

**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

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## **A million flee Pakistan-Taliban fighting**

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## THE ARTICLE

A new humanitarian crisis is unfolding in Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have fled their homes to escape fighting between the Pakistan Army and Taliban forces. There are estimates that nearly one-and-a-half million people in the Swat Valley area of Pakistan are displaced. The United Nations say 900,000 civilians moved to avoid the violence in the past month. Huge numbers of internal refugees were on the move on Thursday as the army eased a curfew. Hundreds of cars and overloaded buses formed a huge convoy. They were all heading for refugee camps in the south. Pakistan's Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani said the growing refugee crisis is his nation's worst since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Fighting between the Pakistan military and Taliban rebels has got worse in recent days. Army commanders are increasing their efforts to root out the militants. Pakistan's 'Dawn' newspaper reported heavy fighting in the north-west of the country as the military went on the offensive. Army Major General Athar Abbas said his troops killed at least 55 Taliban fighters in recent attacks. More than 15,000 Pakistan troops have moved into the Swat Valley to take on around 5,000 heavily-armed militants. A Taliban spokesman denied the casualty figures. Muslim Khan said his fighters have killed over 37 Pakistani soldiers in fighting since Wednesday. He said Pakistani troops killed just three Taliban soldiers.

# WARM-UPS

**1. PAKISTAN:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about Pakistan. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*humanitarian crisis / fleeing / estimates / avoiding violence / convoys / refugees / fighting / Taliban rebels / army commanders / heavily-armed / casualty figures*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. HUMANITARIAN CRISIS:** With your partner(s), talk about the best way to give Pakistani refugees help in the ongoing crisis. Change partners and share your ideas.

Problem	Your solution	Is it happening now?
Security		
Food		
Shelter		
Hope		
Health care		
Child care		

**4. PAKISTAN:** Students A **strongly** believe Pakistan will defeat the Taliban and other militant groups; Students B **strongly** believe Pakistan will never defeat the Taliban. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. FLEEING:** What would you take if you had to flee from your home? Rank these in order of which you would take first. Talk about your rating with your partner(s). Vote as a class on which things are most / least important.

- |                     |                               |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ your computer | _____ your English coursebook |
| _____ your passport | _____ your clothes            |
| _____ your pet      | _____ your music              |
| _____ your photos   | _____ your Swiss Army knife   |

**6. TALIBAN:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'Taliban'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Millions of civilians have fled their homes to escape fighting in Pakistan. T / F
- b. The article says 1.5 million people in the Swat Valley are displeased. T / F
- c. The Pakistan Army has refused to lift a curfew to allow people to flee. T / F
- d. The recent refugee crisis is Pakistan's worst in many decades. T / F
- e. It seems the fighting is calming down a little. T / F
- f. A Pakistan newspaper reported the army is on the attack. T / F
- g. There are 10,000 more new Pakistani troops than Taliban fighters. T / F
- h. A Taliban spokesman said Pakistani army casualties were greater. T / F

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. unfolding | a. homeless         |
| 2. fled      | b. soldiers         |
| 3. estimates | c. find             |
| 4. displaced | d. escaped from     |
| 5. partition | e. only             |
| 6. root out  | f. dead and injured |
| 7. offensive | g. developing       |
| 8. troops    | h. attack           |
| 9. casualty  | i. guesses          |
| 10. just     | j. division         |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. A new humanitarian crisis is             | a. a huge convoy          |
| 2. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have | b. casualty figures       |
| 3. 900,000 civilians moved to avoid the     | c. on the offensive       |
| 4. cars and overloaded buses formed         | d. unfolding in Pakistan  |
| 5. the partition of India and               | e. out the militants      |
| 6. Fighting between the Pakistan military   | f. fled their homes       |
| 7. increasing their efforts to root         | g. three Taliban soldiers |
| 8. the military went                        | h. Pakistan in 1947       |
| 9. A Taliban spokesman denied the           | i. violence               |
| 10. Pakistani troops killed just            | j. and Taliban rebels     |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A new humanitarian crisis is \_\_\_\_\_ in Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have fled their homes to \_\_\_\_\_ fighting between the Pakistan Army and Taliban forces. There are \_\_\_\_\_ that nearly one-and-a-half million people in the Swat Valley area of Pakistan are \_\_\_\_\_. The United Nations say 900,000 civilians moved to \_\_\_\_\_ the violence in the past month. Huge numbers of internal refugees were on the \_\_\_\_\_ on Thursday as the army eased a curfew. Hundreds of cars and overloaded buses formed a huge \_\_\_\_\_. They were all heading for refugee camps in the south. Pakistan's Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani said the \_\_\_\_\_ refugee crisis is his nation's worst since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

*estimates*  
*convoy*  
*unfolding*  
*avoid*  
*growing*  
*move*  
*escape*  
*displaced*

Fighting between the Pakistan military and Taliban \_\_\_\_\_ has got worse in recent days. Army commanders are increasing their efforts to \_\_\_\_\_ out the militants. Pakistan's 'Dawn' newspaper reported heavy fighting in the north-west of the country as the military \_\_\_\_\_ on the offensive. Army Major General Athar Abbas said his troops killed at least 55 Taliban fighters in \_\_\_\_\_ attacks. More than 15,000 Pakistan troops have \_\_\_\_\_ into the Swat Valley to take on around 5,000 \_\_\_\_\_ -armed militants. A Taliban spokesman denied the casualty \_\_\_\_\_. Muslim Khan said his fighters have killed over 37 Pakistani soldiers in fighting since Wednesday. He said Pakistani troops killed \_\_\_\_\_ three Taliban soldiers.

*heavily*  
*went*  
*rebels*  
*just*  
*figures*  
*root*  
*recent*  
*moved*

## **LISTENING:** Listen and fill in the gaps.

A new humanitarian crisis \_\_\_\_\_ Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis \_\_\_\_\_ homes to escape fighting between the Pakistan Army and Taliban forces. There are estimates that nearly one-and-a-half million people in the Swat Valley area of Pakistan are displaced. The United Nations say 900,000 civilians \_\_\_\_\_ the violence in the past month. Huge numbers of internal refugees were on the move on Thursday as the army \_\_\_\_\_. Hundreds of cars and overloaded buses formed a huge convoy. They were \_\_\_\_\_ refugee camps in the south. Pakistan's Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani said the growing refugee crisis is \_\_\_\_\_ since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Fighting between the Pakistan military and Taliban rebels \_\_\_\_\_ recent days. Army commanders are increasing their efforts to \_\_\_\_\_ militants. Pakistan's 'Dawn' newspaper reported heavy fighting in the north-west of the country \_\_\_\_\_ went on the offensive. Army Major General Athar Abbas said his troops killed at least 55 Taliban fighters in recent attacks. More than 15,000 Pakistan troops have \_\_\_\_\_ Swat Valley to take on around 5,000 heavily-armed militants. A Taliban spokesman denied the \_\_\_\_\_. Muslim Khan said his fighters have killed over 37 Pakistani soldiers in fighting since Wednesday. He said Pakistani \_\_\_\_\_ three Taliban soldiers.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'million' and 'flee'.

<b>million</b>	<b>flee</b>
----------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unfolding</li><li>• estimates</li><li>• avoid</li><li>• ended</li><li>• huge</li><li>• worst</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• recent</li><li>• efforts</li><li>• heavy</li><li>• troops</li><li>• figures</li><li>• three</li></ul>
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# STUDENT TALIBAN SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about the Taliban in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# TALIBAN DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Taliban'?
- c) What do you know about the Taliban?
- d) Do you think the Pakistani army can beat the Taliban?
- e) What do the Taliban want?
- f) What should the world do to help the Pakistani refugees?
- g) How would you feel about fleeing your home?
- h) How would you feel about being in the middle of two fighting armies?
- i) Do you think there'll always be refugee camps? How can we prevent the need for them?
- j) What other humanitarian crises do you know of in the world today?

*A million flee Pakistan-Taliban fighting – 16th May, 2009*  
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# TALIBAN DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you think would happen in the world if the Taliban beat the Pakistan Army?
- c) Would you worry about the Taliban being in control of Pakistan's nuclear weapons?
- d) Do you think American troops should go into Pakistan to fight the Taliban?
- e) Why do you think it's so difficult to beat the Taliban?
- f) Have militants ever fought in your country (or a country near yours)?
- g) How could the world make the Taliban stop fighting and talk peace?
- h) Why do people join the Taliban?
- i) What three adjectives would you use to describe the Taliban (and why)?
- j) What questions would you ask Taliban leaders?

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# LANGUAGE

A new humanitarian (1) \_\_\_\_\_ is unfolding in Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have fled their homes to escape fighting between the Pakistan Army and Taliban forces. There are (2) \_\_\_\_\_ that nearly one-and-a-half million people in the Swat Valley area of Pakistan are displaced. The United Nations say 900,000 civilians moved to (3) \_\_\_\_\_ the violence in the past month. Huge numbers of internal refugees were on the (4) \_\_\_\_\_ on Thursday as the army eased a curfew. Hundreds of cars and overloaded buses formed a huge convoy. They were all heading (5) \_\_\_\_\_ refugee camps in the south. Pakistan's Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani said the growing refugee crisis is his (6) \_\_\_\_\_ worst since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Fighting between the Pakistan military and Taliban rebels has got worse (7) \_\_\_\_\_ recent days. Army commanders are increasing their efforts to (8) \_\_\_\_\_ out the militants. Pakistan's 'Dawn' newspaper reported heavy fighting in the north-west of the country (9) \_\_\_\_\_ the military went on the offensive. Army Major General Athar Abbas said his troops killed at (10) \_\_\_\_\_ 55 Taliban fighters in recent attacks. More than 15,000 Pakistan troops have moved into the Swat Valley to take on around 5,000 heavily-armed militants. A Taliban spokesman (11) \_\_\_\_\_ the casualty figures. Muslim Khan said his fighters have killed over 37 Pakistani soldiers in fighting (12) \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday. He said Pakistani troops killed just three Taliban soldiers.

## Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- |     |              |                |                |                |
|-----|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1.  | (a) crises   | (b) crisscross | (c) cross      | (d) crisis     |
| 2.  | (a) estimate | (b) estimates  | (c) estimation | (d) estimated  |
| 3.  | (a) avoid    | (b) avoiding   | (c) avoidance  | (d) avoids     |
| 4.  | (a) moving   | (b) mover      | (c) move       | (d) moves      |
| 5.  | (a) by       | (b) with       | (c) for        | (d) at         |
| 6.  | (a) nations  | (b) nation's   | (c) national's | (d) nations'   |
| 7.  | (a) in       | (b) an         | (c) of         | (d) on         |
| 8.  | (a) twig     | (b) leaf       | (c) branch     | (d) root       |
| 9.  | (a) was      | (b) as         | (c) has        | (d) as soon as |
| 10. | (a) lost     | (b) lastly     | (c) last       | (d) least      |
| 11. | (a) denial   | (b) deny       | (c) denied     | (d) denies     |
| 12. | (a) since    | (b) by         | (c) for        | (d) from       |



# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about the Taliban. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. HUMANITARIAN CRISES:** Make a poster about different humanitarian crises in the world today. Include their history and solutions on how to end each crisis. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. PAKISTAN FIGHTING:** Write a magazine article about the fighting between Pakistan and the Taliban. Include imaginary interviews with a Pakistani soldier and a Taliban militant.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to Pakistan's Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani. Ask him three questions about the Taliban. Give him three ideas on how he could win his war. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. F      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. T      g. T      h. T

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. unfolding | a. developing       |
| 2. fled      | b. escaped from     |
| 3. estimates | c. guesses          |
| 4. displaced | d. homeless         |
| 5. partition | e. division         |
| 6. root out  | f. find             |
| 7. offensive | g. attack           |
| 8. troops    | h. soldiers         |
| 9. casualty  | i. dead and injured |
| 10. just     | j. only             |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. A new humanitarian crisis is             | a. unfolding in Pakistan  |
| 2. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have | b. fled their homes       |
| 3. 900,000 civilians moved to avoid the     | c. violence               |
| 4. cars and overloaded buses formed         | d. a huge convoy          |
| 5. the partition of India and               | e. Pakistan in 1947       |
| 6. Fighting between the Pakistan military   | f. and Taliban rebels     |
| 7. increasing their efforts to root         | g. out the militants      |
| 8. the military went                        | h. on the offensive       |
| 9. A Taliban spokesman denied the           | i. casualty figures       |
| 10. Pakistani troops killed just            | j. three Taliban soldiers |

## GAP FILL:

### A million flee Pakistan-Taliban fighting

A new humanitarian crisis is **unfolding** in Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have fled their homes to **escape** fighting between the Pakistan Army and Taliban forces. There are **estimates** that nearly one-and-a-half million people in the Swat Valley area of Pakistan are **displaced**. The United Nations say 900,000 civilians moved to **avoid** the violence in the past month. Huge numbers of internal refugees were on the **move** on Thursday as the army eased a curfew. Hundreds of cars and overloaded buses formed a huge **convoy**. They were all heading for refugee camps in the south. Pakistan's Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani said the **growing** refugee crisis is his nation's worst since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Fighting between the Pakistan military and Taliban **rebels** has got worse in recent days. Army commanders are increasing their efforts to **root** out the militants. Pakistan's 'Dawn' newspaper reported heavy fighting in the north-west of the country as the military **went** on the offensive. Army Major General Athar Abbas said his troops killed at least 55 Taliban fighters in **recent** attacks. More than 15,000 Pakistan troops have **moved** into the Swat Valley to take on around 5,000 **heavily**-armed militants. A Taliban spokesman denied the casualty **figures**. Muslim Khan said his fighters have killed over 37 Pakistani soldiers in fighting since Wednesday. He said Pakistani troops killed **just** three Taliban soldiers.

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d    2 - b    3 - a    4 - c    5 - c    6 - b    7 - a    8 - d    9 - b    10 - d    11 - c    12 - a