

U.S. House takes up move to brand Pak terrorist state

WASHINGTON: The U.S. House of Representatives has referred a bipartisan resolution branding Pakistan as a terrorist state to its International Relations Committee. The resolution was introduced by Democratic Congressman Frank Pallone.

"Besides the terrorist organisations themselves, those countries that harbour terrorist organisations or provide them with technical, financial, political or other support should be held accountable," Mr Pallone said, introducing the resolution in the House on Friday. The resolution was referred to the committee on Saturday amid suggestions from the Clinton administration that Islamabad could face being branded terrorist if it continued to support militant groups.

Mr Pallone, a former co-chairman of the India Caucus, has also written to secretary of state Madeleine Albright calling for Pakistan to be designated as a state sponsor of terrorism.

"For a long time, I have been expressing concern about the role of Pakistan in terms of international terrorist activities. In particular, we have seen Pakistani involvement in the ongoing terror campaign in Kashmir, but it doesn't end there," he said.

The resolution was co-sponsored by Republican Congressman Bill McCollum.

Mr Pallone's congressional resolution noted, "The secretary of state, pursuant to the Export Administration Act, should designate the Islamic Republic of Pakistan as a country the government of which has repeatedly provided support for international terrorism. "In addition to terrorist organisations themselves, those countries that harbour terrorist organisations or provide them with technical, financial, political or other support should also be held accountable," the resolution said.

According to Mr Pallone, given the shared threat that the United

States and other countries face from international terrorist organisations, the state department is urged to explore ways to step up U.S. cooperation with those countries in the struggle against terrorism.

The various clauses of the resolution noted that reports from Western media sources have cited Pakistan as a base and training ground for terrorist groups, and that Pakistan's government has demonstrated a reluctance to halt the use of its soil for terrorist organisations. It also cited reports that have implicated Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) directly in terrorist activities, as well as the international drug trade.

The Harakat-ul-Ansar, a terrorist organisation based in Pakistan, was declared a foreign terrorist organisation by the state department in 1997. The hijackers of the Indian Airlines plane in December 1999 were identified as being part of the Harakat-ul-Mujahideen, and among the hijackers' demands were the release of the organisation's former general secretary, Maulana Masood Azhar, who hails from Pakistan, and other jailed Pakistani militants.

The resolution also stated that during the December 1999 hijacking incident, it was reported that Indian intelligence intercepted satellite telephone conversations between militant groups in Kashmir that confirmed Pakistan had links to the hijackers, and that it has been reported that, after the crisis ended, the hijackers left Afghanistan for Pakistan.

Meanwhile, House International Relations Committee chairman Benjamin Gilman has urged the Clinton administration to declare Afghanistan's Taliban a "terrorist movement" and put Pakistan on notice that if it does not cut its strings with the Taliban then the same will happen to it. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

30 JAN 2000

U.S. has not issued any warning to Pak.: Musharraf

By Amit Baruah HO-1

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 23 The Pakistani military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has said that India would be taught a 'lesson' if it tried to cross the Line of Control (LoC), adding that he did not want to throw a 'challenge' at India.

"Indians are not refraining from crossing the LoC out of any love for Pakistan. They would have done it long before if they could. We will teach them a lesson on the LoC or anywhere else," Gen. Musharraf told *The Nation* newspaper in an interview published today.

On his discussions with the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, Gen. Musharraf said Washington had not issued any "warning" on terrorism-related issues or an early return to democracy.

"During talks with the Americans, I used the word reciprocity that should be observed in case of Kashmir. If India wants an end to the Kashmiri struggle then it should accept that Kashmir is an issue and discussions should be held on it. They should end atrocities and if there is reduction of troops in Kashmir we will request the Mujahideen," the General was quoted as saying.

If these remarks are accurate, then the Pakistani Chief Executive has acknowledged that Islamabad does have some influence over the militant groups, even though he believes that there's is a 'struggle'.

Gen. Musharraf claimed that the Americans were 'happy' with him because he had not promised them things behind the country's back. "I am promising them things that I am telling you genuinely....I always come up front. Don't look at me suspiciously. I tell things in their true perspective."

The Chief Executive said he would announce an 'outline' for return to 'real democracy' in a couple of months. This would be followed by a debate and then the details would be fitted in. The U.S., he maintained, had accepted his contention that it was not possible to provide a timeframe for a return to democracy.

To a question about 'doubts' being expressed about his being in charge of the Government and the Army, the General said a deliberate disinformation campaign was being conducted. A lot of money had been pumped into this exercise.

Gen. Musharraf stated that the Army was totally united and he was in charge. The Corps Commanders met every 15 to 20 days, more frequently than earlier, and they were all on board and fully motivated.

The Chief Executive rejected as baseless rumours that the Corps Commanders had accepted large sums of money as bribes, adding in a lighter vein that no one had made such offers when he was the Corps Commander. The General said he could not even imagine any one of the Corps Commanders accepting money.

THE HINDU

24 JAN 2000

SHARIF'S TRIAL-II

Case Rests On Inconsistent Pleas

IN FIRs, there is a statement of the facts and averments based on them, setting up the writer's case. Read this averment: "I came to know that a criminal conspiracy was hatched by the then Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif and other co-conspirators to hijack flight PK-805 in furtherance of common criminal intent and ulterior motive to kill COAS General Pervez Musharraf and other passengers on board, to force and abduct COAS General Pervez Musharraf with intent to wrongfully confine him in pursuance of act of terrorism, so as to make the command of the Pakistan Army ineffective and endangering and exposing the security of state of Pakistan to external aggression and internal subversion."

A plot "to cause the plane to crash" is totally inconsistent with one to "abduct COAS Gen Pervez Musharraf with intent to wrongfully confine him". Even in a civil suit inconsistent pleas by the plaintiff are not permissible. Here, a man is being charged with attempt to murder and the rest on pleas brazenly inconsistent. What is the case the accused are supposed to meet — attempt to murder by a conspiracy, "to cause the plane to crash" or "to force and abduct" Musharraf at Nawabshah in order to "confine him".

IMPLAUSIBLE

The DG Civil Aviation Authority Aminullah Chaudhry, who became approver, the Chairman Pakistan International Airlines Corporation, Shahid Khakan Abbasi, and Ghous Ali Shah gave orders "to prevent and to unlawfully obstruct safe landing" of the plane — at Karachi. This cannot possibly amount to attempt to murder. This is how the FIR brings in that charge against them. They obstructed the landing "so as to cause crash of flight PK-805 even if the pilot landed despite refusal of permission to land by ATC". No pilot in his senses would do such a thing. There are in fact two PAF airbases in Karachi under military control.

The FIR crosses limits of plausibility when it spells out the objectives of the conspiracy. It was first, to "cause crash of flight PK-805 ... so as to murder COAS ...". However, "in the event the flight PK-805 succeeded in landing at Karachi or Nawabshah despite being prohibited ... to arrest and wrongfully confine the COAS ...". Another objective was "to strike terror and create a sense of fear and insecurity in the passengers and crew on board

By AG NOORANI
flight PK-805 including 60 innocent children of Karachi and Lahore American Schools who were returning from Colombo to Karachi after taking part in an international swimming gala at Colombo".

The FIR concludes by exposing the illegality of the investigative process: "Different agencies, ie civil aviation, PIA, police, ASF, Army authorities, which were directly concerned with the incident, also carried out primary probe into the matter." Such an elaborate inquiry, spread over a month prior to the FIR, is illegal.

The charges are: conspiracy (1) "to hijack PK-805"; (2) "to commit the murder of COAS Pervez Musharraf and 197 others" on the plane; (3) "and failing which, to wrongfully arrest and confine the COAS in pursuance of the act of terrorism and with intent to kill passengers on board". Significantly, there is no averment of a plot to kill the COAS after his arrest. So, his murder could not have been a prime objective, after all.

Five persons were accused of participating in the conspiracy — Nawaz Sharif; Ghous Ali Shah, Aminullah Chaudhry, Shahid Khakan Abbasi and Rana Maqbool Ahmed.

They were charged with offences under Section 402-B of the Pakistan Penal Code (the IPC (renamed) which provides punishment for hijacking); Section 365 (kidnapping), Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) 1997 and Section 324 Qisas and Diyat Act (attempt to murder).

USE OF FORCE

The FIR itself belies the charge of hijacking. "The flight crew was subjected to tremendous mental stress by receiving illegal order of the then Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif and ex-DG CAA Aminullah Chaudhry through Wing Commander Farooq, secretary to ex-DG CAA Aminullah Chaudhry and from Air Traffic Control authorities, specially Yousuf Abbas, Chief Operating Officer, and Syed Aqeel Ahmad, General Manager Air Traffic Services of Karachi Airport." In this elaborate chain of command, an "illegal order" was transmitted from one person to another, none of whom was bound in law to obey it, least of all the pilot. He was not subjected to physical force but admittedly only to "tremendous mental stress". That falls well outside any definition of hijacking.

Orders given from the ground, no matter how improper or illegal, do not fall within any of these definitions. The charge of hijacking is not made out in the FIR even if all its statements are accepted. No charge can be framed for hijacking, for Section 402-B PPC defines hijacking: "Whoever unlawfully or by the use or show of force or by threats of any kind seizes or exercises control of an aircraft, is said to commit hijacking." The FIR does not allege any of these one bit.

The same is true of one under Section 7A of the ATA later in the *challan*. It was inserted in 1999 in the 1997 law. On 13 December 1999 the Supreme Court ruled on a petition which contended that in so far as it includes illegal strikes, go-slows, lockouts as "civil" commotion" and providing punishment for the same, militates against the Fundamental Right of freedom of expression provided in Article 19 of the Constitution. The court held that since the expressions "illegal strike, go-slow, illegal lockout" were not defined in the Act, they had no nexus with terrorism and as such, the same could not be made punishable under the Act. As for "civil commotion" by other means it is stretching the language too far to say that Sharif's conduct would have created "civil commotion". As far-fetched is the charge that arrest of a sacked COAS would make the army's command "ineffective" and expose the country to "aggression" and "subversion".

Section 7 of ATA provides punishment for a "terrorist act" as defined in Section 6. It contemplates use of weapons, poisons, gases etc. or threats to "the use of force".



INTENT TO KILL

Admittedly, bar Musharraf, the passengers knew nothing about the happenings. This was not a case of a "terrorist act".

Thirdly whether Musharraf's arrest would have been legal or not, it could not possibly have constituted kidnapping, as the offence is known to law.

These four offences — hijacking, causing "civil commotion", terrorism and kidnapping — are not made out even if all the statements in the FIR are established. It does however, explicitly allege an intent to murder, however implausibly. A trial on this charge can proceed provided that the statements of witnesses recorded by the magistrate lend support to it. They do not.

Detained on 12 October, Nawaz Sharif was formally arrested on 17 November. The news agency NNI reported that the nine-member crew spoke to the police that day. "In their statements, the witnesses said that when the Karachi-bound flight from Colombo arrived at Karachi airport for landing, the lights of Jinnah Terminal runway were put off and the pilot was directed to take the plane to Nawabshah airport. They said that on the pilot's refusal to land, the plane remained in the air for quite some time and it kept flying till left with only six-minute fuel. They told the police that finally they received a message that the Army had taken over and now the plane could land."

Sharif was produced before the magistrate only on 20 November when he met his lawyers for the first time.

(To be concluded)

N-bombs will be used as a last resort: Musharraf

By Harvey Stockwin
The Times of India News Service

HONG KONG: Pakistan's chief executive Gen Pervez Musharraf was in China for 48 hours, but he found time to give CNN an interview where he clarified Pakistan's nuclear doctrine. He said he would welcome China taking a more active role in mediating the Kashmir dispute, and blamed India for the current deterioration of Indo-Pakistan relations.

All the questions by CNN's Beijing bureau chief Rebecca MacKinnon related to relations with India. Gen. Musharraf made it perfectly clear that India was to blame. The interview was broadcast on Tuesday, a day after Gen. Musharraf had talks with China's President Jiang Zemin and second-ranking leader National People's Congress chairman Li Peng.

MacKinnon's final question was whether Pakistan would be willing to pledge not to use nuclear weapons first in any conflict? Gen. Musharraf's answer: "Well, this is a complex issue. Our basic strategy is one of minimum deterrence and our nuclear potential is meant as a deterrence, a deterrence in the conventional as well as in the non-conventional field. Now as far as its physical usage is concerned, certainly I don't see its use at all. Any sane person would not like to see nuclear bombs being used. Having said that, certainly I would like to use it—it will be used as an absolutely last resort—when the security and integrity of Pakistan is at stake and I would like to take a decision when the opportunity comes."

Two points about this statement should be noted. CNN transcribes in the last sentence "it would be used as an absolutely last resort" when Gen. Musharraf clearly says "will" in the audio which CNN provides. Certainly there is ambiguity about the sound when Gen. Musharraf says, also in the last sentence, "I would like to use it..." and it is possible that he said "wouldn't". That said, and what is likely to surprise observers is the breadth of Gen. Musharraf's definition of what constitutes "a last resort".

Gen. Musharraf began the interview by noting that China has been "generally very supportive on the (Kashmir) issue... whatever our stand, they have always agreed with our stand". Asked whether he would like China to take a more active role in helping to mediate the conflict, Gen. Musharraf said Pakistan would certainly like China to do so, but "I wonder whether the other side would like China to participate... the problem is from the Indian side. When we ask a third party to mediate, they say we are violating the Simla Agreement or the

Lahore Declaration... You ought to put this question to them whether they will accept Chinese mediation. We would certainly like it."

MacKinnon said Indo-Pakistan tensions are escalating and asked what Gen. Musharraf proposed "as a solution to de-escalate tensions?" Gen. Musharraf took a bleak view of the relationship: "Yes, I will agree that the tensions do escalate, are escalating, and that relations between India and Pakistan are very low. But when I sit alone and think who is responsible, whether we are responsible, and I realistically and honestly ponder over this issue, the result, or the answer that comes to my mind, is 'no', we are not responsible. It's the Indians who are responsible. It's they who catch an incident and create such a hysteria within their own nation using all facets of their media to project wrongs and creating hysteria to



'It's the Indians who create such hysteria within their own nation using all facets of media to project wrongs to a level where extrication becomes difficult for themselves'

a level where extrication from that hysteria becomes very difficult for themselves."

Having thus demonstrated yet again the one-sidedness by both parties, Gen. Musharraf did offer an olive branch: "I have been saying that we are for peace. Now, just because I happen to be a military man doesn't mean I can't talk peace. I have been trained for war, all right, but I can talk peace and I am offering peace to the Indians."

Gen. Musharraf dismissed India's recent allegations concerning Pakistan's possible involvement in the hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane as "totally baseless" and said he didn't believe the names so far given by India to be credible or authentic. "Pakistan was not involved. It's the Indian desire, actually, since long, that they should somehow get Pakistan declared as a terrorist state.

Now they are using this gimmick, the hijacking incident, which actually has aggravated because of their own administrative failures, and they are pinning it on Pakistan and trying to gain maximum leverage in trying to declare us a terrorist state, which is absolutely baseless."

The interview was notable for its anti-Indian tone. Whether this was also the policy line which Gen. Musharraf was conveying to his Chinese hosts remains to be seen. An appropriate commentary on the interview was provided by a snap poll conducted by the CNN website. Asked whether they thought strong ties between China and Pakistan could spell trouble for India in the long term, 500 viewers or 66 per cent have so far said 'yes' and only 262 viewers or 34 per cent have disagreed.

Musharraf confident of cementing ties with China

Beijing, January 17

PAKISTAN'S MILITARY ruler General Pervez Musharraf today termed China as a "trusted friend" and said during his two-day stay here he would discuss with the Chinese leaders the security situation and various steps taken by Islamabad to bring peace and stability in the region.

"During my stay in Beijing, I look forward to an in-depth discussion with our Chinese friends on the security situation and various steps the Government of Pakistan has taken to bring peace and stability in the region," Gen Musharraf

said, kicking off his maiden international visit outside the Arab world since seizing power in a coup on October 12 last.

Lauding the steady growth in Sino-Pakistani relations, the Chief Executive said in his arrival statement, "I am confident that my visit would further fortify our ties, strengthen our mutually beneficial relations and enhance mutual cooperation in international fora."

He described China as "a country which Pakistan holds dear as its most reliable and trusted friend," and added "my visit to China is a reaffirmation of our close and fraternal ties."

Islamabad's relations with Beijing has grown in strength and vitality and "the long-standing ties between our two countries are underpinned by mutual trust and confidence. China has stood by Pakistan in difficult times," he said.

Tomorrow, he is to meet President Jiang Zemin and Parliamentary Chairman and former Premier Li Peng, who is number two in the Chinese political hierarchy.

The Pakistani leader is accompanied by Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz and Commerce and Industry Minister Abdul Razzaq Daud. But

there was no word on whether any new economic or trade promotion agreements were in the works.

Gen Musharraf, who assumed the title of Chief Executive, has visited several Islamic countries in apparent moves to gain international acceptance of his government.

He is trying to offset Western-led criticism of his coup that toppled Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

State media in China, a close ally of Pakistan since the 1960s, has stressed that Beijing and Islamabad see eye-to-eye on most international issues, including human rights. (Agencies)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
18 JAN 2000

U.S. and Britain ask General Musharraf to ban Harkat-ul-Mujahideen

ISLAMABAD: The U.S. and Britain have privately asked Pakistan's army ruler General Pervez Musharraf to curb militant groups operating from Pakistan, and, as a first step, ban the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and disband its organisational presence in Pakistan, a leading daily reported on Saturday.

Although the visit of a U.S. senate team and Britain's chief of defence staff General Charles Guthrie were separately planned, U.S. and Britain are closely co-operating in submitting a list of bench-

marks that the military government should take if Pakistan wants to gain international acceptability.

Senior western officials said they would like to see Islamabad curb militant groups operating from its soil, sign the CTBT, make positive moves towards bringing about peace in Afghanistan, help apprehend wanted Saudi terrorist Osama Bin Laden, improve ties with India and lay down a timetable for restoration of democracy, English daily 'The News' said.

They said the first and most important step

should be to curb activities of the Harkat, which the U.S. has already designated a terrorist group. The Harkat is responsible for last month's hijack of an Indian Airlines plane to Afghanistan and for kidnapping and killing six western tourists, including Britons and Americans, in Kashmir in 1994.

Pakistan's strong statements against terrorism need to be backed by curbs on the most active groups such as the Harkat. "I stressed the need to (Musharraf) for Pakistan to join in international

efforts to eradicate international terrorism in all its forms," General Guthrie told a small group of journalists after his meeting with General Musharraf.

"It is now up to Gen. Musharraf to convince us that he is taking steps in the right direction," Gen. Guthrie said. U.S. senators, led by minority leader Tom Daschle, said that they were appreciative of Gen. Musharraf's attempts to "put Pakistan back on the rails, but Washington was still looking for concrete actions and measures towards reforming

the social and economic mess and curbing terrorism," the newspaper said.

Diplomats said as Pakistanis were becoming impatient with the lack of progress in the army's reform agenda, so too were western capitals. "This message will be delivered even more strongly to Pakistan next week when a high-level U.S. diplomatic mission headed by U.S. assistant secretary of state Karl Inderfurth, which will include top U.S. counter-terrorism officials, visits Islamabad," it said. (PTI)

DEMOCRACY FATIGUE

5/8 But the military is no better 16/1

NOBODY seems to be greatly impressed with General Musharraf but then neither is anybody excessively bothered by what happens to Nawaz Sharif. That is the opinion in the Pakistani media. According to one commentator, two chargesheets against Nawaz Sharif and his brother in the anti-terrorist court in Karachi, one of hijacking, treason and conspiracy to murder, the other waging war against the state, reflect Musharraf's animus against the man. Musharraf should have stopped with Sharif's removal. The PML seems undecided whether to swim with the tide. They filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the military takeover and since the courts seem to be functioning normally there is good sense in doing this. Ejazul Haq, son of the dead dictator, says the party will not protect the corrupt, while Shujat Hussain, former interior minister, seems to crave for Musharraf's attention. In other words, the PML is in no position to mount a political fight in Sharif's favour. The judiciary is showing some independence. Justice Shabbir Ahmed threw out some intelligence operatives and transferred the case to a lower court. Only time will tell if the question of a fair trial has been settled and how the military react to an adverse judgement. In any case, Sharif continues to benefit from international pressure in favour of a fair trial for and against the coup.

Musharraf now has a sort of an agenda. He has announced a Rs 700 crore cut in the defence budget and a deal for tax evaders, is talking economics with gusto, reducing the number of Punjabis in the higher echelons of government, meeting with the MQM to try and address the Mohajir problem. The military is also looking at alternative systems of government. It may be, as a Pakistani commentator put it, that "A government outside the pale has to justify itself by its performance", but one also gets the impression that blaming 11 years of Pakistani democracy, not just Sharif, is part of the justification on offer. There are a number of people, suffering from democracy-fatigue, who feel authoritarianism will eliminate political ambitions and pressure groups, combine objective and impartial administration with military ruthlessness. Maybe. Part of the problem with previous administrations was that executive decisions were often biased: Sharif gunning for Benazir, Benazir gunning for Sharif, while doing nothing to clean up their own acts. Musharraf, on the other hand, seems to gun for everyone in sight and that may, indeed, create a favourable first impression. But, if he thinks that recovered loot will be enough to put Pakistan's economy back on the rails, he is being wishful. There are, in Pakistan deeply-entrenched structures of power and privilege that pervert government policy and appropriate or misappropriate the fruits of development. This has as much to do with people's aspirations as the fight against corruption and is the area where the failure of earlier military regimes must be inscribed. What qualifies Musharraf, in this regard, at a time when all sorts of radical Islamic pressures may thwart, from within, any modernising agenda that the top brass may adopt?

THE STATESMAN

16 JAN 2000

Intent on restoring democracy, US, UK sending teams to Pak

■ Senate leader Tom Daschle to visit New Delhi next

REUTERS

ISLAMABAD, JAN 11

HIGH-LEVEL British and US delegations arrive in Pakistan this week to try to push the country's military rulers to set a time-frame for a return to democracy, diplomats said today.

A four-member Congressional delegation led by Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle arrives on Thursday, one day after Britain's chief of defence staff Sir Charles Guthrie was to arrive for a three-day visit.

"I know they will discuss the military's plans for a return to democratic government in Pakistan," a US embassy official said.

The United States and Britain both strongly condemned the military coup in October which removed prime minister Nawaz Sharif and put General Pervez Musharraf in power, but have not called for Sharif to be returned to power.

Daschle's two-day visit was to

have taken place before the coup but was delayed by a budget fight in the Congress. It will be the highest level US visit since General Musharraf seized power.

The embassy official said he expected Daschle's talks with Musharraf to cover a range of topics, including regional security and the nuclear Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty which Washington has been pressuring both Pakistan and India to sign.

Pakistani critics of the treaty say it will prevent Islamabad from developing and modernising its nuclear weapon system, which they see as a deterrent to the nuclear programme of rival India.

The visits come as Pakistan's relations with India have deteriorated further, with New Delhi accusing Pakistan of being behind the recent hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane.

Islamabad denies the charges.

In London, a foreign office spokesman said Guthrie's mission was aimed at establishing

high-level British contact with General Musharraf, without endorsing his takeover.

"The visit is not a sign of return to business as usual. (Guthrie) will be making it clear that the British government views the military coup as unacceptable and we are looking to General Musharraf to restore democracy," the spokesman said.

"Sir Charles will also take the opportunity to underline British concerns about security issues and our expectation that Pakistan will play a responsible role in ensuring stability within the region."

The spokesman added that Guthrie and Gen Musharraf knew each other well from earlier military contacts.

Daschle was to visit New Delhi after Pakistan.

On Sunday, Senator Sam Brownback, chairman of the US House of Representatives subcommittee on South Asia, arrives in Pakistan and is also to meet Gen Musharraf.

INDIAN EXPRESS

12 JAN 2000

Pak. reins in Masood to meet U.S. demand

9/1

Pak (12)
HD

By Amit Baruah

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 8. Masood Azhar, the Pakistani cleric released by India in exchange for the hostages, has been asked by Islamabad to 'refrain' from making public statements and holding press conferences, *The News* reported today quoting 'sources' in the Pakistani Interior Ministry.

"He has also been advised to lie low and not agitate public sentiment," the report said, adding "the decision has been taken in the wake of two statements that caused Islamabad huge diplomatic embarrassment".

This report makes it clear that Pakistan does have "influence" over the likes of Masood Azhar. The fact that he has now been asked to "lie low" would also indicate that Masood Azhar was "allowed" to speak his mind in Karachi and Bahawalpur, his home town in Pakistani Punjab, soon after his return.

Pakistan would have hardly been embarrassed had Masood Azhar stuck to hitting out at India. Now that he has spoken out against the U.S., the Pakistani establishment has decided to rein him in. It will be interesting to see what kind of profile the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen leader maintains from now.

Interestingly, the official Associated Press of Pakistan (AFP) news agency today put out a statement, reportedly given by the cleric to the BBC, that he had not made any statement against the U.S.

"Whenever some incident takes place, India claims to have arrested several persons after the incident... in fact, the BJP Government is doing so to avert the pressure of the Opposition. All this issuance of photos... is a drama. This was done in the wake of my statement that all the five hijackers were Indian citizens and that they belonged to occupied Kashmir. Immediately after this, Advani sahib staged a drama and tried to mislead the press," Masood Azhar was quoted as saying.

That he is denying his anti-American statement

under pressure is clear from this AFP report from Karachi on Thursday quoting him as saying: "Tell Indians and those who have suppressed Muslims that Mujahideen are a force of Allah and will hoist the flag of Islam in this world soon... so marry for 'jihad', give birth for 'jihad' and earn money only for 'jihad' till the cruelty of America and India ends. I will not be at peace till Muslims get liberated."

In Bahawalpur on Friday, Masood Azhar again gave a call for 'jihad' to liberate Kashmir, with thousands of people reportedly being present.

He said if Pakistanis stood for 'jihad' then "half of India" could be liberated from "the Hindus" in a short time.

The cleric also revealed that he was not stopped at the Pakistani border of Chaman when he entered Pakistan along with Mushtaq Zargar and Ahmad Umar Saeed Sheikh. He claimed he was against terrorism and did not know the hijackers.

In a related development, Pakistan described as "hollow and frivolous" Indian claims that Islamabad had masterminded the hijacking.

India's objective, a Foreign Office spokesman said, was to get Pakistan declared a "terrorist" State. "Unfortunately for India, such a false and malicious charge is not easy to prove. Fabrication and circumstantial evidence only further exposes India."

The spokesman quoted a report in an Indian newspaper which clearly denied what the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, had said about the link between four arrested persons in India and the five hijackers. He also ridiculed the Indian claim of a telephone call intercept.

PTI reports:

The spokesman said in an interview to the CNN on Friday night that Pakistan would try the hijackers as per law if apprehended. Pakistan had been maintaining that the hijackers were not on its soil.

Onus on India to resume talks' Musharraf warns of pulling N-trigger

INDIA ABROAD NEWS SERVICE

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 4. — Pakistan will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons if its security is threatened, General Pervez Musharraf warned today.

"If the security of Pakistan is threatened, surely we would not allow it to die. That will not be allowed," he declared in an interview to CNN.

The General was responding to a question about the conditions in which his country would be prepared to use nuclear weapons, NNI news agency reported.

The chief executive, who seized power in a coup on 12 October, said Islamabad hadn't worked out any guiding principle as such for use of its nuclear arsenal, but "surely Pakistan's security will never be compromised".

Possession of nuclear weapons by both Pakistan and India — which carried out tests within weeks of each other in 1998 — had reduced the chances of an open conflagration on the Kashmir issue, he felt. "And since the dispute is there, and since we are both

nuclear powers now, the danger of this expanding into a nuclear conflagration should modify our stand and we must look at it more seriously," the General maintained.

India should be realistic and focus on resolving the Kashmir issue — the main cause of tension between the two countries. "Kashmir has been sidelined in the past and that is why there has never been any progress."

Whatever achieved in the past has been cosmetic. "If we strike at the root cause of tension between Pakistan and India, I am very sure we can resolve the problems and exist in peace," he asserted.

"The people of Kashmir do not want to be with India, and they have their own demands. The UN resolution is there, which calls for plebiscite to determine the wishes and desires of the people of Kashmir. And this is the dispute that needs to be resolved."

Gen Musharraf felt a solution lay in discussing the issue to arrive at a mutually agreeable

solution. "But the first step that has to be taken is to accept it as a problem and start a dialogue. And this is exactly what has not been done by India."

The General accused New Delhi of ignoring his overtures and maintained that Pakistan is prepared for a meaningful rapprochement with India. "I have been saying it in no uncertain terms that I would like to have peace in the region and, in that, I would surely like to go a long way. I have been saying that if India takes one step, I will take 10 steps. But on the other side there is no reciprocation," he regretted.

On CTBT: The Pakistani foreign minister today hinted the military-led government would consider signing a nuclear test ban treaty to avoid international isolation, but said the country wouldn't rush a decision, adds Reuters.

US NO TO ROGUE TAG

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4. — The USA has said that it will not accede to India's demand to declare Pakistan a terrorist state for its alleged role in the hijacking. But it urged concerned states to ensure that the hijackers are arrested and prosecuted.

"Pakistanis have told us that they condemn these acts of terrorism and they will meet their obligation to apprehend the hijackers and bring them to justice," the US state department spokesman said yesterday. — PTI

"A sound policy should keep Pakistan in the mainstream rather than push us to the fringe, liable to international isolation," Mr Abdul Sattar told a seminar held to debate the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

He felt the question to sign, or not to sign, should be made without

"unfounded doubts and emotions". "I suggest we ponder the CTBT question on the basis of its objective merits. Cold logic should guide us. Unfounded doubts and emotions shouldn't be allowed to cloud judgment."

Referring to the recent hijack drama, Mr Sattar accused India of trying to isolate Islamabad internationally by "falsely" implicating it in the hijacking.

He felt Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's statement yesterday was one such attempt to "defame" Pakistan. "The statement exposes the Indian desire to isolate Pakistan in the world community."

"Pakistan will never succumb to these designs of India. It will, inshallah (god willing), remain a part of the mainstream of international opinion."

Yesterday, Mr Vajpayee accused Islamabad of involvement in the hijack and said New Delhi would try to get Pakistan declared a terrorist state.

THE STATESMAN

- 5 JAN 2000

Pak envoy in Nepal runs currency racket

Rs 50,000 fake Indian cash found □ Claims diplomatic immunity

Kathmandu, Jan. 3: The police in the Nepalese capital Kathmandu has raided the house of a Pakistan embassy official here and recovered 50,000 fake Indian currency notes from the premises.

A report appearing in the *Kathmandu Post* on Monday said that the Valley Crime Investigation Department of the police, after receiving a tip off on Sunday night, conducted an undercover operation on the house of Asim Saboor, an assistant secretary in the Pakistan embassy here and recovered Rs 50,000 in fake Indian notes.

Officials of the crime investigation department said Mr Saboor had sold 1,000 fake Rs 500 bills to an undercover officer at a park in the capital. The notes were in the currency denomination of Rs 500 each.

The Nepalese daily quoting senior police officials went on to say that Saboor had been

involved in the money laundering of fake Indian currency for quite some time and was suspected of stashing millions more inside his rented two-storey apartment in Kathmandu's Maharajgunj area.

The house is just 100 metres east of the personal residence of Nepal's foreign minister Dr Ram Sharan Mahat.

Backed by senior Pakistan embassy officials, Saboor has reportedly claimed diplomatic immunity and locked himself and his family inside the apartment.

The apartment has been surrounded by the police, who are awaiting further orders from the higher ups.

A telephone tap leading into the apartment and water supply have been cut off.

The daily also quoted the police officials as saying that Saboor had links with one Lakhbir Singh, who was apprehended by

them in October 1998 while attempting to ship RDX explosives into India.

The police claimed that the RDX was given to Lakhbir Singh by Saboor.

Nepal's foreign minister Mahat, when asked to comment on the incident, said that it was too early to anything on the issue, and added that the government would say something only after finding out the truth.

Superintendent of police, Rabindra Pratap Shah, who personally supervised the undercover operation, told the *Kathmandu Post* that the police did not even know that Saboor was a citizen and diplomat of Pakistan.

He said that the police went to Saboor's apartment to arrest him and was then told that he worked for the Pakistan embassy, forcing the agents, conducting the raid to back off.

The government is yet to decide on how to

deal with the situation and whether Mr Saboor is protected under diplomatic immunity conventions.

The Indian government has in recent weeks expressed concern at fake currency notes flooding the market from neighbouring Nepal.

The news of the raid on the Pakistan official's home has come as a bad news for the Nepalese Government, which is still attempting to recover from the hijacking episode of an Indian Airlines Airbus.

The eight-day stand-off between the hijackers, the Taliban and the Indian government affected Nepal's image as a country as well as its potential as a tourist destination.

In recent years, Nepal has also emerged as a major base for the clandestine activities of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence wing.

(ANI, AP)

Pak.'s Afghan connection

HD-17 2012

A symbiotic relationship exists between the Taliban and the Pakistani state. And, says AMIT BARUAH, the ISI Directorate has always kept close control of this crucial area.

THE "JEHAD is not terrorism" statement made by Pakistan's Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, must have been greeted with cheers in Kandahar, headquarters of the Taliban Amir-ul-Momineen, Mullah Mohammad Omar. Ironically, it appears that rather than Pakistan having a moderating influence on the Taliban, the militia's agenda and position has been publicly justified by none other than Pakistan's supreme leader. The permission accorded to "Chechnya" to open an embassy in Kabul is a clear indication that the Taliban remains a firm supporter of an "international jihad".

A symbiotic relationship exists between the Taliban and the Pakistani state, though there may be some pulls and pressures in the equation. Afghan policy has never been trusted to civilian Governments, the ISI Directorate has always kept close control of this crucial area.

Even today, Pakistan has not publicly asked that Osama bin Laden, named the most-wanted terrorist by the United States, be expelled from territory controlled by the Taliban. In fact, the Taliban Foreign Minister, Wakil Ahmed Mutawakil, made it clear during a visit to Islamabad in January that Osama's return could not be demanded by Pakistan for the simple reason that he is not a Pakistani.

The fact of the matter is that without Pakistani support, the Taliban regime cannot survive. Any end to transit trade, including the all-crucial supply of wheat to Afghanistan, will bring the Taliban to its knees. In a sense for Pakistan, the benchmark for rejection of fundamentalism and sponsoring of "jehadi warlords" must begin with Afghanistan. India and Kashmir can come later; if at all.

The Afghan "experiment" has not only spelt disaster for the people of Afghanistan, but created enormous problems for ordinary Pakistanis. The inflow of refugees from the Afghan "jihad" has created diverse problems — not the least being the "suspicion" with which the Afghans are regarded in Pakistan.

Writing in a recent issue of *The Friday Times*, Mr. Ejaz Haider argued: "While Islamabad has had to take the full brunt of the Taliban's policies, it has acquired no strategic gains from its support of the Taliban. Those analysts who hailed Pakistan's Afghan policy as a great success are today at a

loss to find a way out of the present dilemma vis-a-vis Kashmir. Should Pakistan declare these groups terrorist groups? The question is evidently being skirted. It must be clearly conceded that Pakistan's present dilemma over Kashmir is a necessary corollary of its Afghan policy.

"The Islamist worldview is simple. India is the enemy closer to home but is not the only enemy....the Islamists' nationalism has no secular roots. It is a nationalism that looks at the state not in terms of a nation-state but as a citadel of Islam. Consequently, nationalism is defined in terms of faith. It is only through this paradigm that one can understand the Islamists' confrontation with the United States...." Mr. Haider argued.

Even though this is a minority view in Pakistan, the fact remains that the international community is increasingly seeing Rawalpindi and its intelligence establishment as responsible for sponsoring terrorist networks not just in Afghanistan, but in Pakistan as well. As part of the "pressure", two ISI officials recently gave an unprecedented interview to an American newspaper. "People think that the ISI is a state within a state, but there are tight checks and controls, and there are certain

scruples....people say we are sponsoring the Taliban, but we can barely afford to send them food."

These officials also stated that it would be unrealistic on the part of Washington to exert pressure on the Taliban to ensure the hand over of Osama bin Laden. "We have an Islamic system here which does not permit terrorism," the ISI officials were quoted as saying.

In an interesting sidelight, a Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman first issued a "press note" on Wednesday "requesting" the Pakistani media to use "correct words" for the Taliban Government and later retracted the "request". Clearly, contrary pulls and pressures were very much at work.

The time, perhaps, has come for Pakistan to make a choice. It can postpone a decision only at its own peril. In the absence of new policy initiatives, the Pakistani economy remains dependent on international aid and the IMF-World Bank combine. If Pakistan continues to support and back the Taliban, which provides sanctuary to terrorist outfits both in Afghanistan and in Pakistan itself, then it will continue to earn greater opprobrium from the international community. As of now, Islamabad cannot afford to dismiss American concerns on Osama and related issues.

"The (Pakistani) state has to take certain decisions. It has to see whether it wants to lap up the Islamists' worldview of a civilisational conflict with the world and accept international isolation or reject that worldview....it wants to exercise both options: opting to use the militias against India while denying it is so. This is the strategy that it adopted in Afghanistan. But it is a strategy that has increasingly lost the element of plausible deniability," Mr. Haider wrote in *The Friday Times*.

In a scathing comment on the military Government, Mr. Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani analyst, argued in *The Nation* newspaper that Gen. Musharraf's agenda had shifted dramatically to one of "defending Islamisation, a more abrasive foreign policy and a tacit tolerance of jehadi culture while there is growing inaction and indecisiveness on the regime's original modernisation goals". Unhappily, Pakistan is showing no signs of giving up its tradition Afghan policy which is inextricably linked to the existence of international "jehadi" camps in Taliban territory. The choice before Pakistan is a stark one.

Pak. test fires Hatf-I missile

By Amit Baruah

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 7. Pakistan today said it successfully test fired a Hatf-I (Death-I) surface-to-surface short range ballistic missile which can be tipped with a "variety of warheads".

An official release said that advance notification of the Hatf-I test was provided to "all neighbours" (including India). This notification satisfies an agreement reached last February in Lahore that "the two sides undertake to provide each other with advance notification in respect of ballistic missile flight tests...."

The statement said all design parameters had been validated. "The test was a sequel to several related tests conducted in previous years. The new design allows greater payload, improved accuracy and can successfully destroy targets at up to 100 km using a variety of warheads."

"Hatf-I is an indigenous effort and contributes significantly to Pakistan's national security and deterrence strategy...." the statement added.

THE HINDU
- 8 FEB 2000

USA accepts Pak N-status: Sattar

INDIA ABROAD NEWS SERVICE

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 7. — The Pakistani foreign minister claims the USA has acknowledged his country as a nuclear state, and Islamabad's signing the CTBT will not alter this status.

And, in an apparent bid to delink Pakistan's signing of the treaty conditional on India following suit, Mr Abdul Sattar said it is "irrelevant" who signed the treaty first. For, only when all 44 countries, which possess nuclear weapons or can produce fissile material, ratified it could the treaty enter into force, NNI news agency quoted him as saying in

an interview.

Pakistan does not need a certificate for its nuclear status, nor does the international community deny this fact, he maintained.

Asked about the US deputy secretary of state Mr Strobe Talbott's statement, acknowledging India as a de facto nuclear state, Mr Sattar claimed the US assistant secretary of state for South Asian Affairs, Mr Karl Inderfurth, had said the same about Pakistan.

Describing the CTBT as "unique", the foreign minister said Islamabad's nuclear status wouldn't be affected by signing the treaty because it will not

forgo its right to conduct further tests if India carried out more.

This non-discriminatory principle is contained in Article 14 of the CTBT. It was incorporated in 1996 and Pakistan was in the forefront of the movers of this amendment, he added.

Before the amendment was introduced, he himself was opposed to signing the CTBT. "But Article 14 incorporated the linkage between Pakistan and India in the text of the treaty. After the treaty was amended, it was no longer necessary to oppose it," Mr Sattar claimed.

"Whether Pakistan and India become parties to the CTBT or

not, that will not affect the nuclear status of either country or their right to maintain and even develop nuclear arsenal," Mr Sattar said.

Pakistan "is in no tearing hurry" to sign the CTBT, he said. The purpose of the ongoing national debate is to promote its better understanding.

Mr Sattar rejected suggestions that Pakistan would have to roll back its nuclear programme if it became a signatory "Its only object is to prohibit nuclear tests. Pakistan will never agree to a rollback."

He noted that 156 countries, including all major Muslim countries and China and Israel, had signed the treaty.

THE STATESMAN

- 8 FEB 2000

Pak. hopeful of Clinton visit

MUZAFFARABAD (PoK), FEB. 5. The Pakistani military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, said here today there were "indications" that the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, would include Pakistan in his South Asia itinerary.

"There are indications, contacts are underway," Gen. Musharraf told reporters in response to a question whether he was hopeful of a visit by Mr. Clinton.

An official announcement in Washington on Tuesday said that Mr. Clinton would visit India and Bangladesh in his tour, starting March 20, adding that no decisions had been taken about other stops. Islamabad has said it would be regrettable if the U.S. President were not to visit Pakistan.

Gen. Musharraf alleged that India could get wrong ideas and further build up tension along the Line of Control in Kashmir if the U.S. President omitted Pakistan from the tour. "We have conveyed our concerns to the U.S. that India may be encouraged in her designs and may escalate tensions in Kashmir," he said.

Mr. Clinton had set up the South Asia tour to promote peace and stability in the region and if he did not visit Pakistan it would become counter-productive, Gen. Musharraf said. —AFP

Delhi firm on condition for talks

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 5. India today reiterated that Pakistan should terminate cross-border terrorism and stop hostile anti-India propaganda to revive the stalled dialogue between the two countries and ruled out third-party mediation to resolve the Kashmir issue.

"Our position (on talks with Pakistan) remains unchanged," an External Affairs Ministry spokesman said here to questions on the remarks by Gen. Musharraf during a meeting in Muzaffarabad today and in an interview to Pakistan Television yesterday.

Gen. Musharraf had expressed his readiness for a dialogue with India on the Kashmir issue and

claimed that no other dispute existed between the two countries.

"We are not surprised by these kind of comments. We have always been the initiators of any dialogue. We have maintained the position that Pakistan has to create the right atmosphere, which includes the cessation of hostile propaganda against India," the spokesman said.

He asserted that there was no role for any third party in resolving Indo-Pak. differences, when asked to comment on remarks by Mr. Clinton that Washington was prepared to work towards restarting the stalled Indo-Pak. dialogue.

The spokesman, however, stressed that the differences over Kashmir must be directly resolved by India and Pakistan.

India's stand on this issue had been clarified in the past by the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, several times. On the possibility of Mr. Clinton's visit to Pakistan, he said it would not be appropriate for him to comment.

THE HINDU

- 6 FEB 2000

Peacemaker President signals visit to Pak

Clinton sets pitch for mediation

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

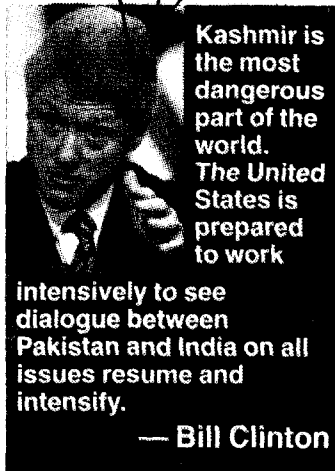
New Delhi, Feb. 4: Indicating that he would like to play peacemaker between India and Pakistan, President Bill Clinton has said he would "most probably" visit Islamabad as part of his attempts to resolve the dispute over Kashmir which had made the subcontinent the "most dangerous place in the world".

As Clinton expressed his desire to act as mediator, India stepped up its attack on Pakistan with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee accusing the nation's enemies of destabilising its economy by pumping in fake currency notes. "We will smash such conspiracies," he said.

At the national prayer breakfast in Washington yesterday, the US President said he was anguished by the simmering tension in the subcontinent which had become "the most dangerous place in the world because of the confrontation between two nuclear-armed neighbours over Kashmir".

Though India is lobbying with US officials to persuade the President not to visit Pakistan, Clinton indicated he would. "Most probably I will," he told former Pakistan Premier Benazir Bhutto at the prayer breakfast meet. The President is scheduled to visit India and Bangladesh next month.

As part of his efforts to convince Clinton to put Islamabad on his itinerary, Pakistan's army ruler Pervez Musharraf said he believed in democracy. "Basically I believe in democracy. A democratic vision. The final decision is made by the leader, but this should come through a democratic process," he said. The statement follows the decision to put



the head of government, not the army, in overall charge of Pakistan's nuclear command.

Clinton offered to help revive the stalled dialogue between the nuclear twins during a meeting with Pakistan ambassador Maleeha Lodhi yesterday. "The US is prepared to work intensively to see dialogue between India and Pakistan on all issues resume and intensify," Clinton said.

"However, to make progress in this area, the cycle of mistrust and violence must be broken. I am personally committed to do what I can towards this objective," he added.

India, in the past, has turned down offers made by different countries to mediate in its disputes with Pakistan. Delhi maintains that while it is ready for a dialogue with Islamabad, the administration there has to create the "right atmosphere" by ending terror export to Kashmir. To that extent, India will see Clinton's statement as a fillip to its stand.

In an attempt to send out the signal that Delhi is not dependent on Washington to fight cross-bor-

der terror, the Vajpayee government has lined up a joint working group meeting with Russia later this month to discuss the rise in insurgency in central and east Asia. Sources indicated that the talks would focus on combating terrorist outfits raised and trained in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Russia is waging a protracted war with Islamic terrorists in Chechnya and Dagestan.

The Prime Minister made it clear that the country was capable of striking out at its foes on its own. "There are conspiracies going on because enemies don't want to see us prosper. Fake currency notes are being pumped into our country to disrupt our economy," he said at the inauguration of the Bhagwan Shranbhdev International Mahotsav here. India, he asserted, had "braved" similar situations in the past and would do so in the future.

Vajpayee justified the Kandahar militant-for-hostage swap which had triggered howls of protest from the Opposition as well as from hardliners in the BJP. The Prime Minister described the hijack crisis as a "*dharam sankat*" (horns of a dilemma) as the government was forced to take the hard decision to save the lives of 160 people.

He argued that the situation was such that even bloodshed could not have saved the lives of the hostages. "We had to take a decision despite knowing that it would evoke criticism," Vajpayee said. "Had the hostages been my family members, I would not have thought for a moment to sacrifice them."

The Prime Minister's remarks seemed part of the government's defence to charges likely to be levelled against it by the Opposition during the Assembly polls.

THE TELEGRAPH

- 5 FEB 2000

Mahathir for restoration of democracy in Pak.

By. P. S. Suryanarayana

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 28. The visiting Chief Executive of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, today packaged his country's credentials as a "geostrategic location" and a "gateway" to the southern as also central and western segments of Asia. Even as he outlined Pakistan's merits as a destination for foreign investment and trade, he was asked about the agenda on the restoration of civilian democratic rule there.

At a luncheon meeting with captains of the Malaysian business and industry, Gen. Musharraf sought help to redress the trade imbalance between the two countries. He also expressed Pakistan's eagerness to become a "full dialogue partner" of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as part of Islamabad's look-east policy.

Overall, as the Malaysian Foreign Minister, Mr. Hamid Albar, made it clear once again that Gen. Musharraf had in fact asked for this visit which was then acceded to, the spotlight was on the twin issues of democracy in Pakistan and the trial of the deposed Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif.

No formal statement was is-



The Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (right), with the Pakistani military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday. — AP

sued by either side at the end of Gen. Musharraf's talks with the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, and that was in consonance with the official word that Kuala Lumpur was treating the event as only a "working visit" by

the military ruler.

Mr. Albar, however, indicated that Dr. Mahathir had impressed on Gen. Musharraf the importance of restoring democratic rule in Pakistan. In response, the Pakistani ruler said, he had no plans

to perpetuate military rule and recounted the circumstances in which he had come to power. He also briefed Dr. Mahathir about the Pakistani military dispensation's policy planks of economic stability and good governance.

Significantly, Gen. Musharraf told the Malaysian businessmen, too, about his willingness to ensure the "stability" and "continuity" of economic policies that could enthuse foreign investors.

On the other subjects that figured in the visiting leader's talks with Dr. Mahathir, the Malaysian side indicated that the visit was used to probe his mind about how far he might be willing to go at this stage to enable the Commonwealth to restore Islamabad's status as a "fully participating member."

PTI reports:

Later speaking to reporters, Gen. Musharraf said Pakistan could survive the impact of the sanctions imposed after the country conducted nuclear tests in 1998.

"We can hold out," he said but admitted that Pakistan was in dire need of investment and was hoping for help from the Muslim countries in the region.

Pak. bid to bring round extremists

ND-1
By Amit Baruah 29/3

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 28. The Pakistani Interior Minister, Lt. Gen. Moinuddin Haider (retd.), has said that all "extremist religious groups" in the country would be "brought" to the conference table and negotiations with these groups were on.

The Minister was also quoted as saying that Pakistan had to fight terrorism and violence by taking strong measures, as this evil, wherever it existed, blocked the way of development and prosperity.

Though it is too early to analyse the import of this statement, the fact remains that if the Musharraf Government intends to negotiate seriously with the "extremist religious groups" (such a term has been rarely used by a Government Minister) then this could be of some significance.

It may be recalled that not so long ago figures in the Musharraf Government were busy saying that the centre of "jihad" had shifted from Afghanistan to Kashmir and that there was a difference between "jihad" and terrorism.

If there is some moderation of support to these groups in the post-Clinton visit scenario, then there is definite scope of improvement in the regional environment. However, whether there is any "promise" in the statement of the Interior Minister it is too early to tell.

Interestingly, *The News* reported today that Lt. Gen. Haider will be leaving on a 10-day visit to the U.S. and Britain on March 20. "The Minister will be leading a Pakistani delegation first to the U.S. and then to the U.K. to look into the problems of overseas Pakistanis," the paper stated.

In a Pakistani context, such a twist and spin to the "visit" is not entirely unexpected. An elaborate "decoy" is often used here to hide the real reasons for any visit abroad.

Enlightened Pakistanis have been quick to see the writing on the wall in the aftermath of the Clinton visit. "Pakistan is thus at a crucial cross-roads and it is extremely important for the country to urgently address the predicament. Denying and attempting to mislead the public about the international pressures may placate public opinion but would immensely mar the nation's long-term interests. The State-controlled media may continue to harp on whatever themes it likes; the same media was also predicting Pakistan's victory in the 1965 and 1971 wars. Pakistani forces were surrendering at the Dhaka Paltan ground and Radio Pakistan was talking of the colossal losses being suffered by the Indians in the eastern sector. Continue with this approach if you like and this may eventually get you a promotion but it would definitely not help the nation," an analysis on the Clinton visit in *The News* said today.

THE HINDU
29 MAR 2000

MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2000

27/3

MIXED MESSAGE TO PAKISTAN

IN THE WAKE of the uncertainty that followed the coup led by Gen. Pervez Musharraf six months ago, Saturday's visit of the American President, Mr. Bill Clinton, to Pakistan itself turned out to be the message. The decoy plane used as an extraordinary security measure and the absence of a joint statement at the end symbolised the state of the ties. It was a context in which the actual message when it was delivered to the military rulers and the people had a careful, calculated mix of blunt speaking and friendly advice as befitting a long standing Cold War relationship. It was unambiguous and mercifully precise when it came to telling Gen. Musharraf and his ruling establishment what in Washington's perception needed to be done both at home and near-abroad to end the dangerous drift of the past year. And it was openly sympathetic when directed at the long suffering people, seeking even to distinguish between the ruler and the ruled as Mr. Clinton spoke of the U.S. being "a committed, concerned friend" and of the "hard choices" before the people. Eager not to be seen to be legitimising the military regime, Mr. Clinton looked beyond to the people with his message of hope, with an emphasis on the imperative of returning to the path of democracy. It was a symbolic gesture since it must have been clear even before the President landed in Pakistan that he would draw a blank over his demand for a road map for a return to democracy. Gen. Musharraf had pre-empted him by announcing his own schedule of local elections, which in effect ruled out parliamentary poll till at least the middle of next year.

Of the three areas of concern voiced by Washington before the visit, no forward movement was evidently possible or recorded on the return-to-democracy demand and the nuclear

nonproliferation issue. It was on the third, Kashmir and the related problem of terrorism, that Mr. Clinton found himself needing to perform a balancing act, watched by governments on both sides of the border. By stating in a well-timed television interview that he believed there were "elements within the Pakistan Government" that supported those engaged in violence in Kashmir and then, from Pakistani soil, asking Islamabad to stop trying to "redraw" borders with blood, Mr. Clinton signalled that Washington was in the process of readjusting its vision to suit its changing national priorities in the post-Cold War world. This was certainly a departure from even the recent past when Washington refused to see the evidence provided by its own intelligence agencies of Islamabad's clandestine acquisition of missile technology. But it will be an exaggeration to call it a paradigm shift in policy, and those looking for a pro-India tilt will be disappointed by some of Mr. Clinton's remarks, in particular his pointed assertion that he shared Pakistan's "convictions that human rights of all its (Kashmir's) people must be respected."

After the week that was, it must be clear to India and Pakistan that for the restoration of the "promise and process of Lahore" there is no alternative to a genuine bilateral effort, which must be launched without any loss of time. Now that the long-awaited Clinton "mission" is at an end, New Delhi must realise the futility of the no-talks-now stance and demonstrate the vision to return to enlightened bilateralism. It must understand Gen. Musharraf's call for reciprocity in the context of the extremely volatile domestic situation in Pakistan and accept his offer to resume the dialogue. This is the only course for the return of the mutual trust that is now dangerously absent in the bilateral relationship.

THE HINDU

27 MAR 2000

Pak. unmoved by Clinton's blunt talk

By Amit Baruah

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 26. As Pakistanis mulled over the significance of the address of the United States President, Mr. Bill Clinton, over the state-run television on Saturday, it became clear that he left Pakistan-India relations pretty much the same as he found them.

Despite the statements before the visit and Mr. Clinton's speech, Pakistan's military leadership gave no indication that it was willing to climb down from its posture of sending terrorists and militants across the Line of Control (LoC) into India — a scenario which is holding up the resumption of dialogue.

This is, however, not to belittle the significance of Mr. Clinton's speech in any way and the import of his message to the people of Pakistan. No other American President has, perhaps, spoken to Pakistan as Mr. Clinton has. His was a polite, though blunt speech.

The American President laid out a full-fledged road-map for Pakistan's future. If Gen. Musharraf and Co., who have rebuffed Mr. Clinton's agenda till date, continue to adopt the same approach, they may find other obstacles before them.

Mr. Clinton was upfront in his criticism of the Kargil misadventure. "Like all key moments, this one poses some hard choices. For this era does not reward those who struggle in vain to redraw

borders with blood," Mr. Clinton said, in an indirect reference to the tragedy of Kargil. There is little doubt that the U.S. had a stake and investment in the Lahore process which was the path to security and peace in South Asia. By referring to the effort to "redraw borders" with blood, Mr. Clinton left none in doubt about who he is referring to.

In a sense, Mr. Clinton has left his "corrective methods" for Pakistan a little too late in his Presidency. If the U.S. President is serious about addressing the ills in Pakistan, there are several options available to Washington and it remains to be seen whether these will be exercised or not.

For, Mr. Clinton has left the region without even a commitment that both parties are willing to resume the dialogue.

The message of restraint that he delivered in both India and Pakistan perhaps will have an impact on both leaderships at a time when lines of communication between Islamabad and New Delhi are almost non-existent.

Almost as soon as he left Pakistan, Gen. Musharraf made it amply clear that he had no intention of creating any conditions (like taking steps to prevent infiltration across the LoC) to facilitate a resumption of dialogue with India. Clearly, he gave short shrift to the ideas presented by Mr. Clinton.

Looking beyond hype: Page 13

THE HINDU
27 MAR 2000

Fingers point at junta, relief in Delhi

Pak slips into Clinton sulk

FROM PRANAY SHARMA
AND PTI

New Delhi, March 26: President Bill Clinton has left the subcontinent as torn as it was when he landed here last week, but between one Sunday and another, he managed to swing the feel-good pendulum from one bank of the divide to the other.

Pakistan today woke up to a burst of dismay at the President's harsh message on television yesterday, with analysts and political parties pointing fingers at the military regime of Pervez Musharraf. The despair in Pakistan devoured overnight the euphoria that swept the country when Clinton overlooked India's reservations and announced the stopover in Islamabad.

The mood took a distinct swing in Delhi, too, as yesterday's controlled satisfaction gave way to fulsome relief that Clinton did not press the "nuclear flashpoint button" in his address.

Ever since the announcement of the Pakistan halt, Delhi was keeping fingers crossed over whether the President would rub in his much-publicised definition of the region as the "most dangerous place" in the world.

Though US officials said Musharraf had not given any assurance on stopping aid to terror strikes in Kashmir, parties and the media in Pakistan, said Clinton had found little right with Islamabad, in sharp contrast to the outcome of his visit to India.

The disenchantment was reflected in the comments by leading allies, Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League and Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party.

"The military regime should read the writing on the wall. The government should realise that if its actions led to an Indian reaction, the international community would not be willing to bail out Pakistan," Bhutto said.

Foreign policy experts in Pakistan also stressed the need to look beyond Washington as India and the US "are bound to come closer to each other in the next 10 years".

An expert in a PTV talk-show said Clinton, who had "educated" himself on the region when he spoke about "South Asia being the most dangerous place in the world", appears to have "de-educated" himself in the five days he spent in India.

She felt the US President's remarks suggested that he was coming closer to India's stance on Kashmir and urged Islamabad to

maintain its "tough" stand. Islamabad did so today, telling Delhi that its suggestion for restoration of democracy was an "unwarranted interference" in Pakistan's internal affairs.

Rubbing salt into Islamabad's wound, a daily suggested that Washington does not see India and Pakistan "as two peas in a pod to be treated equally".

"No agreements were signed. No sanctions were lifted. No investment was committed," grumbled another report. It was different in India, where \$2 billion worth of accords were signed and "an elephant load of kudos" expressed, it added.

Though India is yet to admit that the President's visit went off far better than expected and stock-taking is still on, the hint of smiles on the faces of South Block officials indicates that it has been a satisfying week for Delhi.

Foreign minister Jaswant Singh told a television channel that "there is a departure of nuances in the Indo-US relations" with Washington's realisation of Delhi's standing in the world.

Singh will meet his American counterpart Madeleine Albright on the sidelines of a conference in Warsaw on May 26 and 27.

■ More reports on Page 6

THE TELEGRAPH
27 MAR 2000

Pak army regime fails to find favour with U.S. despite Clinton's visit

WASHINGTON: The U.S., saying that it would not have its "usual relationship" with Pakistan until Islamabad takes steps to meet its concerns on democracy, anti-terrorism and non-proliferation, made it clear that President Bill Clinton's visit to the country was in no way an approval or acquiesces of the military regime there.

State department spokesman James Rubin on Wednesday said Mr Clinton would be travelling to Pakistan because U.S. national interests would be better served by having communications with both India and Pakistan, as was shown during the Kargil crisis last year.

"President Clinton is going to Pakistan only because the U.S. is a friend of Pakistan and not because he approves of or acquiesces in the military regime of Gen Pervez Musharraf," he said.

"In fact," he added, "we will not have a business-as-usual relationship with Pakistan until they have taken those steps (to meet U.S. concerns on democracy, anti-terrorism and non-proliferation)." In reply to a question on Mr Clinton's decision to make a stopover in Islamabad during his way back home from a trip to India, he said, "It is not a simple question and the conclusion was that our national interests were better served by the president travelling than had he not travelled.

Asked about the feeling in India that Mr Clinton would be dealing with a *coup-ester*, (Gen Musharraf assumed power after a coup on October 12), Mr Rubin said, "I think it is a de facto situation that they (Musharraf and his people) are in charge and I think that whatever

they might view it from India or anywhere else, it is a fact. I think it is also our view that the United States' ability to play a role last summer (in the Kargil crisis) was welcomed by the Indian government, and the New Delhi saw it in their interest to have the kind of communication between the United States and the leader in Pakistan."

He made it clear that the U.S. believed in staying in contact with both sides, and that having communication channels with both sides could prove extremely important to its national interests in the future. The U.S. president, Mr

Rubin said, would clearly make known to the leadership in Pakistan directly that the meetings would be about U.S. concerns.

He repeated what senior officials had said the previous day — that Mr Clinton was not going to the region to mediate the Kashmir dispute. "Our view

is that if both sides want our assistance to that end, we will be prepared to play the role. They do not want any assistance this time."

Meanwhile, Shahbaz Sharif, brother of deposed Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif, told a Karachi anti-terrorism court on Thursday that he was asleep when the army seized power in the October coup.

Shahbaz, former chief minister of Punjab, insisted that he had not met the Prime Minister on the day of the coup. Shahbaz, along with his brother Nawaz and five former senior government officials, has been charged with hijacking, abduction, attempted murder and terrorism in a case based on the night of the coup. (Agencies)



Bill Clinton



Pervez Musharraf

THE TIMES OF INDIA

18 MAR 2000

Pak bid to unite ultras under one umbrella

New Delhi, March 5

PAKISTAN IS trying to make Hurriyat Conference set up a central co-ordinating body in London and step up efforts to unite mercenary groups under the banner of "Kashmir Liberation Army" in an attempt to escalate militant tempo ahead of United States President Bill Clinton's visit to sub-continent.

The central co-ordinating body to be set up in London was to lobby in the West for Kashmir's "liberation" on the lines of Washington-based Kashmir American Council, sources said.

The Pakistani efforts to set up a co-ordinating bureau in London as well as attempts to unite the terrorist groups is facing rough weather due to major differences between London-based Kashmiri groups and Pakistan-based mercenary groups like Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and Lashker-e-Tuiba.

These efforts, the sources said, were being co-ordinated by ISI under the direct instructions of Pakistan's Chief Executive Gen Pervez Musharraf. As part of the new "jehad" offensive, Inter

Services Intelligence had reportedly inducted Afghan and other mercenaries in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The presence of these armed mercenaries was leading to tension between these heavily-armed rival groups as well as tussle between these mercenaries and

Some mercenaries had revealed that ISI had directed groups to target local people and then to blame it on India.

local populace across the Line of Control (LoC).

Some mercenaries, during their interrogation, had revealed that ISI had directed groups to target local people and then to blame it on India. Pakistan's efforts to set up an umbrella Kashmir lobbying group in London follow reports here that Hurriyat leaders are trying to seek an appointment with Clinton during his visit to India.

Two prominent Hurriyat leaders, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq and Abdul Gani Lone, have been camping here for the last one month trying to fix up a meeting with Clinton through US embassy officials. They have also written a letter to the White House.

These efforts are likely to get a boost with the arrival of a prominent leader of Kashmir American Council, multi-millionaire Farooq Kathwari, the sources said.

But powerful sections of the Kashmiri groups both in London and Washington are opposing moves to form a pro-Pakistan Kashmir umbrella grouping. In fact, Pakistan's efforts received a setback with prominent families from Jammu and Kashmir announcing their intentions to set up their own group, disassociating with pro-Pakistan groups.

The sources said that Inter Services Intelligence was making big preparation to step up its activities in Jammu as well as Kashmir Valley before President Clinton's visit to create an impression that situation in the state was "explosive". (PTI)

NAM may shut its doors on Pakistan

PAK (W) (W) ST
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

CARTAGENA, April 10. — Foreign ministers of the NAM countries today took a step that could lead to debarring of Pakistan and other military-ruled states from the movement.

The final declaration adopted at the end of the two-day NAM ministerial meet endorsed New Delhi's demand that military regimes overthrowing democratic governments should find no place in the movement.

Without naming Pakistan, the leader of the Indian delegation, External Affairs Minister, Mr Jaswant Singh had suggested yesterday that military-ruled states be debarred from NAM membership.

"We welcome the decision of the Organisation of African Unity in Algiers in July 1999 calling for the restoration, before the next OAU summit, of constitutional legality in states whose governments have come to power through unconstitutional means," a 63-page declaration issued after the meeting said.

"We strongly recommend that this issue be considered by the movement at the next summit" at Dhaka next year, it said.

The import of the declaration is that countries like Pakistan which are ruled by military regimes could lose their memberships of NAM unless they revert to constitutional rule. With Gen Pervez Musharraf giving no indication that constitutional rule would be restored, Pakistan could find itself out of NAM.

In another significant move that could prevent the Organisation of Islamic Conference from passing Pakistan-sponsored anti-India resolutions in future, the ministers asked the OIC to follow the principles of the movement and desist from attacking member states. Many OIC countries are also members of NAM.

Mr Jaswant Singh said at the conclusion of the conference: "We have every reason to be extremely satisfied with the outcome of the meet. There have been significant gains for India which includes a greater recognition of its true position."

THE STATESMAN

11 APR 2000

Bangladesh media dubs Sharif trial 'unfair'

By Haroon Habib

Pak W
Benazir

DHAKA, APRIL 9. The people of Bangladesh in general, and the media in particular, have expressed serious doubts about the fairness of the trial of the former Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif.

The majority of Bangladesh newspapers which had been bitter in criticising Gen. Pervez Musharraf's coup in October, have termed the court verdict handing down life imprisonment to Mr. Sharif a "mockery".

A leading ruling party leader and Commerce Minister, Mr. Abdul Jalil said, "We don't know how the verdict was received by the people of Pakistan, but it is quite natural that a trial under a military Government lacks legitimacy." Mr. Jalil was also quoted by a Bangla daily as saying that his party was always against military rule.

The Deputy Speaker of Bangladesh Parliament, Mr. Abdul Hamid, was quoted as saying by a daily, "The way the army captured power in Pakistan ousting an elected government is not at all acceptable". He also questioned the fairness of the trial held under the military Government.

Prof. Emajuddin Ahmed, former Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, said the "mockery of a trial" against Mr. Sharif had drawn worldwide protests. He termed the repeated military takeovers in Pakistan as "unfortunate" and opined that the army which ousted an elected government would have to face a tough time in the long run.

The Daily Star in an editorial commented, "In our eyes, one is the hijacker of a plane and

the other is the hijacker of a constitutional government." It also wrote in the editorial that though it was the court that had passed the sentence, it should be borne in mind that it was functioning under a military government.

Detailing the alleged plane hijack drama, the newspaper said the passengers were exposed to danger by Mr. Sharif's action but had nothing actually happened to them. On the contrary, due to the action of the army, Pakistan had lost democracy. "Who is a greater culprit, the hijacker of a plane whose passengers ultimately suffered no harm, or the hijacker of a legitimate Government due to whose action the people of Pakistan have to suffer dictatorship and illegal army rule?"

The Independent, in an editorial, remarked that Pakistan's isolation had taken a newer shade with the Sharif judgment. "In the first place, the court decision effectively removes Sharif, at least for now, from politics. In the second, the reaction to the plight of its leaders shows how indifferent Pakistanis have become towards the fallen man."

It added, "The sadness about Sharif's case is that much of the misery the former Prime Minister faces today was brought about by his own arbitrary exercise of power. It is Pakistan's particular tragedy that the politicians who were expected to help it make a turn-about — and the list includes Mrs Benazir Bhutto and Mr. Sharif — ended up doing significant disservice to society. Mr. Sharif's browbeating of the judiciary, coupled with the forced removal of a President undermined politics to a very great extent in Pakistan."

16 APR 2000

Pakistan unveils Shaheen-II

London, April 5

PAKISTAN HAS unveiled its medium range ballistic missile (MRBM), Shaheen-II, with a range of 2,500 km and capable of hitting most of India's cities.

According to the latest issue of Jane's Defence Weekly, the Pakistani Government claims the missile displayed at the recent annual Pakistan Day parade can carry a 1,000 kg payload. "If true, the missile would have a greater range than either Pakistan's Ghauri I or Ghauri II, which are built by Khan Research Laboratories at Kahuta," the report said.

Like Pakistan's other solid-fuelled missiles, Shaheen-II is built by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission's National Development Complex under the direction of Dr Samar Mubarrak Mund. Dr Mund said last year that the missile was ready for test-firing and Pakistani officials said Shaheen-II would be flight-tested "shortly".

Although little public information is available on the missile, visual inspection shows it to be road-mobile with two solid-fuelled stages, the report said.

According to the report, the claims over the missile ranges "in the region are often inflated for political and prestige purposes." The Transporter-Erector-Launcher vehicle is very similar to the Russian Maz-547V which was used to transport the SS-20's Abre' until it was taken out of service in 1987.

Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission which has experience with developing the country's solid-fuelled sounding rockets, may also be involved with the programme, the report added.

Other Pakistani ballistic missiles on display at the parade included the Shaheen-I, the Ghauri and the upgraded Hatf-I. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 6 APR 2008

EXIT STRATEGY-I

How To Remove Pervez Musharraf

THE precedents are discouraging, yet instructive. Ayub Khan was removed after 11 years by a mass upheaval, led by a charismatic ZA Bhutto with support from some in the army. Yahya Khan took over in March 1969, held the first general elections in December 1970, and quit in disgrace in December 1971 after the Bangladesh war. Zia-ul-Haq ruled for 11 years from July 1977 till August 1988, when his C-130 blew up in the air.

There is no charismatic leader in Pakistan today to lead a movement for the restoration of democracy. Benazir Bhutto is an appropriate subject of an Interpol notice. Nawaz Sharif is discredited, even if the farcical trial wins him some sympathy. But in 2000 military

coups, like other violations of human rights, are a matter of international concern.

NON PERFORMING

The chief executive, Gen Pervez Musharraf heard the riot act read out not only by the US President, Bill Clinton, personally on 25 March, but also by leaders of Turkey, Malaysia and Thailand. Pakistan's membership of the Commonwealth stands suspended.

Far more demoralising must be the simmering domestic disquiet. His regime simply does not perform. Shortly after the coup, on 12 October, he said, "Whenever you give a time-frame (for ending army rule), a countdown starts and the administration comes to a halt." So, it has. A time-frame of sorts does exist and every one knows it. In February 2002 the terms of the national assembly and provincial assemblies expire and there is certain to be strong clamour, domestic and foreign, for fresh elections.

The chairman of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) could not have been unaware of this when he wrote in his report to the Durban summit on 11 November, after a mission of the group had visited Pakistan, that while most "appeared pre-

The author is a lawyer and commentator on current affairs.

By AG NOORANI

pared to wait 'a reasonable time' for the restoration of democracy ... they expected to see clear progress" in that direction "within a one or two-year time frame".

Public opinion has hardened

revived only through a national pact which removes the distortions of the parliamentary system in the Constitution of 1973 and since and gives the army incentive enough to transfer power. The concessions must not be such as to blight the future of democracy. They

must not institutionalise the army's pervasive influence in Pakistan's politics since Zia's death and even earlier, during ZA Bhutto's rule. That would be a sordid betrayal. They must restore democracy firmly and in full strength. The recognition accorded to the army's *locus standi* to be heard on matters of national security must conform to democratic principles.

National pacts are never easy to accomplish but they are indispensable for resolving national

crises. The political situation must be faced with stark realism.

SETTLEMENT

Benazir and Nawaz are unlikely to join hands. If they do, it will only be to part no sooner they see some prospect of grabbing power. Neither is above seeking the army's support at that moment even if it means splitting it. Each retains a following. Neither can return to power without harming the polity. Will they accept a settlement in the national interest? If they do not, are there persons of courage and clout who will? Only a political renewal can impart meaning and strength to constitutional renewal.

An interesting suggestion was made by Khurshid Kasuri, vice-president of the PML, on 1 December. He said the best option with the military regime was to talk to the PML leadership about constitutional amendments, restore Parliament, introduce checks and balances by making accountability a permanent feature of the future set-up, give the President powers to oust a government and that, too, subject to the approval of the NSC. He favoured the NSC structure for 10-15 years. It is unlikely that the people will accept such a role for the army. A conference of political parties rejected it on 5 December.

(To be concluded)



since. The CE's proposals made on 23 March try to respond to it by promising a variant of Ayub Khan's basic democracy polls on a non-party basis will begin in December 2000 and end with district assembly polls in July 2001; six months before February 2002. In the "second and third stage, the provincial assemblies will be elected to be followed by the election of a National Assembly and the Senate". On 3 April in Bangkok he promised polls to these bodies after July 2001.

CONCESSIONS

The local bodies will not be "used as an electoral college for other levels of democracy" nor serve "as a substitute" for provincial and central governments. The CE swore by "the principle of federalism" for good reason. His cumbrous proposals, if worked, will undermine the powers of the provinces, who are already aggrieved at the amassment of power by the Centre. Growth of provincial resentment will proceed apace with rise in domestic disenchantment and impatience and international censure. That, despite repeated refusals, he gave some time-frame on 23 March suggests that he is in retreat; but, he is not on the run.

Pervez Musharraf is no push over. He represents the army and the army will not return to the barracks in disgrace. Pakistan's democracy can be

Pak to protest UK Minister's accusation of exporting N-material

Mubashir Zaidi
Islamabad, May 30

PAKISTAN WILL protest against British authorities over the statement attributed to British Foreign Office Minister Peter Hain that accused Islamabad of exporting nuclear materials.

A Foreign Office spokesman said that it was awaiting authentic text of Hain's comments before raising the issue with the British Government. "We would be surprised if such an irresponsible statement, which is belied by the contents of the Sunday Mirror article itself, has been made by a

senior official of the British Government," he said.

If this story has any truth, it raises serious questions about whether the Soviet army had introduced and stored nuclear materials in Afghanistan during its decade-long military intervention and why these stocks were not removed when the Soviet forces withdrew. "Pakistan will consider raising the matter formally with the IAEA and the UN for international investigation into how the Soviet nuclear materials reached Afghanistan," the spokesman said.

He firmly stated that Pakistan is committed not to export nuclear and other sensitive

materials and technologies to any other country or entity.

It may be mentioned that reports appeared in the Pakistani media yesterday quoting Britain's Foreign Office Minister Peter Hain who accused Pakistan of rapidly becoming a threat to world peace.

The Sunday Mirror carried a story of a Pakistani tribal warlord who offered to sell nuclear bombs to undercover British weapons experts. The British Minister asked Pakistan to immediately halt this threat to world peace. "It is no good for their government to say they have no control over third parties or private companies who sell

nuclear materials. If they were determined to put a stop to this, they could," he said.

Hain went on to say that when nuclear material falls into the hands of private parties it is a step short to getting into terrorist hands. "There is a link between Pakistan's exports of nuclear capability and terrorism.

The country is rapidly becoming a threat to world peace." The report further claimed that these warlords offered to sell sarin nerve gas shells and mustard gas phosgene grenades. These tribals claim to have given one of the nuclear canisters to the Pakistani Government Nuclear Weapons Development Programme for testing.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 MAY 2000

Pak. open to peace plan for Kabul

By Amr Baruah

ISLAMABAD, MAY 11. In what appears to be a calculated shift in position, Pakistan has said that it is willing to support the idea of a "*loya jirga*" (grand assembly) to work for the restoration of peace in war-ravaged Afghanistan. However, Islamabad has qualified this statement by saying that such an idea should be acceptable to the Afghan people.

The State-run Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) news agency quoted a Pakistan Foreign Ministry official as saying: "The peace plan has got to be indigenous. If the idea of *loya jirga* is acceptable to the Afghan people, well and good. We will fully support it." This "shift" in the Pakistani position, in part, could be related to American efforts to convene such a "*loya jirga*", a proposal that reportedly finds support from "King" Zahir Shah, the former Afghan monarch who lives in Rome.

For long, Pakistan, while officially backing a process of dialogue between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance, has actually been supporting the student militia's bid to take over the whole of Afghanistan. As they see it, only commander Ahmed Shah Masood and his fighters stand in between the Taliban and full control of Afghanistan. It remains to be seen whether the present shift in position, as reflected in the desire to support the idea of a *loya jirga*, is for real or is yet another attempt by Pakistan to deflect some of the pressure it faces on the Afghan front.

Even a casual observer of the Afghan scene can see that the Taliban consists of religious zealots who have no faith in democracy or the rule of law.

So far, they have shown no desire to set up any kind of administration or even attempt to rebuild the infrastructure of the war-ravaged country. By now, Pakistan, too, is aware that it is carrying much of the diplomatic baggage for supporting the Taliban regime without any tangible benefits in return. In fact, both diplomatically and monetarily, the Taliban is a dead loss to Pakistan as has been pointed out by some perceptive Pakistani commentators.

From the American side, the pressure on Pakistan to do something about the Taliban remains. "What we have done is to send a consistent message (to Pakistan) that we want to see this (Afghan) conflict resolved. We do believe that Pakistan has a very important role to play in that regard because it has as much influence as any country on the Taliban. We do not believe that Pakistan controls the Taliban....," the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, told the Voice of America in a recent interview.

"But we do believe that Pakistan has influence with the Taliban. It has supported and assisted the Taliban over the years. We would hope that Pakistan would use that influence in a positive way to persuade the Taliban to seek a peaceful not a military solution, to sit down with all Afghans — Uzbecks, Tajiks, Azeri, Pashtuns — to bring this war to an end, bring the fighting to an end, bring the suffering to an end," Mr. Inderfurth stated.

He made it clear that the U.S. had welcomed several initiatives to promote a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict, including the efforts of Mr. Zahir Shah to convene a *loya jirga*.

12 MAY 2000

HD-16
7/15

Looking to Musharraf

THE DIVIDE between rhetoric and reality remains. While the Government of Gen. Pervez Musharraf makes occasional noises about taking on entrenched fundamentalist (or 'fundos' as they are better known) forces, there is little evidence that this posture is for real. It is clear that Gen. Musharraf's personal "liberalism" hasn't had much of an impact on Pakistani society in the seven months he has held power. In fact, the General has even had to deny that the Kemal Ataturk model had any relevance for Pakistan.

The General, his Ministers and officials have, for instance, been warning against the malaise of sectarianism that grips Pakistani society. In the past few days, there has been a spate of sectarian killings in different parts of the country while the military regime has watched helplessly.

The issue of "action" against terrorist groups operating in Kashmir is a secondary one for Pakistan when posited against the problem of sectarianism. Of course, it is now known that there is a "live linkage" between terrorist groups operating in Kashmir

A large number of liberal-progressive sections in Pakistan have pinned their hopes on Gen. Pervez Musharraf being able to deliver their country from the control of fundamentalists.
AMIT BARUAH looks at the prospects.

and sectarian outfits. For instance, Masood Azhar's Jaish-i-Mohammad has got money and cadres from the Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), a frontline Sunni sectarian group.

From time to time, there have been reports in the Pakistani press that the Interior Minister will be meeting with one or the other sectarian groups. The rot, however, runs deeper and will not be resolved by meetings alone.

Many *deeni madaris* (one estimate suggests that as many as 500,000 students are "studying" in these religious seminaries) teach a sectarian Islam, while others actively promote the concept of "jihad" in Kashmir.

The sectarian groups and the Pakistan-based militants operating in Kashmir pose a formidable challenge for the future of Pakistan. Islamabad, notwithstanding the "pats on the back" for having escaped the nomenclature of being a State sponsor of terrorism from the U.S., must be aware of the kinds of international pressures that it faces.

Pre-Kargil and pre-Kandahar, the U.S. State Department report on Patterns of Global Terrorism made very general remarks about the Pakistani state and its involvement in backing militant groups. Today, these linkages are open and up front. It would appear that the spate of contacts between Pakistani Government Ministers and officials after the March 25 Clinton visit to Islamabad has given some breathing space to the military regime on the issue of combating terrorism.

However, Pakistan must be

aware that the last word has not been said on the issue of terrorism by the U.S. Reacting to the damaging American report, Gen. Musharraf stated: "I just want to say that there is a difference of understanding in the definition of terrorism and who is a terrorist." When asked if some groups in Pakistan were involved in terrorist activities, the Chief Executive stated: "No, definitely not."

Clearly, Pakistan is in a corner on the issue of terrorism. Rather than doing something about addressing international concerns, Islamabad seems "happy" that it has not been placed on the U.S. list of states sponsoring terrorism. But, Islamabad, as much as New Delhi, needs to realise that the American view of Pakistan as a country which backs terrorism, is on account of American concerns.

A large number of liberal-progressive sections in Pakistan have, however, pinned their hopes on Gen. Musharraf being able to deliver their country from the control of the "fundos". Apart from his announcement on April 21 that an FIR in a blasphemy case will be registered only after approval by a Deputy Commissioner, there is little by way of a liberal agenda in the country.

There is little doubt that there are some small changes from the Nawaz Sharif period. The festival of *Basant* was given official sanction, the music group, Junoon, came out of the shadows to perform in Islamabad and the rights of citizenship have been extended to Pakistani women married to foreigners. So far, the General has not taken any real steps which can get him into trouble with the "fundos". There is, however, little doubt that he finds himself constricted and fettered to the power of fundamentalist forces, who, while having no electoral support, have a larger-than-life image. And, needless to say, their public image is the "Kashmir jihad" in which the Government backs them to the hilt.

One of the problems for the General appears to be the "collegiate" system of decision-making adopted after the October 12, 1999, coup where the corps commanders reportedly take decisions by consensus. And, within the General's kitchen cabinet, there is at least one hardliner on Kashmir. It's time Pakistan sat down to do some hard thinking on where the "fundos" that the state supports are taking the country. Not for the sake of America or India, but for Pakistan alone.

7 MAY 2000

Commonwealth decides to get tough with Pak.

LONDON, MAY 3. The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) has decided to recommend further measures against Pakistan if the military-ruled nation fails to make speedy progress towards restoration of democracy.

It said the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Don Mckinnon, would soon visit Islamabad to apprise the military regime of organisation's concern.

The group would also invite the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, to its next meeting in New York in September to clarify his country's intentions in regard to holding democratic elections at the provincial and na-

tional levels. The eight-member CMAG at its meeting here on Tuesday noted that while the military regime in Islamabad announced that non-party local government elections would be held later this year, it was yet to set a time-frame for provincial and parliamentary elections.

The CMAG raised concerns over the proposed exclusion of political parties in the local government polls, and at the continued suspension of the Constitution.

It also took into account various restrictions imposed on democratic activities, processes and institutions in Pakistan. — PTI

24 MAY 1979

C'wealth warning to Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON, May 3. — The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group has decided to recommend further measures against Pakistan if the military-ruled nation fails to make speedy progress towards restoration of democracy.

Commonwealth secretary, General Don McKinnon, will soon visit Islamabad to apprise the military regime of the organisation's concern.

CMAG will also invite Pakistan's foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, to its next meeting in New York in September to clarify his country's intentions of conducting elections at the provincial and national levels.

The eight-member group yesterday noted that while the Pakistani military regime had

announced a timetable for non-party local government elections to be held later in the year, it has given no timeframe for provincial and parliamentary elections.

The group raised concerns over the proposed exclusion of political parties in local government polls and at the continued suspension of the constitution. It also took into account various restrictions imposed on democratic activities, processes and institutions in Pakistan.

CMAG also expresses concern over circumstances surrounding the Sharif trial and removal of senior judges following their refusal to take oaths of allegiance to the junta.

'US Cong can help rid Pak of terrorism': The absence of democratic rule in Pakistan increased the threat of terror-

ism emanating from that country and the US Congress's action is needed to help remove that threat, Representative Sam Gejdenson said on Monday, a SNS report from Washington adds.

The State Department's annual survey report on international terrorism, which was released on Monday, said South Asia has become a breeding ground for global terrorism.

The report accused Pakistan and Afghanistan of providing safe haven and support to international terrorist groups. However, it did not add the two countries to its list of state sponsors of terrorism.

The report will be viewed favourably by New Delhi, which has been pressing Washington to brand Pakistan a state sponsor of terrorism.

THE STATESMAN

4 MAY 2000

HD-15
25/6

Exercise in self-presentation

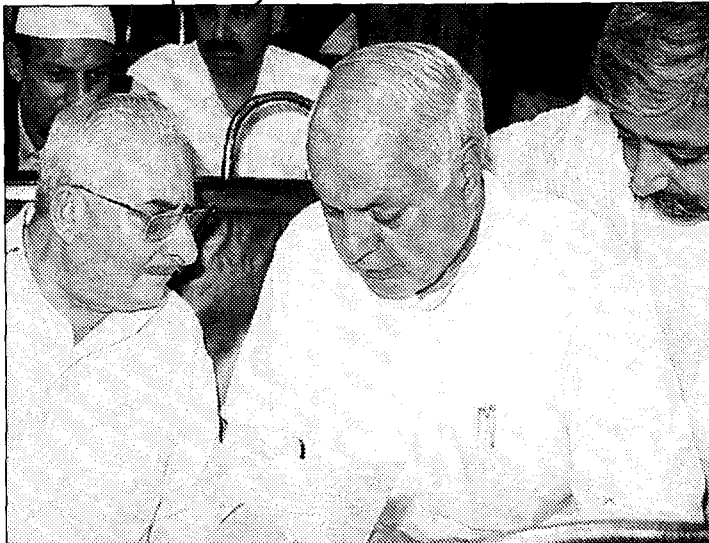
g. B. J. B. K.

THE ONGOING debate on restoration of greater autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir is seen as one of the important developments which will have far-reaching implications for Kashmir's future. The special Assembly session is proving a testing time for the ruling National Conference and will determine its future role in the Kashmir game, which has been going on since 1947. On the other hand, the separatist All-Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has dismissed greater autonomy as a "non-issue" and the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress see it as a threat to India's sovereignty. For the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the developments are a bid to scuttle the dialogue for peace.

It is not clear whether the people of Kashmir see autonomy as a solution to the 11-year-old strife in the Valley, but the keenness among the general public is significant. However, the way the proceedings of the special session, convened to discuss the report of the State Autonomy Committee (SAC) go, the issue is being debated clearly on "communal lines" and on a "Kashmir versus Jammu and Kashmir versus Ladakh" track. Though the NC leadership is armed with the report drafted by the committee of party stalwarts dealing with every subject (except finance) in detail, and discussions revolving round "betrayals by Delhi and mishandling of the situation" continue amid clashes with the main opponents to the autonomy demand — BJP and Congress — the outcome of the "historical session" cannot be anticipated.

For the NC speakers, the report is a complete document. "Even at the international level the facts in the SAC report could not be challenged since it was tabled in the Assembly in March 1999", said Mr. Abdur Raheem Rather, Finance Minister and one of the architects of the report.

(The SAC has recommended sweeping changes in Centre-State relations: The Centre should have control only over defence, communications and external affairs. Fundamental rights guaranteed by the Indian Constitution should be replaced with the State's own set of rights. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, the Comptroller and Auditor-General and the Election Commission should go. Officers of the IAS, IPS and IFS should not be posted in J & K and the designations of Chief Minister



The J & K Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, and Mr. Gulam Mohiuddin Shah, chairman of the State Autonomy Committee... high stakes for the ruling party.



Kash

The National Conference seems to be aware that if it fails to vigorously pursue the autonomy demand, it will have no place in Kashmir politics, which is fast changing. SHUJAAT BUKHARI on the 'do or die' situation for the party, particularly Dr. Farooq Abdullah.

and Governor should be changed as Prime Minister and Sadr-e-Riyast).

The NC seems to be aware that if it fails to vigorously pursue the autonomy demand, it will have no place in Kashmir's politics which is fast changing, with intervention at the international level much visible. Sources in the party admitted that "it is a do or die situation for the party particularly its chief, Dr. Farooq Abdullah". There is tremendous pressure on the Chief Minister for getting the resolution adopted and to throw the ball in Delhi's court.

Notwithstanding the speculation that Dr. Abdullah's New Delhi trip on Thursday assumed significance, the party leaders insist that whatever meetings take place, the NC stand on the issue is

unequivocal. Even as Dr. Abdullah made it clear on Wednesday that he wanted to have a national debate on the issue, putting the resolution through is imminent.

"For the NC it is the last chance in Kashmir politics as all eyes are set on adoption of the resolution" said a senior teacher at the Kashmir University. Though power seemed to be dear to the Sheikh dynasty, the changing political scenario might not allow Dr. Abdullah to go slow on the autonomy demand this time, the teacher added. If he is serious about restoring his eroded political base, he will have to pursue autonomy, only option he is left with, says a senior journalist.

For the common man, it is a test of the credibility of not only Dr. Abdullah but also of the Government of India, which says it is ready to negotiate with the people on genuine issues. "Whatever the Hurriyat Conference wants, it is for Dr. Abdullah to save his position and in case the Centre fails to accept his (their own man) views, it will also be exposed" said Mohammad Shafi, a shopkeeper in Lal Chowk, Srinagar.

The NC leaders hold the view that in the given circumstances, autonomy is the only solution to the Kashmir problem. "The Hurriyat Conference is asking for azadi but we are demanding not autonomy, only its restoration which is a cheaper bargain", said Chowdhry Mohammad Ramzan. Asserting that autonomy is not separation from India, Mr. Mohammad Shafi, Education Minister, says "we want to

strengthen India and ensure that of the people of democratic system. Internal conflict addressed by federal demands cannot with might. "w to taking the au to its logical co added.

On the other with which the in the National Alliance, has n strong oppone but even seeks Article 370, wh special status of Kashmir. A BJP that in case th resolution, it s Mr. Omar Abd Chief Minister. Council of Mir members in th unanimous th threaten the n and that "fight the only soluti problem" face people of Kash Ladakh are no they want peac development. Khajuria, BJP

The "NC can anything on be people with ju vote they have Ashok Sharma In fact, both th Congress have Kashmir versus Kashmir versus harping on the Jammu and La facing at the h Kashmiri leade

Pak asks US to lift curbs

HT Correspondent
Washington, June 17

PAKISTANI FOREIGN
Minister Abdus Sattar called on the US yesterday to lift its economic and military sanctions because they "single out one country and are not consistent with friendly relations." He also urged the US Government and the US Congress to adopt a more general, even-handed, balanced approach to Pakistan.

Even as Sattar adopted a tone of sweet reasonableness at a news conference, it cut no ice with a group of Afghans who disrupted the function with vociferous slogans accusing Islamabad of creating and maintaining the ogre of Taliban.

The sloganeers were firmly escorted out of the news conference, but not before some of them called Foreign Minister Sattar some unprintable names. Other demonstrators waved banners denouncing Pakistan as the Minister entered and departed

1876
from the National Press Club building where the news conference was held.

Sattar was also critical of US sanctions against the Taliban, terming such steps as "counterproductive." But he hastened to add that Pak relations with the US remained "troubled but friendly." His discussions with US officials, he declared, had led to mutual understanding and had been very productive. US officials merely said the talks focused on concerns about preserving South Asian security while preventing nuclear and missile proliferation.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher also put somewhat of a damper on Sattar's seeming enthusiasm by maintaining that US officials would like "a detailed roadmap" for a quick restoration of democracy in Pakistan. Boucher also revealed that Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering had discussed the issue with Sattar, with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright being present part of the time.

The Foreign Minister also met Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott on Thursday in the first resumption of a nuclear dialogue after talks were suspended in February last year. Clearly as a counterpoint to India's nuclear stance, Sattar said he had assured US officials that Pakistan wanted to maintain a nuclear deterrent at "minimum credible levels" and that Islamabad was not in an arms race with India.

In a high-sounding piece of rhetoric that amounted to very little, Sattar said at his news conference that "we are prepared to accept any restraints and non-proliferation measures on a non-discriminatory, regional or global basis."

Minister Sattar did not miss the chance to make Pakistan out as the injured party. He claimed that Islamabad was concerned about a 28 per cent increase in India's defence budget and its "attempt to seek dominance in the Indian Ocean region and beyond (which) will be inherently destabilising."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

18 JUN 2000

Pakistan finalises draft of nuclear safety ordinance

PAKISTAN HAS finalised a draft ordinance to implement an international obligation of regulating safety procedures at places where nuclear activities take place, media reported on Thursday.

All relevant Ministries and government agencies had already cleared the draft billed as "nuclear safety ordinance 2000", which would now be put before the Cabinet for approval, the *Dawn* said quoting Ministry sources.

It said during the Sharif Government the stage had been set to table the proposed draft before Parliament for enactment. After the coup, the process of consultation started afresh.

The draft ordinance is being sent to the Cabinet division to be placed before the Federal Cabinet for its approval. **PTI, Islamabad**

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 JUN 2000

Sharif's little secrets

A DEPOSED Prime Minister can be a thorn in the flesh for any dictator. It is an unwritten rule of all autocracies, therefore, that the person ousted in a coup is eliminated as soon as possible. Pakistan's previous dictator, Zia-ul-Haq, had lost no time in ensuring Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's removal from the scene through what has been widely regarded as a judicial execution. The reprieve, however, which the judiciary has given to Nawaz Sharif from the death penalty sought by the Pervez Musharraf Government is proving embarrassing to the rulers in Islamabad. Mr Sharif's latest disclosures, for instance, on the Kargil conflict throw an entirely new light on the border skirmish and may influence India's decision to revive its dialogue with Pakistan.

Although Islamabad has berated Mr Sharif for saying that those who started the Kargil conflict are now "begging" to India for talks, the fact remains that what he has revealed is quite startling. For instance, he has maintained that he would have stopped Mr Vajpayee's Lahore visit in February 1999 had he known that the Pakistan army had already begun its incursion into Kargil. But it was not until May that he became aware about the crossing of the LoC. The rest is, of course, history, for it is known that the Pakistani withdrawal under American pressure after Mr Sharif's Washington visit in July led to his fall. But what is new is the information that "whole units" of Pakistan's Northern Light Infantry were "wiped out" in the war, a disaster which may have also persuaded Islamabad to call off its Kargil misadventure. Since the official Pakistani spokesmen are accusing Mr Sharif of being economical with the truth, the real events will not be easy to know. But Mr Sharif's disclosures do confirm Benazir Bhutto's earlier claim that, as Prime Minister, she was not always aware of what the army was up to.

It is no secret, of course, that the army has held a special position in Pakistan ever since Ayub Khan's time. From this standpoint, Mr Sharif's ouster was always on the cards because he was proving to be a tough Prime Minister who had not hesitated to dismiss one army chief, General Jehangir Karamat, and had issued orders for General Musharraf's removal as well. So far as India is concerned, what is of interest in the latest revelations is that the Pakistan army had no time for the Lahore process and was more keen on stepping up its war effort in Kashmir. It also had no compunctions about keeping its own Prime Minister in the dark. How reliable will such an organisation be as a partner in a dialogue for peace?

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 JUN 2000

Pak (10)
HD-1

Pak. nominees rejected

By Amit Baruah 9/6

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 8. In a major diplomatic setback for the Musharraf Government, at least three European Governments have rejected the appointment of retired Pakistani military officers as ambassadors. The countries involved are said to be Italy, Sweden and Belgium.

Apparently, the *agreements* (French for agreement) of the three officers was rejected some time ago. The rejection, clearly, is an indication that these Governments are still unhappy with the military takeover in Pakistan.

In a related move, the Saudi Arabian Government has rejected the *agreement* of Lt. Gen. Asad Durrani (retd), a former spy master and Director-General of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

While the West European view is dictated by concern over military rule in Pakistan and the desire to have civilian representatives in place, the Saudi decision comes as a total surprise.

Pakistan has for long proclaimed its friendship with Saudi Arabia — hailing it as an example of "Islamic brotherhood". The reasons behind rejecting Lt. Gen. Durrani's candidature are not quite clear. Possibly, the Saudis don't want a former spy master

as the Pakistani envoy in Riyadh. Of course, Pakistan has the option of nominating new persons for the jobs. However, such rejection is extremely rare between countries. In diplomatic practice, only after the approval of the *agreement* can the names of ambassadors/high commissioners be announced.

It is also a measure of the degree of "concern" voiced by Western Governments at the military coup that they have not downgraded their diplomatic presence in Islamabad after the events of October 12, 1999. They, however, put their foot down on the appointment of retired military officers as ambassadors. Though Pakistan is not facing the kind of international pressure of the kind witnessed immediately after the coup, the rejection of ambassador-designates by three Western countries is a reminder that it's not wholly "business-as-usual" with Islamabad.

While the United States remains engaged with Pakistan, and a non-proliferation dialogue is to resume soon, European countries have their own approach to the Musharraf Government. For the Western Governments, it would appear, having retired military officers representing a military regime in their capitals was too bitter a pill to swallow. Hence, the rejections.

THE HINDU

9 JUN 2000

'Pak. supplying arms to Sri Lanka by ship'

HD-13 By Amit Baruah 8/16

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 7. Pakistan's obsession with India leaves it little time for Sri Lanka. Barring the odd statement that it is committed to Sri Lanka's territorial integrity and sovereignty (a position similar to the one taken by the Government of India), there is little public analysis here of developments on the island.

Pakistan, while helping the Sri Lankan effort with supply of arms, has denied the sale of weapons. In response to questions from this reporter some time ago, a Foreign Office spokesman rejected the contention that weapons and ammunition were being sent to Sri Lanka.

Soon after the fall of Elephant Pass when the Sri Lankan Government appeared to go into a panic mode, three planeloads of ammunition were flown from Karachi to Colombo. Shaheen Air, a foundation set up by the Pakistan Air Force, used its Boeing 707 aircraft to fly weapons and ammunition on three occasions in the first week of May. A Boeing 707 (larger than a Boeing 737 and smaller than Boeing 747) can take up to 50 tonnes of cargo in one flight.

The Pakistanis have supplied artillery shells, multi-barrel rocket launchers and other unspecified weapons and ammunition, apart from bombs for the Kfir aircraft.

Since then, there have been no flights from

Pakistan to Sri Lanka carrying weapons, but informed sources indicate that the weapons are now going by ship, presumably aboard merchant ships.

Till 1998, weapons and ammunition were regularly being flown between Karachi and Colombo and, on occasion, from Islamabad, but the practice was stopped since one sortie cost the Sri Lankan Government a whopping \$45,000. However, three flights took place in the early part of May 2000 on account of its urgent requirements.

Pakistan is aware that it can hardly play a role in Sri Lanka, beyond the supply of weapons, even if it wants to. Sending of troops and maintaining supply lines is an impossible task and, given the present political and economic constraints, Pakistan does not want to annoy India in its "backyard".

However, in order to maintain "proper" relations with Colombo, Pakistan will continue to stress its opposition to "Eelam" while being aware that an LTTE takeover of Jaffna is bound to create new problems for the Government of India.

Sections of the Pakistani establishment will also probably appreciate that the LTTE no longer needs any "help" from intelligence agencies to carry forward its war effort. Today, the Tigers have abundant resources and intelligence agencies can hardly add to their strength.

Also, intelligence agencies, even if they

play a covert role, will be aware that influencing the LTTE supremo, Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, is an impossible task. The Tigers, too, are aware that any "courting" of India or select politicians in Tamil Nadu while having links with intelligence agencies inimical to the country will not be helpful in today's reality. So, if you cannot influence your "target", what is the point "helping"?

Pakistan's quick response to Sri Lanka's request was the only one possible for the two countries to maintain "proper" relations. Also, a cash-strapped Pakistan will be more than happy to have a commercial outlet for its weapons and ammunition.

Pakistan appreciated the Sri Lankan response at the time India manoeuvred the postponement of the SAARC summit in Kathmandu after Gen. Pervez Musharraf had taken power last year. In a scenario, where Pakistan and Sri Lanka have good relations, the supply of weapons was only to be expected from a friend.

In its present predicament, the Government of India will not be unhappy that Colombo is receiving weapons from Pakistan. Given that from 1995 onwards Sri Lanka has bought weapons in the international market on occasion with Indian help, such cooperation in a critical situation will be understood. However, this "understanding" ends with the landing of Pakistani weapons in Colombo.

THE HINDU

- 8 JUN 2000

Britain lifts ban on arms sales to Pakistan

Vijay Dutt
London, July 6

BRITAIN HAS lifted the ban on arms sales to Pakistan. Reports aver that British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, who had led the condemnation of the overthrow of the elected government of Nawaz Sharif and imposed the ban in the light of the coup, has given the final go ahead. He had earlier resisted attempts by the ministries of Trade and Defence to lift the embargo.

The justification has been given by a Foreign Office source. He is quoted saying that the decision has not been "triggered" by any one event but "if you take a look at what was happening in Kargil last year, we have not seen a repetition, which is fairly crucial indication of whether there has been renewed aggression." So a certificate of good conduct has seemingly been given by the Foreign Office to Gen Musharraf's military rule, ignoring the increased terrorist activities in the Valley. Britain had been repeatedly accusing Pakistan of aiding terrorism.

Twenty out of 46 applications by British firms to export arms to Pakistan will be approved. But approval, it is said, will be given to exports regarded as least contentious and will include spare parts for ships and naval helicopters and planes. However, it has not occurred to Mr Cook or the Defence and Trade secretaries that they have avoided returning Sea Harriers, which had been sent for repairs, nor supplied spare parts for Sea Kings.

This, it is said, is related to the US embargo on sales of arms and military equipment

to India following the nuclear tests. Cook's decision has surprised everyone, including some defence and war strategists.

The Guardian has published a parliamentary written answer by Mr Cook, "The government has considered the situation in Pakistan and the wider region since the coup before deciding on a number of applications. We remain concerned about the defence exports to Pakistan, in the light of the incursion at Kargil, the coup, the possibility of diversion to undesirable end-users and continued regional tensions."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Pak assures Lanka of support against LTTE

COLOMBO: Pakistan, which recently helped Sri Lanka acquire emergency weapons to fight Tamil Tiger rebels, has assured Colombo of continuing support to combat the guerrillas, the state-run *Daily News* reported on Tuesday.



Gen. Musharraf

"We will continue to support Sri Lanka," Pakistani military ruler general Pervez Musharraf was quoted as saying. Gen. Musharraf's adviser and information and media development minister Javed Jabbar told the *Daily News* that Pakistan was closely watching the situation in the Indian ocean island and was "ready to extend any support that Sri Lanka needs".

"We will happily and actively participate in any attempt at the regional level, if there is any, to end the conflict in Sri Lanka," Mr Jabbar was quoted as saying.

Pakistan's offer of support was published a day after its arch-rival India said it had come up with a package

to end the fighting in Sri Lanka and was ready to take part in peace talks between the Colombo government and the LTTE rebels. Minister of state for external affairs Ajit Panja said India favoured a united Sri Lanka, but did not disclose details of the proposed package of measures to end the 17-year ethnic conflict.

The LTTE have been fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east since 1983. Gen. Pervez Musharraf was also quoted as saying Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict bore no similarity to the 'rebellion' in India's northern Kashmir region.

Sri Lanka acquired an unspecified quantity of new weapons from Pakistan to help beat back a push by the LTTE to recapture their former stronghold of the northern Jaffna peninsula. It approached Pakistan for arms after India declined to become militarily involved in Sri Lanka as the fighting in Jaffna peaked in May. The fighting has eased in recent weeks, but military officials say it is only a matter of time before the battle resumes. (Reuters)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Islamabad refuses to apologise for 1971 'excesses'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 26. The already strained relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh threaten to nose dive further with Islamabad categorically rejecting Dhaka's demand for an apology for the 'excesses' committed by the Pakistani Army in the run-up to the 1971 war

that led to the birth of Bangladesh.

The Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, disclosed Pakistan was caught unawares by the diatribe from the Bangladeshi leader. To add insult to injury, Mrs. Hasina stepped up her offensive after reaching Dhaka and openly demanded an apology for the

'excesses' committed in the run-up to the 1971 war.

The anti-Pakistan statements continued to flow from Dhaka even after Gen. Musharraf made an appeal to forget the past. This was the backdrop against which Islamabad deemed it necessary to send a communication on the sub-

ject. The thrust of the formal letter was that the events of 1971 were tragic even "without exaggeration and one-sided interpretation."

The letter hoped that they would not be allowed to erase the 'sheer joy and pride' of people of both the countries in the struggle for independence.

THE HINDU

Musharraf plays down growing Indo-U.S. ties

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf on Friday sought to play down India's growing ties with the United States saying relations between Islamabad and Washington have their own dimensions and not linked to Indo-US ties.



Pervez Musharraf

"Our ties with the US should be seen independently and we should not look at it in the context of US-India relations," Gen Musharraf told reporters at Karachi airport on his return from New York after attending UN millennium summit.

"I see our relations in an independent context and certainly not comparing them with their (Americans') ties with India," he said.

Stating that he had a five-minute informal meeting with US President Bill Clinton at a UN reception, he claimed the latter "expressed his concern about what is

happening in Kashmir." The military ruler quoted Mr Clinton as having said that he was trying his best to contribute towards assisting in the resolution of the Kashmir problem.

He said UN secretary general Kofi Annan also expressed his concern over the Kashmir situation and promised to visit the region.

Referring to militant outfit Hizbul Mujahideen's short-lived ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir, Gen Musharraf said India "lost a window of opportunity. They should have shown statesmanship."

He said he refused to meet Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed at the UN because she had meddled in the internal affairs of Pakistan.

"Some of the statements of Bangladeshi Prime Minister at the UN were a direct interference in our internal affairs," he said.

Sheikh Hasina on Thursday called for the trial of those Pakistanis allegedly involved in war crimes against Bangladesh in the 1971 independence war. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

16 SEP 2000

'71 war is not a dead issue in Pakistan, Bangladesh

Pak (u)
11-9 1979

(11)

By Mahendra Ved
The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: There are few takers in Pakistan for Pervez Musharraf's plea that the 1971 war which broke up the country be forgotten and all concerned should move on. Seventy-five per cent of those who voted in *The Nation* poll Thursday said "No" to the question: "Do you agree with the CE that the 1971 debacle is a dead issue?"

Mr Musharraf's statement in New York that it was "a political debacle" has given a new dimension to the debate wherein retired generals, politicians and the intelligentsia are apportioning blame and speak in a self-critical tone.

Their demand for the report being made public has loud echoes in Bangladesh. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has demanded a copy of the report. To Mr Musharraf's statement that 1971 was an "aberration," she has said: "We cannot forget what they did. Pakistan must apologise for atrocities it committed. We take lessons from history, and then move on."

The Internet edition of the *Dawn* carries without comment excerpts from the Hamoodur Rahman Commission Report published in the *India Today*.

Mr Musharraf's description of Z.A. Bhutto — "The very person who ordered the inquiry" as "the vested interest behind the report" — has angered the Pak-

istan Peoples' Party. Former interior minister Lt-Gen (rtd) Naseerullah Babar said in Islamabad on Wednesday: "It is a travesty of truth of which only a handful of our generals can be capable of."

"It required courage for the armed forces to admit that some of its officers had behaved disgracefully and were involved in scandalous tales of corruption, drunkenness and moral turpitude. To improve the image and morale of the armed forces it was necessary to publish the report and allow a public debate," he said.

"One would have thought that the army chief would know better that it was no other person than late Bhutto who revived the armed forces from the bottomless pit of a shameful defeat caused by the moral depravity and cowardice of some generals."

Leading columnist Ardeshir Cowasji writes: "To the credit of the man, it must be said that Yahya Khan never denied responsibility for the part he played in dismemberment of Jinnah's Pakistan." He balances the picture by quoting a long-time Bhutto supporter, Salman Taseer: "Bhutto's detractors preferred to suggest that he was heavily implicated in the political chicanery and blundering that preceded the country's break-up. That may be so. But it is equally likely that the report was by no means the final word on political responsibility for the catastrophe that overcame Pakistan."

THE TIMES OF INDIA

15 SEP 2000

'1971 war panel report incomplete'

5/19 4/10
UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 3. — The Hamdoor Rehman Commission report on the debacle faced by the Pakistan army in the 1971 war, published in an Indian weekly, was "incomplete", Gen Pervez Musharraf has said, announcing that the report will soon be published "in full".

Speaking at the 15th awards ceremony of All-Pakistan Newspapers Society in Karachi last night, he discounted the possibility of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan.

He said a committee comprising several federal secretaries and the interior minister at its helm, was going through the report. The entire report, except a part dealing with international relations and certain secret aspects, would soon be published, he said.

Gen Musharraf said the possible lapses in 1971 were regrettable, but added that half the people concerned with the debacle were dead and the



Gen Pervez Musharraf

other half on their death beds. He wondered why action should be taken now for a debacle that took place three decades ago.

On the efficiency of his government, he said: "I do not want to be surrounded by sycophants and I will quit if I come to know that I am not

delivering and the country is sliding."

Info on MQM sought

The Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi has been asked to send reports on the activities and "hostile" statements made by MQM leaders against Islamabad during a seminar in New Delhi, interior minister Lt Gen (ret'd) Moinuddin Haider, has said.

Talking to newsmen in Lahore yesterday, Mr Haider said the government would take action against MQM leaders in the light of the high commission's report.

THE STATESMAN

17
4 OCT 2000

Pak shuts doors on Afghan refugees

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ISLAMABAD, Nov. 10. — Left largely alone to clothe and feed one of the world's largest refugee populations, Pakistan on Friday said "no more" and closed its borders to the flow of people from neighbouring Afghanistan.

The decision came after a month-long deluge that saw 30,000 new refugees cross into Pakistan, swelling the Afghan refugee population here to more than 2.1 million.

The latest refugee exodus is blamed on a devastating three-year drought and a bitter and protracted civil war that pits Afghanistan's Taliban rulers, who control 95 per cent of the country, against a northern-based opposition, which rules the remaining five per cent.

Tens of thousands more

'WE DON'T HAVE RESOURCES'

refugees were expected to try to cross into Pakistan during the bitter winter months ahead, said Mr Hasim Utkan, Pakistan's UNHCR representative. Pakistani officials say they simply could not handle the influx. "We have no choice," said Mr Abdullah Jan, an official in Pakistan's North-west Frontier Province, which borders Afghanistan.

"Our economic situation is bad and we are trying improve the conditions of our own people. We just can't handle any more refugees. We don't have the money or the resources."

"We are discussing this reported closure with Pakistani officials. While we understand the reasons for it, it is still a matter for regret," said Mr Kris

Janowski, a UNHCR spokesman in Geneva.

Pakistan - a country of 140 million, mostly poor, people - has been single-handedly housing and feeding the 2.1 million Afghan refugees living here since 1995, when the UN stopped its food and housing aid. Some of the refugees date back to the 1980s invasion by the former Soviet Union, when an estimated 500,000 refugees fled to Pakistan. Other refugees came after the 1992 takeover of Afghanistan by Western-backed Islamic groups.

Last month, the UNHCR received an emergency \$960,000 to house the latest influx. But when that runs out, Pakistan will again be left

alone to find food for the refugees, Mr Utkan said.

The Pakistani decision to close the borders "conveys a very clear signal to the Taliban and to the international community," Mr Utkan said. "It reflects I think a frustration on the Pakistani side. They know our budget constraints."

In addition to the war in Afghanistan, large swaths of the country have been ravaged by a three-year drought. Entire herds have died, crops have withered, and entire villages have been forced to relocate, UN workers say.

The UN Children's Fund bemoaned the lack of international sympathy for Afghanistan. Mr Georges-Louis Arsenault, UNICEF representative in Afghanistan, bewailed the lack of international sympathy for the plight of Afghans.

THE STATESMAN

11 NOV 2000

Pak. for agreement with Iran on gas pipeline

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, Nov. 2 Pakistan is not averse to the idea of a direct agreement with Iran for supply of gas, if India is not willing to go in for the proposed gas pipeline from Iran via Pakistan.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, told the Iranian news agency, IRNA, in an interview that "even if India does not agree, we can have bilateral agreement for supply of gas from Iran to Pakistan".

Mr. Sattar's statement reflects Pakistan's keenness on the Indo-Iranian pipeline project in view of the enormous economic benefits it offers. In the last few months Pakistan has gone out of the way to stress its desire to see India enter into a deal with Iran.

Pakistan has recently guaranteed the project's safety to Iran and maintained that it would be in the interest of Iran, India and

Pakistan to go in for an off-shore pipeline. In communicating to Iran its readiness to guarantee the project, Pakistan has tried to allay the apprehensions of India.

Mr. Sattar pointed out that the Pakistan Government changed its earlier stance on the project and assured Iran of cooperation. The change in position came after the military takeover as the Nawaz Sharif Government was opposed to the project.

The Minister has been quoted as saying that Pakistan is keen on having the Iran-Pakistan-India project approved at the earliest and his country is ready to go ahead with it. "We hope negotiations between Iran and India on the project reach a satisfactory conclusion".

Mr. Sattar has said the Iran-Pakistan pipeline project was, in no way, a substitute to the proposed Pakistan-Turkmen gas project. "We need cooperation with the Central Asian Republics, Iran and Afghani-

stan in the field of energy. The Pak-Iran gas project is agreed upon already. Only remaining question is the agreement between Iran and India.

Observers likely for civic poll

International observers from voluntary agencies are expected to monitor the elections to the local bodies proposed by the military government towards the end of December.

The party-led elections will be held in 18 of the 100 odd districts. The poll is to be conducted in phases and likely to be completed by August 2001.

Gen. Pervez Musharraf's government has claimed that the local body poll is the first step towards general elections before the October 2002 deadline set by the Supreme Court. However, most of political

parties have rejected the plan as a meaningless exercise and accused the government of wanting to create a constituency to perpetuate its rule.

The political parties' stand on the devolution plan and the scheme for elections at the village and district level poses a dilemma for the international agencies keen on monitoring the process. Their active participation would mean legitimising the government's agenda at a juncture when the whole world is demanding that it announce a time-table for return to democracy.

The Election Commission has said it would welcome visits by observers from international organisations and would facilitate their interaction at various levels. An official of the Commission has said the observers would be helped to visit a maximum number of polling stations in different provinces.

IMF BAILOUT / \$600-MILLION PACKAGE LIKELY

Pak. sees light at the end of debt tunnel

40-14
By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 5. The good news Islamabad has been waiting for from Washington is finally in. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has at last sent a Letter of Intent (LoI) for a crucial balance of payments support loan. The Pakistan Finance Minister, Mr. Shaukat Aziz, told correspondents here today that the Government had received the LoI. The letter sets out the proposed terms and size of the loan programme, subject to approval by the IMF Board. The Board is to meet later this month in Washington to take a final decision on the loan.

Indications are the IMF has offered \$ 600 million package. Mr. Aziz said that with the IMF bailout, Pakistan is now hopeful of getting \$ 3.5 billion from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Paris Club. Pakistan has been eagerly waiting for a bailout package from the IMF, as the economy is in dire straits with the foreign exchange reserves in a precarious position and a huge outstanding external debt.

The country has not even been servicing its debts for the last two years thanks to the rescheduling allowed by the London and Paris Clubs. As the rescheduling is to end this year, there is the real danger of Pakistan defaulting

technically on its debt obligations.

There has been a furious debate in recent weeks on the course the military government should adopt in tackling the crisis triggered by the debt burden. One school of thought has been advocating in favour of moratorium on loans. However, the Musharraf Government has chosen to ignore the demand in view of the disastrous economic consequences that could follow.

The desperation of the Government for a loan from the IMF can be gauged from the simple fact that even as the issue was under discussion, the Pakistan Finance Minister in September jumped the gun and announced that the IMF has agreed on a package. The IMF managers promptly denied it.

Mr. Aziz had told the press on the sidelines of the joint annual meeting of the IMF and the World Bank that the yet-to-be approved bailout package would help Pakistan meet its debt obligations and revive investor confidence. "This could be a turning point for Pakistan's economic prospects because it is seen as validating the country's economic policies and building investor confidence," he had said.

IMF officials had expressed surprise over this statement and said

67 11
for the first time it was confronted with a peculiar situation in which Minister of a country has gone ahead with announcement of figures not approved by the Board.

Keen to secure a bailout package from the IMF, the Pakistan Government has brought about some fundamental reforms in the economy in the last few months. Several governments, civil and military, in the past had attempted these changes but had to beat a hasty retreat under pressure from vested interests.

Some of the measures implemented by the Musharraf regime included introduction of General Sales Tax and documentation of the economy to widen the taxnet. It should be said to the credit of the Musharraf Government it went ahead with these reforms in the face of stiff opposition from the traders and industrialists lobby.

With forex reserves touching an all-time low and debt obligations reaching a new peak, Pakistan cannot survive without a fresh loan from IMF. This is the second package Pakistan is seeking from the IMF. In 1998, the IMF committed assistance to the tune of \$ 1.6 billion over two years but the loan installments were stopped after May 1999 when the Government failed to implement promised reforms.

THE HINDU

6 NOV 2000

RUSSO-PAK TIES-I

Undignified Pique And Fears

By AG NOORANI

THE Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin's successful visit to India shows how baseless were the fears of a pro-Pakistan tilt by Russia and undignified the tantrums thrown on the eve of his arrival. The success was no surprise. The massive defence deals and documents, signed in New Delhi on 3 October, had been settled earlier reflecting the basis of any sound relationship — congruence of interests on matters of crucial importance. But the pique, which received no small encouragement from the government, falls into a pattern and that pattern is a very disturbing symptom.

On the eve of a visit by the French foreign minister, M Hubert Vedrine, the Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, said in an interview to *Le Figaro*, published on 17 February this year, that India wanted a strategic dialogue and a defence partnership with France. "But for that, your country has to make a strategic choice between the great democratic power that India is and Pakistan, a small country under military dictatorship." Indian officials worked overtime to dissuade President Bill

Clinton from going to Islamabad. "There will be a public reaction (in India) and this has been conveyed to them", the Foreign Secretary Mr Lalit Mansingh revealed at Washington DC on 10 February. Ambassador Naresh Chandra said on 20 February: "We have cautioned the Clinton Administration that the positive effects of this visit will be considerably diluted if the President stops over in Pakistan."

IGNORED

India's prestige was not enhanced by these warnings. It suffered even more when they were ignored and President Clinton stopped over in Islamabad on 25 March. The warnings in March were as petty as were the tantrums of October. None of the three countries — France, the United States and Russia — has any doubt about India's geo-political importance and its central position in the affairs of the region. None, however, can accept it as a regional hegemon any more than France or China, let alone Russia, accept the US as a global hegemon. Nehru gave short shrift to any one who asked him to choose between Western democracies and the brutal Communist dictatorships of Stalin and Mao. Nor did New Delhi exert itself with such cocky and conspicuous crudeness before. It is a particular mindset that explains such a diplomacy and the piques that form its style. The latest performance was inspired by two considerations that lie unexpressed, but which were bared in the context of Russo-Pak moves.

It began with a successful trip to Moscow by the DG of Pakistan's ISI, Lt Gen Mahmood Ahmed, the key man on Afghanistan in the last week of August. A request to meet President Putin was declined but he met his counterpart, Mr Nikolai Patrushev, chief of the

Russian Federal Security Service, successor to KGB, and the defence minister, Mr Igor Sergeev. It was a conscious bid to allay Russian concerns on a host of matters — the Taliban; terrorism in Central Asia; support to Chechen rebels; and drugs. Unlike arrogant incompetents, Russians do not disdain professionalism in diplomacy. They believe in engagement. Direct contact was established with the Taliban. The Lahore daily *News* reported (4 September) that "by early October, Moscow will be dispatching a senior envoy, the Russian presidential

sell MI-17 helicopters and concluded: "On several things there is a growing understanding between the two sides ... (including) struggle against all manifestations of international terrorism". On his return to Moscow, he said on 29 September that "the expediency and date for Mr Putin's visit to Pakistan will be determined by the dynamics of our relations". His "cautious optimism" was based on Pakistan's assurances. It was to be seen "how political declarations are followed up by concrete deeds". Interior Ministers of Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are due to meet shortly in Islamabad.

It is hard to see how any of these can harm India's interests. It might well profit by the lesson Russia learnt. Its Deputy Chief of the Government Staff, Mr Alexei Volin said: "We have gained nothing from not engaging with Pakistan on the problem of Afghanistan".

To think that an exchange such as this should cause alarm enough to prompt India to seek assurances from its guest. On 3 October, Mr Brajesh Mishra, the PM's principal secretary announced to every one's relief: "We

have been assured that this policy towards Islamabad will not be a deterrent to India." And India was satisfied with the assurance.

NEW PRINCIPLES

There was, surely, nothing new about Russia's exchanges with Pakistan. Its Vice President, Mr Alexander Rutskoi, visited Pakistan from 19-22 December 1991. The joint statement urged a "solution that ensured an independent, non-aligned and Islamic Afghanistan". Russia sought "to develop relations with Muslim states on new principles, devoid of ideological obstacles and based on mutual respect, goodwill and mutual benefit". Next came the foreign minister, Mr Andrei Kozyrev's visit to Pakistan (6-8 April 1993). President Boris Yeltsin met Mr Nawaz Sharif in Moscow on 21 April 1999, the first visit by a PM of Pakistan since Mr ZA Bhutto's in 1974. Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov offered to square his famous strategic triangle (Moscow, Beijing and New Delhi) by including Islamabad. "Russia understands the importance of Pakistan in the contemporary world and does not value its relations with other states on the basis of their territory and population", he said, pointedly.

None of this set the alarm bells ringing in South Block. If Mr Putin's aide accomplished that it was because his trip signified for all to see that the *Cordon Sanitaire*, which India had sought assiduously to spread around Pakistan for over a year, was breached by the one country that was expected to respect it. It can hold no longer now, even in its frayed and tattered condition. Britain ruled a huge empire when Lord Goschen proclaimed, on 26 February 1896: "We have stood alone in that which is called isolation — our splendid isolation." India cannot afford that. Hence the panic and pique.

(To be concluded)



spokesman, to Islamabad for high-level dialogue with the Pakistanis. Subsequently, by year end, Islamabad hopes that Pakistan's Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar could visit Moscow". He served there as Ambassador a decade ago. Four days later a senior official said in Islamabad that the 10-minute meeting between President Putin and Chief Executive, Gen Pervez Musharraf, in New York on 7 September, took place as a result of the Moscow talks.

A few days later, accepting the credentials of Pakistan's Ambassador to Russia, Mr Syed Iftikhar Murshed, President Putin said he attached "special importance" to relations between the two countries and described his meeting with the CE as "very positive". Sure enough, on 26 September the President's special envoy, a top aide, Mr Sergey Yastrzhembsky, landed in Islamabad with a letter from the President to the CE. Alarmist reports in Delhi were followed by self-assuring ones that he was there to deliver a warning. It was, in fact, a nuanced but positive message he delivered. "Hopes" for better relations were coupled with "concerns" about the situation. South Asians readily lap up flattery. Even as India is told that it is a great power qualified to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Pakistan was told it is an important player in the region. So, it should behave responsibly.

RELIEF

The envoy said: "We believe Pakistan and India are capable of solving the problem of Kashmir on the basis of the Lahore Declaration and Simla Agreement. The Russian government would be willing to act as a mediator in this regard if both sides asked for such assistance." It was a leaf from the American book. Briefing the press on 27 September, the envoy listed Russia's concerns and suggested improvement in trade relations. He offered to

The author is a lawyer and commentator on current affairs.

Musharraf ready to nuke India if Pak is in danger

BY T.V. PARASURAM

Washington, Oct. 16: Pakistan could use its nuclear bomb against India if its security is jeopardised, its military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, told CBS' 60 Minutes television programme.

"I would never like to use it first of all. But if you ask me a direct question when would I use them... if Pakistan's security gets jeopardised, then only one would like to think of it," Gen. Musharraf told the TV programme on Sunday.

The military ruler said he was proud of Pakistan's nuclear bomb "for Pakistan's sake."

Asked how secure were Pakistan's nuclear weapons, General Musharraf said, "Very secure. That is my guarantee. The national command authority is in place."

According to the Federation of American Scientists, Pakistan has 25 to 35 nuclear bombs and the ability to target any city in India.

US General Anthony Zinni, retired Chief of Central Command, told CBS that Gen. Musharraf may be America's last hope in Pakistan and that if he failed, Islamic extremists would get hold of the "Islamic bomb."

Justifying the coup, Gen. Musharraf said, "The people of Pakistan were fed up with what was going on in the country" and that he "restored confidence."

He asserted that "Pakistan is not a banana republic or a failed state in the region with nuclear weapons, a state that could end up in a nuclear war with India." (PTI)



Pakistan CEO General Pervez Musharraf

Hizb to Delhi: You declare ceasefire first

Islamabad, Oct. 16: Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin on Monday asked the Centre to take the initiative in declaring a ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir to display its "sincerity" about dialogue.

"If someone thinks that ceasefire is a must, then India should take the initiative and declare ceasefire first. It will show India's sincerity about dialogue," Salahuddin told BBC. He said there was "no need for ceasefire from our (the Hizb) side if India declares ceasefire first and agrees for talks." He said the Hizb had "provided a golden opportunity to India for the solution of the Kashmir dispute by announcing unilateral ceasefire (in July) but India adopted traditional delaying tactics and unnecessary conditions." (PTI)

THE ASIAN AGE

10 7 OCT 2001

RUSSO-PAK TIES-II

518 19/10 The Changing Situation

By AG NOORANI

SIGNIFICANTLY, Russia is never asked to choose between India and China. As late as on 28 May 1999, *Izvestia* printed a map which followed the Chinese line on the Aksai Chin border. It is preposterous to assert, as the Minister for External Affairs, Mr Jaswant Singh did at New York on 26 September 1999: "India, being a great country, cannot and should not remain preoccupied with what Pakistan does or does not do and should look beyond the Indo-Pak bilateral context". Pakistan was the centre-piece of the Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's speeches in New York last September and Mr Jaswant Singh's own affected prose.

Another reason for the extreme reaction is, of course, Kashmir. Moscow's stand on this issue has wavered repeatedly between the categorical and the ambiguous ever since the dispute arose. Nikita Khrushchev said at Srinagar on 10 December 1955:

"The question of Kashmir as one of the States of the Republic of India has already been decided by the people of Kashmir." He sent First Deputy Premier Mr AI Mikoyan to Karachi to declare on 25 March 1956 that, in the ultimate analysis, the future of Kashmir would be determined by its people.

EXCEPTION

On 23 November 1956, two days after India's vote on Hungary in the UN General Assembly, the Soviet Ambassador called on Nehru — to discuss Kashmir. Two resolutions on Kashmir in the Security Council, on 24 January and 21 February 1957, were not vetoed. That is how the Swedish mediator, Mr Gunnar Jarring, came to India. On 14 February 1964 in the debates in the Council, the Soviet representative, Mr Nikolai Fedorenko adopted an even-handed approach. UNI reported on 10 September 1965 that the Soviet Prime Minister, Mr Alexei Kosygin wrote to Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri taking "exception to India's crossing of the international border in West Pakistan". The Tashkent conference in January 1966 was followed by arms supplies to Pakistan in 1968.

At his press conference in New Delhi, on 28 November 1986, President Mikhail Gorbachov made an overture to Pakistan. For the next few months, the Soviet press kept recalling Tashkent and all it implied. It was Pakistan's failure to respond on Afghanistan which ended the brief honeymoon.

His successor, Boris Yeltsin, announced at his press conference in New Delhi on 29 January 1993: "We will support the Indian position on Kashmir issue". But only to add: "Of course, we want to have some kind of relations with Pakistan. We do not want to see rupture in these relations over this problem..." Note this exchange:

"Question: What would be a possible mechanism of Indo-Pakistani settlement in the context of Kashmir issue? Mr Boris Yeltsin: It is my feeling that just as we have the European Centre in Vienna for the settlement of conflicts, there has to be a centre for the Asian and Pacific region to deal with conflict settlement with

November 1965, just two months after the war, unleashed by Pakistan, had ended. Kargil, by comparison, was a far smaller conflict. It is all too evident that world opinion on Kashmir has not changed since 1965.

Russia will not weaken its ties with India, but, it will not fail to respond if Pakistan mends its ways on matters that affect Russia's national interest. Its former Foreign Secretary, Mr Tanvir Ahmed Khan revealed recently that in 1990 his talks with Yuli Vorontsov "produced ideas which, if pursued, could have considerably reconfigured the regional situation". They related to Pakistan's Afghan policy. "But I got short shrift on my return from Moscow." The ISI blocked the moves. Now the army rules Pakistan; albeit hamstrung by fundamentalists.

Whether Gen Pervez Musharraf lives up to his promises to Mr Putin or not, it is clear that the Russian President is out to make Russia an important factor in South Asia. Indo-Russian ties will remain strong; but not exclusive. In order to accomplish its objectives, Russia needs a working relationship with Pakistan. There will be times when its actions will not be to our liking.

SMALL MINDS

They are, however, unlikely to harm our interests. For, Russia values its relationship with India. It values even more its relationship with the United States. So does India. The 1971 Treaty pledge (Article 9) to "enter into mutual consultations" in the event of either India or the USSR "being subjected to an attack or threat thereof" in order to take "appropriate measures" was diluted in the Indo-Russian Treaty of 28 January 1993. Article 3 binds them to "contact one another immediately to coordinate their positions in the interests of removing" a threat to peace or "a violation of peace".

The declaration on strategic partnership signed on 3 October 2000 recalls the 1993 Treaty but omits the pledge in its Article 3. It proclaims "the establishment of relations of strategic partnership" and disallows "a military-political alliance". Mr Putin made clear to us, on the eve of his visit, what "strategic partnership" means: "When we say strategic, we mean long-term, a partnership in keeping with the pragmatic national interests of our two countries". This, indeed, is how it should be.

India must come to terms with the changing situation, global and regional, if it is to play the role of a great nation that aspires to be a great power. "A great empire and little minds go ill together", Edmund Burke said. So do small minds and aspirations to greatness.

(Concluded)



participation of all the countries of Asia and Pacific. Russia would be prepared to make its contribution to the formation of such Centre... I think this is the only way, not by taking the path of war, one can extend assistance to another country."

That was just a year after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The climate of opinion has changed markedly since. Russian think-tanks and journals no longer espouse the old pro-Indian line on Kashmir, especially after the nuclear tests in May 1998.

On the eve of his departure for New Delhi, the Russian President said in an interview to an Indian journal: "It's clear that both we and our Indian partners have to take into consideration the fact that the world has changed, Russia has changed, the balance of force in the world has changed and so have some of our priorities." He was alerting India to the changes.

COMPROMISE

He made all the right noises on terrorism in his address to Parliament on 4 October. It is not Mr Vladimir Putin's fault if his audience did appreciate the import of these words: "The fact that the Kashmir issue has not been settled has been making relations between India and Pakistan tense, worst over the last three decades. This issue can be resolved on a bilateral basis, on the basis of a compromise, and on an unconditional respect for the Line of Control. Any foreign interference should be stopped."

With this pronouncement on a formal occasion, Russia joins the other permanent members of the Security Council in urging "a compromise". There is not one country of significance which differs on this. "Almost every country wants that we should somehow settle the question of Kashmir peacefully", Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri noted on 22

Pak. may challenge curbs on Kabul

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

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ISLAMABAD, DEC. 21. Pakistan is expected to appeal to the United Nations Security Council to review and reconsider the latest sanctions imposed on the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

A Foreign Office spokesman told correspondents here today that under Article 50 of the U.N. Charter, a member-State has the right to appeal against any action or resolution if it posed major economic problems for the country.

The contention of Pakistan is that the latest sanctions would aggravate the misery of people in Afghanistan and Pakistan would have to bear the brunt of the massive exodus expected on account of the curbs.

Pakistan is a close ally of the Taliban regime and one of three countries (besides Saudi Arabia and UAE) that recognises the Taliban government. In fact, Pakistan is the only country in the world to have a functional embassy in Kabul.

The spokesman said Pakistan had received the sanctions resolution against Afghanistan and was examining it.

The U.N. Security Council has provided 30 days to Afghanistan to either comply with the directives in the resolution or be prepared to face the consequences.

"Pakistan will respect the U.N. Security Council resolution consistent with its obligations under the U.N. Charter's Article 25 and international norms. We also reserve the right to invoke Article 50 and consult the Security Council."

The spokesman said the one-sided sanctions could encourage the Northern Alliance led by Mr. Ahmed Shah Masood to intensify the conflict. He said the sanctions

were bound to affect Pakistan which itself is confronted with economic problems. "We fear that there would be a large influx of refugees into Pakistan in the coming weeks and months. In a span of three weeks Pakistan has received over 30,000 refugees from Afghanistan."

The spokesman said Pakistan would like the U.N. to launch a major humanitarian programme to alleviate the suffering of the people of Afghanistan.

A day before the U.N. adopted the resolution on Afghanistan, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, had warned of a grave human catastrophe in Afghanistan if the Security Council were to go ahead with the new curbs.

Mr. Sattar said Pakistan would have been glad to support a resolution that prohibited supply of arms and ammunition to both the parties rather than the unilateral ban applicable only for the Taliban.

"We understand some countries are in the process of supplying large quantities of arms and ammunition to the warlord, Mr. Ahmed Shah Masood. It is a clear prescription to prolong the strife."

Asked about Osama Bin Laden, he described people of Afghanistan as 'rational and reasonable' and said that if the effort was sincere, a way out could be found on every issue including that of Osama.

Mr. Sattar said in the perception of Pakistan imposition of fresh sanctions on the Taliban at this juncture would seriously undermine the efforts being made by well wishers of Afghanistan and the United Nation for reconciliation and peace.

Pak. declassifies report on 1971 war

By B. Muralidhar Reddy *MDR*

3/12
ISLAMABAD, DEC. 30. The Pakistan military government kept its promise and declassified today the controversial Hamoodur Rahman Commission report that inquired into the circumstances leading to the debacle of the Army in the 1971 war, and the consequent creation of Bangladesh.

An official statement said barring the chapter on Pakistan's relations with other countries in the run-up to the war, the main and supplementary reports of the Commission were being placed in the National Documentation Center of the Cabinet Division for "consultation and reference".

The report, a damning indictment of the conduct of the Pakistan Army in the then East Pakistan, was a top secret document only in the records of the Pakistan Government. Much of the report were known thanks to leaks in the last 10 years.

The Musharraf Government decided to declassify it after an Indian magazine published the supplementary report of the Commission in August. Major Pakistani newspapers published special supplements reproducing the contents of the report as appearing on the Internet edition of the magazine.

Nevertheless the credit for declassifying the report goes to the Musharraf government as

no government in the past — civil or military — dared to talk about it even though it was gathering dust since 1974.

It is a bold decision on more than one count. Serving and retired military officers have serious grouses against the report. According to them, the report is flawed as its terms of reference were biased and left no scope for an objective analysis of the role played by politicians of the day in the creation of Bangladesh. The move is bound to strain further the already delicate relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh. The issue of punishment for military officers accused of excesses in the run-up to the war is a matter of constant friction between them.

Just two weeks ago, Bangladesh expelled the Pakistan Deputy High Commissioner after he disputed the claim of three million deaths and widespread rape and loot in the civil war that preceded the 1971 war. The expulsion came despite the decision of Pakistan to recall the diplomat. With the report out in the open, Bangladesh can only be expected to step up its demand for punishment to those accused of excesses.

The contents of the report have been intensely debated after the Indian weekly published a substantial portion on August 14, the Independence Day of Pakistan. The debate was whether the military or the political lead-

ership of the day was responsible for the dismemberment of Pakistan.

Gen. Musharraf was initially reluctant to release the report even as the media and intelligentsia and the Bangladesh Government made a strong case for it. During his sojourn in New York after the U.N. millennium session in September, he rejected the demand and urged people to "forget about the past".

He characterised the 1971 defeat as a "political-military debacle" and endorsed the views of a majority of the retired Generals that the terms of reference of the Commission were biased. But a sustained campaign in the press compelled his Government to reconsider its decision.

The publication triggered a war of words between the retired Generals and leaders of political parties on who was to blame for the events of 1971. Politicians sought to pin responsibility on the Generals for the humiliating defeat. But the latter hit back, saying it was the failure of political parties that led to the dismemberment of the country.

In October, while announcing his readiness to release the report, Gen. Musharraf said except for the portions relating to foreign relations, his Government intended to publish all other chapters. He said the portion published by the Indian weekly was selective and gave a misleading picture.

THE HINDU

31 DEC 2000