

## Russia in touch with India on Afghan situation

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 15. Russia today said it was maintaining "closest" interaction with India over the developments in Afghanistan and was looking at deepening political and economic ties with New Delhi.

Russia's visiting Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, after a meeting with the National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, said that Moscow's non-military involvement in Afghanistan was considerable. "In this regard, we have closest contacts with India."

Mr. Klebanov will call on the President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, during his three-day stay.

His talks with the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, covered international terrorism, situation in Afghanistan and bilateral cooperation.

Mr. Klebanov's visit is part of preparations which are underway for the visit of the Prime Minister, Mr. Vajpayee, to Moscow in early November. Both sides have decided to push cooperation in the spheres of nuclear energy, computer software, oil and gas, steel, defence, space and diamonds. The Russian side is also keen on tie-ups with key Indian States. India has invested \$one billion in oil and gas in Russia's Sakhalin area.

THE HINDU

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# Indian help for Bhutan to root out extremists

Jaideep Mazumdar  
Kolkata, December 21

INDIA IS helping Bhutan in its proposed military action against insurgents of the North-east who have set up camps in its territory.

With the December 31 deadline for the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) fast approaching, the Royal Bhutan Army (RBA) and the country's militia units have moved into combat mode.

India has, over the past few months, strengthened its Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT) in Bhutan. Sophisticated weapons including Kalashnikov series rifles, light machine guns, carbines, grenade launchers and equipment like shoulder-launched missile systems and night vision gadgets have been supplied to Bhutan. A considerable number of soldiers and offi-

cers of Bhutan's elite Royal Body Guards (RBG) have been trained recently at the College of Combat in Mhow and at the Counter-Insurgency & Jungle Warfare School at Vairangte in Mizoram.

As had been reported in the Hindustan Times, the armed forces of the two countries had been readying for coordinated operations against the insurgents of these two groups.

Bhutan has, over the past couple of months, launched a wide publicity drive to prepare its citizens for the adverse consequences of a likely military action against the insurgents. The ULFA has eleven camps and the NDFB three camps in that country.

The insurgents sought refuge in Bhutan after the army crackdown on them in 'Operation Bajrang' in 1992.

The Bhutan Government has held a few rounds of talks with the insurgent groups and had set

a deadline of December 31 to the ULFA and NDFB to dismantle its camps in South-east Bhutan. The militants have, however, not shown signs of leaving the country.

Bhutan has increased the size of its forces — the RBA, RBG, National Militia, Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) and Forest Guards — to a little over five lakh and mobilised reserves of about 2.5 lakh. RBA camps have been set up on the border with India from Kalikhola to Daifam.

Apart from the regular troops, special units of the RBG have been moved to Trongsa, Tashigang, Pemagatsel, Mongat, Shemgang, Samdrup Jongkhar and Geylegphug.

IMTRAT with its headquarters at the Ha district, near Tibet's Chumbi Valley, has a large concentration of Chinese troops and is reportedly providing crucial backup by formulating strategies and sourcing help from New Delhi for the planned

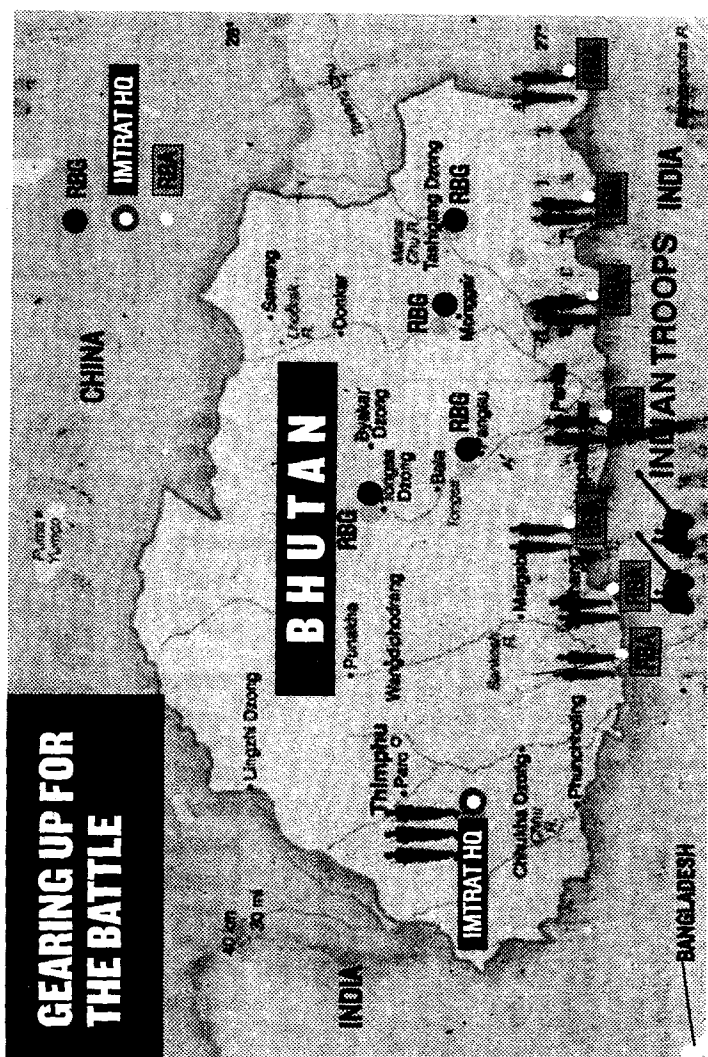
offensives. Indian forces, at the same time, have moved closer to the Indo-Bhutan border to nab militants trying to sneak back into India.

Bhutan is also likely to invoke its own National Security Act to book people extending help to the insurgents.

This measure is directed against Nepalese immigrants who occupy South Bhutan and have been at loggerheads with the monarchy over the past few years.

These migrants, whom Thimphu considers illegal settlers, have been helping the ULFA and NDFB.

It is learnt that the Lhengyel Zhungtshog (Council of Ministers) and the Lodoi Tsokde (Royal Advisory Council) have approved of military action against the militants. Bhutan has also built up buffer stocks of foodgrains and other essential commodities in its southern districts.



THE HINDUSTAN

22 DEC 20

# Bhutan mulls force against Ulfa, NDFB

Prabin Kalita  
Guwahati, December 20

THE BHUTANESE Government fears that it may have to use force to root out Indian militant outfits from its territory. The feeling exists despite an agreement with the Ulfa and the NDFB leadership on removal of their camps from Bhutan.

The Ulfa leadership had signed an agreement with the Royal Government in June assuring to remove four out of its nine camps by December-end. While Intelligence reports said the outfit has already destroyed the four camps in Bhutan a few weeks back, the Royal Government has said the militant outfits refuse to leave.

"All our people are aware that our country is facing its biggest security threat from the presence of armed militants from Assam," Bhutanese King Jigmi Singye Wangchuck said in his address to the nation on its National Day on December 17.

The King, according to Bhutan's official daily *Kuensel*, said: "I would like to inform you that in June this year the Royal Government held talks with the Ulfa leaders and an agreement was signed in which they assured that they'll close four camps by the end of this year. If the Ulfa closes the camps, the Royal Government will continue to make every effort to resolve the problem through dialogue."

"Our biggest concern is that if the efforts and initiatives taken through dialogue do not yield results, and the militants refuse to leave our country, in the end, when all peaceful options are

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Dhaka

## DHAKA DENIES ULFA INFLUX REPORTS

DHAKA HAS strongly denied reports of an Indian separatist group setting up camps or relocating bases in Bangladesh.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman on Wednesday rejected such reports and said Bangladesh does not support any form of sanctuary, training and also does not support any terrorist group in its territory. He was referring to reports on the United Liberation Front of Assam (Ulfa) outfits moving into Bangladesh. An earlier report from Guwahati quoting Meghalaya police chief L Sailo said, "We have been getting reports of Ulfa units winding up camps inside Bhutan and trying to shift to Bangladesh via Meghalaya, and in the process setting up some temporary shelters in parts of Garo Hills."

The report further said, "The Ulfa, a militant group fighting for an independent homeland in Assam, entrenched bases inside Bhutan for years. But the Bhutan Government has given the rebels time till the end of this year to wind up their camps or face being forced out by the army."

The Sheikh Hasina Government had arrested Ulfa general secretary Anup Chetia and his two close associates from Dhaka in December in 1996. The three are now undergoing different prison terms in Dhaka central jail after being convicted for illegal entry into Bangladesh, possession of different passports, foreign currencies and high-powered satellite phone.

HTC, Dhaka

exhausted, we may come to a stage where there is no other option left but to send our forces to remove them from our territory."

However, being a poor nation, Bhutan is wary of launching an armed operation against the militant outfits. "We must all be fully aware that if an armed conflict breaks out in the country, no matter what efforts the Government and the people make, we will not be able to implement the 9th Plan development programmes. If we are not able to utilise the large budget outlay of Nu.70 billion for the 9th Plan development programmes, it will result in all kinds of problems for the Government."

Bhutan is apprehensive of its important installations and service facilities being sabotaged in the event of an armed operation.

Moreover, in order to protect the lives of the Bhutanese people living in between Lhamoi Zingka in the west and Daifam in the east, the King said, the government may have to evacuate more than 80,000 people to more secure areas. "If such a step has to be taken, it will mean that about 80,000 of our people will have to leave behind their houses and land and face the possibility of having to live like refugees in our own country."

Nevertheless, if such a crisis arises the Government will mobilise resources and do everything in its power to look after the *Kidu* of the affected people. It is very important for all of us to understand the gravity of the problem if a conflict situation arises in our country.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

21 DEC 2001

# Maoists in Nepal

By Sangeeta Thapliyal

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CONTEMPORARY POLITICS of Nepal has been witness to crisis after crisis. The latest is the challenge posed by the Maoists. Emergency has been imposed in the country and the army has been called out. The Maoists' emergence is the outcome of political instability and socio-economic backwardness. The kingdom's main challenge after the change in the political system in 1991 was to stabilise democracy. The intra and inter-party feuds failed to provide an effective Government much to the disappointment of the common people who participated in the movement for democracy. The ground was, thus, ripe for the Maoists to wage a war against the Government. The Maoists also found support across the country where people were tired of their socio-economic condition.

Once part of mainstream politics, the United People's Front of Nepal (UPFN) led by Mr. Baburam Bhattarai had captured nine seats in the 1991 general election. It was the political front of the Unity Centre formed by the coming together of four extreme Left groups. The UPFN, which considered itself the precursor of the revolutionary movement in Nepal, justified its participation in the election to expose the deficiencies of the multi-party system. However, it was soon disillusioned when the Left forces under Mr. Man Mohan Adhikari formed a Government in 1994. Mr. Bhattarai was dissatisfied with the working of the Left parties which, he said, had digressed from the Marxist goal of creating a classless society. The UPFN left mainstream politics and in 1996, joined hands with the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to start a "people's war".

The CPN(M)'s main objective is to establish a 'people's government' through a 'people's war', in line with the ideology of Peru's Shining Path group. To form a 'people's government', the CPN(M), which bases its ideals, aspirations and course of action on Mao's style of dictatorship of the proletariat, adopted the "strategy of surrounding the city from the countryside". On February 4, 1996, the

Maoists submitted a 40-point memorandum to the Government of the Prime Minister, Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, demanding the abolition of royal privileges and promulgation of a Republican Constitution, abolition of the Mahakali Treaty with India etc. The Government did not pay heed to their demands. Consequently, on February 13, 1996, the Maoists carried out simultaneous attacks in different parts of Nepal. Starting from six western districts — Rukum, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Salyan and Gorkha — and Sindhuli in the east in 1996, their influence has spread to

was prevalent even in the Panchayat regime but the commencement of democracy and the new Constitution gave voice to the people. The new Constitution has given freedom of expression to the people who were earlier silent spectators. The ethnic groups in Nepal have organised themselves against economic discrimination and the imposition of Sanskrit as a compulsory subject in schools or Nepali as the country's lingua franca. The Maoists have been sympathetic towards the demands of the ethnic minorities and have been demanding that ethnic minor-

**India should be cautious while dealing with Nepal. Any kind of military or material support from India becomes an emotive issue in Nepal and can be misinterpreted as interference.**

66 of Nepal's 75 districts, particularly in the poverty-stricken, economically-backward areas. Since then, the guerillas have attacked Government installations, indulged in loot and arson and killed local bureaucrats, village headmen and influential people especially in the western, central hill areas and the western terai. The Army, left untouched in the initial stages of the 'war', became a target in the recent spurt in violence.

The Maoists' traditional support base, comprising Brahmins, Chettris and Newars, has been expanded and they now draw support from Rais, Limbus, Gurungs, Magars, Tamangs etc. Economic backwardness, political instability and social discrimination led the ethnic minorities to extend support to the Maoists. The cohesive structure of Nepali society was shaken in 1990 when the new Constitution declared Nepal to be a Hindu-state with Nepali the only official language. The other ethnic groups (mainly Tibeto-Burman) questioned the propriety of declaring Nepal a Hindu state, as they do not consider themselves Hindus. The ethnic disparities became glaring between the ethnic minorities and the dominant castes. The domination of the dominant castes in education, employment etc.,

ities should have autonomy over areas where they are in majority. Presently, the Maoists' call to the indigenous ethnic groups to join the people's war has been answered by the Khambuan Mukti Morcha. Unless the Government takes care of the people's grievances, the possibility of the disgruntled people joining the people's war is a possibility.

The Government has used force, persuasion and negotiation to tackle the issue, all in vain. The police have proved ineffective against the better armed and better organised Maoists. The mechanisms adopted to persuade the guerillas to give up arms by forming the Ganesh Man Singh Peace Campaign in July, 1999, or the Government's initiative to set up a six-member committee led by Mr. Deuba did not make any breakthrough. Ending their four-month-old ceasefire, the Maoists attacked several districts in November this year. King Gyanendra declared imposition of emergency on the recommendation of the Cabinet and deployed the Army to tackle the Maoists.

The Maoists have been declared terrorists. The lack of a consensus is behind the Government's failure to tackle the issue be it on the issue of the use of army or

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implementing an anti-terrorist bill. On an earlier occasion, the Government's demand for deploying the Army against the Maoists had been turned down by the King.

What does the Maoist movement in Nepal spell for India? To begin with, the Maoists specifically have an anti-India bias. The document adopted at the third plenum of the CPN(M) central committee in March, 1995, declared that the armed struggle was specifically against "Indian imperialism". It also voiced opposition to the recruitment of Gurkhas in the Indian Army. It is alleged that the Maoists are being trained by the ex-Gurkha soldiers. The Maoists fraternal links with the People's War Group (PWG) and Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) in India are well established. It is said that the Maoists got electronic detonators and explosives from the PWG, while pistols, ammunition and high-quality detonators were provided by the MCC. Nepal, in fact, is emerging as the conduit for illegal arms brought from India, which are smuggled back again to India.

The socio-political turmoil in Nepal has a spillover effect in India. The timing of the attacks by the PWG in Andhra Pradesh with the end of the Maoists' ceasefire in Nepal is noteworthy. India has diplomatically extended support to the declaration of emergency in Nepal. Condemning violence by the Maoists, India said it would not allow its territory to be used by forces inimical to Nepal's interests. India should be cautious while dealing with Nepal. It should be borne in mind that any kind of military or material support from India becomes an emotive issue in Nepal and can be misinterpreted as interference.

While dealing with the Maoists, the Government of Nepal has to be clear whether it is a terrorist problem, a political problem or a socio-economic one. It has to assess its own strengths while dealing with the Maoists be it on seeking external support or its own negotiating strategy.

(The writer is presently with the Delhi Policy Group.)

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18 DEC 2001

# Time for Kabul during siege

BY **PROV. PRANAY SHARMA**

**New Delhi, Dec. 14:** The meeting between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Afghan foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah yesterday lasted only 30 minutes. But the message was loud and clear: India is back in business in Afghanistan.

This was the first meeting between an Afghan leader and an Indian Prime Minister in a decade.

This afternoon, when he met Indian counterpart Jaswant Singh, the Afghan foreign minister gave New Delhi credit for the changes that have taken place in Kabul. "I thank India for making this day possible when terrorist groups are not in control of Afghanistan," Abdullah told Jaswant and the Indian delegation in South Block.

That Vajpayee met the Afghan foreign minister despite the fast-paced developments following the attack on Parliament yesterday indicates how much he is valued in New Delhi.

Abdullah Abdullah is among the string of Afghan leaders, mostly from the Northern Alliance, who have been visiting India since early this month to thank the country for its support.

India, along with Russia and Iran, has been one of the main backers of the Northern Alliance — which is playing a crucial role in the interim regime in Kabul.

The interior minister of the new regime, Younis Qanuni, was here recently. After Abdullah, the third key figure of the Alliance and the defence minister of the new set-up, General Fahim, is expected to visit India.

The almost back-to-back visits of these leaders have made it clear that India, which was persona non grata in Afghanistan when the Taliban were in con-

trol of the country, has bounced back in a big way.

From the security point of view, the developments in Afghanistan have worked in India's favour. The Taliban's ouster has not only cut off Pakistan's strategic depth, it has also paved the way for New Delhi's entry into Afghanistan.

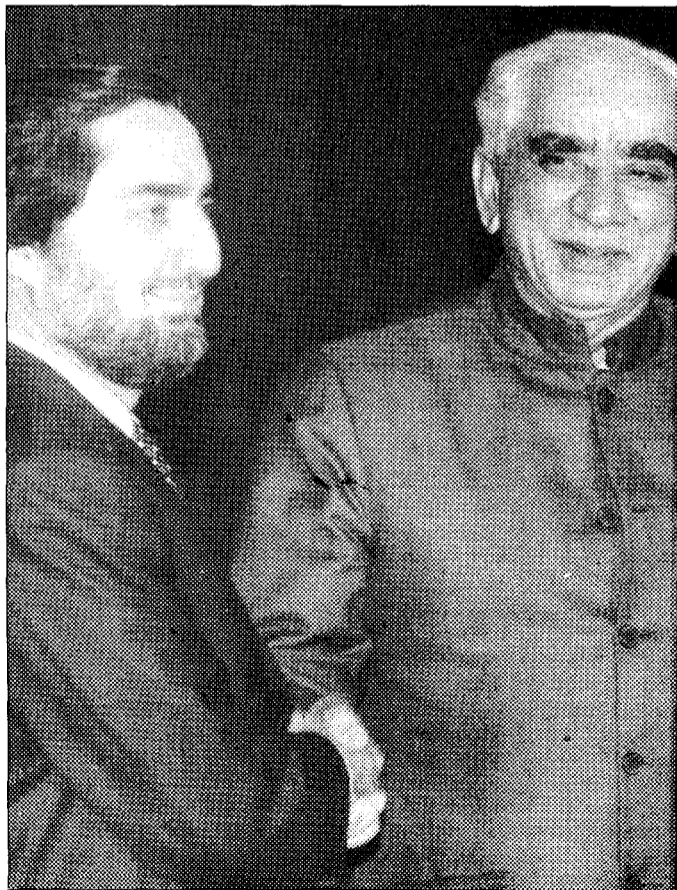
At the meeting this afternoon, Abdullah recalled the role played by the slain Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Massoud, who had worked relentlessly for the liberation of Afghanistan from the fundamentalist Taliban regime.

With the new interim regime about to take charge — the formal takeover is scheduled for December 22 — the Afghan foreign minister decided to share with India some of the problems that the people of Afghanistan are facing and point out the areas where New Delhi could help.

Abdullah said there were two main challenges before the new regime in Kabul — security and stability and reconstruction and rehabilitation. He expressed the hope that in this struggle, too, Kabul would be helped by its "true friends" like India.

Jaswant promised that India would continue to extend all support to the people of Afghanistan. He stressed that India's aspiration was purely to gain the friendship of the Afghan people and to ensure their wellbeing. Once the new regime decides on its priorities and identifies areas where it needs urgent help, India would be only too happy to extend its support, he said.

India's help has already been sought with medicines, medical service and education. The Indira Gandhi hospital in Kabul has been revived and New Delhi has despatched medical personnel and tonnes of medicines to help the Afghan people.



Jaswant Singh with Afghan foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah in New Delhi on Friday. (PTI)

THE TELEGRAPH

15 DEC 2001

# Wait for signal from Washington

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Dec. 14: In step with the rhetoric of liquidating terrorists, India is building a case against Pakistan, holding it indirectly responsible for yesterday's attack on Parliament and hoping that the US would exert enough pressure on Islamabad to give up its policy of cross-border terrorism.

Foreign minister Jaswant Singh claimed "technical evidence" of Pakistan-based terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba's role in the attack on Parliament.

"There is credible technical evidence that yesterday's terrorist attack on the seat of democracy and sovereignty of Indian people was the handiwork of Pakistan-based terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Toiba," Singh said.

Lashkar denied it. "This is a lie and baseless," its spokesman Yahya Mujahid told Reuters in Islamabad.

Delhi demanded that Islamabad immediately act against the leadership of Lashkar and another Pakistan-based terrorist outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed.

Pakistan promised to examine the "technical evidence". "If India provides us with evidence, we will examine it," the official Associated Press of Pakistan news agency quoted foreign ministry spokesman Aziz Ahmed Khan as saying.

Although the nature of this "technical evidence" is not being divulged, it could be intercepts of messages between the terrorists and their leadership in Pakistan and other clues that establish their link with Islamabad.

Home minister L.K. Advani said: "We have received some clues... which show that a neighbouring country, and some terrorist organisations active there are behind it."

Pakistan, however, said it would not allow its soil to be used for terrorist activities.

The "evidence" Delhi claims to have is likely to be shared with the Americans. In the evening,

Singh met the US ambassador, Robert Blackwill, who has offered Washington's help in the fight against terrorism. Visiting Parliament in the morning, Blackwill said the US and India were together in this battle.

"The tragic event that occurred yesterday and perpetrated by terrorists was no different in its objective from the terror attacks in the US on September 11," he said.

India lodged a strong protest with Pakistan in the form of a verbal demarche by foreign secretary Chokila Iyer to high commissioner Ashraf Jehangir Qazi this afternoon.

In the message, India asked Pakistan to do three things. One, to stop the activities of Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed based on its soil. Two, take the leadership of these outfits into custody and three, freeze their financial assets.

"Pakistan, which has joined the international fight against global terrorism, should now take appropriate action," foreign ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said. "We want Pakistan to walk the talk."

Anticipating that Pakistan may attempt to bring the focus back on Jammu and Kashmir by asking its armed forces along the Line of Control to be on "high alert", the Indian leadership is trying to ensure the issue is not blown out of proportion. Asked to comment, Singh said: "We have no such information with us."

The dilemma before the Indian leadership is how to deal with the terrorist attack. Having gathered the "evidence", which Singh may have passed on to Blackwill, Delhi wants Washington to exert pressure on Islamabad to act against the terrorist outfits.

If it does not see any results, India may have to take the difficult decision of dealing with Pakistan on its own, for which pressure is building up within the ruling BJP.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said today: "Give some time to the government."



A CRPF officer stands guard outside Parliament. (Reuters)

## Capitol war against 'President Vajpayee'

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Dec. 14: Within hours of yesterday's terrorist attack on the Parliament complex, the Bush administration moved Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Rashtrapati Bhavan!

The instant reaction of the White House in describing Vajpayee as India's President while announcing the phone call made by President George W. Bush yesterday reflects how very, very low a priority the US is attaching to what is to the Indian government a cataclysmic development.

South Block and the PMO may not realise how far removed

India is from America's radar screen. But the Indian embassy in Washington certainly does. Indian officials here have been working overtime on Capitol Hill to create sentiment supportive of Delhi in the eventuality of any retaliation by India acquiring crisis proportions.

Their efforts produced far more significant results than anything that transpired yesterday vis-a-vis India in the White House or in Foggy Bottom, the seat of the state department.

Tom Lantos, the ranking Democratic member of the House of Representatives International Relations Committee, tried to jog America's consciousness by

comparing the latest terrorist attack in Delhi to the outrage on September 11.

Lantos said on the House floor that "three months and two days ago, terrorists used box cutters, knives and fuel-laden passenger jets to launch suicide missions against the US".

He reminded Americans that "one of those airplanes may have been intended to hit this very Capitol building — the symbol of our democracy. The attack against India, as with the attacks against the US, were... cowardly attempts by criminal terrorist organisations to attack free and democratic societies, to intimidate their people and

their government".

Lantos continued: "Today, I want to assure the people and government of India that you are not alone... We must act together in rooting out the terrorist networks wherever they exist."

Lobbying in recent years has taught the Indian embassy here that the most effective route to securing action by any US administration is through Capitol Hill. When Pakistanis occupied the Kargil heights in 1999, the state department equivocated for 10 days, Bill Clinton notwithstanding. It was not until the House International Relations Committee criticised Islamabad that Foggy Bottom stirred

against Pakistan.

It is not for nothing that successive Israeli leaders visiting Washington first go to Capitol Hill before they interact with anyone in the administration. Belatedly, India is learning from Tel Aviv how the US system operates.

Of course, Bush himself spoke to Vajpayee. What is lost on New Delhi is that the White House did not even find it necessary to mention the President's conversation with Vajpayee. Bush offered Vajpayee the sop of assistance by the FBI and the state department's counter-terrorism teams, all highly discredited after September 11.

# A neighbour in danger

J.N. DIXIT

India & her neighbours

It is six months since Nepal suffered the trauma of regicide. The king, Gyanendra, is still to stabilize his authority and credibility. The tragedies and threats to stability have not just continued but they have increased. India's focus of attention has been on the global anti-terrorist campaign in recent weeks. Within a month of the assassination of the former king, Birendra, India was concentrating on Indo-Pakistani relations in the context of the impending Musharraf-Vajpayee summit in July. We have perhaps not been attentive to developments in our other neighbouring countries in the process.

The massive attack by Maoist terrorist organizations against Nepal's security forces and civilian population in the western districts between November 19 and 25 draws our attention back to Nepal because of the threat that terrorism poses to Nepal's security and stability. It is even more necessary for us to assess and respond to the violence in Nepal, because it has serious implications for India's internal security.

Recalling more recent developments in Nepal during the last six months would be pertinent. Gyanendra's ascending the throne was surrounded by feelings of suspicion and uncertainty. Political parties participating in the democratic governmental processes were subject to internal contradictions and factionalism at higher levels after the murder of the former king and his family.

Birendra was removed from the scene at the time when there were rumours of his having initiated some discussions with Maoist extremists with the objective of persuading them to move away from violence and to join the political mainstream. This was the reason the late king did not authorize the operational deployment of the Nepalese army against the Maoists despite recommendations made by the G.P. Koirala government. There were also reports that the present king, Gyanendra, was the main interlocutor designated by the late king to carry out these highly confidential discussions.

The then prime minister, Koirala, was replaced by Sher Bahadur Deuba. Gyanendra and Deuba jointly managed to negotiate a ceasefire with the Maoists in July. But the implementation of the ceasefire has had a chequered pattern of implementation since July and August, 2001. Apparently the Maoist Party of Nepal decided to abandon the ceasefire arrangements in the second half of November,

which led to largescale and territorially widespread violence in the districts of Dang, Rolpa and Pyuthan between November 19 and 25. Maoist cadre specifically targeted police and army camps, government offices, as well as members of the recognized political parties of Nepal along with civilian government representatives. It must also be recalled that the Maoists were running a parallel government in six to ten districts of southern and western Nepal over the last five to six years. They could do this because of the lack of development and poor economic condition of the people in these areas.

The democratic governments of Nepal perhaps did not attend to this problem effectively since they came back to power in the early Nineties. The other factor which contributed to the hold of the Maoist Communist Party of Nepal in these areas was Birendra's reluctance to use the Nepalese army against his own people. When the democratic leaders of Nepal failed to negotiate with the Maoists, the king himself tried to intervene in the process during the last months of his life, an effort which was abruptly cut short by his assassination.

The latest bout of violence which resulted in the killing of military and civilian personnel of the government of Nepal compelled the Nepalese government to declare a state of emergency in the country, and the king, Gyanendra, to take the decision to deploy the Nepalese army against Maoist cadre on Monday, November 26. The Nepalese government has also issued an ordinance stipulating life imprisonment and confiscation of properties of anybody who directly or indirectly participates in or supports terrorist activities.

The print media, the mouthpieces of the Maoist Party, *Janadesh Weekly*, *The Daily Janadisha*, and the monthly magazine, *Dishabodh*, have been closed down by the government. Nepalese armed forces have carried out ground operations as well as air strikes in the districts affected by the latest insurgent activities. What is to be noted is that the decision to take decisive action against this terrorist group has been taken reluctantly. The Deuba government is keeping the door open for negotiations. The prime minister issued an official statement which reflects this attitude. He said, "Our country is passing through a grave situation these days. The terrorists in the name of Maoists have terrorized the whole Nepalese public

through violence, murder and senseless bloodshed. Efforts are being made to invite them to the negotiating table to seek a peaceful solution to the problems."

India has announced support for the Nepalese government's decision. Our foreign office spokesman has stated, "The declaration of emergency is

Thapa, the chief of staff of the Nepalese army, held discussions in Delhi and the Maoist Communist Council of Bihar. This link poses a continuing threat to security and stability on the Indo-Nepal boarder as well as in the concerned states of India mentioned above.

The macro-level political agenda of



in India's view a necessary step by the democratic government (of Nepal) to preserve order. We extend our support to the government of Nepal." That Nepal expects not just political but also some substantive assistance from India is clear in the bilateral interactions since November 26. The Nepalese prime minister, Deuba, spoke to the Indian prime minister on the night of Monday, November 26.

The commander-in-chief of the Nepalese army, General Prajwalla S.J.B. Rana, made an emergency stopover in Delhi on November 25 while travelling back from Vienna to Kathmandu to have discussions with the Indian chief of army staff, General Sunderajan Padmanabhan. Prior to this visit of General Rana, a five-member armed forces team from Nepal led by Lieutenant General Pyarjung

**The latest bout of violence resulted in the killing of military and civilian personnel of the Nepal government**

the Nepalese Maoist Party is to abolish the constitutional monarchy and the current democratic system in Nepal. It is also categorical in its objection to a close relationship between India and Nepal. At a deeper level, the socio-economic predicament of Nepal has to be noted. Nepal is land-locked, and is amongst the least developed countries in the world. Within Nepal itself there are internal socio-economic dispari-

ties of a critical nature. While the Kathmandu valley and portions of eastern Nepal are comparatively developed, western Nepal, nearly half of the country, is underdeveloped and is in need of purposive governance and economic and social development inputs. The objective of the Maoists has been to prevent such policies so that they do not lose their base in this region of Nepal. If there is lack of minimum levels of political stability and continuity, the Maoist insurgents would be able to move forward on the objectives mentioned earlier.

A disturbed and unstable Nepal can create serious political and security concerns for India. The floating Nepalese population between Bhutan, India and Nepal, with indeterminate national identity and in economic want can provide fertile ground for recruitment of Maoists and other terrorist groups on both sides of the Indo-Nepal border.

A Nepal in turmoil which is unstable and subject to fractious politics can get enmeshed in foreign policy and security decisions which can have a detrimental effect not only on Indo-Nepal, but also on Sino-Indian relations. It is in this context that India has been prompt in supporting Deuba in decisions taken by his government to take effective countermeasures against the current phase of Maoist insurgency in that country.

India will also be providing necessary operational and logistical assistance to the Nepalese government to make these counter-insurgency operations successful. This support and cooperation are both necessary and desirable, given the long-term productive potentialities of bilateral cooperation between India and Nepal. Leaving aside the important political and security dimensions of these potentialities, cooperation in the fields of commerce, joint utilization of hydro-electric potential and the joint effort with Nepal to strengthen the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation are of long-term importance and benefit to the peoples of both countries.

The next summit of the SAARC scheduled to be held in Kathmandu is a more immediate factor necessitating Indian support to Nepal in the efforts underway to control and then eradicate the Maoist insurgency. Indo-Nepalese relations are again at a critical juncture due to developments in that country over the last fortnight. The capacity of Nepal to return to normalcy and stability within a democratic framework and India's ability to be supportive without being prescriptive are factors which should underpin India's Nepal policies.

# Abdullah arrives in Delhi #10-11

By Atul Aneja

*9/20/12*  
*by the way*

**NEW DELHI, DEC. 12.** Afghanistan's interim Foreign Minister, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah arrived here this evening to push forward political and economic ties with India.

Dr. Abdullah arrived in an Indian Air Force IL-76 plane, accompanied by Mr. S.K. Lambah, India's Special Envoy on Afghanistan, who was on a day-long visit to Kabul.

During his visit to Kabul, the Indian delegation discussed prospects of contributing to the reconstruction of the war-torn Afghanistan. Mr. Lambah, during the visit also met Afghanistan's Defence Minister in the interim Government, Mr. Mohammad Qasim Fahim. Discussions revolved around the possibility of long-term defence cooperation between the two sides, official sources said.

Analysts here attach considerable importance to Dr. Abdullah's visit as it follows the trip to India, by Afghanistan's Interior Minister, Mr. Yunus Qanooni.

## Defends ties with India

Our Staff Reporter adds:

Brushing aside the recent concerns voiced by Pakistan over members of Afghanistan's Interim Government visiting India, the Afghan Foreign Minister-designate, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, on arriving here today said it was Afghanistan's right to maintain bilateral relations with any country and these visits should be seen in that context.

Speaking to mediapersons at



**The Afghan Foreign Minister-designate, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, addressing a press conference in New Delhi on Wednesday.**

his brother-in-law, Mr. Kaihan's residence here, Dr. Abdullah made it clear that Afghanistan viewed its relations with India differently from that with Pakistan. "India is a major power in the region and Pakistan is a neighbouring country. And it is Afghanistan's right to maintain bilateral relations with India as much as with Pakistan."

Dr. Abdullah, who arrived here this evening, said he would be attending a few official meetings apart from reuniting with his family. However, he refused to disclose the number of days he planned to spend here.

On the issues that he would be taking up with the authorities here, Dr. Abdullah said: "I am here at the invitation of the Indian Foreign Minister to discuss the security situation in Afghanistan

and the problems before the newly-formed Interim Government."

The official side apart, Dr. Abdullah has some private matters at hand — he will be taking his wife and daughters, who have been in India for the past four months, back to Kabul.

To a question on this, he replied: "If you (the media) give me the time, I can discuss these matters with my family."

Earlier, Dr. Abdullah's brother-in-law, Mr. Kaihan said the entire family was hoping to return to Kabul at the earliest. "We will surely be going back, but when and how will be decided by Dr. Abdullah. After all, who is not eager to return to his country."

Unlike, Dr. Abdullah's wife and daughters, the 27-year-old Mr. Kaihan has been in India for three years, but has been making intermittent trips to Afghanistan.

## A.P. HC gets five new judges

By Our Legal Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, DEC. 12.** The President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, has appointed Mr. Gurugubelli Yethirajulu, Mr. Dalava Subrahmanyam, Mr. Dubagunta Subrahmanyam, Mr. Chintamaneni Sreerama Krishna Prasad and Mr. Maddy Narayana Reddy, to be additional judges of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, in that order of seniority, for two years each, with effect from the date they assume charge.

13 DEC 2001



# India stepping up engagement of Afghanistan

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 10. India is stepping up its engagement of Afghanistan this week by receiving the Foreign Minister-designate, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, and sending the second relief flight to the war-torn nation.

Dr. Abdullah, who arrives in the capital on Wednesday for a two-day visit, will meet the top rung of Indian leaders including the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh. He is also visiting his family here.

Last week, India hosted the Interior Minister designate of the interim administration in Afghanistan, Mr. Yunus Qanooni.

Pleased with the turn of events in Afghanistan that led to the ouster of the Taliban, India is exploring all avenues for intensifying the interaction with interim administration that will take charge of Kabul on December 22.

Dr. Abdullah's visit is part of the process for establishing political contact with the new leaders of Afghanistan, many of whom India has known over the last few years while extending support to the Northern Alliance.

In engaging the new leadership in Kabul, India is likely to explore new avenues for bilateral cooperation in the context of putting Afghanistan together again and delivering relief and reconstruction to the people.

The country has already offered assistance to train and build the urgently needed police forces in Afghanistan. A small contingent

of Indian police personnel could be stationed in Kabul to help develop the necessary human resources for the maintenance of law and order. India has the experience of participating in such policing programmes under the United Nations flag.

New Delhi sent one relief plane a few days ago and another will follow on Wednesday. More doctors, nurses and medicines may be sent in the flight.

The country also plans to take an active part in the international meetings of the donors who are planning to coordinate their efforts in delivering relief and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan in the coming weeks.

## Indo-U.S. military exercise

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 10. India will hold a three-day military-to-military exercise with the United States off the Mumbai/Goa coast from Wednesday. It will be followed by joint exercises with Korean ships.

The details for the joint exercise with the U.S. armed forces were finalised over four months ago. The impetus came from the reactivation of the joint Defence Policy Group headed by senior civilian officials from THE Defence Headquarters of both countries.

Three Korean ships will be visiting Mumbai from December 14. A passage exercise will be conducted when the ships leave Mumbai on December 18.

Dawa Sangpo Dorjee talks to police officers when prevented from reaching the Rumtek monastery in Gangtok on Sunday. — The Statesman

Turn to page 3

# Delhi quick off the block in Kabul

**Bhava Roy Choudhury in New Delhi**

Dec. 9. — South Block moved uncharacteristically swiftly to re-assert India's presence in Kabul as soon as the Taliban fled the capital, and ensure that its voice was heard.

Not only did it set up a rudimentary liaison mission in record time (one day), the Indian flag is actually fluttering high in the embassy compound.

Mr Gautam Mukhopadhyay, IFS officer, is trying to reassert India's role in the war-ravaged nation after a rude interregnum. He is in constant touch with New Delhi and is trying hard to cement India's position with the new interim administration.

Mr Qureishi, an old Afghan hand who has served in Kabul for 27 years, is his interpreter. There are some support staff also.

The team of doctors and medical staff which went to Kabul said long queues of patients are seen standing outside the Indira Gandhi Hospital almost daily.

It will, however, take some time to restore the colonial-style Ambassador's residence, which the Taliban used as an ammunition dump "and for oth-

er undiplomatic uses".

The liaison mission, which is staying at the Kabul Hotel, has been interacting with the local community to sort out minor grievances and assuring them of complete safety.

An official said: "Kabul is a city at peace with itself. The armed forces are on the periphery and the police in town are ensuring that the law and order does not break down". The team is due to return "before Christmas" for debriefing.

Senior Northern Alliance officials accompanied the Indian team on visits to the local temple and Gurdwara to reassure the remaining 500 Indian families in Kabul of their right to worship freely, without fear of persecution.

Ties between the two nations were further strengthened as the newly-appointed interior minister, Mr Younus Qanooni, visited New Delhi on his way back from the UN-sponsored conference at Bonn. The official contact paved the way for India to play a more active role in reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee extended a \$100 million credit line to Afghanistan. He also promised close cooperation in training police and para-military personnel in that country.

10/12/81  
India's  
response

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# Abdullah Abdullah to visit Delhi

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri  
New Delhi, December 9

THE FOREIGN Minister of the interim Afghan administration, Abdullah Abdullah, will be making his first official visit to New Delhi on Wednesday. Abdullah's arrival, following closely on that of the new Afghan Home Minister, Yunus Qanooni, reflects India's influence with the present regime in Kabul.

Abdullah is scheduled to meet his Indian counterpart, Jaswant Singh, Home Minister LK Advani and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

New Delhi considers Abdullah, who has long been the Northern Alliance's Foreign Minister, as Kabul's most ardent Indophile.

Abdullah was one of the closest confidantes of the murdered Ahmad Shah Masood. He was the Alliance's liaison with the outside world. Abdullah played a key role in overcoming the Alliance's distrust of India — a dislike derived from Delhi's support of the Soviet invasion.

Like many of the new generation of Afghan leaders, Abdullah is not a prisoner to ethnicity. His mother, for example, is a Kandahari Pashtun and his father a Panjshir valley Tajik. Qanooni is also ethnically mixed. The two were crucial in sidelining old Tajik leaders like Burhanuddin Rabbani who opposed sharing power with Pashtuns or allowing a multinational presence. Qanooni is still in New Delhi. He may even be among the passengers aboard the Il-76 aircraft being sent by the Indian Government to Kabul from New Delhi on Wednesday morning to reinforce the liaison office New Delhi has set up in Kabul.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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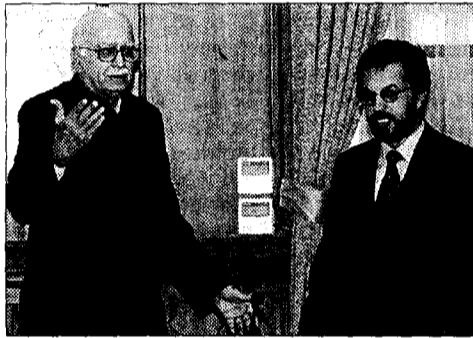
# Qanooni lashes out at Pak policy

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 7 DECEMBER

**P**AKISTAN'S POLICY of fomenting terrorism came in for heavy criticism by the new Afghan interior minister, Younus Qanooni on Friday, as Afghan and Indian views on terrorism converged for the first time in years. Coming straight to Delhi from Bonn, Mr Qanooni, the first high-level visitor from the interim administration in Kabul warned Islamabad that its "policy of terrorism in Afghanistan has failed as also in other places. This is the time for Islamabad to review its strategy of the past."

Mr Qanooni who will remain in the city for the next few days with his family, will return to Kabul in the middle of next week. Speculation is rife that he and his family might be on the next Indian flight to Kabul that is scheduled for Wednesday morning, though there was no confirmation from the government.

In a significant assertion, which may have differed from the new Afghan premier, Hamid Karzai, Mr Qanooni also categorically ruled out any amnesty for top Taliban leaders like Mul-



**CEMENTING TIES: Home minister L.K. Advani welcomes Afghanistan's interior minister Younus Qanooni in New Delhi on Friday. — AFP**

lah Mohammed Omar or Osama bin Laden. "Amnesty is possible for the small men, not the big leaders." Mr Karzai's offer of amnesty to Omar on Thursday in return for a condemnation of terrorism had to be changed.

Mr Qanooni, along with the rest of the

Northern Alliance, is less inclined to be charitable to the Taliban. Mr Qanooni stressed that the foreign fighters who were still in Afghanistan — mostly Pakistanis — would be asked to return forthwith. He was also relatively untroubled by the apparent rebellion by Abdulrashid Dostum. "He wants a few more ministries," Mr Qanooni said, denying the Uzbek leader had been marginalised. He promised these minor problems would be sorted out in Kabul. What he didn't mention was that Dostum's closeness to the US would ensure that he would not be allowed to derail the Bonn agreement.

Meeting the foreign minister, Mr Jaswant Singh and home minister Mr L.K. Advani on Friday evening, Mr Qanooni, here to see his parents and brother who live in Delhi, assured India that Afghanistan would no longer be a fertile ground for terrorists who operate in Jammu & Kashmir. Instead, he said,

The significance of Mr Qanooni's visit lies in the fact that India is well on its way to regaining some of the influence it enjoyed in Afghanistan, especially after a decade of being kept out of Afghan affairs by Pakistan.

# Afghan minister underscores India's role

5/11  
8/12  
India & her  
neighbours  
Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec 7 - Mr Younus Qanooni, the newly-appointed interior minister of the interim government of Afghanistan, arrived here today on a three-day official visit, underscoring the re-emergence of India as a key state in the Afghan scheme of things. Mr Qanooni was also the interior minister in the government headed by Mr Burhanuddin Rabbani, which retains the Afghan seat at the United Nations.

After meeting the Union home minister, Mr LK Advani, Mr Qanooni said the meeting was crucial and friendly with Mr Advani assuring that India would aid the reconstruction of the ravaged country. "It's good news for Afghanistan that the Indian government is ready for any help for the reconstruction of Afghanistan", he said.

He added, India and Afghanistan have a centuries-old relationship which the new administration greatly valued and there was need to rejuvenate it.

Rejecting amnesty to top Taliban leaders, including the chief, Mullah Omar, whose current whereabouts are still unknown, the Afghan minister said a general amnesty could be given to its "smaller members".

During his meetings with Mr Advani and the foreign minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, the Afghan minister discussed details of the future set up in the war-ravaged country after the surrender of the Taliban, including the necessity of having a multi-lateral peacekeeping force in Kabul at the earliest, given the increasing lawlessness accompanying the departure of the mullahs, said officials.

Mr Qanooni said, another key input required from India was co-operation on police and administrative training, which Mr Advani offered, including a visit to the Police Training Institute in Hyderabad and the National Security Guards' Training Centre at Manesar. The interim government wants to gradually re-establish civil institutions so they can ensure a smooth transition and adequate law and order mechanisms once the tenure of the UN-sponsored multilateral force ends.

Mr Qanooni, who arrived directly from Bonn, where he participated in the UN-sponsored talks to decide Afghanistan's future, also briefed Indian leaders on the decisions that emerged during the meeting in Germany, even while trying to downplay reports of differences within the new interim government.

"Mr Burhanuddin Rabbani and Mr Rashid Dostum are very much with the Bonn agreement," he stressed. "They have welcomed it. However, minor differences, if any, will be sorted out" he said.

Meanwhile, Australia has asked India to allow its own investigation of Mohammed Afroz Abdul Razzak, arrested in Mumbai for allegedly planning 11 September-style terrorist attacks in Australia, the Australian Prime Minister, Mr John Howard, said in Sydney today. British intelligence sources, however, dismissed Razzak's claims.

In Kabul, several documents related to the 1999 hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane were found in a house, implicating a Pakistan-backed group, adds PTI reports from New York. These included a hijacker's fake Indian identity card and train passes.

THE STATESMAN

Nepal's importance for India calls for the highest diplomatic skills

# Of monarchs and Maoists

SUNANDA K. DATTA-RAY

**T**he Nepalese cannot be blamed for jumping to the conclusion that only the Maoist insurrection has saved them from being brow-beaten by India into accepting rigorous trade terms. For, when renewal of the bilateral trade treaty signed on December 5, 1996, was being discussed recently, Murasoli Maran, the commerce minister, remarked with no thought for geopolitical considerations, "How can I give more to Nepal than to Sri Lanka?" The treaty would have been extended automatically last Wednesday for another five years if New Delhi had not given notice of objection three months ago. Then, Atal Bihari Vajpayee suddenly telephoned Sher Bahadur Deuba, the Nepalese prime minister, last week to extend the treaty by three months.

Conjecture is inevitable because it is a deeply disturbing feature of subcontinental life that no one in Nepal, from monarch to Maoist, really believes in India's good will or good faith. India's financial aid is seen as clumsy bribery designed to exclude the Chinese. Indian technical assistance is described as a device to keep out sophisticated Western technology. Indian investment in massive hideal plants is dismissed as only a ploy to generate power that India alone can buy cheap.

This Great Game is more vital to India's interests than the more dramatic Great Game being played out in the West. While American forces are blasting Afghanistan for Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar Mohammed, Nepalese troops are scouring Himalayan jungles for Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Ram Bahadur Thapa, known respectively as Comrade Prachanda and Comrade Badal.

Post-taliban Kabul is said to have yielded evidence of a connection between two centres of conspiracy. But it is the Nepalese turmoil with which India's security is more closely intertwined. It is through Nepal that Pakistani intelligence can strike directly at India's soft underbelly. It is with Nepal that India has an open border that straggles through 1,700 kilometers of unguarded jungle, fields and hills. Cheap Chinese manufactures are flooding Indian markets through Nepal. A Chinese delegation recently appeared in Kathmandu to discuss tourism, which seems a curious distraction at a time of convulsions along the Himalayas and a global slump.

All this further underlines the kingdom's importance, and the need for diplomatic skills of the highest order, for political wisdom and the utmost generosity. Insensitivity to geopolitical compulsions is at least partly responsible for the crisis in what is probably the weakest link in India's defensive perimeter though it is not, of

course, the only reason.

Nepalese lobbies with vested interests are also paying for their own crass shortsightedness in manipulating the militant left in their power games. The Bharatiya Janata Party's central leadership is not so inhibited by Tamil blinkers as to equate the landlocked kingdom with an island which looks on the world as its oyster. King Birendra's presence in New Delhi as chief guest when the new government celebrated its first Republic Day was rich in symbol and substance. When he flew to Kathmandu four months ago, Jaswant Singh assured his hosts that no one would be allowed to kill the trade treaty's spirit.

But what about its body? The problem will arise again next March unless

been for grinding poverty, illiteracy, population growth of more than 2.5 per cent, a rigid caste system and oligarchic Brahmin and Chhetri control. Unemployed youths are exposed not only to this country's rumbustious but liberal democratic polity but also to the revolutionary propaganda of the Maoist Communist Centre in adjoining Bihar and the People's War Group in Andhra Pradesh.

It makes for an explosive mix. The monarch in his pearl-studded crown and flowing bird of paradise feathers is the obvious symbol of privilege. For all that some see him as the *avatar* of Vishnu, the Narayanhitty Palace massacre did not foster respect for either the throne or the dynasty. An elected government should have been able to absorb anger



No offence meant

Maran demonstrates greater understanding of strategic considerations. But not even the most liberal terms then can expunge the impression of arm-twisting created by the notice of expiry followed by a last-minute reprieve which the rebels are bound to exploit.

They have always come in handy for Nepalese lobbies. Some used the Maoists to discredit, and others to justify, the old *panchayati raj*. Some legitimate political parties were tarred with the Maoist brush, others exalted as the only bulwark against revolution. Some accused the palace of playing footsy with the guerrillas to discredit parliamentary politics; others thought that one branch of the palace found them useful to pressure another. Everyone saw them as leverage against India.

These cynical games might not have boomeranged so violently if it had not

and defend institutions of state, but factional strife has robbed parliamentary groups like the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist) and the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party of much of their prestige.

King Gyanendra has not helped either by dealing direct with the army chief of staff, General Prajwal Shumshere Jang Bahadur Rana, though Deuba holds the defence portfolio. That must convey to the populace that elected leaders and, indeed, the government, lie outside the loop of real power. If the palace can disregard the prime minister, so can the rebels.

Development is the only answer. Though the Nepalese elite, with its penchant for flirting with China may not like this, India is the only country with the will and ability to help while Beijing

plays on Kathmandu's fears to gain strategic advantages. The failure of King Mahendra's efforts to route trade through the north exposed the limit of Nepal's China card. Prachanda knows that New Delhi is the only power to which Kathmandu can turn — hence his thesis of the inevitability of war with India and tirade against the India-Nepal friendship treaty.

Nepalese officials were pleased when the old trade and transit treaty was split and a new transit treaty valid for seven years signed in 1999. They called it "very accommodating". The problem is that the separate trade treaty does not exclude goods that might be manufactured in Nepal but have a high element of components from a third country. Vajpayee told Deuba on the telephone that such imports were damaging Indian industry. This is a legitimate complaint. Nepalese sales to India have jumped from about Rs 70 crore to Rs 270 crore largely because the Chinese are abusing the kingdom's geopolitical advantage.

But with globalization the keyword, and the World Trade Organization watching out for any kind of protection, India must tread with circumspection. Kathmandu is especially concerned because in spite of passing off Chinese exports as Nepalese, its trade deficit with India is still about Rs 250 crore. Restrictions would increase the imbalance, which is why India must make a major effort to remove the impression of penalizing a vulnerable neighbour. At the same time, political considerations should not prevent India from bringing Chinese malpractices to the WTO's notice. Clandestine exports and dumping must be fought internationally, not through bilateral ties with a small country with which India has such intimate historical, cultural and economic ties.

India has a new ambassador in Kathmandu; Nepal has a relatively new monarch. They should be able to undertake a four-fold process of reconstruction. First, the rebellion must be stamped out. Second, Kathmandu must engage the rebels. Third, it must accept that personality-ridden politics has brought Nepal to this pass and that the only answer lies in economic growth. Finally, India must convince Nepal that no other country can help its political, economic and strategic transformation.

Kings are often vain, and Mahendra was exceptionally so. It is his legacy that India is still fighting. Meanwhile, there is no need to offend Nepalese sensibilities and compound estrangement by claiming that Jawaharlal Nehru could have annexed the kingdom but chose not to do so. Nepal will fear for its security as long as Indians repeat that unproven tale.

# Nepal minister roots for India

Keshav Pradhan  
Kathmandu, December 4

AMID THE growing suspicion among many Nepalis over India's open support to contain the Maoist insurgency, Nepal Home Minister Khum Bahadur Khadka has said no Government in Nepal can run without cooperating with India.

In an interview to vernacular daily *Rajdhani* today, he said: "India is both a friend and a brother to us. We are destined to live together in both good and bad times. No Government here can survive if it works against India's interests. What will happen if it just stops our supplies?"

As the crackdown on Maoists continued, the Nepal army killed two more rebels, the defence ministry said today.

5/12 India & her neighbours  
Khadka said India's decision to provide "all necessary help in our fight against terrorism" was "a positive step".

"People who ran the erstwhile panchayat regime may talk big now, but they also had a good rapport with Delhi. So did the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (UML). It is a must for all Governments here to do so," Khadka said.

Some Communist and Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (an organisation attached to the partyless panchayat system that ran for 30 years till 1990) leaders feared the wide coverage given to India's decision to help Nepal could boomerang on bilateral ties. An RPP leader said, "Unlike China, people may find India too interfering."

But, ruling Nepali Congress leaders felt the Maoists are a

threat to both Nepal and India.

Rumours about the clandestine arrival of Indian military equipment, including helicopter gunships and troops, have been rife ever since Atal Bihari Vajpayee spoke to King Gyanendra and his Nepalese counterpart Sher Bahadur Deuba last week. This seemed to have embarrassed and irritated the Government.

On a report carried by a pro-Nepali Congress weekly that many trucks loaded with equipment have entered Nepal from India through Darjeeling, Deuba said: "You may please confirm this with the magazine itself."

Opposition leader and UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal has declared: "There is no role for foreign troops in the kingdom."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

2001

# Camouflaged arms trucks with Indian army escorts roll into Nepal

FROM PROBIR PRAMANIK

Siliguri, Dec. 4: In a hush-hush operation, India sent 11 trucks stacked with sophisticated weapons and surveillance gadgets to Nepal last week through a border post near here.

The covert arms shipment, headed for the Nepalese army's

eastern headquarters at Pathari and the Charany base camp, was "escorted" by select personnel of the Indian armed forces, intelligence officials said today.

The operation was pulled off in two instalments last Thursday and Friday in civilian trucks, not army vehicles. In-

telligence officials said the effort was to "camouflage" the export of state-of-the-art arms and military hardware belonging to the Indian army.

"The shipment was being handled by a special group of select personnel drawn from the Indian armed forces. Though the shipment was

'camouflaged' by using civilian vehicles... the army escorts for the convoys were a sure giveaway," an official said.

The consignment, sent through the Panitanki border post 25 km from here, was "received" by a joint team of Royal Nepal Army and Kakarvitta police officers. Six trucks rolled

into Nepal on November 29 and five the next day.

The secret consignment comprised mostly weapons for guerrilla and jungle warfare, counter-insurgency equipment, small and medium firearms, surveillance gadgets and flashlights, the official said.

The undercover operation is

believed to be part of India's efforts to help Nepal plug any spillover of Maoist rebels into north Bengal. The extremists have a strong support base in the region and have also spread their tentacles into Bihar, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh.

Intelligence sources said reining in the Maoists was diffi-

cult as they easily merged with the local population in the Darjeeling hills, Sikkim and eastern Dooars. "Nepalese rebels on the run can also seek shelter across the porous international border," an official said.

Central intelligence sources said 10-15 hardcore People's

Liberation Army activists had already infiltrated into north Bengal. But the Darjeeling district police have denied this. Central and military intelligence agencies are worried that the Siliguri corridor has turned into a hotspot for clandestine arms running.

■ See Page 3

THE TELEGRAPH

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- 5 DEC 2001



# Nepal averse to military assistance

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 2. — Nepal has ruled out accepting military help from its neighbouring countries, including India, to quell the Maoist insurgency but welcomed the support extended to them by these countries to mount over the crisis.

Prime Minister, Mr Sher Bahadur Deuba, was quoted as saying in media report here that he "can't say anything right now" on seeking military assistance from India, China or Pakistan but "the Royal Nepalese Army is quite capable of sorting out this problem".

Ruling out the possibility of direct involvement of Indian troops to counter the Maoist insurgency, Mr Deuba, however, welcomed the support being provided by every country, including China, India, the US and the European Union. The Prime Minister rejected criticism against the imposition of emergency in Nepal, saying: "It is directed against the Maoists and their supporters and they will be dealt with an iron hand", *The News* daily reported.

Mr Deuba said the Saarc summit will be held as per schedule in Kathmandu despite escalation of violence by the Maoists. "The 11th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Summit will be held as scheduled," he told the daily in an interview in Kathmandu.

Asked whether any member country has shown any hesitation, Mr Deuba said, "No, not whatsoever. Everybody is on board".

He said: "Extra security measures are being taken to ensure the security of visiting delegates from the Saarc countries".

Mr Deuba said the Saarc summit will not be advanced due to the "terrorist campaign of the Maoists". He suggested that the summit should discuss measures to put up a common fight against terrorism.

Mr Deuba said: "The issues of terrorism should come on the Saarc agenda since every country — be it Nepal, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka — is internally suffering from this menace".

When reminded that political or bilateral issues cannot be addressed at the Saarc forums, Mr Deuba said: "Bilateral issues, no doubt, are out of the scope of Saarc, but the issues of common concern can be discussed and terrorism is not a bilateral subject".

The summit has acquired added significance as Prime Minister Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistani Gen President Pervez Musharraf are expected to have a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of it.

Meanwhile, Nepal today reinforced troops fighting the Maoist insurgents as the rebels attacked government installations and a foreign aid agency, reports Reuters from Kathmandu.

The rebels attacked the office of Adventist Development and Relief Agency in Rasuwa, north of Kathmandu, took away office equipment and cut communication lines. No one was injured in the attack.

ADRA, which is headquartered in the USA, helps provide health-care in Nepal, which lacks basic medical facilities.

The rebels also attacked a military post near Sundarjal on the outskirts of Kathmandu but were beaten back. "There was no casualty on the Army side in any of these incidents," the government said.

Defence secretary Mr Padam Kumar Acharya said more soldiers had been sent to hunt down the insurgents entrenched in thickly forested mountains. Troops had closed in on the Maoist stronghold of Rolpa in the Himalayan foothills, where the rebellion took off in 1996.

THE STRIP

3 DEC 2001

# India sends arms to Nepal

*India & her neighbours 112 S.P. 7*

SUDIPTA CHANDA  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

PANITANKI (India-Nepal border) Dec. 1. — The Centre has moved 11 truckloads of weapons and other allied equipment to Nepal since 29 November through this transit point.

The development comes a day after the Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, assured Nepal's King Gyanendra of India's support including paramilitary and weapons assistance to quell the Maoist upsurge in that country.

While six truckloads of the hardware were sent on Thursday, five truckloads of the weapons and other equipment were sent yesterday.

The Statesman cross-checked and confirmed the arms movement from the authorities concerned.

At least one weapons consignment was delivered to the Nepalese army stationed at Pathri, the headquarters of the Nepalese army in eastern Nepal.

The composition and quantity of the weapons is not known. It was, however, learnt that a "special force" was engaged in the supply job.

The special force, which employs experts in close combat and counter-insurgency, is also engaged in training a group of 100 Nepalese police recruits who crossed the border on 27 November.

The training is being held under tight security at a spot adjacent to National Highway

31 about 20 km south of the Siltguri town.

With the apprehension of the Maoist activists sneaking into this side of the border growing by the day, the Darjeeling district police today deployed additional forces along the Indo-Nepal border.

The Darjeeling SP, Mr Sanjay Chander, who inspected the transit point said, additional policemen are being sent to all the four police stations responsible for main-

## SPECIAL FORCES ENGAGED IN SUPPLY

taining law and order along the border.

For the first time, police also route marched in areas along the border today. "The exercise will continue till matters cool down on the other side of the border," the SP said.

According to Mr Chander, police have also started to move among the settlements in remote areas and are warning the people not to shelter any Maoist fleeing from Nepal. "Anybody found violating the instruction would be answerable to the law," he warned.

THE STATESMAN

2 DEC 2001

# India, Nepal to monitor the border

By C. Raja Mohan

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 30.** Continuing their sensitive political consultations at the highest level, India and Nepal today agreed to coordinate their actions on the border to prevent the flow of arms and assistance from the Indian side to the Maoist insurrection in the Himalayan Kingdom.

Senior officials from the security establishments of the two countries will meet soon to work out ways to monitor and stop the Maoist insurgents in Nepal from exploiting their links with the extremist groups in India.

The decision to enhance bilateral cooperation in border security-management came from the conversation this morning between the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and his Nepali counterpart, Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba.

There is a strong recognition in New Delhi and Kathmandu of the grave threat the Maoist rebellion poses to both the nations and the subcontinent as a whole. For Nepal, it is a question of defending the present political order. And India cannot be secure with the rise of another extremist force in its neighbourhood.

For Kathmandu, there is no question of accepting the Maoist demand to dismantle the revered monarchy. "Constitutional monarchy and democratic governance in the Kingdom are non-negotiable," the Nepalese Envoy to India said here today. Hoping that the present phase of emergency to cope with the Maoist threat would be a short one, the envoy said the doors remained open for talks with the insurgents.

Addressing a press conference here at the Foreign Correspondents Club of South Asia, Mr. Bhekh Bahadur Thapa said his Government was "gratified by the level of political support and understanding shown by India."

On the likely political backlash in Nepal against seeking assistance from India, Mr. Thapa hinted that the two sides were aware of the importance of "caution and care" even in cooperating against common threats. It was premature to talk about the "details of the nature of the security assistance" that had been sought from India, he said, adding that Nepal was making an assessment of its needs. Its friends abroad had only been alerted with regard to possible future requirements.

Mr. Thapa would not go into whether Nepal had sought military assistance from any coun-

try other than India. The Government of Nepal is believed to have made it quite clear to the international community that it has no desire to seek the presence of foreign troops on its soil to cope with the Maoist threat.

Mr. Thapa welcomed the Indian decision to extend the bilateral trade treaty by three months. India had sought a review of the treaty which was due for renewal on December 5, 2001. *HD-11 1/12*

New Delhi is seeking corrective measures to prevent the flow of third country goods to India via Nepal and undermine the Indian industry. Nepal, on the other hand, is concerned at the likely alteration of the basic structure of the treaty, aimed at promoting its industrialisation. The extension of the treaty should give time for the two sides to complete the difficult negotiations under way.

Mr. Thapa also said the planned summit of the South Asian leaders was "very much on the cards," despite the current crisis. Nepal "does not see any reason to postpone" the long-delayed summit of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation, and preparations for the meeting were in full swing, he said.

THE HINDU

300 2001

# Trade treaty breather, new envoy for Nepal

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

**New Delhi, Nov. 30:** India has decided to extend its existing trade treaty with Nepal "in its present form" for another three months.

The agreement would have become invalid after December 3, but India took into account insurgency-hit Nepal's problems. The two sides will now get till March 5, 2002 to successfully complete negotiations on the new agreement. The decision coincided with another — to send retired diplomat I.P. Singh as the new ambassador to Nepal.

Singh will replace Deb Mukherjee whose term ended today. He will leave for Nepal tomorrow to take up his new assignment as South Block feels the situation in the Himalayan kingdom does not allow a hiatus in bilateral relations.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee spoke to his Nepalese counterpart Sher Bahadur Deuba today and assured him about the extension in the period of the trade treaty. He repeated Delhi's offer of all possible help to Kathmandu to deal with the situation arising out of the recent strikes by the Maoist rebels. This was the second time the two leaders spoke since the Maoist uprising.

Vajpayee also referred to concerns of the Indian industry about certain provisions of the treaty and said that negotiators of the two countries should ensure the sticky points are ironed out within the next three months.

Deuba assured the Prime Minister that solutions would be found and the new treaty would promote Nepal's industrial development, while ensuring that interests of Indian industry are protected.

The trade treaty is important to India-Nepal relations. Land-locked Nepal has to depend heavily on India for most of its basic requirements. But the treaty has become more important an issue now because the Maoists rebels are working on anti-Indian sentiments to consolidate their position.

In the mid-1980s, the Rajiv Gandhi government had refused to renew the Indo-Nepal trade treaty, throwing bilateral relations into a tizzy. The Vajpayee government is aware of this and wants to take care that there is no repeat of that situation — at least not at this juncture.

The Maoist in Nepal is an offshoot of the Communist Party of Nepal, which toes the line of the "Gang of Four" in China. Comprising extreme Leftists, this group has spawned insurgency in Nepal through acts of terror, extortion and

violence since February 1996. The Maoists' main demands are elimination of the monarchy, establishment of a republic and a new Constitution for Nepal. Their estimated cadre strength is nearly 2,500 hardcore supporters. They also enjoy the support of large sections in mid-west Nepal — the most backward area of the country.

India, which has offered all help to Nepal, has sounded a red alert in states like Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand so that the Maoist rebels cannot infiltrate the porous 1,751-km-long border and set up bases and shelters on the Indian side.

The government has also instructed the Border Security Force and the other security agencies to keep in touch with their Nepalese counterparts.



Deuba

THE TELEGRAPH

1 DEC 2001

# Delhi restores Kabul ties

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 21. — New Delhi today sent a "diplomatic and medical mission" to Afghanistan to hold talks with the Northern Alliance leaders and begin preparations for reopening the Indian mission and the Indira Gandhi hospital. The Indian embassy in Kabul was closed five years ago.

New Delhi has denied that the move has anything to do with its desire to get a head-start in the diplomatic arena. It acknowledged that Pakistan was unlikely to follow suit since it had all along supported the Taliban regime.

The mission, led by the special envoy for Afghanistan, Mr SK Lambah, landed at Bagram Airfield near Kabul this morning. Mr Lambah was scheduled to return later tonight.

An eight-member medical and nursing team, which has accompanied the diplomatic mission, would stay on in Kabul with a liaison officer, Mr Jaswant Singh said in Parliament.

Mr Lambah was scheduled to have talks with the Northern Alliance foreign minister, Mr Abdullah Abdullah, UN officials and examine prospects of reopening the Indian mission.

New Delhi will also look at the re-establishment of close linkages with the new dispensation in Kabul and make an on-the-spot study of the fluid political situation in the country.

The decision to set up a liaison office in Kabul was taken at a Cabinet Committee on Security meeting chaired by Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee on Sunday.

The USA and its allies were informed before sending the "diplomatic and medical mission". The government said this was necessary to ensure safety of the special Air Force flight that carried the team to Kabul.

The aircraft, which also carried security guards, reportedly took the Iran route to reach Kabul instead of flying over Pakistan.



WINDS OF LIBERATION: A woman smiles after lifting her burqa at the UN World Food Programme bakery in Kabul on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

The setting-up of the liaison office will help the government maintain close contacts with various Afghan groups, who are trying to install a multi-ethnic government.

India has always favoured a broad-based government in Afghanistan, which does not believe in export of terrorism as its ideology.

A foreign ministry spokesperson said the liaison officer would help the government get a first-hand information on developments in Afghanistan.

India closed its embassy in Kabul on 26 September 1996 but continued to recognise the gov-

ernment of Prof Burhanuddin Rabbani, who returned to Kabul a few days ago.

Prof Rabbani has started reasserting legitimacy of his regime. Pakistan and the Western nations favour return of former King Zahir Shah as the head of the interim government.

**All-Afghan meet in Bonn:** The United Nations has proposed setting up an interim administration in Kabul immediately because of the fast-moving events on the ground, reports Reuters from UNHQ. It has announced an all-Afghan conference in Bonn from Monday.

The UN Secretary-General's special representative for Afghanistan, Mr Lakhdar Brahimi, said yesterday that he wanted Afghans to form a small body to take over the running of Kabul before a larger and more representative group could be organised. "I hope we will take some concrete decisions and steps at this conference", Mr Brahimi said.

His plan calls for an emergency Loya Jirga, a traditional Afghan assembly of ethnic leaders and elders, to approve the transitional administration and some yet-undefined security proposals.

A second Loya Jirga could then

be convened to approve a constitution and create a government.

The meeting, expected to last a week, will include representatives of major factions and ethnic groups. Supporters of Mohammed Zahir Shah will also attend. The Taliban has not been invited, Mr Brahimi said.

**Kabul palace blast:** A rocket explosion destroyed a guard post at Kabul's presidential palace today but the blast was an accident and nobody was killed, soldiers at the scene said.

■ More reports on page 5

## ALLIANCE:

(Continued from page 1)

**Alliance troops attack Kunduz:** The Northern Alliance said it launched an assault to take Kunduz by force today after the failure of talks on a Taliban surrender in the besieged province, adds Reuters. Despite an announcement by a senior Northern Alliance commander that surrender terms had been finalised, the Alliance interior minister, Mr Yunus Qanuni, said the deal had fallen through. "We have tried to settle the issue of Kunduz through negotiations, but we have been forced to choose a military solution," Mr Qanuni said. "At the moment, our forces are advancing. We hope by tomorrow we will have secured Kunduz." Thousands of Taliban fighters, Pakistanis, Arabs and Chechens, linked to the Al Qaida, are encircled in Kunduz. Alliance fighters massed east of Kunduz firing rockets at Taliban positions, witnesses said. Alliance commanders said their forces were also advancing from the west. They said US bombing raids went on all day.

**Musharraf for safe passage of foreign fighters:** As most of the foreign fighters under the Taliban in Kunduz are reportedly Pakistanis, Gen Pervez Musharraf has urged President George W Bush to allow them safe passage out of Afghanistan, adds PTI from Washington.

**600 bodies found in Mazar-e-Sharif:** Red Cross workers have found about 600 bodies in Mazar-e-Sharif after the Taliban abandoned it, adds AFP. But they couldn't say how they died. "We can't say whether these people were brutally executed or died in the fighting," Mr Olivier Durr, head of operations for central and south Asia for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said.

**Afghan meet:** A meeting of the Afghan groups, to be held next week in Germany, will elect a leadership council to oversee the transfer of power to a broad-based government, a senior Northern Alliance leader said today, adds Reuters. The Alliance interior minister, Mr Yunus Qanuni, said the council's election and agreement on a framework for a future government were the main aims.

THE STATESMAN

20 NOV 2001

## 'Indian Army not aiding Northern Alliance'

By Sandeep Dikshit

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 8.** India today denied allegations that its army officers had joined the U.S. army in aiding the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. "No one belonging to the Indian Army is involved in guiding the Northern Alliance in Northern Afghanistan," maintained a senior Defence Ministry official. The denial followed claims by the Taliban Ambassador to Islamabad, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, about the involvement of Indian officers of the rank of General and Brigadier in guiding American air strikes which was "why they have started war on many fronts."

Defence Ministry officers said Indian help to the Northern Alliance was limited to humanitarian assistance.

### Pak. orders closure of Taliban consulate

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, NOV. 8.** The Pakistan Government today ordered the Taliban militia to shut down its con-

sulate in Karachi without specifying any reasons. Though the Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, said Islamabad had cited "security considerations" as the reason for the order, it is widely seen as an action by Pakistan to convey the message that it would not allow the militia to use its soil for "propaganda purposes."

Today's development came two days after Pakistan directed the Taliban embassy here to "restrict" its activities and urged Mr. Zaeef not to brief the press on a daily basis. The provocation for the order could be the decision of Mr. Zaeef to invite a group of Pakistani editors for dinner on Wednesday night and pour his heart out against the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan.

Mr. Zaeef's press briefings were clearly proving to be an embarrassment to both Islamabad and Washington as he is not only attracting more journalists than any other personality here but also making use of the opportunity to launch strident attacks on the U.S. On Tuesday, Mr. Zaeef was called to

the Pakistan Foreign Office and told to observe the diplomatic norms, particularly with regard to attacks on a 'third country'. But it appears the Taliban envoy was in no mood to oblige as was evident from his outpouring at the dinner meet with the editors.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, who confirmed the order asking the Taliban to shut down its Consulate in Karachi, was not willing to say a word more. He maintained that the decision did not mean Pakistan was reviewing its diplomatic ties with the militia. "The Taliban embassy is very much functioning in Islamabad and so are the other two of its consulates in Peshawar and Quetta," he said. Reacting to Pakistan's latest decision, Mr. Zaeef said that henceforth, the Taliban would hold press conferences inside Afghanistan. He contested the charge that the Taliban was using the Pakistani soil for propaganda and maintained it was only telling the facts about the losses and "oppression" being perpetuated on Afghanistan.

## India, Nepal begin talks on trade treaty

**KATHMANDU, NOV. 3.** Officials from India and Nepal began fresh talks today on renewing a key treaty aimed at boosting trade between the two countries, officials sources said.

All HOA  
"The talks will focus on issues concerning the trade treaty between the two countries," the Nepalese Commerce Ministry official, Mr. Purushottam Ojha said. The meeting is scheduled to end tomorrow. The 1996 treaty which is due to expire on December 5 gives all Nepali goods except alcohol, cosmetics, and tobacco duty-free access to India.

Kathmandu is pushing for renewal of the treaty without any changes. But New Delhi wants curbs on the export of Nepali hydrogenated vegetable cooking oil, acrylic yarns, copper wires, steel pipes, and zinc oxide because they say the trade in these goods is affecting domestic production.

Officials from both countries have met several times over the issue but failed to resolve differences. India also alleges that cheap Chinese goods are entering its market through Nepal.

4 NOV 2001



# N Alliance endorses India's stand on broad-based govt

591 23/11 India & her neighbour

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 22. — The Northern Alliance has "completely endorsed" New Delhi's stand on the future government in Afghanistan and appreciated India's "positive role."

The Alliance's views were communicated to India's special envoy to the country, Mr SK Lambah, who was in Kabul yesterday. Mr Lambah met Prof Burhanuddin Rabbani, the Northern Alliance foreign minister, Mr Abdullah Abdullah, and other leaders. An external affairs ministry spokesperson said they were "appreciative of the Indian government's positive role and the positive stand of the people of India towards Afghans."

However, in Parliament, the Opposition criticised the government saying New Delhi had acted prematurely in reacting to the attacks and called for an

## PAK CLOSES TALIBAN'S ISLAMABAD EMBASSY

ISLAMABAD, Nov. 22. — The Taliban today received a setback when Pakistan issued an order to close the militia's embassy here. The Pakistan foreign office spokesman, Mr Aziz Ahmad Khan, said the decision to close the Taliban embassy was taken yesterday and "this has been communicated officially to the Afghans this morning." Pakistan has also started erecting a barbed wire fence along a main border crossing point into Afghanistan to prevent Taliban and foreign fighters from entering the country, officials and witnesses said. — AP & PTI

introspection of the country's foreign policy to ensure that India had its rightful role in installation of a broad-based neutral government in Afghanistan.

The Opposition said the government should ensure that the US economic aid, being extended to Islamabad, was not misused against New Delhi. There were indications by the Centre that these concerns were being addressed.

Mr Lambah said the one-day

visit enabled India to meet Afghan leaders and get first-hand information about the situation. "There's a lot of goodwill and a liaison office has been established. The Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital, built with Indian assistance in the past, now has Indian doctors and the medicine taken with us are being used from today," he told reporters. The Indian team carried five tonnes of medical supplies.

There was, however, no word

yet on when India would upgrade the liaison office to a full-fledged embassy. The spokesperson said no time-frame could be fixed. The Chancery has to be revamped and necessary infrastructure put in place before this could be done. Officials said the decision on upgrading the office would be prompted by diplomatic factors, not logistics.

**Britain opens diplomatic missions:** Britain has become the first Western country to open a diplomatic mission in Afghanistan, adds AP. A senior British diplomat today said he would look for ways to speed up the flow of aid to the country.

**Abdullah statement:** Mr Abdullah Abdullah today said in Teheran that the United Islamic Front government in Kabul will stick to lenient policies, adds PTI from Dubai.

■ See ALLIANCE: page 5

THE STATESMAN

# India, Bhutan to coordinate anti-militant move

July 6 by New Delhi

Jaideep Mazumdar  
Kolkata, November 29

THE INDIAN and Bhutanese security forces are working on launching coordinated operations to tackle the United Liberation Front of Asom (Ulfa) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) insurgents operating on both sides of the international border. The operations assume significance in the backdrop of last week's mayhem by Maoists in Nepal.

Bhutan, say intelligence officials here, has emerged as an area of grave concern due to the bases that the Maoists, the United Liberation Front of Asom and the NDFB have established there.

There are 17 camps of the Ulfa and four of the NDFB in Southern Bhutan.

The Maoists too have a strong base in that region. "It is basically in Bhutan that the Maoists have established links with the Ulfa and NDFB. We have reports that the NSCN(IM) has also used

Bhutan to establish links with the Maoists," said an intelligence source.

"We have, for quite sometime now, been trying to impress upon Bhutan that coordinated operations need to be undertaken. These are not joint operations and Indian security forces would not be entering that country at all.

"But simultaneous operations would be launched by the forces of both the countries so that the insurgents cannot sneak in and out," said a senior Army officer. Joint operations, he said, are out of question since Bhutan is a sovereign country.

"We can, thus, share intelligence and have a well-coordinated operational strategy," he added.

The Maoists from Nepal have a strong support base among the Lhotsampas (Bhutanese of Nepalese origin) who form 35 per cent of Bhutan's population. Bhutan has been refusing to recognise a substantial segment of them as its own citizens and

nearly a lakh of these people are "refugees" in seven large camps run by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in South Bhutan.

The imposition of a uniform dress code and language by the monarchy there has also alienated the Lhotsampas.

"This segment has no love lost for the monarchy and the Maoists of Nepal have tapped into this resentment.

The Maoists have spread their influence in the refugee camps. The Ulfa and NDFB draw sustenance from these people of Nepali origin who reside in large numbers in South Bhutan," explained the Army officer.

Bhutan had, a few months ago, reached an understanding with top Ulfa and NDFB leaders under which the militants would disband many of their camps in that country in a phased manner by December-end.

But this agreement is being perceived as eyewash by the security establishment here. "We have received inputs that the

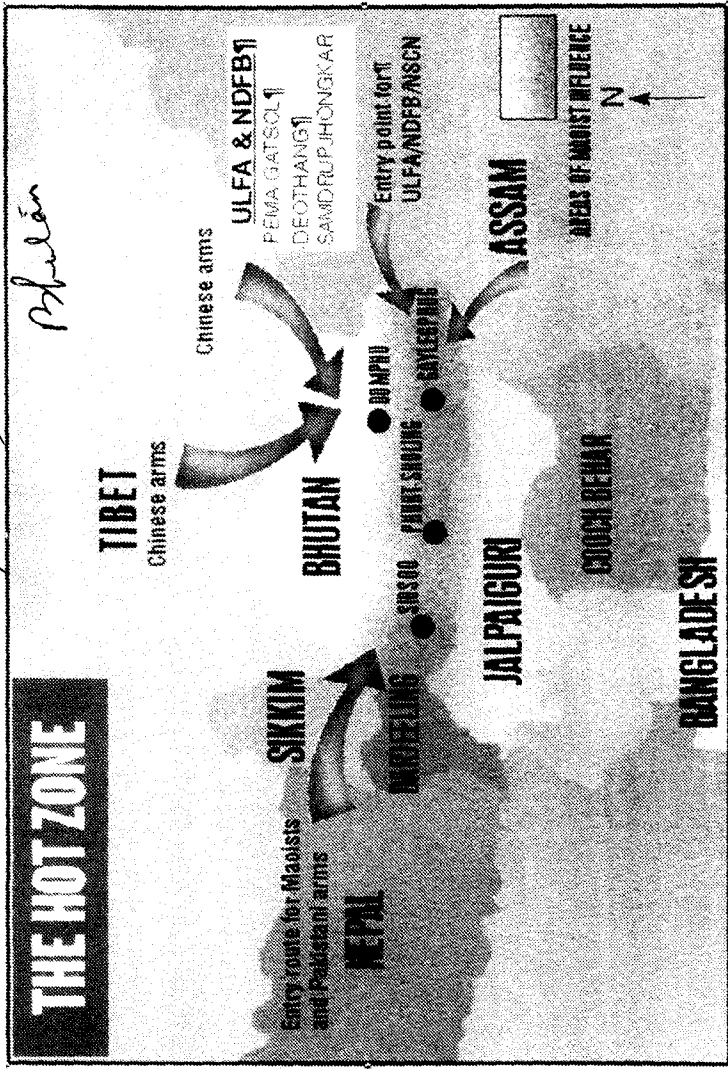
Ulfa has, till date, dismantled just one camp near Deothang. But they have set up another camp near Pema Gatsel. The militants, thus, are not moving out of Bhutan and, hence, it is necessary for the security forces in Bhutan to drive them out.

We will conduct operations against them on this side of the border at the same time. Our aim would be to eliminate them or get them to surrender," explained the Army officer.

Analysts pointed out that half the battle against the North East insurgents would be won if Bhutan ceases to be a safe haven for them. Myanmar is no longer a country that militants from the North East could use.

Bangladesh has, to a large extent, stopped hosting the insurgents. "So if Bhutan cooperates, we can easily tackle the insurgents in the North East by cutting off all their supply lines and escape routes," said the army officer.

(To be Concluded)



GRAPHIC: SURAJIT DEBATH

# New Delhi seeks policy options on Maoists in Nepal

By Manoj Joshi  
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: The collapse of the ceasefire in Nepal following the resumption of armed insurgency by the Maoist rebels has rekindled New Delhi's worst fears. The six-year-old insurgency, which has taken nearly 2,000 lives, peaked this summer following the assassination of King Birendra and most of the royal family.

Ever since this event, New Delhi has been burning midnight oil to come up with policy options to deal with the nightmarish scenario of a link-up between a Maoist-controlled Nepal and Indian extremist Left groups — the Maoist Coordination Committee and the People's War Group active in Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.

Officials claim that India and Nepal have discussed border management and have begun to coordinate actions to prevent the crossing of the border by insurgents and terrorists.

But anyone with any knowledge of the border and the state of the administrative/police machinery in West Bengal, Bihar, UP and their neighbouring Nepalese provinces knows this is the governmental equivalent of whistling in the wind.

One suggestion, already being acted upon, is to use the Special Security Border (SSB) units that were recently seconded to the home ministry from the R&AW to police the border. But the 30,000-strong force is unlikely to make much difference to the largely open 1690-km border that Nepal shares with India.

Since the June events, the issue

has been considered at various levels by the government — the MEA, the Cabinet Committee on Security and the armed forces headquarters — but suggestions as to what India can do to aid Nepal to counter the Maoists, or to prevent the contagion from spreading into India have been scarce. Government analyses have been uniform on one point — that the spread of a Maoist insurgency across Nepal could lead to an opening of yet another front in the country's struggle against terrorism.

While there is little to suggest that the PWG or the MCC have any special relationship with the Maoists in Nepal, as of now things could change if the situation in Nepal got out of hand, since the Nepalese Maoists see India as a major threat to Nepal's sovereignty.

For its part, India is committed to backing Nepalese constitutional monarchy and democracy, but it has already sinned itself helping the Sri Lankans and has its hands full with domestic separatists to be of any practical assistance.

Till the breakdown of the ceasefire, there were hopes that the Nepalese government would be able to negotiate a settlement with the Maoists.

But last week-end's attacks by the Maoists, and the declaration of Emergency in the Himalayan kingdom point to a worsening situation. Another indicator is the decision to order the Royal Nepalese Army to root out the militants.

The Maoists have deep roots in a number of north-eastern districts and a resort to the military option could only exacerbate the situation.

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

3 0 NOV 2001

# Nepal appeals for help, Atal responds

FROM PRANAY SHARMA AND AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov. 28:** The Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today spoke to King Gyanendra and assured him that India was willing to extend all assistance to Nepal in its hour of crisis.

Though the details have not been spelt out, much of this in real terms would mean military hardware and intelligence sharing between the two countries.

The Himalayan kingdom, which began the crackdown after declaring a state of emergency on Monday, had earlier sought outside help. "We want support from wherever it comes, including from India, America," home minister Khum Bahadur Khadka said.

This was the first conversation between Vajpayee and King Gyanendra since the massacre at the royal palace in Kathmandu in the

middle of this year in which King Birendra and his entire family were wiped out. Yesterday, Vajpayee had spoken to his Nepalese counterpart Sher Bahadur Deuba.

During this afternoon's conversation between the two, the Prime Minister expressed India's support for the emergency measures taken by Nepal to deal with the Maoist violence.

"India will stand by Nepal at this difficult juncture," Vajpayee said. He also told King Gyanendra that he looked forward to visiting Kathmandu for the scheduled Saarc summit in January next year.

King Gyanendra explained the circumstances in which emergency was imposed in the country on the recommendations of the Nepal Cabinet. Referring to the old relations between the two countries, the king thanked India for standing by Nepal in the past

and hoped that New Delhi will continue to do so even in the future and during the present crisis.

The Prime Minister told him that his government has already instructed the BSF (Border Security Force) to interact closely with their Nepalese counterpart and keep a strict vigil on the porous border between the two countries. Similar instructions have also been given to states which share a border with Nepal to ensure that Maoist supporters do not take advantage of the porous border and seek shelter in India.

The Indian foreign ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said the Maoist activists were nothing better than terrorists. "Such forces that take recourse to violence to achieve their objective pursue terrorist goals." She, however, refused to give details of the kind of help that India was willing to give to Nepal.

Yesterday, the Nepalese army chief Gen. Prajwalla S.J.B. Rana met his Indian counterpart Gen. S.Padmanabhan in New Delhi.

Though details of the talks were not known, indications suggest he was requested South Block for military hardware. The hardware that Gen. Rana sought from India included ammunition for the infantry, weapons and artillery, engineering equipments and Maruti Gypsies to carry out operations in mountainous regions of Nepal.

## Army operations

Today, soldiers hunted down Maoist rebels in remote mountain terrain and used helicopters to try to locate the Maoists. Officials said 66 rebels had been killed in army operations that began on Monday night.

The army had also foiled plans for major rebel offensives in Okhaldhunga in the east and Ja-

rkot in the west, the defence ministry said in a statement. It gave no other details.

It said troops had also recovered weapons, ammunition and explosives and some cash from Salyan district, close to where Maoists had staged deadly attacks at the weekend. Nepal, which has some 45,000 soldiers, had previously used its ill-equipped police force to fight the rebels from the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

But its army, while better trained and renowned as fierce fighters, have been used of late for overseas peacekeeping missions and have little experience in guerrilla warfare in mountainous terrain suitable for deadly hit-and-run attacks. Police today stopped a prominent human rights activist from leaving the country for examination of a heart ailment, and briefly arrested him.



Sher Bahadur Deuba

HANOI HAVANA OPEN DOOR OF RECONCILIATION A LITTLE MORE FOR AMERICA

THE TELEGRAPH

# India offers paramilitary assistance to Nepal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 28. — India will extend paramilitary and weapons assistance to Nepal in its attempts to quell the Maoist insurgents.

Prime Minister Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee spoke to King Gyanendra on the telephone today and conveyed India's support for the emergency measures enacted by the Nepal government.

Mr Vajpayee assured King Gyanendra that India was ready to extend whatever assistance necessary in this hour of need, the foreign ministry spokesperson said. The

Border Security Force and various state governments have been instructed to exercise utmost vigil along the India-Nepal border, he said. Indian security personnel have been instructed to work in close consultation with their Nepalese counterparts to curb violent activities of the Maoist rebels.

Nepal has sought night-vision equipment, helicopter gunships and guns and rifles to seek out and capture Maoist insurgents.

India has promised all possible help.

According to diplomats, there was panic in Kathman-

du on Sunday with reports of the government having lost control in the wake of the huge casualties inflicted by the Maoists.

The imposition of emergency has eased the panic and helped the government reassert its control. Strict curbs on the media are also being enforced as a result of the emergency measures.

Nepal has said the Saarc nations, scheduled to be held in January in Kathmandu would not be postponed. Mr Vajpayee told King Gyanendra that he was looking forward to attending the summit at Kathmandu.

THE STATESMAN

23 NOV 2001

28/11 HD-12  
**India extends support to Nepal**

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 27.** As Nepal struggles to cope with a massive national security crisis generated by the attacks from Maoist Opposition, India today extended strong support to the beleaguered Government in Kathmandu.

But the Ministry of External Affairs spokeswoman declined to answer questions on whether India was offering any operational support to the Nepalese military forces in quelling the Maoist insurgency.

Military observers here say the Nepalese armed forces might require substantive technical and logistical support to effectively deal with the Maoist insurrection. Asked if there were any requests for military assistance from Nepal, the spokeswoman said, "the security agencies of both countries maintain close and continuous contact with each other".

As it turns out, the chief of the Nepalese armed forces, Gen. Prajwal Shamsheer Jung Bahadur Rana, is believed to have had consultations here on Monday with the Army Chief, Gen. S. Padmanabhan. Gen. Rana was transiting through India after a trip to Europe. Responding to the imperatives of a very unique and special relationship between the countries, the Government today en-

dorsed the imposition of an emergency in Nepal.

The spokeswoman today called the emergency "as a necessary step by a democratic Government to preserve order in the country. We extended our support to the Government of Nepal for steps taken by it to maintain peace and security in the country".

The unstinting support extended by India follows a call on Mon-

day night from the Nepalese premier, Mr. Sherbahadur Deuba, to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. Mr. Deuba had detailed the latest developments in Nepal and the context for the imposition of emergency. Mr. Vajpayee is said to have expressed his empathy and stressed the importance of safeguarding the interests of the Nepalese people and ensuring the sanctity of the

*J. G. R. N. K. S.*  
 Nepalese Constitution.

On the links between Maoist groups in Nepal and those in India, the spokeswoman said, "India has an open and porous border with Nepal and terrorist elements do cross over into our territory. But India is vigilant to the threat of terrorism, and will not allow its territory to be used by the forces inimical to the people of Nepal."

**More time for Indo-Nepal project report**

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 27.** The India-Nepal joint group of experts (JGE) on the Pancheshwar multi-purpose project has decided to recommend an extension of six months for the completion of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) jointly by the two countries. It was to be completed by December 2001. This emerged after a three-day meeting of the joint group at Kathmandu from November 21.

A number of outstanding issues were discussed relating to the project benefit and the route for the transportation of various heavy equipment for the proposed power house component of the project.

Both sides agreed that the power potential studies and reservoir operation studies of the Pancheshwar reservoir and the re-regulating structure would be done in a manner that would not prejudice the existing consumptive uses of the two countries.

It was also agreed that priority would be accorded to these studies for finalisation of technical parameters for the various unit sizes of the power segment.

To carry out field investigations and studies for preparation of the DPR, a Joint Project Office Pancheshwar Investigation (JPO-PI) was established in Kathmandu in December, 1999 with the mandate to complete the report within two

years. The JGE observed that while progress had been made there were some delays due to the stoppage of investigation work by locals in Nepal at one of the re-regulating sites and some unavoidable delays in field investigations.

The Joint Group reiterated that the JPI-PI should proceed with investigations at both Rupaligad and Purnagiri, by March, 2002 so that the report could be completed by June, 2002.

It was also agreed that detailed studies would be undertaken by RITES for the route selected by the JGE for the transportation of heavy equipment.

# India backs state of emergency in Nepal

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Nov. 27: India has supported the steps taken by the Nepalese government, including the declaration of a state of emergency, to maintain peace and security in the Himalayan kingdom and has strongly condemned the violence by Maoist rebels during the past few days.

"The declaration of emergency is, in our view, a necessary step taken by the democratic government to preserve order in the country," an official statement said here on Tuesday.

Strongly condemning the widespread violent attacks by Maoists after unilaterally withdrawing from negotiations, the statement pointed that many lives had been lost in these attacks. It asserted that India has consistently opposed the use of violence for gaining political or ideological objectives.

"We remain convinced that constitutional monarchy and multi-party democracy in Nepal are the two pillars that provide the necessary space to accommodate divergent political opinion in the political process."

It was related that Nepalese Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba had called up Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on Monday and conveyed to him the steps he was taking to preserve peace and security in the country. He also informed Mr Vajpayee about the background of the incidents.

Mr Vajpayee agreed to the steps taken by the Nepalese government. "We have already expressed concern over the setback to the dialogue between the Maoists and the government and condemned recourse to violence for achievement of goals," an MEA spokesperson said. Mr Deuba also on Tuesday briefed the resident ambassadors in Kathmandu about the situation in the kingdom.

7 3 NOV 2001

**HIGH ALERT**

# BSF to be deployed along Bengal-Bhutan border

**Kinsuk Basu**  
*Kolkata, November 27*

**ALARMED** AT the rising influx of terrorists from across the border and their links with the Kamtapur Liberation Organisation, the Ministry of Home Affairs has decided to get tough with Bhutan.

In the first move of its kind, the Union Government has decided to deploy forces along the India-Bhutan border in West Bengal to plug suspected movement of Ulfa militants to North

Bengal. The decision comes in the wake of intelligence reports on the suspected links between the Ulfa and the KLO in terms of training and execution.

India shares 643 km of border with Bhutan and Bengal contributes a paltry 175 km. The biggest chunk of 265 km is shared with Assam, where there is a strong BSF presence. This is the first time that the Bengal-Bhutan border would be manned.

The deployment, according to sources in the BSF (North

Bengal), would be particularly intense along the stretch between the two rivers of Sankosh and Joldhaka in Cooch Behar.

This area, according to intelligence reports, has emerged as the most operative zone for the terrorist groups from Bhutan, including the Ulfa and Bodos.

"We'll carry out the deployment as per the Union Government's recommendations. The border stretch here is not quite long and it should be no problem," said G N Pradhan, princi-

pal staff officer of the BSF (North Bengal).

The decision to focus on Cooch Behar follows the recent arrest of one Dinabandhu Burman from Mathabhanga. The arrest of the 29-year-old exposed the nexus between the Kamtapur Liberation Organisation and the Ulfa, police claimed.

Interrogation revealed that Burman was part of a batch of 32 KLO trainees who were trained in the use of sophisticated arms from the Ulfa in the jungles of Bhutan. Reports suggest that

Burman was trained in the use of 9 mm pistol, AK-56 and Universal Machine Gun at the Ulfa's central headquarters in Sandupjungkar in south-eastern Bhutan. The trainers included Ulfa commander Himanshu Choliya, KLO commander Mihir Das and Pabitra Singha.

The report further added that the elusive KLO chairman and commander-in-chief Jeevan Singh alias Tamir Das, had supervised the training session at the Ulfa headquarters between July and August in 1997.

Burman said the batch was later sent to Ulfa's Dewthang camp for training in hand-to-hand combat for another two months.

The strategic deployment of BSF, according to security experts here, is aimed at "neutralising" the presence of both the Ulfa and Bodo guerrillas who are now on a self-funding scheme to buy arms and ammunition. This is particularly applicable for the Ulfa who, intelligence agencies claim, have mopped up

large sums from the KLO for training its members. New Delhi stumbled upon the KLO-Ulfa nexus following reports from the Tea Planters Association, which claimed that the abduction of Roshan Lal Garg was solely to collect money for the Ulfa. Garg, who was abducted from his Latabari tea estate in July 1999, was the first instance of a joint operation by the Ulfa and KLO. This was also the first time that North Bengal witnessed the use of sophisticated arms in the range of AK-47s.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES



# Emergency in Nepal a necessity: India

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & PTI

NEW DELHI/ KATHMANDU, Nov. 27. — India today supported Nepal's imposition of emergency to tackle the Maoist menace in the country. Meanwhile, the Nepalese army today launched land and air strikes against Maoist rebels in several parts of Nepal.

A statement in New Delhi said: "The declaration of emergency in the country is, in our view, a necessary step by a democratic government to preserve order in the country."

This is the second time an internal emergency has been declared in Nepal, under Part 18, Clause 115 of the Constitution of Nepal, with King Gyanendra invoking the Terrorism and Destructive Activities (Control and Punishment) Ordinance. The first time was in 1960 when the present monarch's father, King Mahendra imposed emergency after dismissing the government of former Prime Minister, Mr BP Koirala.

Last night, the Nepalese Prime Minister, Mr Sher Bahadur Deuba, called up Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee to inform him of Nepal's resolve to quell terrorism that threatened to go out of control, with attacks even on the Royal Nepal Army. Mr Vajpayee expressed his understanding of and support for the steps to invoke emergency

to deal with the violence.

There are indications that the Nepalese government sought Indian cooperation in tackling the Maoist insurgency, which is essentially an "internal problem" of that country, and raised the issue of insurgent training camps within India territory.

While declining to confirm the existence of such camps, a foreign ministry spokesperson said it was possible for anti-national elements to cross over from Nepal into India through

## ■ Editorial: Checking Maoists, page 6

the porous borders. The spokesperson, however, added: "We are vigilant to this phenomenon and will not allow our territory to be used by forces inimical to Nepal." Mr Deuba today also briefed resident ambassadors in Kathmandu on the sequence of events leading to the imposition of emergency, saying his government's priority was to maintain peace and order.

A Nepalese defence ministry release said the army launched land and air strikes against rebels in Dang, Rolpa and Pyuthan districts which were the targets of Maoist attacks since Friday. The release talked about heavy casualties without elaborating.

The government issued an ordinance providing for life im-

prisonment and confiscation of property of those who, directly or indirectly, support terrorism.

Nepalese home ministry officials said under the emergency measures, press freedom has been restricted and rights to information, property and privacy have been suspended.

The Kathmandu Post reported that at least eight journalists working for Maoist mouthpieces were arrested, and the offices of the weekly Janadesh, the daily Janadisha and the monthly Dishabodh monthly were sealed. The officials, however, refused to confirm the report.

Under the ordinance, any suspect can be arrested without a warrant and detained for 90 days without framing of charges against him. Anyone's house can also be searched without any court order.

Hours after the imposition of emergency, Maoist rebels attacked a police post in Gokuleshwar in the western district of Darchula bordering India killing four policemen and injuring six others. After the imposition of emergency, the general situation in Nepal was peaceful. But the situation in some districts which witnessed Maoist violence was still tense.

In Kathmandu, army and police personnel patrolled the areas around the Tribhuvan International Airport, government buildings and other installations.

## 'Maoists may take shelter in N Bengal'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SILIGURI, Nov. 27. — The imposition of emergency in Nepal has increased the possibility of Maoist ultras taking shelter in the border areas of north Bengal, officials here feel.

But there is yet no significant security measures applied on the ground. Patrolling along the border has been intensified, but no additional forces have been called in yet.

The police posts along the 100 km border that Darjeeling district shares with Nepal have been "alerted". This officially means nothing more than "intensive patrolling and gathering more intelligence".

However, in tune with the relatively low-key official response, life in the India-Nepal border region here does bear any mark of the cataclysmic events in Nepal. Things were described as "perfectly normal" by sources at the border.

But in case of an eventuality, Darjeeling district faces a curious situation as both the district magistrate and the SP are "out of station". While Mr Anil Verma is away on a "training", Mr Sanjay Chander is in Delhi in connection with Ghisingh-attack case where some of the accused have moved bail petition at the Supreme Court.

## Nepal police team in Siliguri

SUDIPTA CHANDA  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

MECHI (India-Nepal border), Nov. 27. — A Nepalese police team arrived in Siliguri today to acquire counter-insurgency training from "experts" here.

The destination of the 100 police recruits and their trainers are being kept a secret. But it was learnt that their arrival is linked with the prevailing Maoist violence in Nepal.

The police team arrived in two buses and several small vehicles and created quite a flutter among the Indian police personnel and customs officials posted at the border. They were held up for over an hour before being permitted to proceed.

Senior Nepalese officers accompanying the team refused to answer questions related to the destination and purpose of their arrival. They also refused to divulge their ranks or designations.

"We didn't have prior information about their arrival," the customs and police officials later said.

The IG, SSB, North Bengal, Bihar and Sikkim division, Mr A Negi, visited several areas along the border including Mechi today. "The SSB will deploy forces in this part of the border within the second week of December," he told **The Statesman**.

Mr Negi said the SSB would set up 15 security posts in the Kishanganj sector and another 15 in Darjeeling district.

Security have been tightened at the border following the deteriorating political conditions and imposition of emergency in Nepal. Police are frisking visitors and commuters on both sides of the border for arms and other offensive articles.

Claiming that the police of both countries are in constant touch, a senior police officer said extra steps have been taken to ensure that the Maoist activists do not sneak into India through this corridor.

Despite the volatile conditions in Nepal, life remains normal at Kakarvitta — the first eastern Nepalese town across the Mechi river. The presence of army men seen waiting in two vehicles near the town's entrance was rather "a reassuring view" as a resident claimed.

Though eastern Nepal has turned violent recently, all that the locals fear is an army clampdown. "The situation is reminiscent of the days of the royal family massacre and there were rumours of an army takeover," a senior official of a major Nepalese bank said.

THE STATESMAN

28 NOV 2007

# N Alliance helped India in Kargil

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 24. — India's support for the Northern Alliance in its battle against the Taliban is well-known. What's not so well-known is the help India got from the internationally accepted Afghan government (comprising Northern Alliance leaders) two years ago, during the Kargil conflict.

When the intrusion by Pakistani soldiers, many of them from the Northern Light Infantry, was detected in early May, the Army was taken by surprise. It had no information about the number of Pakistani soldiers within the Indian ter-

ritory or their intentions. Before the Army took its first prisoner of war much later, one way of getting those information was monitoring the Pakistani army's radio broadcasts from the Kargil front. Most of them were in Balti and Dari, not Pashtu.

There were people who understood Pashtu, but no one had much idea of the dialects.

"We didn't have anyone in the Indian establishment who understood the languages," an official said. "So, we had to ask the Afghan embassy here. At that time, they gave us eight men to monitor the air-waves."

The help came in the latter half of May. Two of the Afghans were kept here at Army headquarters while the others were sent to Northern Command. Some were located in Udhampur, the Northern Command headquarters.

Their immediate task was to translate the transcripts of the radio conversations. The translations helped the Army understand where the Pakistani forces were and what were their intentions.

"Without the Afghans' help (India never recognised the Taliban government), it would have taken the Army longer to organise counter-measures and fight the intruders," an official said.

THE STATESMAN

25 NOV 2002

25 NOV 2001

# Indian team holds talks with Rabbani

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, NOV. 21. India today established a permanent diplomatic presence in Afghanistan with the despatch of a high-power official delegation to Kabul. This is the first Indian diplomatic mission to Afghanistan after 1996, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, informed the Rajya Sabha.

The team, headed by the Government's special envoy to Afghanistan, Mr. S.K. Lambah, held wide-ranging talks with Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani and other leaders of the Northern Alliance on the situation in the war-ravaged nation, its reconstruction as also the future set-up.

Mr. Lambah also met U.N. functionaries and discussed with them the nature of humanitarian assistance required urgently for the Afghan people. He also met the Foreign Minister of the Northern Alliance, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah.

The other members of the Indian team include Mr. Arun Singh, Joint Secretary in the Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan division of the Ministry of External Affairs, and Mr. Gautam Mukhopadhyay, a Joint Secretary-level officer who is the "liaison officer."

Besides, a small medical and nursing component is part of the delegation that will look at ways to revive the Indira Gandhi Hospital for Women and Children in Kabul. The "diplomatic liaison cell" in Kabul will also coordinate

its activities with India's Ambassador to Iran.

The Indian side is initially expected to operate from a prominent hotel in Kabul, till an embassy reopens after a new post-conflict government in Kabul assumes charge.

With India establishing a functional diplomatic presence, key countries supporting the Northern Alliance — Russia, India and Iran — have positioned themselves well to influence events in a post-conflict Afghanistan. The United Kingdom has also started operating from Kabul. A Russian delegation, led by Mr. Alexander Obulov, has arrived in Kabul. Twelve members of the delegation arrived from Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe, on November 18, while five have stayed behind. The Iranian team has also established a presence in Kabul.

Sources pointed out that Iran, apprehending that its interests in Afghanistan might be compromised on account of its still frozen relations with the United States, took the lead in persuading the Northern Alliance to move into Kabul. The Russians apparently concurred with the Iranian advice. With the Northern Alliance which Iran has backed establishing a strong presence on the ground, Teheran's interests in the new dispensation in Kabul are now expected to be well-protected.

India, by establishing a presence in Kabul, is better placed to

influence Afghan diplomacy for a new government in the coming days. The assessment here is that the Western countries are inclined to catalyse a 160-member future Afghan Government. Around 60 representatives could belong to the Northern Alliance, another 40 from the King Zahir Shah faction and the remaining from the Pashtun factions.

A clash between the U.S. and Pakistan over the Pashtun factions cannot be ruled out. While the U.S. is backing Pashtun leaders such as Commander Hamid Karzai in the Kandahar area, the Pakistanis are also backing sympathetic Pashtun leaders, especially in eastern Afghanistan.

India is keeping a close watch on two meetings that will take place in the next few days. According to one view, the meeting of Afghans, minus the Taliban, that will take place in Berlin on Saturday is expected to promote the Zahir Shah faction in a future government.

The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) is also meeting in New York shortly. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, is expected to address this meeting. Among the Afghans, the Foreign Minister of the Northern Alliance, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, is likely to address this conference. An attempt is also being made so that another prominent leader of the Alliance, such also the Uzbek faction leader, General Rashid Dostum, is also present.

THE HINDU

22 NOV 2001

# Time to pack up: Bhutan to ULFA

Foreign minister Thinley says army action will come after monsoon

SANJOY HAZARIKA  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 22

IN a marked change of mood, Bhutan has said it's ready to evict Indian insurgents from its territory by military force if they don't heed warnings. It has asked the members of these outfits — the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) — who are living in camps along its southern border with Assam to go by year-end.

In some of the frankest remarks on the issue by a Bhutanese leader, Foreign Minister Lympo Jigmi T Thinley asserted in New Delhi over the week-

end that his government was not going to ask the militant groups to come again for talks if they did not abide by their commitment to vacate at least four armed camps and leave the country.

"We are militarily prepared and the nation is psychologically ready," said Thinley, who has been Foreign Minister for the past three years. "We are not going to beg them again to come and negotiate with us."

The minister's exasperation with the ULFA and the NDFB was clear to a small group of diplomats, scholars, former officials and journalists who met him here on Saturday evening. His remarks follow a three-year-long

Bhutan government campaign against the extremists that has unfolded on four fronts:

(a) First, the government has been trying to build up political support for its efforts to resolve the problem and get the "unwanted guests" to leave through political discussions with ULFA and NDFB leaders peacefully. It has also won the support of King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the entire political leadership and the public for military action if its initiative fails.

(b) Bhutan has also held detailed discussions with India at the diplomatic and military level, leading to the strengthening of its own ground forces and their training in counter-insurgency strategy in India. It has beefed up its small army — at

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**SPECIAL TO  
THE EXPRESS**

*India of the northeast - Bhutan*

*79 10/22/00*

# Bhutan asks N-E ultras to leave

Indin & bu news

RM SINGH  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

18710  
**'CENTRE KEEN ON N-E DEVELOPMENT'**

NEW DELHI, Oct. 15. - Bhutan will not allow its soil to be used by insurgents operating in India's north-eastern states and it has already served them an ultimatum to leave the country.

Four of the nine militant groups operating in the north-east, with their bases in Bhutan, have agreed to close their camps and leave the country by December, Bhutanese minister for foreign affairs, Mr Lyonpo Jigmi Y Thinley, told reporters here.

"Bhutan's national assembly has served them an ultimatum to leave the country. They will not be allowed to continue in Bhutan as their presence is a threat to our sovereignty," he said,

adding, "We would like to take India's help. But before that we would like to use our own resources to flush them out through peaceful means." He also said he would discuss the issue with India's external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, and the home minister, Mr L K Advani.

Mr Thinley was here in con-

TAWANG (Arunachal Pradesh), Oct. 15. - Creation of a ministry for tribals and regular visits by central ministers to the North-eastern states showed the Centre's desire to develop the region rapidly, the Union tribal affairs minister, Mr Jual Oram, said.

Announcing Rs one crore grant for the development of the Tawang district, Mr Oram told reporters, the tribals living in isolated areas like Arunachal Pradesh had different problems and the ministry had been specially created to tackle these.

He said he had toured the state thrice as a minister. Mr Oram also invited state ministers and secretaries to New Delhi to discuss various problems of the state.

- PTI

nection with a rare exhibition of arts, crafts and religion of Bhutan, organised by the ministry of culture, Government of India and the Royal Bhutanese Embassy. The exhibition will be held at the National Museum from October 17 to November 13 under the name - "The Living Religious and Cultural Traditions of Bhutan".

It will also be on display at the Indian Museum in Kolkata from December 1 to 28.

The display, covering 183 rare artifacts, aims at bringing the people of India closer to those living in the Himalayan kingdom. It is based on thirteen kinds of traditional

Bhutanese arts and crafts known as Zorig Chosum, around which life in the valley revolves.

Master artists shall demonstrate their skill in the making of thangka paintings, wood carvings, clay sculpture etc.

The only surviving Bhutanese slate-maker will also display his creativity.

Students of the Royal Academy of Performing Arts will perform the traditional exuberant mask dance and other lyrical folk dances and songs in the National Museum courtyard.

The group will also perform at Lucknow and Chandigarh.

THE STATESMAN

# Afghans to get India's humanitarian aid

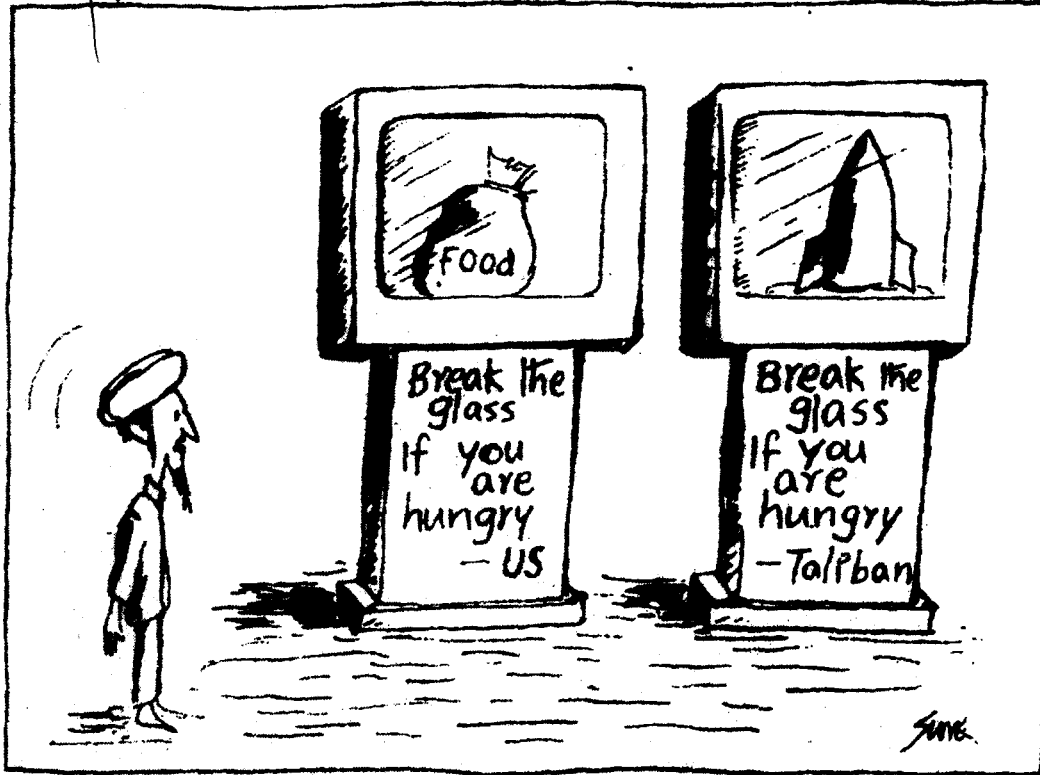
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 11. — Afghans caught in the war will receive India's extensive humanitarian assistance and Afghanistan after the war will be a focus of India's diplomatic interests, foreign minister Jaswant Singh said here today.

India will be supplying one million tones of wheat besides tents, blankets and quilts to the war-torn nation. Medical services will be expanded and in particular rehabilitation efforts, including providing the 'Jaipur foot' limb reconstruction technique, will be made. "The government has decided to enhance significantly our humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan," said Mr Singh.

Keeping in mind the long, tradition of historical and cultural linkages between the two countries, India intends to participate actively in the rehabilitation and reconstruction effort in the post-crisis period, the minister said. Elaborating on it, the minister said that this would be through infrastructure development, education, medical and other projects, all under the aegis of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation which until 1979, was the largest single such programme.

India has been constantly in touch with other countries



the collective effort to ensure least possible collateral consequences on the civil society of Afghanistan in the current campaign against international terrorism. Consultations with various countries have already taken place and some are slated to take place like discussions with France, Turkey, Uzbeki-

stan and Tajikistan.

Several important leaders are also due to visit India. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klevanov is visiting from 14-16 October. US Secretary of State Colin Powell will also be undertaking a visit soon after that.

Besides, consultations are underway between Iranian Deputy

Foreign Minister Mohsen Aminzaden on 15 October and during the meeting of the Indo-Russian Working Group on Afghanistan, India will hold talks with Russian Foreign Minister Trubnikov.

With the renewed international focus, India's policy now is to move towards a world where innocent civilians are not tar-

## JASWANT PAK VISIT

NEW DELHI, Oct. 11. — External affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, is not going to Islamabad now.

There were reports from Islamabad quoting officials as saying that if Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, was unable to visit Pakistan soon, the foreign minister would visit the country "as soon as possible." However, Mr Singh said that he has neither received any formal invitation from the Pakistani government nor does he intend to undertake a visit at this juncture.

The cable connection of the Indian High Commission for Indian news channels hasn't been restored yet. The minister said, the reason behind the disconnection is the Pakistani government's action against the cable network operators and added that since "it has consequences to the Indian mission also," the Indian government will be taking up the issue. — SNS

getted, terrorism is rejected as an instrument of state policy and there is no acceptance of any political, religious or any other attempted justification for such criminal acts.

THE STATESMAN

12 OCT 2001

# Srinagar or New York, Germany condemns terrorism

Berlin, October 5

GERMANY HAS strongly condemned the terrorist attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly saying it does not differentiate between victims of terrorism, "be they in New York or Kashmir".

"India should be rest assured that Germany does not at all differentiate between victims of terrorism, be they in New York or Kashmir: Germany's condemnation is equal in both cases," Chancellor Schroeder said during his meeting with External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh here last evening.

During the 30-minute meeting, Singh referred to the situation after the September 11 terrorist attacks on US and emphasised the need for all countries to assess the true dimension of the challenge posed by militants.

"What we face is a reality of globalisation of terrorism," he said, whose centres were focused in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Describing the meeting as "very



JASWANT SINGH

good and positive", an Indian spokesperson said the two leaders discussed issues relating to a post-Taliban structure in Afghanistan.

Accepting Prime Minister Vajpayee's invitation to visit India, Chancellor Schroeder said he was greatly looking forward to meeting the Indian leadership. "I am specially looking forward to it as it will be my first

visit," Schroeder said. The External Affairs Minister also had a "very comprehensive discussion" with his German counterpart Fischer.

The two leaders exchanged views on building a global coalition to fight terrorism.

Singh reiterated that the fight against terrorism could not be "uni-dimensional" and said India had been fighting terrorism for over two decades.

Referring to relations between India and Pakistan, Fischer said India epitomised stability in the region.

He also appreciated the state-manship of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee as evident from his Lahore and Agra initiatives.

Referring to the terrorist attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, Singh said it was a blatant and deliberate act of provocation and was directed not only against India but was aimed at derailing the process of any planned action against perpetrators of the September 11 attacks.

PTI

## Kathmandu joins pro-Delhi chorus

Keshav Pradhan  
Kathmandu, October 5

NEPAL, YESTERDAY came out strongly against the attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly complex on Monday by Pakistan-based terrorists, calling it an "attack on a democratic institution". Hindu and Muslim organisations in the country, meanwhile, continued to mount attacks on each other on support to the US.

Nepalese Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, in a letter to Atal Bihari Vajpayee, said, "Nepal expresses its solidarity with the people and Government of India." The Opposition Rashtriya Prajatantra Party, a pro-royalist organisation, decried the attack and asked the international community to jointly wipe out terrorism from the world.

Radical Hindu organisations



AFP PHOTO

A woman passes by as border guards keep watch from an armoured vehicle in Srinagar on Friday.

have recently stepped up their campaign against Muslims after posters hailing Osama and Mullah Mohammed Omar appeared here.

The posters were put up in the name of an unknown organisation called the World Islamic Students' Underground Front barely a day after Delhi cracked down

on the Simi. They threatened to punish Nepal for its refusal to support Islamabad and Kabul and for deporting two Pakistani diplomats, Aslam Saboor and

Mohammed Arshad Cheema.

While Saboor was caught with counterfeit Indian currency worth over 50 lakh in January 2000, Cheema was nabbed with about 15 kg of RDX in April this year. The posters also demanded the formation of an Islamic country comprising Muslim-dominated Nepalese districts bordering Bihar and UP.

Muslim leaders, including the Imam of Jame Masjid, Sheikh Wali Mohammed, described the posters as the "handiwork of mischief-makers".

Despite this, the Pashupati Sena on Wednesday put up equally provocative posters close to Jame Masjid (the kingdom's biggest mosque) and Kashmiri Masjid, half a kilometre away from the royal palace. It called upon the Nepalese people to fight against Osama supporters and Pakistan.

The more aggressive Shiv Sena (Nepal) has, in a leaflet, warned that it would throw out the Muslims if they extended support to terrorist organisations.