

India & the Security Council

By C. V. Narasimhan

There has been a renewal of interest in India's claim to a permanent seat in an expanded U.N. Security Council.

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27/5

IN RECENT months, there has been a renewal of interest in India's legitimate claim to a permanent seat in an expanded security council of the U.N., Russia and the United Kingdom have expressed support for the idea. This support has been repeated by Germany, a sure choice for permanent membership in the future, and by France, a permanent member at present, as are Russia and the U.K. Another permanent member — the U.S. — has tied its support to Indian participation in the CTBT. Of the five present permanent members of the council, only China has not made any public statement on the subject. A pleasant surprise was the statement by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, that India would be a natural choice for permanent membership from the developing countries.

To understand the significance of this proposal, we have to go back to the U.N. charter. Of the six principal organs established under the charter, the two most important are the General Assembly and the Security Council. The Assembly consists of the entire membership of the U.N. and represents "the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members". It "may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the charter". It "may make recommendations to the members of the U.N., or to the Security Council, or both, on any such questions and matters". It is important to note that resolutions of the General Assembly are only "recommendations" to the member Governments. They have no sanction.

The provisions relating to the Security Council are narrower in scope. The charter confers on the Council "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security". "The members of the U.N. agree to accept and carry out its decisions." Under chapter VI of the charter, the Council has been given an important role in encouraging "peaceful settlement of disputes". Very large powers have been entrusted to the Council, including the authority under Article 42 to "take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security".

It will thus be seen that the Security Council is a powerful body, and represents the enforcement arm of the U.N. The charter as first adopted provided for five permanent members, representing the victorious allied powers of World War II — namely the U.S., the USSR, China, France, and the U.K. — and six elected members. The elected members served for two years, and were eligible for re-election after a break of one year. Both Japan and India have been re-elected a number of times.

By an amendment of the charter adopted by the General Assembly in December 1963, the membership of the security council was enlarged to 15, by the addition of four more non-permanent members, making a total of 10 elected members and five permanent members. What gives the five permanent members a special status is the fact that any one of them can exercise a veto, preventing the Council from taking a valid decision. Actually, the word "veto" is not used in the charter. Article 27(3) provides that decisions of the Council on non-procedural matters "shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members". In the U.N., three votes are possible — yes, no, and abstain. In respect of the above quoted provision, an "abstain" vote does not constitute a veto. Thus, if one or more of the permanent members were to abstain, the Council can still take a valid decision with a minimum of nine "yes" votes. But even if all ten non-permanent members and four of the five permanent members were to vote "yes", and one permanent member voted "no", no valid decision could be taken.

The appointment of the Secretary-General is a matter where the Council has the first say. Under Article 97 of the charter, "the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council". This recommendation cannot

be forthcoming if even one permanent member disagreed. One implication is that any Secretary-General who aspires for a second term should be careful not to alienate or offend a permanent member.

There are two important differences between the General Assembly and the Security Council. The charter provides that the Assembly "shall meet in regular annual sessions, and such special sessions as occasion may require". The regular annual session usually begins on the third Tuesday in September, and lasts for 13 weeks. The Council, on the other hand, "should be so organised as to be able to function continuously" since it may be called upon at short notice to deal with an international crisis. Another important difference is that the President of the Assembly is a person. He may be the Foreign Minister of Italy, but as President he speaks only for the Assembly. He cannot be his own country's spokesman. In the case of the Council, the President is a state — e.g. France. The President serves for only one calendar month, and is succeeded by the next state in the alphabetical order at the end of the month. If he so chooses, he may address the Council on behalf of his state. The role of the President has become progressively more important, since so many decisions of the Council are taken behind closed doors. The Council then meets in public, and either a draft resolution already agreed upon is put to a formal vote, or a draft statement is read out by the President, and approved by the Council.

Another important role has been assumed by the Council, in respect of the authorisation of "peace-keeping operations". Although not specifically envisaged in the charter, they have become the most important activity of the U.N. in maintaining international peace and security. India has made a distinguished contribution to U.N. peace-keeping. Indian soldiers and their officers have

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tivity, discipline and professionalism.

For quite some time now, the proposal to expand the Security Council has been gathering momentum. The original membership of the Council was 11 out of 51 members, representing 21.6 per cent. In 1963, when the Council was expanded to 15, there were 113 members, representing a fall from 21.6 per cent to 13.35 per cent. Today, with over 160 members, the representation is reduced to 9 per cent. Thus, it is demonstrable that the Council has become less and less representative of the U.N. membership. The expansion proposal began with the U.S. which would have liked to see Japan and Germany — the two largest contributors to the U.N. after it — made permanent members. To make this proposal viable it has been suggested that three countries from the third world may also be inducted, making a total of 20 members. Apart from India, the largest country in Asia after China, the other "possibles" are Brazil and Nigeria, the two largest countries in Latin America and Africa.

One thing is not clear: if the developments envisaged in the previous paragraph were to come about, will the new permanent members have the traditional veto power? It has even been suggested that we may have a three-tier council: five permanent members with veto, five permanent members without veto, and 10 elected members (five elected annually for two years).

Will this expansion lead to a more effective Security Council? So far, the record of the Council has not been distinguished. Leaving aside the peace-keeping operations, I remember the "sanctions" imposed by the Council under Article 41 of the charter against Southern Rhodesia (today's Zimbabwe) after the unilateral declaration of independence by Ian Smith. This was systematically flouted by the neighbouring white supremacist South Africa, and the sanctions failed. Many friends of the U.N. regret the ineffectiveness of the U.N. and would like the decisions of the Council to have more "teeth".

(The writer is a former U.N. Under Secretary General.)

THE HINDU

27 MAY 2000

CTBT move linked to India's UN ambition

Backroom talks to precede national consensus

Udayan Namboodiri
New Delhi, June 30

A PERMANENT seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for India would not be a 'cheesecake' even if the process of achieving a political consensus on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) gathers momentum and is taken to a logical conclusion.

External Affairs ministry sources said neither the United States nor its European Union allies have given a firm commitment on this count. The former is pushing for Germany and Japan, while Britain has made it clear that it sees India as a natural contender for any eventual Asian Group seat but it would be for the regional group to decide that. In Europe, UN reform is the buzzword and enlargement of the UNSC must precede India getting a berth.

Signing the CTBT might at best accrue benefits in the form of easing of sanctions that directly impact the country's nuclear power programmes. Notwithstanding the sanctions, developmental and humanitarian assistance from the multilateral funding organisations continue to flow in to top up India's own budget for the social sector.

Officials here deny that India was "under pressure" to sign the CTBT. "India led the call for a test ban treaty in 1954 and had co-sponsored many of the resolutions that helped build the international momentum behind the objective," a senior official said. "We are committed to pursuing global, nuclear disarmament but simultaneously we want to diffuse the myth

that as the bigger power in South Asia our stand is breeding a nuclear standoff."

The upgradation of Indian presence at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament (CD) from having a permanent representative to an ambassador was the first sign that India would continue its campaign for a nuclear weapons free-world on a relatively more serious note. "The announcement by the Prime Minister today does not signify a shift from that position," the official said.

India is opposing the CTBT on several grounds. But the most important point of discord is that the CTBT is not a comprehensive ban but merely a ban on nuclear explosive testing. Computer simulations are permitted. Moreover, there is no definitive insurance providing for nuclear disarmament as the treaty does not provide any timeframe for the big powers to dismantle their arsenals.

The announcement by Mr Vajpayee was preceded by External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh's assurance to US Secretary of State Madeline Albright a day earlier that a discussion on the CTBT would be held in the monsoon session of Parliament beginning next month. Today the Prime Minister went one step ahead of his Lisbon reiteration to state that he expected a consensus by the year-end.

Officials agreed the 'consensus' cannot be achieved on the floor of Parliament. That would be possible only through backroom consultation and much internal debate within the entire political spectrum. "Parliament would be the forum watched by the world powers to gauge which way India is going," they said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

FD-13
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Kashmir not on agenda of U.N. session: Annan

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 13. The Kashmir question will not figure in the planned agenda of the prospective "millennium session" of the United Nations General Assembly, according to the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan. Affirming this in Bangkok today, Mr. Annan did not indicate, one way or other, whether the Kashmir issue will altogether be taken off the U.N. agenda.

To a question whether a move was on the cards for erasing the Kashmir issue from the U.N. agenda at the proposed new historic conference, Mr. Annan said: "It (Kashmir) will not be one of the topics that we will be discussing during the millennium Assembly (later this year)." He was addressing the international media on the sidelines of the ongoing 10th session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Outlining the agenda of the proposed unique session of the U.N. General Assembly, Mr. Annan said: "I would hope that the member-states, the heads of states and governments who are coming to New York, will come to discuss the U.N. in the 21st century, look forward and perhaps also decide to take action on certain specific problems that we all face." Noting that these problems would fall in the category of those "that can be managed" by the international community, he expressed the hope, too, that the millennium Assembly could "come up with proposals for dealing with them." Such proposals could "include timetables" for their implementation and "measurable standards that we will follow through," he elaborated.

Without specifying such issues of common global concern, the Secretary-General made it clear, though, that "we are not going to take on issues like Kashmir." The notion of a move, if any, to jettison the Kashmir issue as a historical baggage of the previous century is traceable to an event that occurred a few years ago when this sensitive dispute came close to being considered redundant for the purposes of the U.N. General Assembly. Pakistan then resorted to what it saw as a crisis diplomacy to ensure that Kashmir was not taken altogether off the U.N.'s ra-

dar screen. Mr. Annan noted that "a petition was (presently) handed over to us at the U.N. Office here in Bangkok" by a group representing the Kashmiri separatists. While Mr. Annan did not go into any specifics in that regard, the petition was apparently transmitted by the All-Party Hurriyat Conference that staged a minor demonstration near the U.N. office here in a bid to draw his attention on the occasion of the UNCTAD session.

The Special Envoy of Pakistan's President to the UNCTAD session, Mr. Munir Akram, did not mention the Kashmir issue at all by name in his speech to the plenary here today. He did, however, identify "conflicts and tensions arising from foreign occupation and suppression of the right of peoples to self-determination" as one of several non-trade factors for "inequality" and inequity on the global stage at present. The "right to self-determination" is a diplomatic phraseology that Pakistan often adopts to denote its support for the Kashmiri separatists on the Indian side of the Line of Control.

It was also a matter of much diplomatic nuance that Mr. Munir Akram was designated, for the purposes of the UNCTAD-X, as the Special Envoy of the President of Pakistan and not of Gen. Musharraf. India is being represented at the conference by the Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr. Murasoli Maran.

Answering questions on a range of international issues, Mr. Annan said at his press conference that the world body would organise elections in East Timor within the next two years or so. The objective was to help the East Timorese in "electing their own leaders in a democratic fashion" so that "they can take over the government and we (the U.N.) will withdraw" after completing its "operation" of putting that territory through its paces towards independence.

The U.N., Mr. Annan said, was already "broke" at present in a "technical sense" on account of the unpaid arrears owed to it. "But we have managed to keep on with our work" and "we do need a partnership with civil society" and the non-governmental organisations.

India troops will remain part of UN peacekeepers

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, July 16. — Mr Jaswant Singh today ruled out any possibility of India withdrawing from the United Nations peacekeeping force in Sierra Leone and hailed the Indian forces for the brilliantly planned and executed Operation Khukri.

India would not seek any change in the UN mandate to change the role of the troops from peace keepers to peace enforcers, the Union external affairs minister said.

Mr Singh was briefing the media on the successful operation that began at 6 a.m. (local time) at Daru yesterday and ended at 4 p.m. with the capture of Pendembu and rescue of 221

Unamsil soldiers, mainly Indians.

By participating in the UN peacekeeping effort, India is only continuing a tradition it had set, he said. In last 50 years, the country has taken part in 33 such campaigns, including the ones in Congo and Somalia.

Mr Singh paid tribute to the military operations that came after the failure of extensive diplomatic initiatives at the

highest level to persuade the RUF to lift the siege.

The go-ahead for the operation was given by the UN secretary-general, Mr Kofi Annan, and the UN department of peacekeeping operations. The UN had been in constant touch with India while taking the decision, the minister said.

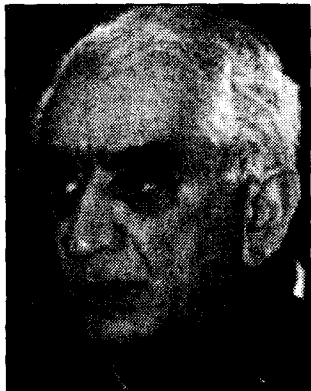
UNAMSIL force commander, Major General VK Jetley personally supervised Operation Khukri. It was a complex operation, involving a link up between the Indian columns from Daru and Kailahun at a mid point in Pendembu — the RUF headquarters, Lt Gen NC Vij said.

Surprise, speed, good orchestration and extensive air cover caught the RUF off guard though the rebels did put up stiff resis-

tance.

Indian forces seized one medium machine gun, eight light machine guns, seven rocket launchers and a truckload of ammunition abandoned by the RUF at Pendembu.

Two one-tonne vehicles belonging to the Indian army which had been hijacked by the RUF were also recovered. IAF helicopters also destroyed three RUF vehicles carrying reinforcements.



Mr Jaswant Singh

THE STATESMAN

Annan praises role of Indian peacekeepers

UNITED NATIONS: Secretary-General Kofi Annan Tuesday highly praised Indian force commander in Sierra Leone, Major-general Vijay Jetley, and his contingent for leading an "effective, highly efficient and professional operation" in rescuing 233 peacekeepers surrounded by rebels for the past 10 weeks.

In separate statements on Monday, the UN Security Council and Kofi Annan paid tributes to Sergeant Krishan Kumar who lost his life during the operation at Sierra Leone and expressed "profound condolences" to the family of the slain peacekeeper. In their statements, American ambassador Richard Holbrooke and British ambassador Jeremy Greenstock also expressed full support to the operation. Holbrooke said the RUF had acted in an intolerable and unlawful manner and had to be met by force.

"The courage and remarkable discipline and determination displayed by all bring credit to them, their countries and to the UN," Annan said. The fact that peacekeepers were able to bring all their weapons, vehicles and other essential equipment with them was an added cause for satisfaction.

Expressing full support to the decision taken by Gen Jetley to use decisive force to rescue the peacekeepers who were low on ration, the Council at a specially convened meeting paid tributes to the Indian contingent that took the leading role in the execution of the "difficult and dangerous" operation. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

India will raise debt issue at UN meeting

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: During the special session of the UN general assembly which begins in Geneva on Monday, India is expected to take up the external debt problems of developing countries.

The Indian position will be that it is only when the developed nations give developing countries genuine trading rights that the latter will be able to overcome their external debt problems. This was stated by Planning Commission deputy chairman K.C. Pant, who will be leading the Indian delegation at the five-day special session in Geneva beginning on Monday.

The special session has been called to review the progress made in order to achieve the ten social commitments which were made five years ago when nearly 117 countries came together in Copenhagen during the World Summit for Social Development.

Speaking to *The Times of India* before leaving for the summit, Mr Pant said, "We are interested in projecting the social problems of India and other developing countries in the light of the changing world scenario." He said serious efforts will be needed to generate the resources needed by developing countries to deal with social problems like are to be tackled.

Mr Pant also noted that while developed nations had agreed to give a percentage of their GNP to developing countries, in reality this is yet to happen.

That resource issues will be central to the special session is also stated in a paper titled 'Footing the Bill for Social Development' prepared by the U.N. in the run-up to the special session. However, it notes that "the session is not likely to produce instant debt relief, trade breakthroughs or pledges of large new grants of assistance." But at the same time it observes, "The results of the session can have far-reaching implications for the operations of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and on how national governments approach social development issues."

Among the ten social commitments adopted during the Copenhagen session were:

- * The creation of an economic, political, social and cultural environment which will help social development.
- * Eradication of poverty.
- * Promotion of full employment.
- * Promotion of universal education and primary health care facilities.
- * Ensuring that structural adjustment programmes include social development goals.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

26 JUN 2000

India seeks EU's support for UN seat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LISBON, JUNE 28

INDIA on Wednesday made a strong plea to the European Union to support its case for a permanent seat in an expanded UN Security Council and join hands in fighting the scourge of international terrorism, which poses the biggest danger to global peace and stability.

Stating that reforming the United Nations was a crucial element towards a new multi-polar world order, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee told the first-ever India-EU summit that "India, as the world's largest democracy and rapidly growing economic power,

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has a natural claim to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council".

Without naming Pakistan, Vajpayee said "differences between us can only be resolved through bilateral negotiations. There is no room for any third-party involvement, however well-intentioned."

Terrorism posed as great a threat to the European Union as to India, he said, stressing the need for the two to work together to counter the menace.

"We must collectively expose and reject attempts to cloak terrorism as *jihad* (holy war). This is something that cannot be accepted as civilised conduct among nations," he said. He said it was a mat-

ter of satisfaction that India and EU have resolved to work together on the convention on terrorism that will be negotiated in the UN General Assembly later this year.

Vajpayee said since the establishment of the UN in 1945 to achieve the noble objectives of peace, economic prosperity and co-operation among nations, the world has changed, as has the international order.

But, he said, these changes are not reflected in the structure of the Security Council and added the council must reflect the new realities. Vajpayee said that in the increasingly inter-dependent world, a plural security order alone can deal

with the challenges of the new era and the development of "our nuclear capability should be seen" in this context. "It is part of our resolve to build a multi-polar world where we have strategic space and autonomy in decision-making. Our view of regional security goes beyond the passive absence of conflict to the active building of confidence with our neighbours," Vajpayee told the Summit, also attended by Portuguese Premier Antonio Guterres in his capacity as EU president and president of European Commission Romano Prodi.

He said for more than a decade, India had been a victim of

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INDIAN EXPRESS

JUN 2000

India seeks UN convention to ban use of ~~N~~-arms

United Nations, October 18

INDIA HAS introduced a resolution in the UN General Assembly calling for commencing talks on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

Moving the resolution in the disarmament and international security committee of the UN General Assembly, on the lines of one adopted by the Assembly at New Delhi's initiative last year, Indian representative to the conference Rakesh Sood yesterday strongly criticized the nuclear powers for claiming the right to possess

such arms in perpetuity.

In this context, he reiterated India's demand for a step-by-step process to eliminate nuclear weapons backed by a legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of such arms.

"It is a matter of regret that due to inflexible position of certain delegations, the conference of disarmament has so far not been able to commence negotiations on this subject," he said.

The resolution would be discussed by the committee, which is expected to appeal to the General Assembly to adopt it during its current session.

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It expresses the conviction that a multilateral agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would strengthen international security and contribute to the climate for the negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The resolution, Sood said, goes to the very core of the nuclearised global order, which persists even a decade after the end of Cold War.

"Doctrines of first-use of nuclear weapons have been re-validated and reaffirmed even though the threat perception that originally led to those doctrines have long disappeared," he emphasized. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

19 OCT 2000

Panja odyssey for Council seat

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, July 14: As the Indian effort to find a permanent seat in the UN Security Council gains momentum, minister of state for external affairs Ajit Panja is being used more and more by the Vajpayee government to canvass support in African and West Asian countries, most of them members of either the Organisation of Islamic Conference or the Organisation of African Unity.

Panja has been to Tunis, Cairo and Khartoum in April this year. He has just returned from the oil-rich kingdom of Kuwait, where he tried to convince decision-makers of the need to back India.

Kuwait, which is demanding that its 600-odd prisoners languishing in Iraqi jails since the Gulf War be returned, has been assured by the minister that India

would offer all assistance in this matter.

It appears that in the months preceding the crucial September meeting of the UN General Assembly, Panja might make several trips abroad to garner support. Several of these trips might be to Africa and West Asia.

When contacted, he said he found the Kuwaitis quite positive about India's claim for a Security Council seat. "I was overwhelmed by their hospitality," said the beaming minister.

Panja's brief included convincing the Kuwaitis of India's stand on global terrorism and how it affected India. He gave them details of the Airbus hijack and told them how it was done at the behest of another nation.



Panja:
Flying high

Another business on the agenda was the migration of Indian workers to Kuwait.

There are 280,000 Indian expatriates working in Kuwait. Among them are highly-paid professionals like software specialists and doctors. There are a large number of domestics, too.

About two years ago, India prohibited job-seekers from going to Kuwait because of reports that the Indian domestic workforce was being treated cruelly.

Kuwaitis are now sending signals that the ban be lifted. A delegation will shortly go to the Gulf country to review the working conditions before allowing Indians to take up menial jobs there.

It is a long-standing complaint

that the illiterate Indian domestics are discriminated against and paid paltry wages in Kuwait. But there are signs that the situation may change now if these domestics have even rudimentary education.

India will also send a 1,500-strong health team, including 400 doctors, to Kuwait. The Gulf nation has a perennial shortage of medical staff and professionals from the sub-continent have always helped fill the gap.

Panja also inspected the 240-km border between Iraq and Kuwait, now under the supervision of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission.

Among the mission's troops, many are from the sub-continent. The minister said he was impressed by the camaraderie between Pakistani and Indian soldiers and he even spoke in Bengali to the Bangladeshi troops.

THE TELEGRAPH

15 JUL 2000

India needs major effort to enter Security Council

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, APRIL 20. As the efforts to expand the United Nations Security Council gather an unexpected momentum, diplomatic observers here say India will have to launch an all-out offensive to gain a permanent seat at the high table.

While the prospects for India becoming a member of the world's most exclusive club are looking up, informed sources here caution that "the road ahead is a hard one".

They point to the debacle three years ago when India miserably lost its bid for a non-permanent seat at the United Nations. Unless it "puts in place a coherent strategy and mounts a major lobbying effort", observers here say, India could easily squander a rare opportunity for enhancing its global position.

India is certainly pleased with the recent French and British endorsements of its candidature for the permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council. Among the other permanent members, Russia has already backed India's claim. According to highly placed

sources, the United States too had signalled a positive approach during the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit here last month.

The good news of Western support comes amidst signs that the current logjam at the U.N. on Security Council reform is being broken. Earlier this month, the Clinton Administration indicated it was giving up its previous insistence that an expanded Security Council should not have more than 21 nations, including both additional permanent and non-permanent members. The Council presently has 15 members, of whom five are permanent.

Lack of an agreement on the proposed size of the new Council had killed the prospects for an early expansion. The U.S. argued until now that the effectiveness of the Security Council depended on keeping it compact.

But the American proposal of 21 members was too small to accommodate the very divergent interests in the world body. Any expansion of the Security Council must be approved by two thirds of the total membership (not just present and voting) of the U.N. General Assembly.

The non-aligned movement is looking at a figure of 26 for the new Security Council. France and Britain are apparently willing to endorse a Council of 24 members. The American readiness now to go beyond 21 has opened the doors for an accelerated schedule of U.N. reform.

The reluctance of the U.S. Congress to contribute its assessed share of the U.N. spending may also be giving an impetus to early expansion of the Security Council. The U.S. hopes Germany and Japan, which it wants as permanent members in the expanded Council, would accept a large share of the UN financial burden.

Besides the question of the size of the new Council, consensus will have to be evolved on a number of difficult issues. Should the veto powers of the current permanent members be curtailed? Or must the new members too be given the right to block any decision?

Undoubtedly the expansion of the Security Council will turn out to be one of the most complex diplomatic exercises in recent history. But is India really prepared for the big fight?

THE HINDU

21 APR 2000

India sees no role for UN in Sri Lankan conflict HCR

SINGAPORE: Indian foreign minister Jaswant Singh on Friday ruled out a role for the United Nations in war-torn Sri Lanka and reiterated that New Delhi would only get involved in the conflict there if asked by Colombo.



Jaswant Singh

"I personally do not see a role for the United Nations as such," Mr Singh said at a question-and-answer session after a speech on India and regional security in Singapore.

But Mr Singh, in Singapore on a three-day official visit, said India was seeking greater Commonwealth involvement to end the crisis in Fiji. He said U.N. involvement in Sri Lanka had so far been restricted to humanitarian aid under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The Lankan army and Tamil Tiger rebels are locked in battle in the northern Jaffna peninsula and fighting has intensified after fresh offensives by the LTTE.

"What we are witnessing in Sri Lanka is a challenge to Sri Lankan integrity. India remains committed to the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka," he said. "We cannot independently assume for ourselves a role in Sri Lanka that is not at the request of the Sri Lanka government," Mr Singh said, when asked if India would consider intervention.

India sent troops to Sri Lanka in 1987 to disarm the LTTE under a peace accord with Colombo. It withdrew in 1990 under the orders of Sri Lanka's then president Ranasinghe Premadasa.

Mr Singh said India was in touch with the Norwegian special envoy who was trying to broker efforts to stop the ethnic bloodshed and had offered advice.

Unlike the hands-off stance on Sri Lanka, Mr Singh advocated

greater international involvement in the crisis in Fiji where the elected government of Mahendra Chaudhry was overthrown in a coup last month.

Mr Singh said the Commonwealth, of which Fiji and India are both members, can act under an action programme which discourages the forceful unseating of democratically elected governments.

Fijian coup leader George Speight and a band of armed supporters have been holding Mr Chaudhry, the country's first elected ethnic Indian prime minister, and most of his cabinet hostage inside the parliamentary complex since May 19.

India is in talks with other Commonwealth countries, including Australia and New Zealand, to get the group to act on the crisis.

Mr Singh said an Indian envoy dispatched for talks with authorities in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji was due to arrive in Fiji on Friday. (Reuters)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

3 JUN 2000

Keep troops from undemocratic nations out of UN missions: India

United Nations, February 15

INDIA HAS warned the UN against including troops from countries where armed forces have destroyed democracy at home in its peacekeeping contingents.

"Introduction of contingents from military dictatorships in countries driven by conflict, alienation and misrule would send a wrong message and defeat the very purpose of such an operation," India's acting permanent representative to the world body Satyabrata Pal said addressing the United Nations Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations yesterday.

Moreover, if the UN is promoting democracy in countries where its absence has been a cause of conflict, it can hardly be done by military even from democratic states as the armed forces have little understanding of the tasks of governance and development, he said.

"The challenges that face the UN

arise not from new missions being set up or old ones being expanded but from the manner in which they are set up and what they are asked to do," Mr Pal said, adding "surely time has come to ask if running municipalities, establishing a legal system or spreading aids awareness are functions for a peacekeeping operation."

Criticising the way the Security Council is functioning, he said if the Council no longer acts promptly and effectively in its mandated sphere of maintaining international peace and security and instead ventures into areas like human rights, humanitarian law and disarmament which fall into the domain of other UN organs, "we must seriously consider whether it should continue to have the monopoly on setting up and running peacekeeping operations."

Mr Pal said the Committee, an expert body of the General Assembly on Peacekeeping, should have a role in the formulation of mandates of multi-dimensional

mission that go beyond traditional peacekeeping.

UN does best when its peacekeeping operations do not stray from traditional mandates, he said.

"Peacekeeping is a process more closer to diplomacy than war. The consent of parties, the impartiality of peacekeepers and minimum use of force remain the cardinal principles, deviation from which have often been tragic, which led to failed operations and compromised UN," he said.

Mr Pal agreed that durable peace is built on foundation of democracy, economic growth and development for which help of international organisations is needed. But these are not the responsibility that a peacekeeping mission could assume without overreaching itself and failing in its primary task.

Pal also criticised the recruitment policies of the UN for peacekeeping operations, saying women candidates are not selected for reasons that at best appear "arbitrary".

(PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 FEB 2000

HD-11
10/9

Unanimity over democratic deficit in U.N.: Najma

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By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 9. Parliaments of the world are firmly behind the United Nations and this support is both political and practical; and whether parliamentarians belong to the majority or are in the opposition in the respective national parliaments, they are committed to offering necessary political backing to the world body as the cornerstone of the international cooperation system, according to Dr. Najma Heptullah, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and President of the Conference of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments.

In a statement to the Millennium Summit on the outcome of the conference of Presiding Officers here, Dr. Heptullah, Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, said, "We are also committed to allocating the resources which the U.N. and other inter-governmental institutions need to accomplish their noble mission."

Dr. Heptullah maintained that there is unanimity in identifying a democratic "deficit" in the U.N. and the inter-governmental regime at large.

"If U.N. decisions are to interpret the concerns and aspirations of the people and if international agreements are to effectively find their way to our national reality, parliament, as the institution which legitimately represent society in its diversity and is accountable to it, should have a better say in the international cooperation process," Dr. Heptullah remarked.

Although governments negotiate at the United Nations and the main role of legislators is to translate into legislative and budgetary provisions the agreements reached internationally, yet in the wider interest of all and in the interest of democracy, legislators must be involved in the process in the early stages and not exclusively in the implementation phase, Dr. Heptullah said in her statement.

Referring to the Millennium Declaration that called for a strengthening of cooperation between the U.N. and the national parliaments, Dr. Heptullah assured the gathering that she and her colleagues "would do all in our power and attempt much that is beyond to give concrete shape to your call".

Talking about the parliamentary dimension to the phenomenon of international cooperation, she remarked, "To create this new partnership, parliaments intend to act in close consultation with you, governments and with inter-governmental organisations."

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, Dr. Heptullah argued, is a unique instrument to relay the views of our parliaments to the inter-governmental system.

"This is why we can no longer accept that it be classified as a non-governmental organisation and we look forward to identifying with you a status for the IPU which is commensurate with the constitutional status of parliaments and with IPU's mission as our world organisation."

Dr. Heptullah also organised a Conference

of Speakers and Presiding Officers of National Parliaments, and for the first time more than 150 participants from 140 countries attended the session and spoke on issues such as globalisation, liberalisation and democracy, including on how the world body should be democratised.

In a conversation with *The Hindu* Dr. Heptullah said that it was imperative that the voice of the people be heard and that a new concept is coming up at the United Nations — the parliamentary dimension at the world body, for which much credit will go to India.

On the issue of globalisation, it was pointed out that the focus has been on money, but this had to be shared and not remain in the hands of a few. "Globalisation also means learning from others' experiences," Dr. Heptullah observed. The focus and attention must be on cooperation and not competition, the latter leading to the existence of a few lavish empires.

Dr. Heptullah maintained that parliaments are not the only democratising institutions, and that media and modern technology are also tremendous agents of democracy; these must not be in the hands of a few but "be made available down the line."

Dr. Heptullah said there was a lot of discussion on terrorism; and it was felt this menace, with its transnational characteristics, posed a great danger to the international community and that parliaments cannot remain silent spectators.

THE HINDU

10 SEP 2000

MORE SUPPORT FOR INDIA'S CLAIM

INDIA'S FOCUSED CAMPAIGN for democratisation and reform of the United Nations and its powerful policy-making body, the 15-member Security Council, has begun to yield results, faster perhaps than even New Delhi had hoped for. This is reflected in the growing support for a permanent seat for India on an expanded Council. Till a year ago there were but two obvious candidates, Germany and Japan, both economic powerhouses, with the U.S. distinctly disinclined to grant entry to others. Washington's attitude was accompanied by the failure of the international community to evolve acceptable criteria for inclusion of other nations, with regional rivalries effectively stalling reform of the organisation. India's efforts received an initial setback when New Delhi needlessly entered the race for an elected Council seat against Japan. But since then, especially since the Kargil crisis of last summer, there has been evidence of some acknowledgment around the world of India's possibly key role as a force for peace and stability flowing from the innate strength of its democratic plurality.

The experiences of a decade after the end of the Cold War and the imbalances of the unipolar world have injected great urgency to reinvesting the world body with the responsibility for keeping global peace. The search for multiple poles to end the global domination by one superpower, coinciding with the initiation of measures for reforming the U.N., has seen the emergence of new friends and revival of old friendships and rivalries. It was in this evolving context that Russia, with a new President, renewed its support for India's candidature for a permanent seat. Now comes the categorical statement by the French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac, that New Delhi is a "natural candidate" which will receive the support of his country. Paris' support, under-

lined during the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan's state visit, strengthens India's case even if it is partially the fallout of centuries-old rivalries on the Continent.

More non-committal has been the position of Britain. The visiting Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, would not go further than hail India as a "clear contender" for a permanent seat. The Labour Government's apparent reluctance to break away from its past support to Pakistan was understandable. Britain is, besides, echoing Washington's line which is to keep up the suspense and uncertainty by saying India's candidature is receiving "serious consideration". Pakistan, their Cold War ally, has opposed India being given a permanent seat and suggested non-permanent rotational membership to nations in each region. Pakistan's Foreign Minister has openly criticised the expansion of what he called "islands of privilege" through grant of permanent seats.

Mr. Cook however has announced one departure. By adding Britain's voice to the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's warning call to Pakistan not to attempt to redraw boundaries in blood, Mr. Cook corrected a long-standing imbalance in Labour's policy perception on the Kashmir issue. His remark that there could be no meaningful dialogue in "circumstances of violence" fell short of a full condemnation of cross-border terrorism. But the message, addressed to Pakistan, was clear and categorical: respect the Line of Control. In the uncertain domestic situation in Pakistan — critically important considering that the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen has been forced to contradict an exceptionally bold statement reportedly made by the Interior Minister — a strong message from an ally of Cold War vintage will undoubtedly strengthen the beleaguered forces of moderation in Islamabad.

THE HINDU

20 APR 2000

PACT ON PROMOTING INVESTMENT SIGNED

Portugal backs India's claim for U.N. seat

By Alok Mukherjee

LISBON, JUNE 29. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today wound off his two-nation, five-day foreign tour with an assurance from Portugal that it would support India's candidature for a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council.

Following the summit meeting with the European Union (EU) here on Wednesday, the bilateral part of Mr. Vajpayee's Portugal visit began with consultations with his counterpart here, Mr. Antonio Guterres, and other dignitaries of the Portuguese Government. After the meeting, the two leaders addressed the media where Mr. Vajpayee said he had discussed the issue of expansion of the Security Council and the need for developing countries to be on it. Mr. Guterres, on his part, said "India's claim for a permanent membership of the Security Council deserves our full sympathy," and replied in the affirmative when asked whether this consideration would translate into reality.

India and Portugal also decided to consolidate their economic



The Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, being welcomed by the Portuguese President, Mr. Jorge Sampaio, at the Presidential Palace in Lisbon on Thursday. — Reuters

and political linkages by maintaining a continuity in the high-

level dialogue and mutual interaction. The Prime Minister and

the President of Portugal have been invited to visit India at mutually convenient dates and regular consultations would be held between the foreign offices of the two countries.

On the economic front, the two countries signed the fourth agreement pertaining to bilateral investment promotion and protection. Earlier, an agreement on avoidance of double taxation, on cooperation in science and technology and one on economic and industrial cooperation were signed.

The bilateral investment promotion and protection agreement was signed by the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha and his Portuguese counterpart Mr. Jaime Gama.

During the bilateral discussions, the two sides had a "very useful exchange of views" on recent regional and global developments of mutual relevance.

The issue of terrorism was discussed in detail and India and Portugal agreed to cooperate at multilateral for developing an organised and collective strategy for defeating this scourge.

THE HINDU

30 JUN 2000

UN owes India \$50 m. for peacekeeping operations

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations owes India about \$ 50 million for troops and equipment contributed by it to different peacekeeping operations.

Underscoring the strain unpaid dues caused to a developing country, India's acting permanent representative to the UN Satyabrata Pal said that despite the arrears, New Delhi continued to send its troops for difficult missions.

"With the other developing countries who still contribute the bulk of peacekeepers, we do not just sustain UN missions, but subsidise them," he told Security Council members who authorise missions.

Addressing the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, Mr Pal said on Monday that the UN seemed to believe that developing countries should be able to provide troops whenever needed but wait for payment forever. "This really cannot go on," he said.

India, at present, is the largest contributor to the UN 1,745 soldiers, 226 policemen and 27 observers serving with various missions around the world. Over the years, more than 50,000 Indians have served on 31 peacekeeping missions in every continent, underlining the country's commitment to world peace, the Indian representative said.

The primary reason for delay in reimbursements to troop contributing countries, Mr Pal said was the withholding of assessed contributions by member states. "We hope those who have defaulted in the past will, as they must under the Charter, pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without condition and clear up their arrears," he said.

"If they do not, the backlog of payments for the larger missions now being set up, compounded by accrued arrears, will bring us rapidly to a crisis," Mr Pal warned. He also expressed the fear that the UN might borrow from peacekeeping operations to finance regular budget activity to meet the shortfall created by delay in payment of dues by member-states.

The U.S. is a major defaulter and Congress has sought to lay down conditions for payment of arrears, including reduction in its contribution to peacekeeping costs from 31 per cent to 25 per cent.

The U.S. also wants its contribution to the regular budget to be reduced from 25 per cent to around 20 per cent (PTI)

Advani debut trip to Israel

FROM DIPTOSH MAJUMDAR
AND CHANDAN NANDY

New Delhi, May 30: In his first foreign tour since taking over as home minister in 1998, L.K. Advani will visit Israel next month to discuss the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalists and ways of containing it.

The trip, to begin from June 13, is significant as Israel has been sending feelers on the common cause it shares with India.

For two years, Advani has steadfastly refused to go on trips abroad, saying as home minister he preferred staying at home.

The visit comes at a time when not just the home minister, but even Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee agrees that there is an all-out effort by Islamic fundamentalists to damage the fabric of the "secular identity of the nation".

Advani has been crying himself hoarse warning about this larger goal of "ethnic cleansing of the Muslims and further balkanisation of India" by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence.

Advani is going to Israel essentially to convince Tel Aviv that both countries should share inputs on terrorism. He is going to tell them that India could utilise Israeli expertise in the war against terror. Israel's Mossad is said to be the most effective counter-terrorism organisation.

Israel has insisted in the past that the terrorism faced by India is different from the kind it has to tackle in Jerusalem, Lebanon and other parts of West Asia.

Ever since the Vajpayee government came to power, there have been talks of India sharing a "natural bond with Israel", which, too, has been the target of terrorist strikes by Islamic fundamentalist outfits.

National security adviser Brajesh Mishra had flown to Israel after the Pokhran nuclear tests in



George Fernandes, L.K. Advani and Parkash Singh Badal at a meeting in New Delhi. (PTI)

May 1998. Two months ago, the Israeli national security adviser had visited India and met Mishra and even Advani.

From Israel, the home minister will travel to Paris, and possibly Lyons where he is expected to hold discussions with Interpol bigwigs.

India needs tips and assistance from Interpol on several crimes committed in the country which have international links, includ-

ing the cricket betting and match-fixing scandal.

Advani will also go over to London to discuss the help that could be provided to India by British intelligence agencies. Now that Robin Cook, the British foreign secretary, too, is highlighting the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalists, Advani will be in a good position to drive home his agenda.

Advani will also meet British

home secretary Jack Straw.

Along with Advani, home secretary Kamal Pandey is also planning to go on a four-nation tour which will include Israel, France and Germany.

Pandey's trip will only supplement the home minister's visit to West Asia and Europe and formalise relations with the countries on sharing of intelligence and information on international criminal syndicates.

THE TELEGRAM

31 MAY 2000

US warms to Delhi council seat bid

New Delhi, April 9 (Agencies): The US is prepared to give serious consideration to back India's case for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council, US ambassador to India Richard Celeste has said.

"The US has to be prepared and will be prepared to give India serious consideration for permanent membership of the Security Council," he told Doordarshan in a programme telecast tonight.

He said the US also believed that the Security Council needed to be recast and "we are prepared to give India every consideration".

India has one-sixth of the world's population and, therefore, had to be taken seriously, Celeste said, adding, that President Bill Clinton believed that a stable and prosperous global community would require India as one of its leaders.

"We anticipate India as a true global leader looking down the road 10 or 20 years", he said. He added: "It is leadership in resolving important global issues that range from environmental issues to strategic and political issues."

Celeste said both Delhi and Washington had a stake in energising economic growth in India "so that it not only benefits the middle class in India but reaches to the very poor".

On the Kashmir issue, he said the US was clear that there was no scope for third-party mediation to sort out the differences between India and Pakistan. "Third party is necessary only when the first two parties want, invite and see it out".

Celeste said the vision statement of Clinton and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was an "architecture that can be comfortable for the next President, whether it is Gore or Bush".

He said India could count on Clinton as a strong advocate of India "both in office and out of office".

Celeste said there was a huge opportunity for further growth of Indo-US relationship. "But if you compare where we stand relative to China, I think it is evident that there could be more US investment in India and more trade between the two countries".

The future Indo-US cooperation, he said, should go beyond the usual areas of science and technology, agriculture and health and include environment and clean energy as well.

"There could be a variety of opportunities which the new forum on science and technology can identify," he added.

Celeste said it would be difficult to increase cooperation in the area of nuclear and space technology unless India and the US harmonised their views on non-proliferation.

On opening an FBI office in Delhi, he said FBI's skills and assets were being deployed, in cooperation with CBI, to track down the hijackers of the Indian airlines aircraft and bring them to justice.

THE HINDU

10 MAY 2000

Jaswant reaching out to Iran

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MAY 17. As part of India's new diplomatic thrust in the Islamic world, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, is travelling to Iran later this week. The formal reason for Mr. Singh's trip to Tehran is to attend the 11th meeting of the Indo-Iranian Joint Commission that deals with a bilateral cooperation on a range of issues.

Mr. Singh's objective would be to go beyond the routine diplomatic chores of the Joint Commission—to try and lift Indo-Iranian relations to a higher strategic plane.

Converging interests in Afghanistan and energy security considerations are emerging as the key elements of the geopolitical template that is beginning to shape relations between New Delhi and Tehran.

The challenge before Mr. Singh and his Iranian interlocutors will be to find ways to realise the new potential for strategic cooperation between the two nations. Besides inaugurating the Joint Commission along with the Iranian Foreign Minister, Mr. Kamal Kharazi, Mr. Singh will interact with the Commerce and Petroleum Ministers of Iran.

Mr. Singh will also call on the Iranian President

Mohammed Khatami, who has emerged as the most exciting political leader in the Islamic world.

The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan in the recent years has drawn India and Iran closer together in their assessment of the new threats to regional security. Both India and Iran have both been deeply concerned at the forces of extremism and destabilisation that have been radiating out of the Taliban led Afghanistan.

Briefing the press here on Mr. Singh's visit to Iran, the spokesman of the Foreign Office said "New Delhi and Tehran have a close identity of views on Afghanistan."

The consultations on Afghanistan between Mr. Singh and the Iranian leadership come amidst the consideration of new sanctions against Katul by the United Nations Security Council.

Beyond Afghanistan, New Delhi and Tehran seek peace and stability in Central Asia and want to see the best possible use of the energy resources there.

Blocked by Pakistan and Afghanistan in its access to Central Asia, India has seen Iran as its gateway to the former republics of the Soviet Union.

But New Delhi and Tehran need to iron out many glitches before India can effectively use the Iranian

transit route to Central Asia. Energy security is likely to become an important factor in strengthening the Indo-Iranian relations in the future.

Iran has one of the world's largest reserves of natural gas. India plans to import this commodity in large quantities to meet its growing demand for clean energy.

During Mr. Singh's visit to Iran, the two sides are likely to explore different options in bringing natural gas to India from Iran and beyond in the Persian Gulf.

Meanwhile, the recent political rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran marks a significant positive evolution of Tehran's relations with its Arab neighbours. Mr. Singh also has plans to travel to Saudi Arabia in the near future.

Together, Iran and Saudi Arabia are calling on the Islamic nations to reject extremism and promote greater tolerance among the various Islamic sects and for a comprehensive dialogue between Islam and other civilisations.

It is in this context that Mr. Singh's overtures towards the Islamic world in general, and Iran in particular, acquire a particular significance in India's national security strategy.

18 MAY 2000

Jaswant aims to strike balance in oil deal

Anand K. Sahay
New Delhi, May 21

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister Jaswant Singh, who is on a five-day visit to Iran, has a sensitive and difficult task on his hands, relating directly to the country's overall security compulsions. He has to persuade his interlocutors in Teheran to agree to sell natural gas to India without bowing to insistence from any quarter that the gas be carried overland through Pakistan.

Informed sources here believe that such pressures can be strong, for the issue has got caught up with international power politics which can conceivably co-opt commercial interests that may associate with the Iran-India transaction.

The discussion with Iran on the gas issue is five years old.

During most of this period, however, it had remained dormant and was suddenly revived only during the US President, Mr Bill Clinton's recent visit, when it came to be touted in the media as a 'peace pipeline'.

It was believed that if as vital a

commodity as energy supply for India was routed through Pakistan, both the countries would develop an inherent and unshakeable stake in peace with each other which could, in turn, help settle issues like Kashmir.

While on one hand, India would get vitally important gas running through Pakistan, Islamabad, on the other, would earn around US \$500 million per annum, which would be a relief to its straitened circumstances.

Security plan-

ners here are astounded at the

idea. The proposed gas purchase from Iran is the equivalent of 15 million tonnes of oil per annum, which is as much as 30 per cent of India's total oil imports.

If such huge amounts of vital resource supplies pass through Pakistani territory, Islamabad will automatically come to wield a whip over this country's energy needs.

It is inconceivable that an 'adversary' state be provided with such a leverage, the security community feels.

India's energy needs are growing at close to seven per cent per year, the fifth highest in the world.

And if a strategic reserve is also to be built, Iran could be a source for even more gas. In case an overland conduit through Pakistan is established, the increased supply would also pass through it, giving Islamabad even greater leverage over this country.

During his visit to Iran, the External Affairs Minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, will be expected to suggest alternatives. Two are available straight-away.

The first is the building of gas pipes under the continental shelf of Pakistan, rather than overland. Under Section 79 of the Law of the Seas, India has the right to do so and Islamabad cannot object, although its consent is needed in the delineating of the pipeline traversing its continental shelf.

A Committee of Secretaries here had cleared this proposal earlier in 1995, and then, quite bafflingly, had sought Pakistan's approval for it.

It is hard to say if this was at the instance of any commercial interests that may favour overland fabrication over submarine pipes. Predictably, Pakistan suggested that the gas-bearing pipes pass overland.

The following year when President Rafsanjani of Iran visited India, he too endorsed the overland route.

Mr P V Narasimha Rao, the then Prime Minister, balked at the idea and is said to have shot it down before the Iranian leader in uncharacteristically sharp language.

The second alternative that the External Affairs Minister can suggest is to have no pipelines at all, but to lift the Iranian gas in double-hull tankers for liquid gas.

This would entail construction of a liquefaction plant at the gas-head in Iran and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal and gassification plant on the Indian side.

However, the External Affairs Minister, Mr Singh, may not have an easy sailing on this account and he will be judged by the quality of his efforts.

New Analysis

Energy, key issue in Indo-Iranian ties

By C. Raja Mohan

TEHERAN, MAY 21. As India and Iran seek to build a new partnership, energy security and Afghanistan are emerging as important areas of focus in the high level consultations under way here.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, will meet his Iranian counterpart, Mr. Kamal Kharazi, tomorrow to examine the various options available to bring natural gas from Iran, which has it in abundance and India so badly needs. The two leaders will also seek to consolidate the growing convergence of their political interests in Afghanistan.

The Indo-Iranian consultations on Afghanistan take place amidst new international initiatives on bringing peace to that war-torn nation and moves by the United

Nations Security Council to impose additional sanctions on the Taliban.

The two Foreign Ministers, who will be meeting for the fifth time in just about a year, will have an opportunity to push forward the agenda of cooperation in the economic as well as regional security arena. The mood here on the eve of the Singh-Kharazi meeting is upbeat. Senior officials in the Indian delegation, briefing the press here said there was a new sense of promise in Indo-Iranian ties.

The officials suggest that New Delhi and Teheran are aware of the enormous untapped potential of the bilateral relations and the need for a focussed effort to realise it. Mr. Singh, who is here on a five-day visit, will open the 11th meeting of the Indo-Iranian Joint Commission along with his coun-

terpart Mr. Kharazi. Senior officials from the two sides have been preparing the ground for the talks at the ministerial level tomorrow.

Iran, which has nearly 15 per cent of the world's natural gas reserves, is keen to find export markets. India has now emerged as one of the world's biggest consumers and importers of petroleum products. As India's economy continues to grow, New Delhi will have to ensure its energy security, and is looking for long-term partnerships.

India and Iran have three broad options in giving a practical shape to their energy cooperation. They can transport liquefied natural gas (LNG) through ships; lay pipelines on the seabed from the Persian Gulf to the western coast of India; and finally build an overland pipeline between India and

Iran, via Pakistan. Iran has been seeking Indian cooperation in building an overland pipeline. Teheran believes such a pipeline will also provide a viable means to transport the natural gas resources of Central Asia to the sub-continent through an interconnected grid of pipelines through Iran.

Pakistan, meanwhile, has supported the project. Islamabad stands to benefit by charging transit fees on the gas flows between the Persian Gulf and India. But there are strong political reservations in New Delhi about the implications of India's energy supplies coming through the hostile territory of Pakistan. There are many unanswered questions on the reliability of a gas pipeline that will be at the mercy of Islamabad's political whims.

India, Iran to develop strategic ties

Udayan Nambodiri
Teheran, May 21

THE FOREIGN Ministers of Iran and India meet here tomorrow to revive hopes of greater strategic and economic co-operation between the two countries.

Everybody agrees there is great potential in the relationship, especially on the economic front. However, apart from a minor joint venture in shipping, gains from privatisation and decontrol in Iran, big commercial ventures have till now generally eluded India.

The Joint Business Commission (JBC) of the two countries was set up in 1998 and its third meeting was inaugurated today. Twenty-three representatives from 20 Indian companies and business associations are attending it. Mr

Khamoushi, president of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, said that over 200 industrial corporations in Iran will be privatised in the country's second five-year plan period which should offer reasonable scope for Indian investors who are eyeing the emerging Central Asian markets.

The Indian interest in reactivating the 1993 memorandum of understanding for a joint pipeline is considerable. Energy-starved India can definitely benefit from an energy partnership with Iran which has 15 per cent of the world's natural gas reserves. However, the project has been stuck by bureaucratic delays on the part of the Iranians and the downturn in relations between

India and Pakistan which is against the laying of a land pipeline.

Though under stiff United States sanctions, Iran has been able to attract investment from the European Union countries. India is looking for a piece of this cake. According to Mr A K Srivastava, chairman of the Indian delegation

in the JBC, India could go in for joint ventures and

production in the oil sector. Indians doing business with Iran face a number of bureaucratic problems. The Iran Government demands legalisation of documents and there is no financing infrastructure for trade in machinery or project exports. These problems require ironing out. India is also offering Iran its training estab-

lishments in the fields of agriculture and mining. Though External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh will be spending a lot of time with Ministers in the trade and oil sectors of Iran, strategic talks with his counterpart, Mr Kamal Kharazi, is expected to hog much of the limelight. As a preparation for their meeting tomorrow, officials in the political sub-group of the Joint Commission discussed the regional political situation which includes Afghanistan.

Since the last Joint Commission meeting, the two Ministers have met thrice at different multilateral forums. Iran is one of the countries on the UN's framework of nations seeing resolution to the Afghan crisis, but upholds the view that no process which excludes India can prove fruitful.

Jaswant in Teheran

India, Iran look for bigger role in Kabul

By C. Raja Mohan

TEHERAN, MAY 22. Building on their growing convergence of interests in Afghanistan, India and Iran have begun to consider substantive political cooperation on regional security issues. This could possibly include greater coordination in their diplomatic efforts for peace in Afghanistan and more military interaction.

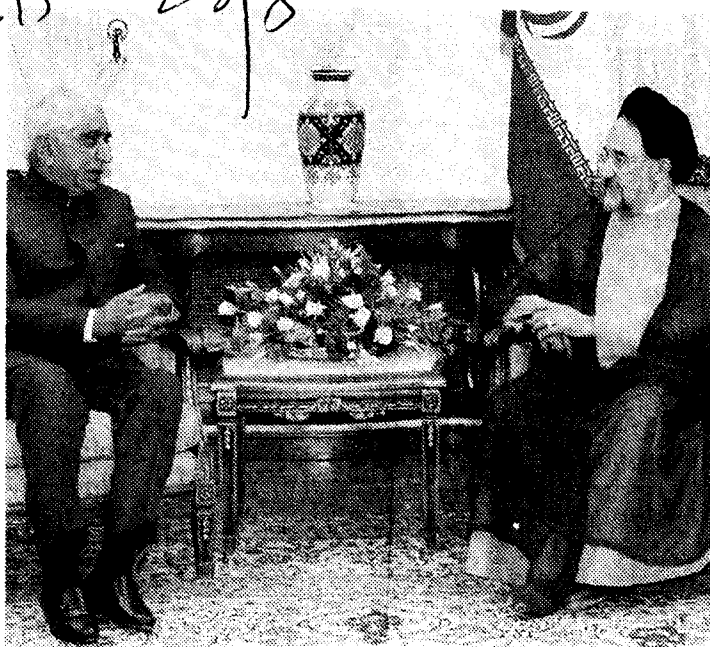
Afghanistan was among the many issues of mutual interest that the visiting External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, discussed today with the Iranian President, Mr. Mohammed Khatami.

Sources in the Indian delegation told reporters here that the talks between the two leaders were warm and constructive. There was a meeting of minds, the officials said.

Mr. Khatami told Mr. Singh, when the latter called on him this afternoon, that greater interaction between the two countries was important for regional stability.

Responding to the positive sentiments expressed by the Iranian leadership, Mr. Singh said India and Iran were natural partners.

The upbeat mood in India on the eve of high-level talks this week with the Iranian leadership now appears to have been confirmed by the tone and tenor of Mr. Singh's discussions with Mr. Khatami and the Iranian Foreign Minister, Mr. Kamal Kharazi.



The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, with the Iranian President, Mohammad Khatami (right), in Teheran on Monday. — AP

Although the notion of strategic and natural partnership between nations has been somewhat diluted with frequent use, the emerging relationship between New Delhi and Teheran is of considerable significance. Iran is one of the leading Islamic countries and a leading actor in the oil-rich Persian Gulf and in Central Asia. And it shares long borders with India's neighbours — Pakistan and Afghanistan.

India, as part of a new diplomatic thrust, has sought to reach out to the Islamic world. New Delhi wants to tap the unrealised potential for economic and political partnerships with the key Islamic nations such as Iran.

While Mr. Khatami and Mr. Singh are viewing the prospects of a long-term partnership, it is the geopolitical fallout from the rise of the Taliban that has begun to draw the two nations closer.

Threatened by the forces of destabilisation radiating out of Afghanistan, India and Iran have a common objective in limiting the domination of the Taliban and in ensuring that peace and stability were returned to the war-torn nation.

New Delhi and Teheran want to contribute to international efforts aimed at establishing a government in Kabul that fully represents the ethnic and cultural diversity of Afghanistan.

Senior Indian officials were unwilling to reveal any specific step under consideration by the two sides to make an effective political intervention in the international debate on Afghanistan. They said the talks would continue tomorrow.

As India and Iran explore the prospects for a new partnership, the one big missing element — defence cooperation — is coming into view. Indian officials here did not respond to a direct question on whether the two sides were looking at enhanced bilateral military engagement. Military diplomacy is now a common feature among major nations, and the two nations agree, it could begin with modest steps.

The two Foreign Ministers inaugurated the 11th meeting of the Indo-Iranian Joint Commission today. The message from Mr. Singh and Mr. Kharazi to the officials was to begin a conscious and focussed effort to advance the relationship across a broad front.

THE HINDU

23 MAY 2000

CROSS THE GULF 12

In the past there has been little substance to India's relations with Iran. The recent visit of the Indian external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, to the Islamic republic reflects the belief in New Delhi and Tehran that the two now have a lot in common. The two nations believe they share interests in both geopolitics and economics. The mutual security concern is the *taliban* of Afghanistan. Iran holds the taliban's patrons, Pakistan, partly to blame for the persecution of Afghan Shiites and the killing of Iranian diplomats by the taliban last year. India and Iran are not out to overthrow the Kandahar regime. Their interest lies in containing the rogue state until it is tamed. The reformist regime of Mr Mohammad Khatami is wary of being drawn into an armed conflict with the taliban because a *jihad* would strengthen his chief rivals, Iran's hardline *mullahs*. Both countries fret about Afghanistan's becoming a source of terrorism, India's primary concern, and heroin, most of which passes through Iran. J. W. R.

The other interest is economic. Hence the recent revival of the 1993 plan to build a natural gas pipeline between Iran and India. India's recent burst of economic growth has made it the most important energy market in this part of the world. Iran, on the other hand, is sitting on some of the largest reserves of natural gas in the world for which it needs infrastructure and customers to pay for it. The pipeline is still a blueprint, in part because it must run *via* Pakistan. Iran also hopes to host many of the pipelines that will be siphoning the petroleum riches of the Caspian and Caucasus. Again, it will help if it has a large customer nearby. Iran and India have had troubled relations in the past. Under the *shah*, Iran and Pakistan were on the same side of the Cold War. For a brief three or four years the Islamic republic trained and supported militants in Kashmir. Then in 1994 it signalled a shift in its position by persuading Pakistan to withdraw a resolution on human rights violations in Kashmir. As the taliban cast a shadow across Afghanistan, talk of Iran acting as Pakistan's strategic backyard went out the window. In addition, the Islamic revolution begun to lose much of its fervour. The recent electoral evidence of enormous popular support for Mr Khatami's liberal Islamism makes it easier for democratic India to come closer to Tehran. Far from defying the West, India is *de facto* paving the way for the United States and other Western nations who are waiting for Mr Khatami to push aside the mullahs. Iran's revolution has burnt itself out. Tehran now sees an Islamic revolution next door as a threat and is preparing to end its decades of diplomatic and economic isolation. India is and should be at the forefront of this process.

THE TELEGRAPH

24 MAY 2000

India wary of pipeline through Pakistan

TEHERAN: Expressing strong reservations over Iran's proposal for establishing a gas pipeline to India via Pakistan, external affairs minister Jaswant Singh on Tuesday asserted "there is no way we can agree to it unless certain fundamental issues are addressed."

Physical security of the proposed overland pipeline, assured supply of gas and the question of no country having arbitrary or unilateral control to turn off the energy source are among the security considerations which make India wary of the Iranian proposal.

New Delhi's reservations were conveyed by Mr Singh during his parleys with Iranian President Mohammad Khatami and foreign minister Kamal Kharazi.

The minister pointed out that the 1993 memorandum of understanding signed between India and Iran on cooperation in the energy sector was a "bilateral one and Teheran could not unilaterally transform it into a "trilateral" arrangement involving Pakistan.

Both countries have decided to set up a joint working group with technical experts to examine various options of India getting natural gas from Iran, Mr Singh told reporters.

Responding to questions, Mr Singh clarified that India was not dictating terms to Iran but only asserting its legitimate security concerns. Teheran, he said, understood New Delhi's apprehensions.

India is also examining prospects of enhanced energy cooperation with Qatar, Turkmenistan and the United Arab Emirates, all having large reserves of natural gas.

On Afghanistan, Mr Singh conveyed India's concerns over the actions of the Pakistan-backed Tal-

iban regime and threats posed to regional security.

Mr Singh made it clear that without India being on board along with other countries concerned to deal with the Afghan imbroglio, "there cannot be lasting solution to Afghanistan."

During the talks, Iranian President Khatami said the Afghan crisis is a threat to the regional security and hoped for an international resolve and regional common will to help the Afghan people reach lasting peace.

New Delhi maintains that peace, stability and security in Afghanistan is important for the welfare of all Afghan people and for the region's security and stability.

It says the military solution, being pursued by the Taliban through the active support, collaboration and actual involvement of Pakistan, could be neither successful nor enduring in resolving the Afghan conflict.

Both Mr Khatami and Mr Kharazi stressed that India has an important role to play in maintaining the security and stability in the region.

Iranian commerce and energy ministers, who held detailed discussions with Mr Singh on enhancing cooperation in diversified fields, underscored the need for the two countries to have comprehensive trading links. Six leading Iranian banks have offered their assistance in this regard to Indian companies.

Senior officials said the overall thrust of Mr Singh's five-day visit was to further consolidate the existing broad-based and multifaceted bilateral ties and work towards building long-term stable relations. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

24 MAY 2000

HD-13

Indo-Iran JWG set up

24/5

By C. Raja Mohan

TEHERAN, MAY 23. Looking for a long-term energy partnership, India and Iran today unveiled a high-level forum to identify the best possible means of transporting the vast natural gas reserves of the Persian Gulf and Central Asia to the sub-continent.

In announcing the decision, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and his Iranian counterpart, Mr. Kamal Kharazi, avoided for the moment the nagging question whether Pakistan should be part of the alluring prospect of a geo-economic waltz between India and the Islamic world.

The setting up of the Indo-Iranian Joint Working Group is part of Mr. Jaswant Singh's energy diplomacy aimed at leveraging India's huge dependence on imported petroleum products to transform relations with the oil-rich nations. But the Pakistan factor is at the heart of the many difficulties that have bogged down the many attractive proposals in the past for an energy partnership between India and Iran.

Iran has huge reserves of natural gas and India is hungry for this clean source of energy and petrochemical industry. Besides its own natural gas resources, Iran could become the hub of gas exports from the rest of the Persian Gulf and Central Asia to India. Iran has been keen to move this gas through an overland pipeline running through Pakistan, which is sandwiched between the two

countries. There are major reservations in India about relying on a pipeline that runs through hostile territory. While India's security concerns have constrained the choice of land pipelines, there was some focus on sub-sea pipelines and bringing gas in liquid form via ships. Both these options, however, raise project costs.

Addressing a joint press conference with the visiting Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Kharazi said the Joint Working Group would study the political and technical hurdles in the way of transporting gas to India.

The JWG, to be headed by the two Foreign Ministers, will raise the on-going regional discussion on natural gas pipelines to the political level. It could also accelerate long pending decisions on mega projects that could lead to enduring economic and political bonds between India and her petroleum-rich neighbours.

There is some anxiety in Iran that its huge gas reserves are lying unutilised and wants a quick decision in favour of a pipeline through Pakistan. Islamabad, which would benefit by charging transit fees on gas flows to India, has supported the project.

Reacting testily to a question from an Iranian journalist, Mr. Singh said it was entirely unwarranted to believe that India was dragging its feet on the project. In a separate briefing to the Indian press, he insisted, there was no way India could agree to an overland pipeline, unless some funda-

mentals were addressed. That precisely is what the JWG is expected to do in the coming months and years.

Mr. Singh said the agreement between India and Iran was a bilateral one and any assumption that it was trilateral was an oversimplification.

The key to the realisation of the potential of energy cooperation between India and Iran, according to Mr. Singh lies in arranging a survivable marriage between economic and security aspects of the pipeline proposals.

THE HINDU

24 MAY 2000

India, Israel will strengthen ties in hi-tech, communication areas

TEL AVIV: Appreciating India's scientific, technological and industrial progress, Israel has offered cooperation in high-tech, communication and other sectors to further strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries.

"Israel has achieved tremendous success in high-tech and communication areas which is standing in the first row among world leaders in the field and I would like to extend cooperation in high and communication business with India," Israeli deputy prime minister and minister for communication Benjamin Ben Elizer said.

Praising India's advancement in various sectors, showcased in the ongoing first ever India trade fair here, he said the exhibition demonstrated India's progress.

"There is no secret that relation between the two countries are solid one and the exhibition opens the gates of India for Israeli people," Mr Elizer, who inaugurated the trade fair with Indian Minister of state for commerce and industry Raman Singh on May 3, said.

Indo-israeli trade had gone up phenomenally nearing around one billion dollars, Mr Singh said, adding "India is ready to offer diverse market opportunities to Israel."

Inviting Israeli leaders to invest in India, Mr Singh told there is unlimited potential of bilateral cooperation in various areas, particularly software and electronic industry.

Mr Elizer also said he would visit the country in the near

future. "I intend to come to India with a big delegation of 20-25 members comprising big and important Israeli companies to introduce our achievements so far," he said. Lauding Indian goods displayed in the exhibition, Israel's interior minister Natan Sharansky said the "bilateral trade target is now two billion dollars and we have to focus on cooperation in high-tech, textile, agriculture and aircraft industry."

Over 100 Indian companies are showing casing India's ever-growing scientific, technological and industrial progress, burgeoning fashion industry, cinema, food and folk culture during the fair here this week, marking a new chapter in Indo-Israeli trade and cultural ties in the new millennium. (PTI)

India reaches out to the Islamic world

AD 13
5/4
By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, APRIL 4. The Government is making a conscious diplomatic effort to reach out to the nations in the Persian Gulf and West Asia to emphasise the threat to regional security from the forces of religious extremism and terrorism.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, is slated to travel to Iran next month and hopes to visit Saudi Arabia as well in the near future. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Ajit Panja, has already taken off on a visit to Tunisia and Sudan and will have a brief stopover in Egypt. Terrorism and its connections to narcotics trafficking and religious extremism will also be highlighted by Mr. Singh at the non-aligned ministerial conference next week in Cartagena, Colombia.

If India's objective is to get the international community encourage Pakistan to get off its addiction to terrorism and extremism, the countries of the Persian Gulf would have a very important role. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia have increasingly been critical of extremist tendencies in the Islamic world and have together called for restraint and tolerance.

Shia Iran is directly affected by the rise of Sunni radicalism in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Teheran's cultural, economic and geopolitical interests have already been challenged by the Pak-sponsored Taliban in Afghanistan.

Indian and Iranian interests have steadily converged in Af-

ghanistan, and Mr. Singh will try and deepen the political and economic linkages between the two nations.

Saudi Arabia, a long-standing ally of Pakistan, is in a vantage position to exert quiet pressure on Gen. Pervez Musharraf to temper Islamabad's religious radicalism.

Ten days ago the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, warned Gen. Musharraf that Pakistan must either choose the path of moderation or risk further global isolation. The Clinton administration is expected to reinforce this message to Pakistan through Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations.

The kingdoms of the Arabian peninsula have their own reasons to worry about the political direction Pakistan has chosen. They are conservative in their religious orientation and are wary of the kind of Islamic radicalism that is being spawned today in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The message from the other leading Islamic nations has been similar. The Prime Minister of Turkey, Mr. Bulent Ecevit, who was here last week had called on Gen. Musharraf to restore democracy and eschew the path of extremism. The President of Indonesia, Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, last week had apparently offered Gen. Musharraf advice on the same lines.

Concerned about the impact of violence and religious extremism on their security and stability, the Arab nations have begun to give up their traditional reluctance to condemn international terrorism.

IMPROVING TIES WITH TURKEY

WITH THE UNNATURAL barriers of the Cold War crumbling in the past decade, nations are discovering that the time is opportune for reviving and resuming old relationships where they once existed. India and Turkey are two countries that need no excuses for attempting to improve ties, on the foundations of a relationship that dates back centuries. In that effort, a half century of estrangement resulting from the Cold War must be treated as an aberration, an interregnum that is not allowed to cloud the prospects for the future. The just-concluded visit of the veteran Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Bulent Ecevit, underlines the depth of the relationship. A translator of sections of the Gita and Rabindranath Tagore's Gitanjali, Mr. Ecevit appropriately ended his visit at the Viswabharathi University where he received the highest honor conferred by the institution. His observations in Delhi and the joint statement issued at the conclusion of his visit must mark a turning point in bilateral relations, in fact a turning away from the past decades which saw the two countries often speak different languages. Democracy and secularism and the related threat posed by extremism remained Mr. Ecevit's theme and in both areas the two countries can share their rich, varied experiences for the region's good.

Turkey, strategically placed on the geographic gateway to the east and the west, scored a major victory recently in the geopolitical battle for the oil pipeline from the new fields of Central Asia. Ankara has been seeking a change of image from the recent past when for half a century it was so closely tied to the military alliances sponsored by the U.S. that there was little meeting ground with nations outside of the blocs. Pakistan was an ally in that so-called front against communism and it was

clear from the remarks of Mr. Ecevit that Turkey has put those years behind as it seeks to expand and enlarge its relations. The country itself had had a mixed experience as it fought off the two threats of frequent military takeovers and militant fundamentalism. Perhaps Turkey is the only country which has experienced the incredible irony of the military playing policeman for democracy intervening to oust an electoral victor because of his refusal to subscribe to the secularist principles on which Kemal Ataturk had founded the modern nation. Religious fundamentalism, feeding on the failings of the polity which had often remained under the military, is an unvanquished threat. The military has for now kept the fundamentalists in check.

g/v

India and Turkey have in fact much common experiences to share in terms of fighting religious fundamentalism and the menace of terrorism. Turkey has had to contend with the separatism of the Kurds, whose genuine grievances have been exploited by external forces to spark trouble inside the land. Mr. Ecevit's remarks against terrorism stem from his own country's experiences with the Kurds. Ankara, which attempted to put down the menace with an iron hand, scored a major victory when the Kurdish rebel, Abdullah Ocalan, was apprehended. If sharing of experiences must prove profitable, India and Turkey must look ahead and explore the vast avenues for cooperation in diverse fields, building on the cultural bonds of the distant past. Turkish connections deserve to be renewed but they do not acquire greater value, as some proclaim in New Delhi, because Turkey has switched sides and is no more to be counted as a Pakistani ally. The bilateral relationship deserves more solid foundations.

SECRET

SECRET

APR 200

Germany all for India in UN

Our Calcutta Bureau
CALCUTTA 18 APRIL

INDIA SHOULD have a permanent seat in an enlarged UN Security Council.

Stating this, Heinrich-Dietrich Dieckmann, the German ambassador to India said "the claim for global leadership by India is not disputed by Germany."

The ambassador was addressing a joint meeting of the members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industries and the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta on Monday.

The German ambassador said India had become a member of the G-20 group of nations on German initiatives. "We have also welcomed India's presence as dialogue partner at last year's organisation for economic cooperation and development (OECD) ministerial conference." He said Germany "counted on India as a major partner in WTO."

Mr Dieckmann said having worked for quite a few years as one of the leaders preparing the G-7 and G-8 summit, he felt that "international mechanisms had to be adjusted to new realities in search for a broader consensus on international economic matters."

"The world faces global challenges asking for global answers. There are issues of security in the broader sense for the future of mankind and in particular for the future of upcoming generations," he said.

However, the ambassador felt that India should expedite its reform process and hard sell the country abroad. Replying to a question asked he said the country needs to sell its products and services in order to bring in more investments from abroad. He said the German perception of India is changing with more and more entrepreneurs willing to share newer technologies with Indian businessmen.

The Economic Times

19 APR 2002

HC-15
25/7

Breakers of the siege

Indian peacekeepers in Sierra Leone have shown that they can use force to good measure. They should not be deterred from fulfilling their duties by domestic pressures, writes **ASHOK K. MEHTA**

AFTER 75 days of dilly-dallying, the action to free the 223 Indian peacekeepers, mostly Gurkhas, besieged by the Revolutionary United Front at Kailahun, was decisive. In a stunning pre-dawn commando operation code-named Operation Khukri, the United Nations Mission for Sierra Leone's predominantly Indian peacekeeping force achieved a virtually casualty-free success. Decisive action was the result of the fact-finding team led by Director General Military Operations Lt. Gen. N.C. Vij to Sierra Leone.

In his report, he had recommended that the onus of action lay with India and not with the United Nations Secretary General or any friendly African country which might agree to intercede on India's behalf. Hence, Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh took the bull by the horns to first get the release of the 21 hostages followed by military action to break the siege. However, the operational decision for offensive action was taken by the much-maligned UNAMSIL commander, Major General Vijay Jetley, who has now become a hero.

Operation Khukri was a coup noted for its surprise, speed and stealth. UNAMSIL had lulled the RUF with the tune of peaceful resolution and the conviction that Indians would never attack. But military action was forced by three reasons: one, UNAMSIL was beginning to look like a toothless force; two, besieged soldiers were running short of supplies; three, the onset of the rains would have made military operations difficult later. Further, Lt. Gen. Vij had stated in his report that India would have to act in its self-interest and not rely on others.

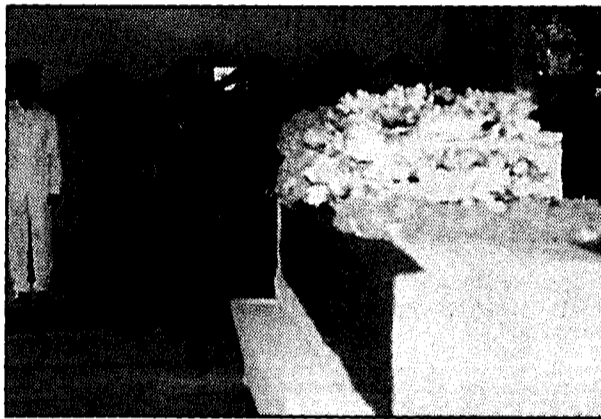
India was able to act with dispatch because it went into Sierra Leone with a strong military force of combined arms, a lesson it had drawn from its Somalia experience. Since peacekeepers from other countries are inadequately equipped and trained, Maj. Gen. Jetley had no choice but to give the difficult rescue mission mainly to the Grenadiers and Gurkhas.

Technically (and legally) the UN chain of command starts and ends with the UN Secretary General. He is the supreme commander of all UN missions operating worldwide under the mandate of the Security Council. The use of military force is legitimate even under

PLATFORM

Chapter 6 of peacekeeping for free movement and self defence.

Now that the RUF has lost both its aces — the 21 hostages and 223 besieged — it had banked on using as bargaining chips for the release of its leader Foday Sankoh, UNAMSIL, may now try and bring the RUF to its knees. The United States, the United Kingdom and even Nigeria are in favour of this course, while



Liberia is not. This will also require UNAMSIL moving from Chapter 6 to 7 — that is peacekeeping to peacemaking.

India has rejected this option and wants to stick by the original mandate which requires the RUF to be disarmed, demobilised and reintegrated with the government forces. One thing is sure: UNAMSIL will re-deploy and prosecute its mandate in a more forceful fashion.

Meeting recently at Lome, the OAU attended by most heads of African states except Liberia agreed that the stand-off in Sierra Leone must be resolved peacefully. As per the accord, Sankoh was to be appointed Honorary Vice President and Minister for Natural Resources (read diamonds). The mess in Sierra Leone is because the Lome accord has come unstuck and there are too many takers for the country's diamonds. Seventy per cent of the country's economy supported by the diamond industry is located in Sankoh rebel-held areas in the east

of the country. But 70 per cent of the diamonds are smuggled out mainly through Liberia.

UN peacekeeping operations in Africa are riddled with tribal politics and deep-set enmities between warring factions. Hostage-taking is a common practice for bargaining. Copper in Congo, diamonds in Angola and Sierra Leone are part of the big game in Africa over control of strategic minerals.

Maj. Gen. Jetley and the Indian peacekeepers have been targeted by the West African states which failed to keep the peace in Sierra Leone. They want their man to replace Maj. Gen. Jetley. The last time this happened was when the Indian commander in Bosnia, Lt. General Satish Nambiar, was forced to leave. Lt. Gen. Nambiar did not have a single Indian peacekeeper in his command. But Jetley does and has shown he can use force to good effect.

Questions are being asked on the advisability of sending Indian soldiers on peacekeeping operations in countries where India has no stake and when the Indian Army is already overstretched. The war in Sri Lanka has revived the futility of the IPKF sacrificing 1,200 lives on foreign soil.

Indian peacekeepers are regarded as among the finest in the world. They have taken part in 33 UN missions since 1948. India is seeking a place in the UN Security Council and must fulfil its global responsibility. Under no circumstances should India be deterred by regional difficulties and domestic pressures.

It is unfortunate that the British, who intervened in Sierra Leone outside the UNAMSIL mandate, have hijacked Operation Khukri by taking credit for the mission in Kailahun. The truth is that only one British helicopter was involved in the operation and that too to extricate Major Andy Harrison, the British observer, caught in the siege. But Britain has still made a song and dance about their role in the rescue mission.

India has failed woefully in its public relations and it is only now that Defence Minister George Fernandes has been sent to congratulate the breakers of the siege. The original plan was for Jaswant Singh and Army Chief General V.P. Malik to accompany Mr Fernandes in a special aircraft. But like all good ideas, this too was dropped.

Security Council seat plea

UNH NEWS OF INDIA

UNHQ, Sept. 8. — The Prime Minister today made a strong case for its inclusion in an expanded UN Security Council, emphasising India's democratic moorings,

"Mr President, because there can by definition be no equitable development without democracy, it is essential that the United Nations promote democratic norms. And the UN should do so not only by monitoring elections or by promoting standards of effective governance, but by example," he said.

The Prime Minister thanked Mr Kofi Annan for bringing back UN General Assembly into focus with the summit. "The UN

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9/9

charter envisaged a balance between the three major inter-governmental organs of the UN — General Assembly, Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Over the years, this balance has tilted rather heavily towards the Security Council. It is important that the central role of the General Assembly be respected, this Millennium Summit is a good first step."

He said it was, however, understandable that the Security Council would continue to have a rather special role to play. "It is, therefore, all the more necessary that it be made more representative of the large membership. We hope this summit will commit itself

to an early expansion and reform of the Security Council, bringing in new permanent members from developed and developing countries, so that it reflects the new realities of the 21st century," he urged.

He told the gathering that India had made it known for some years that it would like to be a member of an expanded council. "We believe ourselves qualified by objective criteria for responsibilities of permanent membership. Indeed, as the world's largest democracy, enormous potential, a rapidly growing economic power and a major contributor to peace-keeping operations, India has a natural claim to a permanent seat in the Security Council."

THE STATESMAN

9 SEP 2001

Terrorism, dialogue do not go together: Vajpayee 9/9

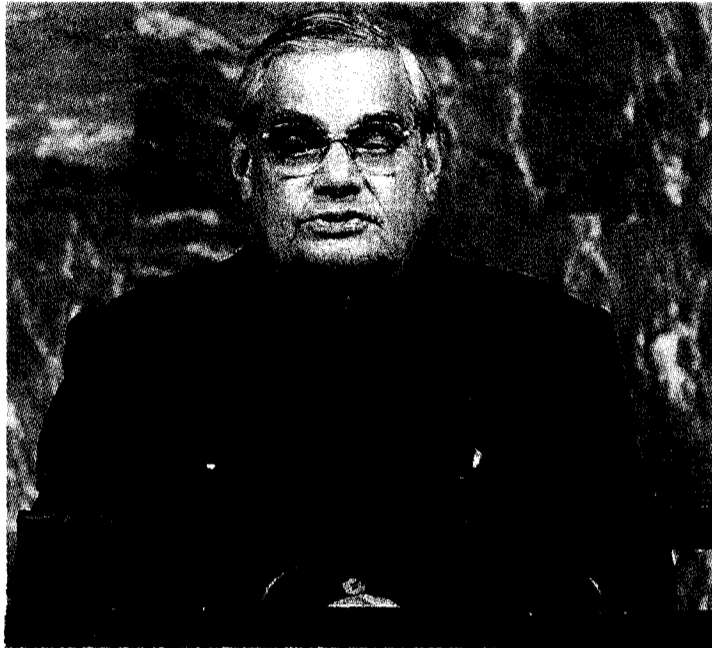
9. W.N.
HD-1

By Malini Parthasarathy

NEW YORK, SEPT. 8. While renewing India's claim to a seat on a potentially expanded UN Security Council, the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, used his turn to speak at the Millennium Summit today to strongly urge the international community to focus sharply on the dangers of cross-border terrorism. By implication, the Prime Minister's remarks were intended to offer a perception sharply different from that presented by Pakistan's General Musharraf to the Summit on Wednesday.

In what were remarks clearly directed at Pakistan, the Prime Minister said that India "has been a victim of cross-border terrorism" for more than a decade now and that international terrorism with "its links to religious extremism, drug trafficking and the commerce in illicit arms" was the most dangerous of the many threats to peace, democracy and development that faced the global community. "Terrorism feeds on violence against innocent people and seeks to undermine plural, open societies... I call upon the international community to act against terrorism before it is too late." In a sharp if implicit denunciation of General Musharraf's stand that Pakistan was prepared to take bold initiatives through a dialogue with India, including a no-war pact, Mr. Vajpayee said: "Many statesman-like words have been delivered from this high tribune. Unfortunately, some of them are a mockery of the truth. The world must see the reality as it is. The acid test of sincerity of purpose is not words, but deeds. Terrorism and dialogue do not go together."

The Prime Minister's observations, which were to be circulated and placed on the U.N. General Assembly records but not delivered at the podium for want of time, included more explicit references



The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, addressing the United Nations General Assembly at the 'millennium summit' on Friday. — Reuters

to Pakistan. "Those who have stifled democracy at home speak of freedom from this forum. Those who have engaged in the clandestine acquisition of nuclear weapons and delivery systems talk of ridding South Asia of these. Those who have repudiated solemn covenants talk of new agreements to prevent war. The authors of a vicious terrorist campaign that has claimed more than 30,000 innocent lives in India, who actively sabotaged a historic peace initiative are now offering new initiatives for dialogue."

The Pakistan factor figured again obliquely in the Prime Minister's remarks setting out the rationale for India's having acquired nuclear weapons. While India was forced to acquire these weapons in 1998, he said, because the principal nuclear weapons states refused to accept the demand for nuclear disarmament, "the spread of nuclear weapons

in our neighbourhood made us especially vulnerable." Mr. Vajpayee said that India would support the UN Secretary-General's proposal for an international conference to "address nuclear dangers". He reiterated India's stance on the CTBT, and that India would participate in negotiations on a fissile material ban with a view to ensuring the emergence of a treaty that was non-discriminatory and which would meet India's security imperatives.

The Prime Minister's emphasis on terrorism concluded with an appeal to the international community to speedily adopt and implement India's proposal for a comprehensive convention against terrorism that would be negotiated at the forthcoming U.N. General Assembly session, following the Summit. Meanwhile, Mr. Vajpayee appended India's signature to a French initiative that has crystallised in

another convention against terrorism, directed at suppressing its financing. This convention — the Convention on the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism — makes it an offence for any person to finance individuals or organisations to commit terrorist acts as defined within the scope of the convention itself and other such terrorism-related conventions. It was pointed out here that the convention is more voluntary in nature in the sense that the member-states of the U.N. adopting this pact would have to implement its provisions within the scope of their own national jurisdiction.

Mr. Vajpayee signed this Convention earlier this morning before delivering his Summit address. Indian officials said here that the decision to sign this convention, a proposal mooted by France, had been taken earlier by the Union Cabinet and that this particular convention was one of several legal instruments thought

'India, U.S. natural allies': Page 13

necessary to strengthen the international consensus against allowing terrorism. India's own initiative for a more comprehensive convention on terrorism would be taken up further in the forthcoming session of the U.N. General Assembly, these officials said.

PM's address in Hindi

PTI reports:

As he had done the first time in 1978 when he was the External Affairs Minister, the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today spoke at the United Nations in Hindi. Like all other speakers who are participating in the millennium summit, Mr. Vajpayee spoke nearly for five minutes reading out a two-page summary of his 12-page address. The full text was distributed to the delegates.

THE HINDU

- 9 SEP 2000

Gen Jetley to stay on, India deftly wins over his critics

Shishir Gupta
New Delhi, June 20

HECTIC DIPLOMATIC activity by the Indian team with regional groupings and constituents of the UN peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone has resolved the differences over Major General V.K. Jetley's continuance as the Force Commander.

Gen. Jetley has also been told to lead the UN Force as a soldier-diplomat and not plan as a division commander. The thrust being on "peace keeping" and not "enforcement".

Highly placed Government sources said the Indian team led by Lt-General N.C. Vij, Director General Military Operations (DGMO), has managed to allay apprehensions over Gen. Jetley's appointment. The DGMO, who returned to India yesterday evening, discussed peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone with the other regional powers such as Nigeria, Togo, Liberia and Libya. The Indian team also discussed the issue with the UN, USA and the United Kingdom.

MPs assured

CONCERN FOR the Indian soldiers exploded at the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs on Tuesday. Placating the MPs, foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh, promised to hold another meeting focused on the continuing crisis soon.

According to one Opposition MP, the theme of the meeting was "India's permanent membership in the UN Security Council". As soon as it began, members drawn from all parties began to demand details of the situation faced by the 2,000 Indian troops caught in the cross fire in the civil war torn nation.

HTC, New Delhi

The Indian delegation convinced the regional groups that the taking of 21 Indian soldiers as hostage by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in no way reflected on Gen. Jetley's leadership. The team said that any Force Commander runs the risk of his

troops being taken as hostages in a UN peacekeeping operation. Hostages, it was pointed out, were used to obtain concessions.

It is understood that the 21 soldiers of the Indian battalion 5/8 Gorkha Rifles have been disarmed. The RUF is using them as a leverage for the release of their leader Foday Sankoh without trial.

According to Government sources, Gen. Jetley has issued instructions to the UN peacekeepers to secure their flanks so that the RUF rebels do not surround them. It is learnt that earlier, the UN troops were moving in platoons (around 34 troops). But now, they are patrolling the jungle terrain of Sierra Leone in infantry columns, each column having a strength of 120-130 troops. They are equipped with field and area weapons.

The strategy now apparently adopted by the UN peacekeepers is to dominate the areas infested by RUF rebels. This "battlecraft" has been used effectively by the Indian troops in insurgency prone areas of Kashmir and the North-East.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

21 JUN 2000

MILLENNIUM SUMMIT

Vajpayee makes a strong showing ^{at UN}

AS the Millennium Summit in New York works on how to make the UN relevant to the 21st century, Secretary General Kofi Annan has signalled that a pressing issue on the UN agenda would be how to make the Security Council more representative. Its five permanent members are there on the strength of winning a world war a half century ago; the world has changed immeasurably since then. There is no reason why economic powerhouses like Germany and Japan, or populous democracies like India and Brazil, should be kept out of the club. The permanent five also happen to be the nuclear five, allowed to stockpile nuclear weapons legitimately, but this is tantamount to making nuclear weapons the sole currency of power, which surely cannot be part of the UN mission. Study after study has shown that China, one of the permanent five, in fact proliferates weapon and missile technology and materials by providing them to Pakistan. This has created an understandable sense of frustration and threat in India, paving the way for the Pokhran blasts. What has fuelled India's sense of insecurity, however, is not so much its feeling of being encircled as the fact that it is not a member of a single influential transnational group coming together on the basis of economic or security interests — NAM and SAARC do not count in world affairs. This cannot be blamed on external factors, but is a failure of Indian diplomacy.

The UN is often decried as a talking shop, and peacekeeping missions under its aegis are seen as ineffective. But in a world that is rapidly shrinking, decisions taken within a country have their effect elsewhere and without a forum for discussion, the world would be even more dangerously unstable than it is now. Annan has correctly pointed out that while globalisation is being driven purely by commercial interests, it has social, cultural and environmental aspects which need to be considered — on pain of driving a wedge between the privileged few and many underprivileged worldwide. Just as social and political tensions within a country are managed by having democratic institutions, tensions on a global scale can be managed by making world bodies like the UN more representative and responsive. Vajpayee deserves praise for incorporating many of these points and forcefully projecting India's point of view in his address to the summit, a welcome change from past practice. Pakistan has as usual chosen the summit to mount a diplomatic blitz against India, and Gen Musharraf is in New York pulling out all the stops for this purpose. But Vajpayee has met him head-on, not pulling any punches of his own. In the past, Indian leaders have tended to be timid and circumlocutory in international fora, mixing obsequiousness and bluster, sending across messages too complicated for foreign diplomats to unravel. This has been a factor leading to India's marginalisation. Vajpayee has been both assertive and dignified — may this set a trend for future Indian diplomacy.

10 SEP 2000

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2000

RAISING INDIA'S PROFILE

9. W.V.
THE PRIME MINISTER, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has struck a right diplomatic note at the United Nations millennium summit, voicing India's aspirations as an emerging global player with the credentials for a permanent seat in an expandable Security Council. This obviously synchronises with India's deserving image as the world's largest democracy. His veiled but vigorous denunciation of Pakistan as the evil genius perpetuating anti-India terror is a separate but relevant issue. It is aimed at turning the spotlight on the external sources of some of New Delhi's internal challenges in sustaining a vibrant civil society. By measuring his words as he enunciated that "terrorism and dialogue do not go together", Mr. Vajpayee has sought to demonstrate that India ranks far above Pakistan on the international stage. In the circulated text of his speech, Pakistan's rulers have been further portrayed as "those" whose actions at home and towards New Delhi betray their real contempt for democracy as also nuclear non-proliferation and a genuine dialogue with India. But even if Mr. Vajpayee wins new friends at the U.N. as a result of this subtle exercise in contrasting India favourably with Pakistan, the larger question of influencing the thinking of the member-states will remain a different task altogether.

In reality, the millennium summit is not an occasion for problem-solving diplomacy as distinct from a public relations opportunity at the inter-state level. However, the policies outlined by the various leaders do matter and it requires to be reaffirmed, therefore, that India must engage Pakistan through parleys without allowing perceptions, however precise, to cloud the larger foreign policy considerations. Now, the Vajpayee administration is definitively right in seeking to bring Pakistan under heightened international pressure so that it might act with restraint in regard to India. But a dialogue with Pakistan, aimed at promoting in some way or other a nuclear arms-related stability in South

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Asia and a development-driven peace agenda for the region, should remain the paramount imperative in Indian diplomacy. This does not, of course, grant Pakistan's Gen. Pervez Musharraf a right to dictate the agenda for talks. His efforts at the global summit and on its margins to equate the Kashmir dispute with the U.N.-resolved East Timor issue can be counter-productive, although not entirely unimaginative. Being a soldier-'leader', he may have calculated that his separate call for a no-war deal with India will suit his political tactics. But it hardly is tactful diplomacy at this stage, given the Vajpayee Government's post-Kargil circumspection.

There is also nothing creative in Gen. Musharraf's suggestion that the U.S. somehow put pressure on India to begin addressing the Kashmir issue by conceding Pakistan's locus standi and not just acknowledging the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen's relevance. But Mr. Vajpayee cannot wish away a Pakistan shadow over his prospective talks with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton. Knowing this, the Prime Minister has adroitly turned his speeches at the U.N. and the Asia Society to good effect, setting the tone for a possibly new and mutually beneficial direction in the dramatically enhanced India-U.S. dialogue. Mr. Vajpayee's frontal assault on Pakistan's "cloak of jihad" or "a medieval religious extremism" around its policy of "terrorism" against the Indian people is good strategy, no doubt. More significantly, Mr. Vajpayee is beginning to adjust his sights on the avenue to a possible new India-U.S. partnership by making it clear that New Delhi will remain CTBT-friendly even during the evolution of a national consensus on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. India's readiness to participate in negotiations for a global fissile materials cut-off treaty should also please Washington. On a completely different plane, it was quite incongruous that Mr. Vajpayee should have addressed the U.N. in Hindi instead of in the impact-laden English.

THE HINDU

1.1 SEP 2000

INDIA MEETS BASIC CTBT OBLIGATIONS'

Jaswant seeks support against terrorism

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 20. Even as the international community is seeking to strengthen democratic principles and practices and even as the spreading sweep of democracy is casting aside dictatorships and authoritarian regimes, there have been instances of regression as well, says the Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Jaswant Singh.

In a statement to the 55th session of the United Nations General Assembly (the Millennium Assembly) in New York on Tuesday, Mr. Singh argued, "such acts move against the currents of our times. The

international community should oppose these assaults on the spirit of our times and uncompromisingly support and strengthen democratic impulses, practices and norms."

Pointing out that the developments in Fiji had caused deep concern and appreciating the action taken by the Commonwealth after the overthrow of a constitutionally elected government, Mr. Singh said, "we hope that Fiji will return immediately to the constitutional base of 1997 and restore at the earliest rule of law by putting an end to racial discrimination. This is in Fiji's own long term interest."

The External Affairs Minister dwelt on a number of issues such as peace, nuclear disarmament, terrorism, the menace of the circulation of small arms, the composition of the Security Council, the developmental imperatives and the process of globalisation.

Noting that a consensus had to come about both within and among nations on issues of national and international security, Mr. Singh reiterated that New Delhi would not stand in the way of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. "India volunteered and continues to observe a moratorium

on further explosive nuclear testing. This meets the basic obligation of the CTBT," Mr. Singh said in his statement.

Maintaining a sharp focus on Pakistan even if not by name, the Minister said, "India has been the object of state-sponsored, cross-border terrorism, in its most inhuman manifestations for more than a decade... Terrorism is an assault on human decency, a violation of the basic precepts of democracy and the very anti-thesis of what the United Nations represents and stands for... it constitutes a crime against humanity. It is also a threat to international peace and security, especially when terrorists are

armed, financed and backed by governments or their agencies."

"We have proposed the draft of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. I urge all members of the United Nations to give their total support to this initiative," he added.

Pointing out that the structure of the U.N. Security Council continued to be the same as it was in the colonised world of 1945 and the global consensus that it was outmoded and must reflect the logic of an enlarged membership, Mr. Singh said, "an unrepresentative Security Council will lack the range and depth of sensitivity, perceptiveness and understanding of the realities that it will have to deal with or the moral authority to take such decisions. I would like to reaffirm India's willingness to take on the responsibilities of permanent membership."

The United Nations had consistently been called on to increase its development orientation and engagement; and that to address the root cause of poverty meaningfully, there had to be firm international commitments to re-order and re-shape international relations. "Developing countries and their people cannot thrive on a diet of advice and goodwill alone," he said.



The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, addressing the United Nations Assembly on Tuesday. — AP

THE HINDU

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India's pull-out timing surprises defence circles

KEITH FLORY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 22. — While neither the defence ministry nor the external affairs ministry offered any further insight - beyond the bland statement issued by the latter last night - into India's opting to pull out of the UN peace-keeping mission in Sierra Leone, only the timing of that decision has caused some surprise in local defence circles today.

"There have been more downs than ups to Unamsil, so terminating our participation was not unexpected but surely a comprehensive statement explaining what proved the breaking point ought to have been forthcoming" an analyst observed. "If for nothing else than to prevent our detractors from continuing with their slander campaign."

Was there a move to change the mandate of the UN force from "peace-keeping to peace-enforcing"? Would the reported decision to raise the strength of the force from 13,000 to 20,000 men make it necessary for it to be led by an officer of a rank higher than major general? Or was it simply the result of a

breakdown in the relations between Maj Gen VK Jetley and his deputy and the bulk of the African troops in the force that prompted the pull out? These were the questions being asked.

There were no formal answers, which several experts contended ought to have been forthcoming so that not only were the shortcomings of Unamsil exposed, but a repetition of such perceived mistakes might be averted. "India has always done its duty by the UN in this regard, its reasons for withdrawing would have been listened to with respect" an expert opined.

The only scraps of information that trickled through, "off the record" of course, was that there would be no immediate pull out. India would await the UN arranging for replacements, and the process of withdrawal would be spread over at least a couple of months. The UN would also have to make arrangements for air-lifting the troops and their heavy equipment. "It took some time to arrange that during their induction, there is no reason to expect rapid action for their de-induction" an Army officer observed.

Even on purely military

grounds it could not be a case of shutting up shop overnight. Withdrawal would have to be phased, areas under the control of the Indian units have to first be secured, then handed over to their replacements. That was essential to ensure that the troops were not attacked during their pull out.

The Indians have contributed two infantry battalions (one each from the Grenadiers and the Gorkha regiments), two companies of mechanised infantry, a battery of medium artillery, a battery of anti-aircraft guns, plus units providing logistics support and medical cover. They were backed up by transport and attack helicopters of the IAF. "Getting all that home will take considerable effort" the officer pointed out.

While there may have been speculation over the immediate provocation for India to withdraw, there were no two opinions that Unamsil had never really taken off. To start with there was "no peace to keep", hence the mandate of the force proved the initial, and perhaps continuous, hurdle.

Nor did any genuine coordination develop between the various contingents of the force. Not even in times of trouble.

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