

30 killed in Afghanistan

Taliban threatens Western nations in video message

AFP, Kabul/ Madrid

New insurgency-linked violence left five policemen and 25 militants dead in Afghanistan, authorities said yesterday, as a UN Security Council team continued a tour to assess post-Taliban development.

In the southern province of Helmand, Taliban fighters infiltrated a police post and shot dead five policemen early Wednesday, provincial government spokesman Daud Ahmadi said.

"There was no fighting. The enemy infiltrated our post and they killed the policemen," he said.

A Taliban spokesman, Yousuf Ahmadi, confirmed the attack and said prisoners were taken.

"We attacked the post. We killed five policemen and we took another eight policemen prisoner," he said.

Opium-producing Helmand is a stronghold of the Taliban, who ran the government between 1996 and 2001, and the insurgents are said to be in charge of several of Helmand's districts.

President Hamid Karzai told the UN Security Council team Tuesday it was unacceptable that insurgents controlled pockets of his country, including in areas where foreign troops operate under a UN mandate.

Also on Wednesday, US-led coalition troops killed 15 militants after they were attacked during a raid on a known "command and control" centre for bombmakers in the southern province of Kandahar, the US military said in a statement.

"Coalition forces returned fire with small arms weapons killing 15 insurgents and detained six," the statement said.

Another operation on Tuesday targeted a senior Taliban commander in the eastern province of Paktya who was believed to liaise between al-Qaeda and the Taliban, another statement said.

Five militants were killed in a clash at the site, it said, without making clear if the commander was among the dead.

Five more were killed and four arrested in another raid Tuesday in the adjoining province of Paktika that targeted the radical Haqqani network, which is linked to al-Qaeda.

"We continue to disrupt terrorist networks, stemming the flow of weapons and supplies that are used against innocent Afghan civilians," US military spokesman Colonel Jerry O'Hara said.

There are nearly 70,000 international soldiers in Afghanistan, most of them under a UN mandate to help the government fight an insurgency led by the

Taliban and joined by other outfits such as the al-Qaeda and Haqqani networks.

Despite their efforts, security has deteriorated sharply this year prompting calls to re-evaluate the strategy to put down the rebellion and focus more attention on militant sanctuaries across the border in Pakistan.

Fifteen UN ambassadors and representatives arrived in Afghanistan on Monday to assess the internationally funded effort to help the destitute and fragile country, which has suffered 30 years of war.

They traveled to the western city of Herat on Wednesday where they met Afghan officials, a spokesman said without being able to give details.

Meanwhile, the Taliban has threatened to stage attacks on five Western nations deploying troops in Afghanistan in a video discovered by Spanish security forces, a local radio station said yesterday.

The United States, Spain, France, Denmark and Australia are warned in the 42-minute video along with Israel, news radio Cadena 5 said.

It "threatens Nato and US troops with attacks against their interests inside and outside of Afghan territory if they do not withdraw from Afghanistan," the radio said.

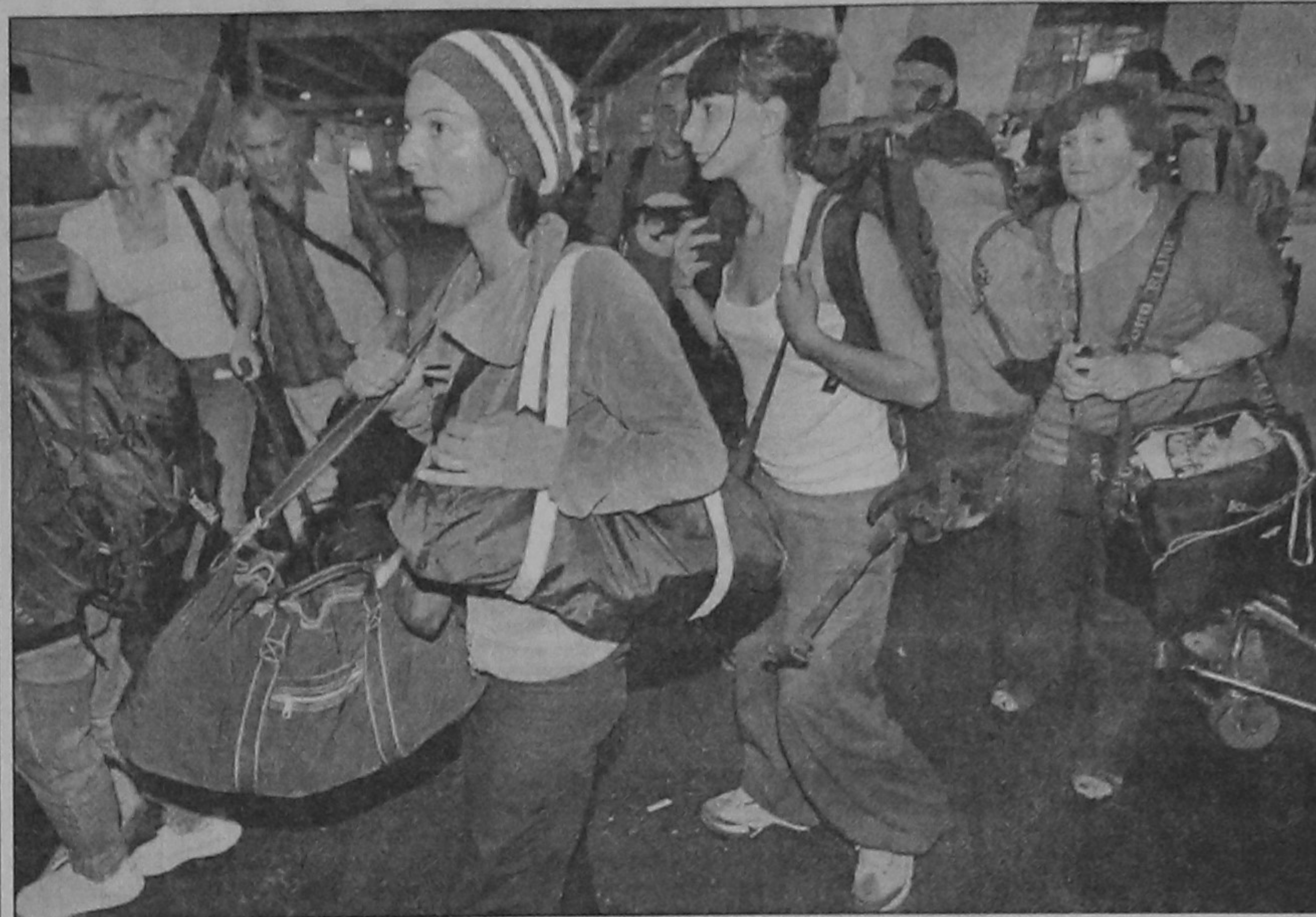


PHOTO: AFP

Foreign passengers carry their bags as they leave the airport after anti-government protesters forced the closure of Bangkok's main airport, the Suvarnabhumi international airport, in Bangkok yesterday. The political strife that shut down Thailand's main international airport could devastate the kingdom's massive tourism industry, which is already battered by global financial woes, experts say.



Indian Mizo people wait at a bus stop near an election campaign banner in Aizawl, the capital city of the north-eastern Indian state of Mizoram yesterday ahead of the State Assembly Elections scheduled to take place on December 2.

US transfers Laden's ex-driver to Yemen

AP, San Juan

A former driver for Osama bin Laden was transferred from Guantanamo Bay to his homeland of Yemen to serve out the remaining 32 days of his sentence, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

Salim Hamdan, the first man to go before a US war crimes trial since the end of World War II, was flown from the US Navy base in Cuba to Yemen.

Hamdan was convicted on Aug. 6 of providing material support to terrorism, and the military said it could keep him locked up indefinitely if it considered him to be a continued threat. Instead, he was sent home early.

US has never advised Israel against Iran strike

AFP, Washington

The United States has not pressured Israel to rule out military action in order to halt Iran's nuclear program, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said on Tuesday after talks with President George W. Bush.

The outgoing prime minister, who ends what is probably his last visit to Washington in office, said he had "spoke at length with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and the president on Iran."

"There is a basic, deep understanding about the Iranian threat and the need to act in order to remove threat," he told reporters.

Israel considers Iran its greatest threat, because of Tehran's accelerating nuclear program and repeated state-

ments by its leaders predicting the Jewish state's demise.

Israel -- the Middle East's sole if undeclared nuclear power -- and the United States accuse Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons, while Tehran has insisted its program is entirely peaceful.

The Jewish state has refused to rule out military response to the nuclear standoff and Olmert said on Tuesday that the Bush administration has never advised them against such action.

"I don't remember that anyone in the administration, including in the last couple of days, advised me or any other of my official representatives not to take any action that we will deem necessary for the fundamental security of the state of Israel, and that includes Iran," Olmert said.

Thai authorities start moving passengers from airport

AFP, Bangkok

Thai authorities Wednesday began evacuating passengers stranded overnight at Bangkok international airport after anti-government protesters stormed the building, AFP reporters said.

Hundreds of weary travellers were herded out of the arrivals area at Suvarnabhumi airport on to buses provided by the facility's operator, the correspondents said.

More than 3,000 passengers have been trapped there since Tuesday night, when demonstrators swarmed the three-billion-dollar building to press their campaign against the government.

The evacuation appeared chaotic, with authorities making no announcement and people in the departures area upstairs either unaware or finding out through word of mouth.

Hundreds of people with heavy suitcases and bags gathered to wait for the buses, which arrived one at a time, and people queued on escalators to reach the second floor arrivals section.

"It was very unclear, Thai Airways staff said, 'We need to vacate the airport, go get your bags and get out,'" said Andrea Neil, from Sydney.

Verity Rousset, from Perth, Australia, added: "They told us to come here and take the bus to a hotel. It was confusing. We don't know if it's mandatory."

Moudud, Aman

FROM PAGE 1
Barrister Mahbubuddin Khokon, counsel of Moudud and Aman, said now there is no legal bar on their release from jail as they have obtained bail from the HC in all the cases filed against them.

Upon a petition filed by Moudud, an HC bench comprising Justice Mohammad Anwarul Haque and Justice Abdus Samad granted him regular bail in the case filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC).

Another bench of Justice Md Arayesuddin and Justice Md Abu Tariq, on a petition filed by Aman, granted ad-interim bail to him until disposal of his appeal in an extortion case.

Earlier Aman was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in the case. He filed an appeal with the HC against the conviction.

On May 8 this year, Judge Mohammad Altaf Hossain of the Sixth Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, sentenced former state minister for labour and employment Amanullah Aman to seven years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) for extorting Tk 10 lakh from a

businessman in June 2004.

Meanwhile, Justice MA Matin, chamber judge of the Appellate Division, yesterday stayed for one month the HC order, granting bail to Naser Rahman, elder son of former finance minister M Saifur Rahman, in a corruption case.

The judge also asked the ACC to file a regular appeal with the Supreme Court (SC) against the HC order.

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq appeared for Moudud and Aman, barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia for Naser Rahman and Advocate MA Azz Khan argued for the ACC.

Chamber bench of the Appellate Division yesterday upheld the High Court (HC) orders that had earlier granted bail to Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami and Secretary General Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mojaheed in Barapukuria coalmine case.

The HC bench of Justice Justice Sikder Maqbul Huq and Justice Md Fazlur Rahman granted bail for six months to former Khulna city mayor Sheikh Toyebur Rahman in a narcotics case.

'Indian navy destroyed Thai fishing boat, not pirate vessel'

AP, New Delhi

A pirate "mother ship" sunk last week by the Indian navy was actually a Thai fishing trawler seized hours earlier by pirates, a maritime agency said Wednesday, but the Indian navy defended its actions, saying it fired in self-defence.

Noel Choong, head of the International Maritime Bureau's piracy reporting centre in Kuala Lumpur, said one Thai crew member died when the Indian frigate INS Tabar fired on the boat in the Gulf of Aden on Nov. 18.

Fourteen others are missing and a Cambodian sailor was rescued four days later by passing fishermen, he said. The maritime bureau received a report on the apparent mistake late Tuesday from Bangkok-based Sirichai Fisheries, which owned the trawler, the Ekawat Nava5, he said.

"The Indian navy assumed it was a pirate vessel because they may have seen armed pirates on board the boat which had been hijacked earlier," Choong said.

India's navy said last week that the INS Tabar, which began patrolling the gulf on Nov. 2, battled a pirate "mother ship" on Nov. 18, setting the ship ablaze.

In New Delhi, Indian navy spokesman Commander Nirad Sinha said Wednesday the INS Tabar was responding to threats from pirates on board the ship to attack.



PHOTO: AFP

Ships navigate in the northbound lane of the Suez Canal after passing through Port Said, 180km northeast of Cairo on Nov 24. Increasingly brazen piracy off the coast of Somalia is jeopardising traffic heading to and from the Suez Canal, a strategic shipping route and key earner for Egypt's economy.

Iran fires second rocket into space

AFP, Tehran

Iran yesterday announced it has fired a second rocket, "Kavoshgar 2", into space, following up on the success of its first space launch in February, state television said.

"The rocket landed 40 minutes later with a special parachute after performing its functions," said the report posted on the website of state television.

"Kavoshgar 2" -- which means Explorer -- is made of three parts, including a space laboratory, the report said.

"The main achievements of the launch were to carry out space experiments on the atmosphere, to test the retrieval system and (ensure) coordination between the scientists in an academic project," the report said.

আমার ভোট আমি দেবো
দেখে শুনে জেনে দেবো

ভোটটি দিলে সেইজন্যকে দেখা হবে ফাঁকা

১১-০২-১১/১১

SONY

ENRICH YOUR SHOPPING EXPERIENCE
The BRAVIA LCD TV Promotion

Buy One Get One 26" LCD BRAVIA

Or Upto tk. 90,000 CashBack

FREE

Buy One 40" V&S Series LCD Bravia

Get one 26" S LCD Bravia as Free Gift

Size & Series	Gift /or	CashBack
40" S Series Bravia	26" S LCD Bravia	Tk. 90,000
40" V Series Bravia	26" S LCD Bravia	Tk. 75,000
52" W, 40" W X D 46" V & W	20" S LCD Bravia	Tk. 45,000
37" & 32" All Series	DAV-DZ77K (H.Theatre)	Tk. 35,000
26" All Series	DAV-DZ270K (H.Theatre)	Tk. 22,000
19" & 20" All Series	DSC-S730 (D. Camera)	Tk. 15,000

SONY RANGS Sales Center

Sonartion Tower - 9663556, Rifles Square - 8624792, Airport Road - 8118880-81, Farmgate - 9139200, Karwan Bazar - 01715140222, Bashundhara City - 01716-747199, Crescent Center - 9555519, 9563433, Stadium-2 - 9552376, Stadium-3 - 9554749, Mouchak - 9331870, Lalmeta - 9118328, Mohammadpur - 03782012038, Guleshan-1 - 9883344, Guleshan-2 - 8811576, 9880516 Uttara - 8911971, Lailbag - 9629567, Bashabo - 8252018, Holland Center - 8850545, Mirpur-1 - 9010878, Mirpur-10 - 9005843, Ibrahimpur - 9872098, Shewrapara - 9015324, Dholaipar - 7443236, Savar - 7742831, Narayanganj - 7632704, Gazipur - 9250925, Comilla - 66567, Majdee 63467, Chittagong Waza Corner - 611334, Chak Bazar - 01712-661978, Rajshahi - 774675, 775864, Khulna - 722605, 731698, Jessore - 67331, 01711-688462, Choumuhoni - 52007, Barisal - 64062, Bogra Nabab Bari - 51444, 64904, Sylhet - 710171, 711377