



Armed Pakistani militiamen gather in a village of Doog Dara in the Upper Dir district on Thursday to fight Taliban militants in their area. The number of Pakistanis who returned home since fleeing a recent military offensive against the Taliban has increased to 1.65 million, a UN official said.

Pakistan nets two most wanted Swat Taliban

Pak police in no-show after militant warning

AFP, Peshawar
Pakistan announced yesterday the arrests of two of its most-wanted Taliban insurgents and said the feared militia was starting at defeat after two years of carnage in the Swat valley.
The northwest valley slipped out of government control after radical cleric Maulana Fazlullah rose up in July 2007, commanding thousands of followers who beheaded opponents, burnt schools and fought to enforce Islamic law.
Pakistan launched a blistering offensive against the Taliban after militants marched out of the former tourist district and

advanced further south towards the capital Islamabad in April. The military now claims the areas clear.
The country posted a reward of 50 million rupees (more than 600,000 dollars) for Fazlullah and offered rewards for 15 of his top lieutenants, last May but Friday marked the first announcement of any arrests from the list.
"Muslim Khan and Mahmood Khan with head money of 10 million rupees (120,482 dollars) have been arrested by security forces in a successful operation in Swat," Major General Athar Abbas said in a statement released in English.

"The arrested terrorist leaders are under interrogation of law enforcement agencies," he said - without saying when the men were detained but denying media reports that any negotiations took place.
"The security forces are conducting operations on the information obtained from the arrested terrorist leaders," the military added.
Muslim Khan was second on the most-wanted list behind Fazlullah. He is around 50 years old and earned notoriety as a prolific Taliban spokesman.
Meanwhile, around 500 tribal police officials heeded a warning from a Taliban-linked militant and failed to report for duty in the lawless border district of Khyber yesterday, a senior official said.
Militant commander Mangal Bagh, who has ties to the Taliban, in an FM radio broadcast threatened that lawmakers, army and paramilitary troops in the region who did not resign would see their homes demolished and other harsh penalties.



Handout photographs show arrested Pakistani chief spokesman of Taliban militants in Swat, Muslim Khan (L) and a commander Mahmood Khan in custody of security forces.

Contempt of court petition filed against Musharraf

ANI, Islamabad
Cases against former Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf continue to be filed abated, as now a petition has been moved in the Supreme Court seeking contempt-of-court proceedings against the former general for 'illegally' preventing 60 judges from performing judicial duties after the November 2007 emergency.
The petition filed by advocate Chaudhry Muhammad Aslam Ghuman under Article 204 of the Constitution, named Musharraf as the respondent.

Zia, Yahya and Ayub should be exhumed and hanged like Cromwell: PML-N

ANI, Karachi
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Javed Hashmi has said that all dictators including General Ayub Khan, General Yahya Khan and General Zia-ul-Haq should be tried and their bodies should be exhumed and hanged.
Talking to media persons at the Karachi Airport, Hashmi said the autocratic rulers should be treated in the same way the British treated Oliver Cromwell in 1661 to prevent the emergence of any dictator in future.
"The judiciary should try all the people in the country who had violated the constitution," The Daily Times quoted Hashmi, as saying.
Oliver Cromwell's, an English military and political leader, body was exhumed from Westminster Abbey, and was subjected to the ritual of a posthumous execution.
Symbolically, this took place on 30 January 1661 the same date that Charles I was executed. His body was hanged in chains at Tyburn. Finally, his disintegrated body was thrown into a pit, while his severed head was displayed on a pole outside Westminster Hall until 1685.



Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen (L) shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh ahead of a meeting in New Delhi yesterday. Rasmussen is in India for a two-day official visit.

Pakistan reluctant to act on terror

Chidambaram tells Hillary

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Washington
India Thursday conveyed its displeasure to the US over Pakistan's reluctance to take action against militants arrested for their role in the Mumbai terror attacks and letting their mastermind go free.
Indian Home minister P Chidambaram, who met Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, other government officials and key lawmakers on his second day in the US capital, said he was overall 'pleased with the level of interest shown by the officials and leaders of the US administration to the security

issues that confront India'.
Addressing the media after the talks, Chidambaram said he had briefed US leaders on the quick progress made in the Mumbai terror trial and Pakistan's reluctance to take action against five to six militants arrested for role in 26/11 and releasing their mastermind Hafiz Saeed.
Over 170 people, including 26 foreigners, were killed in the Nov 26-29, 2008 Mumbai attacks.
Asked whether he sought US pressure on Pakistan, he said the US administration 'understands the difference between the way India approached the post 26/11 situation, and the

way Pakistan has approached'.
The home minister said no fresh dossier on Pakistan's role has been given to the Americans.
"The dossier has already been shared with many countries, including the US and the countries whose citizens have been killed in Mumbai. Even the sixth dossier has been shared with 16 countries, including the US," he said.
Chidambaram said they also discussed the issue of money-laundering, with the US promising to support India's membership of Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to combat the problem.

US, UK issue warnings over fraud-tainted Afghan polls

AFP, Kabul
The United States warned yesterday that a long delay in resolving Afghanistan's fraud-tainted polls would benefit the Taliban and al-Qaeda while Britain refused to "be party to any whitewash".
Afghans went to the polls last month to elect a president for only the second time, eight years after the US-led invasion ousted the Taliban from power following the September 11, 2001 attacks blamed on al-Qaeda.
But the August 20 presidential and provincial council elections have been overshadowed by allegations of vote-rigging and mass fraud, and

marred by low turnout blamed on Taliban intimidation and record levels of violence.
The UN-backed Electoral Complaints Commission has ordered thousands of votes thrown out from 83 polling stations in three provinces due to fraud, but there is no timescale for investigations across the rest of the country.
Richard Holbrooke, who is President Barack Obama's pointman for Afghanistan and Pakistan, was asked by the BBC whether it could create an unstable environment if counting from the presidential election took months.
"I don't think you're going to have a process that's drawn out that long, at least I hope

not," Holbrooke told the BBC in an interview.
"The beneficiary of that would be the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and I need to underscore that... the beneficiary of any delays of the sort you're talking about would be the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and everybody understands that."
The US State Department said it could take months to determine the results and probe the alleged irregularities.
President Hamid Karzai, whose relationship with his Western backers has faltered during a seven-year rule marred by corruption and insecurity, is on track to win with more than 54 percent of the votes released so far.

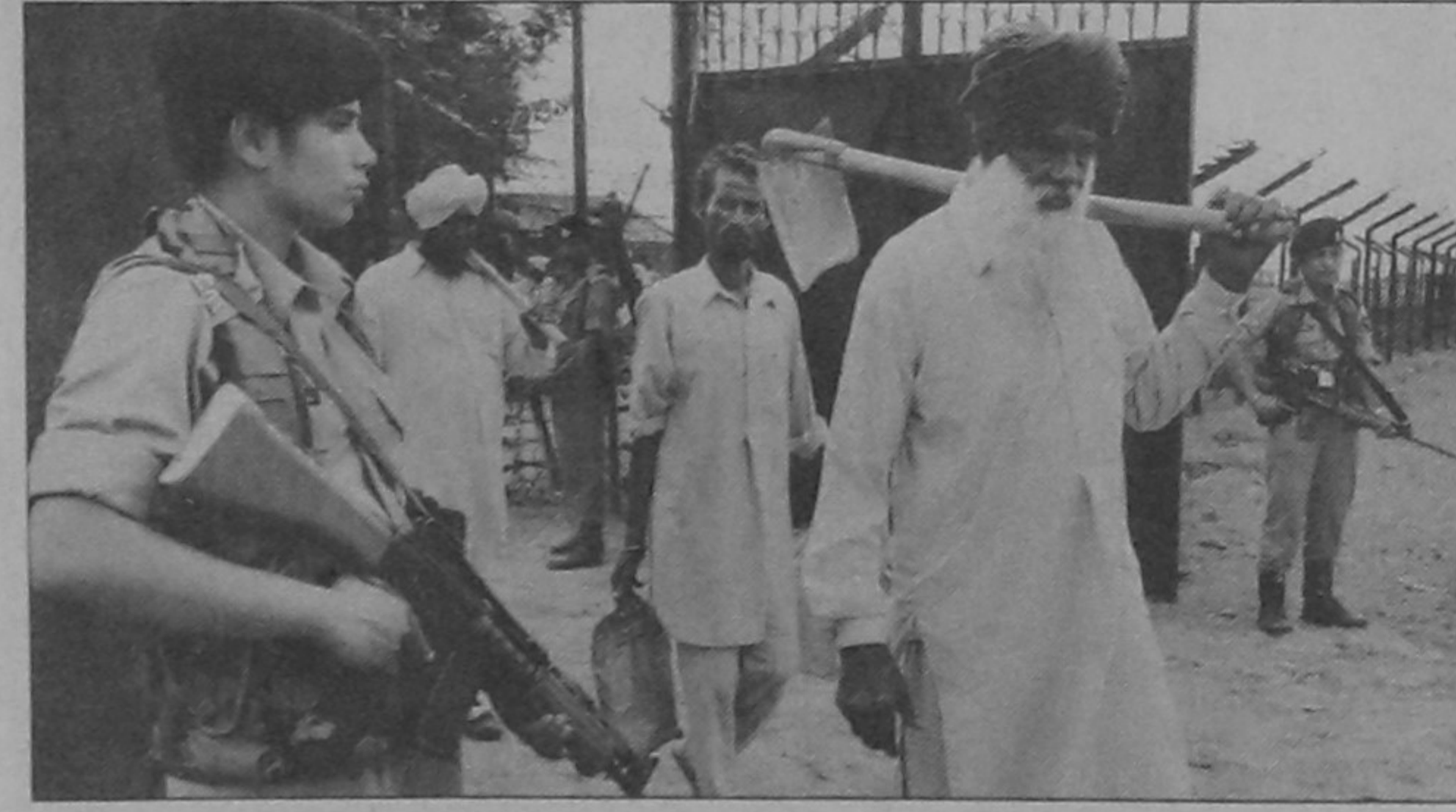


Sri Lankan men, women and children, clutching their few possessions, walk out of a camp housing tens of thousands of displaced people in Vavuniya yesterday. The government released 9,920 ethnic minority Tamils from the camps as part of their drive to resettle people in the once war torn northern parts of the island.

UN urges Lanka to free its staff, respect human rights

AFP, United Nations
The United Nations on Thursday called on Sri Lanka to respect the human rights of two UN employees who have been held without charge since June on suspicion of collaborating with Tamil separatists.
"The UN has been and is extremely concerned about the continuing case of the two national UN staff members detained by the Sri Lankan authorities in June," deputy UN spokeswoman Marie Okabe said.
She said the two men, both Tamils, had been travelling in the area around Vavuniya, an embattled northern town that served as a de facto front line

in the decades-old civil war that climaxed with a massive offensive in May by Sri Lankan troops who defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).
"The UN has been particularly concerned about suggestions that the two staff members may have been mistreated in the first days of their detention," Okabe said.
"If these allegations are validated, this will be a violation of Sri Lankan and international law."
Okabe said the United Nations raised the allegations with the Sri Lankan government "both orally and in writing" and called for "due process to be swiftly applied."



Indian woman Border Security Force (BSF) personnel stand guard alongside a barbed wire fence as farmers walk to their fields at a checkpoint at Roranwala near the India-Pakistan border yesterday. The first batch of 175 female BSF personnel has commenced patrolling duty in the area along the India-Pakistan border.

N Korea makes new concession to South

AFP, Seoul
North Korea has dropped demands that South Korean factory owners pay a huge wage increase at a joint industrial estate, officials said Friday, the latest peace overture from the communist state.
The concession came amid anger in the South over Pyongyang's unannounced discharge of dam water on Sunday, which caused a flash flood in a cross-border river and killed six southerners.
The North is now propos-

ing a maximum five-percent rise this year for its 40,000 workers in more than 100 South Korean factories at Kaesong north of the border. Seoul's unification ministry said.
In June Pyongyang stunned Seoul by demanding a wage rise to 300 dollars a month, from around 75 dollars currently including insurance.
The demand had raised speculation the North was trying to shut down the estate, the last joint reconciliation project still operating.
"The North has proposed

a maximum five percent wage hike for this year," said ministry spokeswoman Lee Jong-Joo, adding it proposed signing a deal as soon as possible.
After months of bellicose moves, including missile launches and a nuclear test, the North in August began making conciliatory gestures towards the United States and South Korea.
It freed two US journalists after a visit by ex-president Bill Clinton and called for direct talks with Washington on the nuclear standoff.

Nepali Maoists hold anti-govt protest

AFP, Kathmandu
Thousands of Maoist supporters gathered in Nepal's capital Kathmandu Friday for a mass protest against the country's new coalition government, police and witnesses said.
Around 5,000 protesters marched through the streets of the capital waving red flags and chanting anti-government slogans before gathering in a city centre park for a rally, they said.
Nepal's Maoists formed a government after winning the highest number of seats in parliamentary elections held in 2008 - two years after the end of the decade-long civil war between the former rebels

and the army.
But their administration fell in May when the president overruled their decision to sack the head of the army -- a move Maoist leaders say was unconstitutional.
The army chief at the centre of the row has since retired, but the Maoists have said they will hold nationwide anti-government protests until the president apologises for his move.
Following the fall of the Maoist-led government, an alliance of nearly two dozen rival parties formed a coalition led by the centre-left UML party, whose former leader Madhav Kumar Nepal took over as prime minister.

Over 300,000 affected by floods in Bihar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Patna
More than 300,000 people have been affected by flash floods caused due to heavy rains in drought-hit districts of Bihar, an official said Friday.
Thousands of people in over 100 villages in Gaya, Nalanda, Jehanabad and Nawada districts were rendered homeless and are struggling to survive on roads and other high places. The areas, drought-hit just over a month ago, have been witnessing heavy rains for the past one week.

Bihar's Minister for Disaster Management Devesh Chandra Thakur admitted that flash floods hit thousands of people in the erstwhile drought-affected areas.
"The flood situation is grim in the drought-affected districts because of rising river waters following heavy rains," Thakur told IANS.
After floodwaters forced villagers to flee their homes under Dhanrua block in Patna district, hundreds of people have turned the Masaurih-Patna road into a temporary shelter for the last two days.

BSF deploys women guards on Pak border

ANI, Ferozpur
The Border Security Force (BSF) deployed the first batch of women guards on Pakistan border in Punjab.
The move would make foolproof body frisking at border check posts and farms lying across the border fence, said an official.
These personnel have been given training in weapon handling, intelligence gathering, border management, unarmed combat, frisking and guard duties.

Musharraf to use secret 'smoking gun' on Nawaz, Benazir if cornered

ANI, London
Former Pakistan president General Pervez Musharraf possess some secret records regarding Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif and former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, and may make them public if the PML-N and PPP push further for his high treason trial.
Sources close to the former general, who may 'formally' join politics in December, say

that he may take the veil off the records if both the parties continues to target him.
According to them, Musharraf, before vacating the Presidency had collected some important documents and records.
It is believed that the documents contained his deal with the PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif before the latter's departure to Saudi Arabia, tapes of telephonic conversation between Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, and other 'secret' documents.

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