in any NHN Centre/Hospitals in and outside Dhaka City. Departmental candidates shall have to apply through proper channel. Medical Officer having training in surgery and gynae. & Obs will get preference. Application has to be submitted only in prescribed forms available at the above address on payment of Tk. 100/- (one hundred). Application forms will be available from 4<sup>th</sup> October 2008 (except on holidays) from 10.00 AM to 3.00 PM. Only short listed candidates will be called for interview. Complete applications alongwith attested copies of academic certificates, experience certificate (if any) and two passport size photographs must reach the undersigned at the above address by 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Name of the position applied for must be mentioned on top of the envelope. For details please visit www.nhn-dab.org.bd or contact the above address. Those who applied before need not apply.

Chief Executive Officer  
 NHN for Diabetic, Non-diabetic Healthcare Services