

Taliban announces truce for Ramadan in tribal belt

Militant-linked Pak elder killed in ambush

ANI, AFP, Miramshah

The Taliban has declared a unilateral ceasefire in North Waziristan during the fasting month of Ramadan.

Taliban commander Hafiz Gul Bahadur's spokesman, Ahmadullah Ahmadi, called local journalists from an undisclosed location and said the outfit has decided to shun its operations for the next 40 days.

"The Taliban will not attack security forces during this period," Ahmadi said.

Ahmadi said the ceasefire would be observed ten days after Eid to maintain the sanctity of the holy month, the Dawn reports.

The Orakzai chapter of the Taliban has also announced a unilateral ceasefire.

Taliban's Orakzai spokesperson spoke to journalists over the phone and said the decision to halt the offensive was taken by the Taliban leadership.

He also said Taliban sharia courts in the agency would be closed from today (Wednesday) until the 10th day of Eid.

The move comes as a surprise after Taliban vowed to avenge the reported death of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) chief Baitullah Mehsud in a US drone attack.

Meanwhile, a tribal elder with links to the Taliban was killed Sunday along with four close relatives in an ambush in Pakistan's northwest militant stronghold, officials said.

The deaths of Malik Sarwar Khan and four other men come amid reports of intense feuding in the militant ranks, after the apparent death of Taliban commander Baitullah Mehsud sparked a heated succession battle.

Khan was travelling from his home village of Dazha Ghundi in the Mehsud heartland of South Waziristan near the Afghan border to the main district town Wana when

gunmen attacked his vehicle, officials said.

"Armed men stopped the vehicle near Wana bazaar and sprayed it with bullets, killing Sarwar Khan, his son, a brother, nephew and a close relative," a senior administration official told AFP.

The attack could have been spurred by a tribal vendetta or infighting in the Taliban movement over the succession, said the official, who asked not to be named as he was not authorised to speak to the media.

Earlier a remote-controlled bomb exploded in a car Saturday killing a militant spokesman and his driver while wounding five others in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar, police said.

"Two people were killed and five others were injured in the car bombing," Peshawar police chief Sifatullah Ghayyur told AFP.

"The bomb was planted in the car and was detonated by a

remote control," he said, identifying the victims as Mubeen Afridi, spokesman for militant group Ansar-ul-Islam, which operates in Khyber tribal district near the Afghan border, and his driver.

Police suspect that rival group Lashkar-e-Islam could be behind the bombing, Ghayyur said.

Bomb disposal chief Shafiqat Malik said that up to 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of explosives were used in the device, which was planted under the car.

Sahibzada Anis, the head of district administration, said that the bombing took place on a busy road near the main government hospital, but there were fewer people out due to the onset of the holy Muslim month of Ramadan.

Television footage showed the white Toyota car reduced to a pile of mangled steel as investigators collected evidence.

US notifying Red Cross of militants jailed in secret camp

AFP, Washington

In a first, the Pentagon is handing the International Committee of the Red Cross the names of militants held secretly at a camp in Iraq and another in Afghanistan. The New York Times reported Saturday.

The move, the latest shift in detention policy undertaken by the Obama administration, took effect this month, the Times reported.

President Barack Obama has shuttered secret CIA prison sites, vowed to close the controversial US military camp at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba by January, and launched large-scale reviews of interrogation and detention policies.

But the US military continues to operate Special Operations camps in Balad, Iraq and Bagram, Afghanistan, details of which remain largely secret, according to the Times.

Between 30 and 40 prisoners are held in Iraq and a smaller number in Afghanistan, military officials told the Times.



Lee Hee-Ho (3rd R), wife of the late former South Korean president Kim Dae-Jung, and her family walk past the memorial altar for Kim during a state funeral ceremony at the National Assembly in Seoul yesterday.

S Korea holds state funeral for Kim Dae-jung

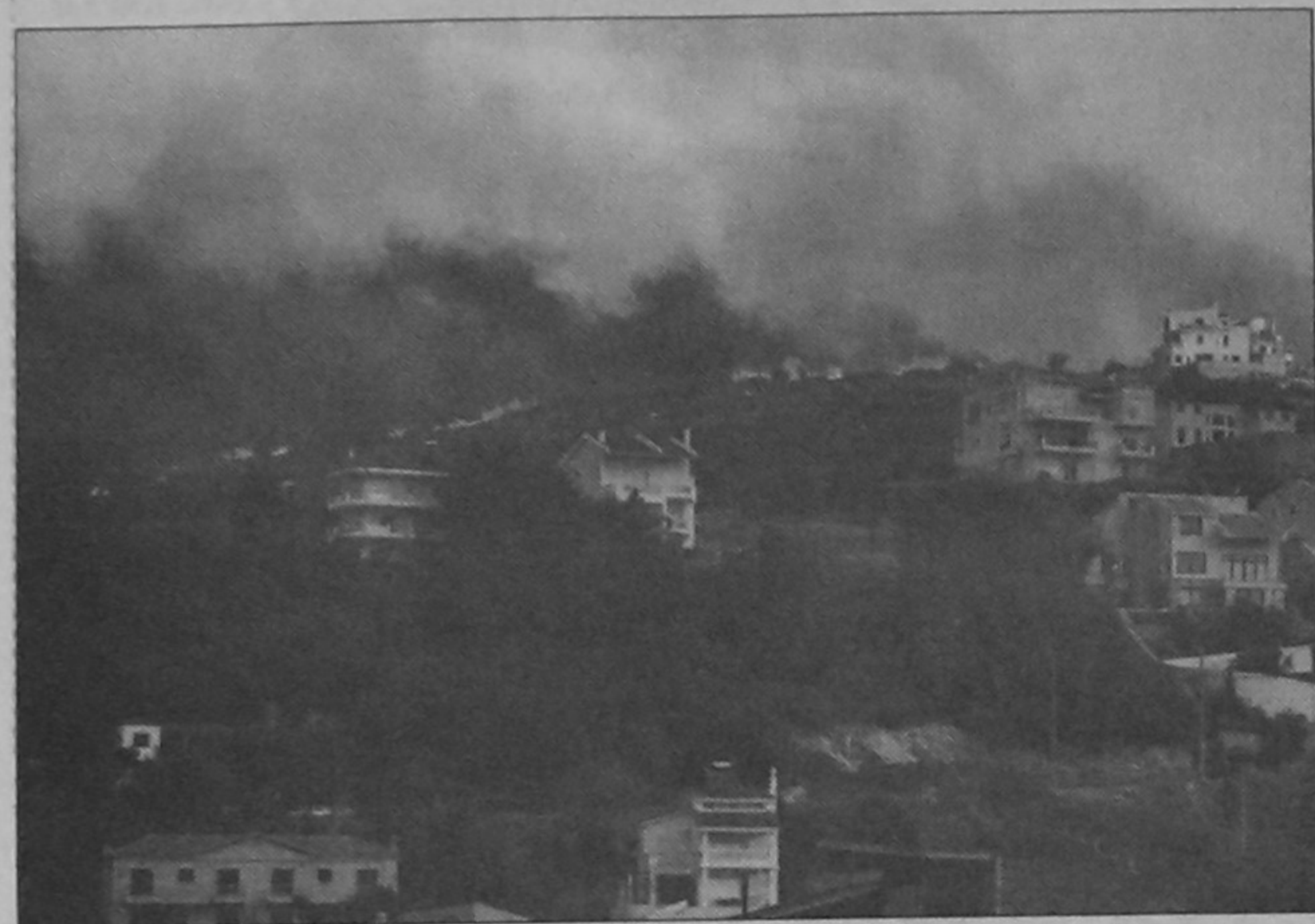
AP, Seoul

Tens of thousands of mourners filled the lawn outside parliament for the state funeral Sunday of ex-President Kim Dae-jung, a longtime defender of democracy and advocate of reconciliation who won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to reach out to communist North Korea.

The solemn funeral was the first held at the National Assembly where Kim who endured torture, death threats and imprisonment during his decades as an opposition leader triumphantly took the oath of office as South Korea's president in 1998.

In central Seoul, mourners watching a public broadcast of the funeral waved small yellow posters that read: "Farewell, Mr. Sunshine: Without you, we would never have known democracy."

The mourning period for Kim, who died Tuesday at age 85, lasted six days.



Fire approaches houses in eastern Athens Draf suburb yesterday. Firefighters waged a titanic effort on Sunday to contain a massive fire in Athens' eastern suburbs that scorched a 30-km swathe through one of the Greek capital's last forests.

British procurement for military flawed

Reveals leaked report

AFP, London

A report for Britain's Ministry of Defence leaked yesterday said the MoD's procurement programme was hugely inefficient and harming Britain's ability to fight enemies like the Taliban.

The report emerged as a former army commander warned that a lack of political will in London to provide more troops and equipment for Afghanistan risked seeing British troops lose the fight there.

The draft review of the way the MoD acquires new equipment found the system was riddled with "endemic" failures. The Sunday Times newspaper reported after receiving a leaked copy of the

296-page document.

The report said the MoD's equipment programme was 35 billion pounds (\$58 billion dollars, 40 billion euros) over budget, five years behind schedule, and could not be afforded in the long-term.

The report by Bernard Gray, a former adviser to defence ministers, said the scale of MoD's inefficiency was "harming our ability... to conduct difficult current operations".

"How can it be that it takes 20 years to buy a ship, or aircraft, or tank? Why does it always seem to cost at least twice what was thought? Even worse, at the end of the wait, why does it never quite seem to do what it was supposed to?" Gray wrote, according to the newspaper.

Kim sends message to S Korean president

AFP, Seoul

North Korean envoys delivered a message from their leader Kim Jong-Il when they met South Korea's president Sunday, raising hopes of an end to high tensions that had sparked fears of military clashes.

Details of the verbal message were not disclosed.

But both sides at the first high-level North-South meeting since President Lee Myung-Bak took office 18 months ago expressed hopes

for warmer ties after more than a year of deep hostility from Pyongyang.

"I'm leaving with good feelings," Kim Ki-Nam, a close aide to Kim Jong-Il, told reporters as he left for the airport after the talks.

Relations have been icy since the conservative Seoul leader scrapped a "sunshine" aid and engagement policy towards the hardline communist state and linked economic assistance to nuclear disarmament.

Advani aide Sudheendra quits BJP

ANI, New Delhi

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader LK Advani's close aide, Sudheendra Kulkarni, on Sunday announced that he was quitting the party because of ideological differences with it.

Kulkarni, who has been with the BJP for 13 years as a party activist and political advisor, said: "I have ideological differences with the party, especially where it stands today."

Forest fires reach Athens suburbs

Thousands evacuated

AP, Athens

Forest fire tore through suburbs north of Athens early Sunday, destroying homes and forcing thousands to flee in nighttime evacuations, fire service and local officials said.

The fires came within 20km of downtown Athens and blackened thousands of acres (hectares) of rugged land covered by pine forest or thick brush. The army removed anti-aircraft missiles from a military base as flames approached.

"The situation is tragic. Fires are out of control on many fronts," greater Athens local governor Yiannis Sgouros said. Athens had an area of greenery that now has gone.

He said an estimated 30,000 acres (12,000 hectares) of land had been burned.

A state of emergency was declared in greater Athens. It is the most destructive fires seen in Greece since fires in the south of the country killed more than 70 people in 2007.

Firefighting planes and helicopters from France, Italy and Cyprus were due to arrive later Sunday, government officials said.

After daybreak Sunday, planes and helicopters resumed water drops following an eight-hour pause that allowed the wildfire to spread across parts of Mount Penteli and reach suburban homes. Clouds of black smoke filled the capital's skyline and obscured the sun.



Japan's main opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) leader Yukio Hatoyama (C) delivers a speech as he visits a shopping mall during a stump tour for the August 30 general election in Tokyo yesterday.

Japan's ruling party faces voter revolt

AP, Tokyo

Keiko Saito's son-in-law recently lost his job and can't find another. As she and her husband approach retirement, they worry whether their pensions are safe. The economy seems chronically incapable of recapturing its glory days.

For decades, 58-year-old Saito supported the Liberal Democrats, a party synonymous with Japan's rise, its fantastic growth and its postwar peace.

Now she is angry, ready for change and looking very typical. Polls indicate a strong possibility that elections Saturday will end the Liberal Democrats' 54 years of nearly uninterrupted rule, one of the most successful runs by a political party in the noncommunist world.

The party's demise has been forecast before, and it has usually confounded its doomsayers.

London, Edinburgh under fire over Lockerbie bomber's release

AFP, London

Scotland rejected scathing criticism Saturday from the FBI over the Lockerbie bomber's release, as the British government came under pressure to explain its role.

In a letter to Scotland's Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill released earlier Saturday, Robert Mueller, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, denounced his decision to free Abdelbaset Ali Mohmet al-Megrahi.

But the Scottish government hit back, saying that while compassionate release

might not be part of the US justice system, it was a proper part of Scotland's.

Meanwhile the British government came under pressure to explain its role in Megrahi's release, but strongly denied Libyan claims it was linked to trade deals.

Mueller, who in 1991 was assistant attorney general in charge of the investigation of Megrahi, wrote that he was "outraged at the decision, blithely defended on the grounds of 'compassion'".

But a Scottish government spokesman said the decision was reached following proper procedures.



Crewmembers of the Egyptian fishing ship Momtaz I wave as they arrive at the port in Ataka, 170km northeast of Cairo yesterday. More than 30 Egyptian fishermen who were held hostage by Somali pirates for four months returned home with eight of their former captors held captive in their boats' refrigerated holds.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Ministry of Food and Disaster Management Disaster Management Bureau (DMB) 92-93 Mohakhali C/A, Dhaka-1212					
DMB/MIM/EQPT(R)-34/2009/83			Date: 19-08-2009		
Invitation for Re-Tender (International)					
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH					
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management			
2	Agency	Disaster Management Bureau			
3	Procuring Entity Name	Disaster Management Bureau			
4	Procuring Entity Code	4815			
5	Procuring Entity District	Headquater, Dhaka			
6	Invitation for	Goods			
7	Invitation Ref No	DMB/MIM/EQPT(R)-24/2009			
8	Date	19-08-2009			
KEY INFORMATION					
9	Procurement Method	OTM (INTERNATIONAL)			
FUNDING INFORMATION					
10	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB			
11	Development Partners (if applicable)	N.A.			
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
12	Project / Programme Code (if applicable)	5150			
13	Project / Programme Name (if applicable)	Procurement of Equipments for Search and Rescue Operation for Earthquake and other Disasters.			
14	Tender Package No.	Lot No-05			
15	Tender Package Name	Procurement of Fork Lift (R.T)			
		Date			
16	Tender Publication Date	20-08-2009			
17	Tender Last Selling Date	13-09-2009			
		Date		Time	
18	Tender Closing Date and Time	17-09-2007		14:00 hrs	
19	Tender Opening Date and Time	17-09-2009		14:30 hrs	
20	Name & Address of the office(s)	Address			
		-Selling Tender Document (Principal)			
		- Selling Tender Document (Others)			
		- Receiving Tender Document			
		- Opening Tender Document			
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
21	Eligibility of Tenderer	Tenderers/Manufacturers must have 10 years experience. (Details mentioned in the Tender documents).			
22	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Supply of Fork Lift (RT) for Search and Rescue Operation for Earthquake and other Disasters. (Details in the Tender Documents).			
23	Brief Description of Related Services	Details in the Tender Documents			
24	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	1000/- each document			
25	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Qty	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk.)
	5	Fork Lifter (R.T)	08	Dhaka	Tk.12,00,000/-
26	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Farhad Uddin			
27	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Director General, Disaster Management Bureau			
28	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Disaster Management Bureau, Disaster Management & Relief Bhaban (4th Floor), 92-93 Mohakhali C/A, Dhaka-1212			
29	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	8858755	8851615 (fax)	dmb@bdl.net.bd	
30	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any / all tender(s).				
Sd/-					
(Md. Monzur Alam Bhuyan)					
Director (MIM)					
Disaster Management Bureau					
Phone: 8859636					
GD-3906					