

Pak troops target militants in 2nd tribal area

US, Pakistan have tacit accord on drone strikes

AP, Islamabad

Pakistani helicopter gunships engaged in a bitter offensive against militants in a northwest tribal region struck targets in a neighbouring area yesterday, a sign that the conflict may be widening to other parts of the rugged zone bordering Afghanistan.

Elsewhere in the northwest, Pakistan temporarily suspended oil tankers and trucks carrying sealed containers from using the Khyber Pass, a move that put pressure on a vital supply line for US and Nato forces in Afghanistan.

The media centre for the paramilitary Frontier Corps confirmed Sunday that helicopter gunships, backed by artillery, have been

pounding suspected insurgent hideouts in Mohmand tribal area since Saturday.

Mohmand is south of Bajur tribal region, an al-Qaeda and Taliban stronghold where the military says a three-month-old offensive has killed more than 1,600 suspected militants.

Speculation has abounded that upon taking control of Bajur, the military would set its sights on Mohmand.

The US has praised Pakistani military offensives against insurgents a separate one is underway in the northwest's Swat Valley saying they have helped reduce violence on the Afghan side of the border. American officials have long blamed militants based in

Pakistan for planning attacks on US and Nato forces in Afghanistan.

An official with the media centre, who insisted on anonymity in line with military rules, said the strikes were not part of a separate offensive for Mohmand. He would not specify where in Mohmand the aircraft had attacked.

"It is the same operation. There is no new operation," the official said. The Taliban fighters "had substantial casualties."

He did not rule out the possibility of militants leaving Bajur for Mohmand, but added, "Wherever they are, wherever they have strong pockets, we have to and we will flush them out."

Meanwhile, the US and Pakistani governments have

reached a tacit agreement on Predator strikes on Pakistani territory, under which Islamabad allows them while continuing to complain about them and Washington never acknowledges them, The Washington Post reported yesterday.

Citing unnamed senior officials in both countries, the newspaper said that under this don't-ask-don't-tell policy, unmanned US drones have fired missiles at Pakistani soil at an average rate of once every four or five days recently.

The deal coincided with a suspension of ground assaults into Pakistan by US special forces, the report said.

Thaksin's divorce won't free frozen funds

Says Thai opposition

AFP, Bangkok

A lawyer for Thailand's opposition party said Sunday that billionaire ousted premier Thaksin Shinawatra would not recoup his frozen assets simply by divorcing his wife.

Thaksin's 32-year marriage to Pojaman was officially ended on Friday at the Thai consulate in Hong Kong, with family and intelligence sources claiming the split was being carried out for financial or legal reasons.

But the opposition Democrat party's legal expert said the couple, who have been living in exile since August to avoid jail sentences at home, did not stand to gain from the split.

"The divorce cannot attribute the money to any one side, it is still jointly owned and they would both need to prove how the money was earned," Thaworn Sennear told AFP.



This handout picture from Sri Lanka's Defence Ministry dated Saturday shows government troops at the strategically important town of Pooneryn which the military said was wrested from rebel control on that day after months of heavy fighting.



Pakistani security officials inspect the crashed buses after an accident in Khairpur yesterday. At least 18 people were killed and 35 injured in a head-on collision between two passenger buses in southern Pakistan.

Truck movement halt on Pakistan passage could dent US supply

AP, Peshawar

Pakistan temporarily suspended oil tankers and trucks with sealed containers from using a key passage into Afghanistan, an official said yesterday, a move that will likely impact supplies heading to US and Nato troops.

The suspension came just days after a band of militants hijacked around a dozen trucks whose load included Humvees and other supplies headed to the foreign forces in Afghanistan.

Government official Bakhtiar Khan would not say Sunday whether trucks carrying materials for American and Nato forces were the target of the suspension imposed late Saturday, but he said

security concerns had prompted it and that it would be lifted "as soon as possible."

The hijacking highlighted the vulnerability of a critical supply line for the US and Nato as well as the deteriorating security in Pakistan's northwest regions bordering Afghanistan. The US-allied Muslim nation faces a rising militant threat just as its tanking economy has forced it to seek \$7.6 billion in aid from the International Monetary Fund.

Lt Cmdr Walter Matthews, a spokesman for the US military in Afghanistan, would not comment directly on whether the convoys were halted but said "the appropriate authorities are coordinating security procedures."

Lanka bombs Tigers' northern defence line

AP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's air force pounded the Tamil Tiger rebels' main northern defence line yesterday, a day after government forces dismantled the last rebel stronghold on the island's west coast, the military said.

Fighter jets bombed the Tamil separatists' defence line in the Mahamalai area of Jaffna peninsula, north of the rebels' de facto

state, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He said the jets also hit rebel artillery and mortar positions in retaliation for rebel shelling of soldiers on Saturday. Nanayakkara said details of damage and casualties were not immediately available.

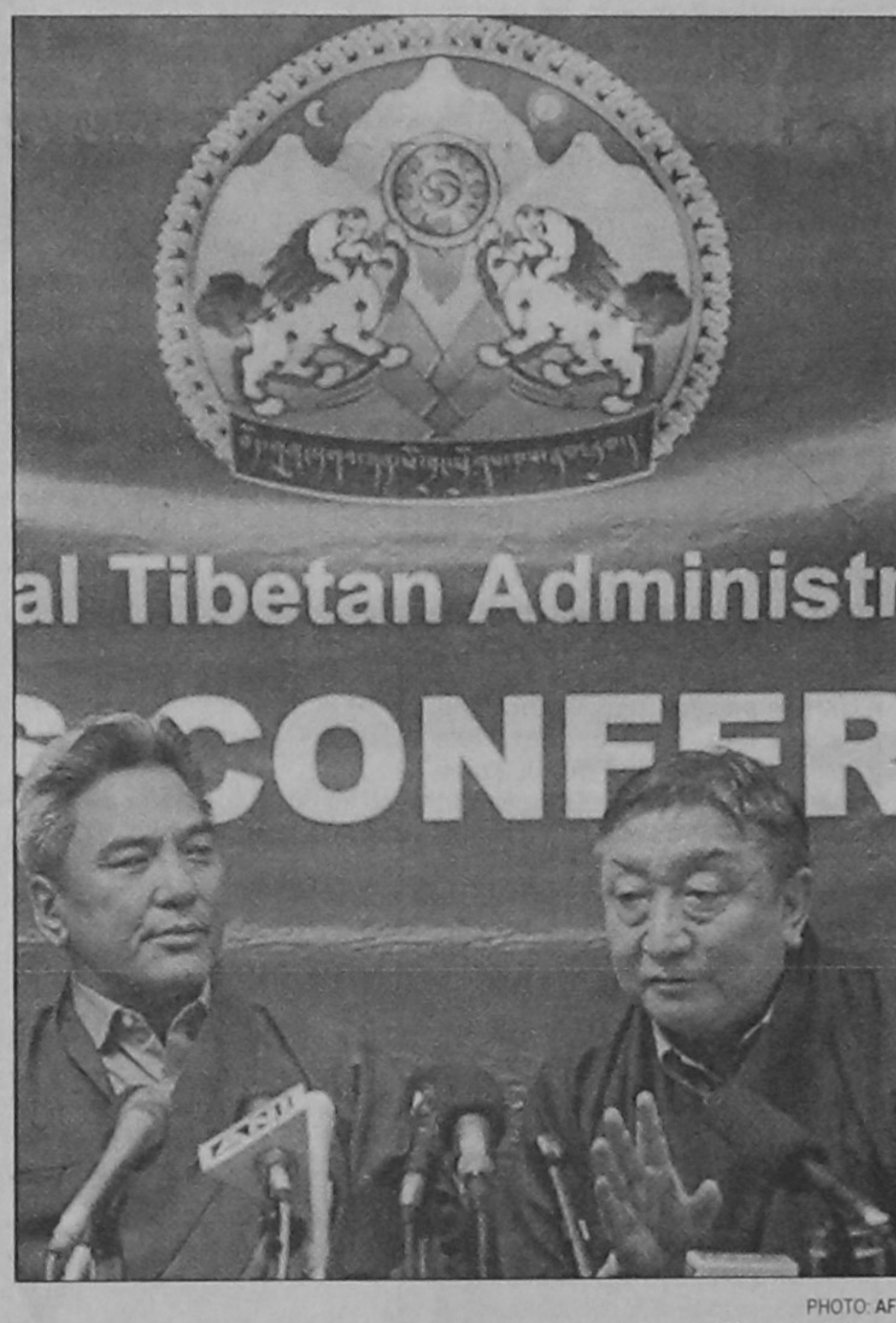
On Saturday, the military announced it had dismantled the last rebel defence on the island's

west coast and secured a land route to government-held Jaffna.

It was a key victory for the military, which has vowed to finally defeat the guerrillas by year's end.

The military has had no land link to the northern peninsula for more than a decade, forcing the government to depend on boats and aircraft for access. The main highway to the peninsula remains under rebel control.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Directorate General of Health Services Disease Control Unit Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212 Invitation for Tender GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH



Special Envoys of the Dalai Lama, Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari (R) and Kelsang Gyaltsen (L) address a press conference in Dharamshala yesterday. Leading Tibetan exiles gathered in India ahead of a week of discussions that could transform how the movement pursues its decades-old struggle with Chinese rule in Tibet.

Nato soldier, 10 militants killed in Afghanistan

AFP, Kabul

A bomb blast and clashes have killed an international soldier in the Nato-led force in Afghanistan and 10 militants, including some allegedly linked to al-Qaeda, the military said yesterday.

Nato's International Security Assistance Force did not release the nationality of the trooper, who was killed when a bomb struck a patrol on Saturday. The 40-nation force did not say where the blast had occurred.

The new death means 261 international troops have lost their lives this year in the effort to help the government fight an insurgency led by the Taliban, according to the casualties.org website.

Most were in attacks, although the figure includes accidents and other causes of death. The figure compares to 232 for the whole of last year.

Five militants were killed in an operation Saturday aimed at al-Qaeda in the eastern province of Pakia on the border with Pakistan, the separate US Forces Afghanistan

said. The troops also detained a "significant al-Qaeda associated militant known to finance militant operations and to assist Taliban leaders with the movement and training of Arab and foreign fighters into Afghanistan," it said.

In all, eight alleged militants were arrested in the province's Zurmatareas.

A similar operation in the adjacent border province of Khost was targeted at the radical Haqqani network, which has links with al-Qaeda. About 10 suspected militants were detained, the statement said.

The Haqqani group, which straddles the border, was formed during the 1980s resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan under well-known fighter Jalaluddin Haqqani.

Another five militants were killed in an operation on Friday in the southern province of Uruzgan in a gunfight that erupted while troops were searching a compound, another coalition statement said.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার কামিশনারের কার্যালয় কাস্টমস্, এন্ডাইজ ও ভ্যাট, ঢাকা (উত্তর) বাড়ি নং-৬, সোনারগাঁও জনপথ, সেটর নং-১১, উত্তরা, ঢাকা-১২৩০ নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি