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## Militants Suspected in Mutilation of 6 Kashmiris

By AMY WALDMAN

NEW DELHI, March 28 — There was a new and gruesome spate of violence in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir today, just days after the killing of 24 Hindus in a village there. Men believed to be Islamic militants cut off the noses of six villagers, according to police reports.

Islamic militants have been waging a 14-year insurgency for the independence, or accession to Pakistan of Indian-held Kashmir.

Pakistan also claims the territory, and the two nuclear-armed nations nearly went to war last year.

India accuses Pakistan of sponsoring and supporting the militants as well as providing a base from which the militants can cross into India for the attacks.

In the latest incident, eight gunmen reportedly entered a remote village in Rajouri District, which has been battered by violence in recent months, and asked for six Muslim villagers, including a woman, by name.

They accused the villagers of being agents of the Indian Army, and mutilated their faces.

Elsewhere in Kashmir, militants also killed five civilians in three separate incidents. One soldier was killed in an attack on an army camp.

Any violence in Kashmir in the coming weeks is certain to be watched closely in India and elsewhere. India explicitly blamed Pakistan for the recent massacre, and reacted angrily to suggestions from American officials that the two countries should resume a dialogue.

In a sign of the concern that the massacre has generated, the United States and Britain issued a joint statement urging Pakistan to fulfill its commitments to stop infiltration into Indian-held Kashmir along the Line of Control separating the two countries' territories. Pakistan's president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, had promised American officials a "permanent end" to crossborder terrorism last year.

The Indian statement added that Pakistan "should also do its utmost to discourage any acts of violence by militants in Kashmir."