

ND-13 Debate on attack turns to POTO 19/12

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 18. Today's parliamentary debate on the situation arising out of the December 13 terrorist attack on Parliament often got sidetracked into a discussion on the controversial, Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO). The House also witnessed the rare sight of the two Dravidian parties, the AIADMK and the DMK, both pledging support to the Government, but taking diametrically opposite positions on the POTO issue.

Both the parties joined the rest of the House in condemning the attack, and the need to unite behind the Government. Significantly the DMK limited itself to condemning the attack, and emphasising the need for the nation to stand united behind the Government. Speaking on behalf of his party, Mr. Adi Shankar of the DMK said his party supported the Government. "The most important task before the nation was to stand united without compromis-

ing on national security", he said.

Mr. P.H. Pandian (AIADMK) who took the floor soon after the DMK member, was more direct. Describing the attack as one on democracy and a challenge to the Indian state, he said his party "welcomed the Government's initiative to introduce the POTO as a stringent legislation was needed to fight terrorism". He chided the rest of the opposition for being critical of the Government and cited the example of how the Democrats had supported the U.S. President Bush after the WTC bombings.

He called on the Government to teach Pakistan a lesson. "Every action must be met with an equal reaction, and the time has come for us to eradicate and liquidate terrorism". He pledged his party's support to the Government in its fight against terrorism. "My party will stand with the Government to curb and liquidate terrorists, and we are prepared to pass whatever law is necessary to achieve that end", he added.

THE HINDU

19 DEC 2001

BY KHALED AHMED

FOR the first time the government's reference to 'extremist religious elements' has become clear to the people of Pakistan. The war in Afghanistan has crystallised the situation: some changes in the army top brass and the break in Pakistan's extreme international isolation has identified the enemy. Parts of the government that used to 'coordinate' Islamic policy with Mulla Umar have become muted. For instance, the religion ministry, which thought Mulla Umar's destruction of the historical Buddhas was in conformity with Islam, is now focusing only on *zakat*.

The biggest opponent of the government of President Musharraf is Qazi Hussain Ahmad. He is the strongest enemy because of his better organisation and adoption of policy. He has stayed clear of sectarianism, a wisdom that is the legacy of the founder of the party, Abul Ala Maududi, who was trained in a Deobandi seminary but hid the *ijazah* (certificate) of qualification, and sought to be a bridge in the Deobandi-Barelvi divide in Pakistan. Since the participation of the Jamaat in government under General Zia, its inroads into the state apparatus are deep, and its upper echelon leaders have become men of substance and independent means. Jamaat supporters come from rich entrepreneurs whom the Jamaat has helped create chains of lucrative English-medium schools and colleges.

QAZI Hussain Ahmad has called for the removal of President Musharraf because according to him he is a security risk. He has called upon the army to get rid of him and openly declared that his party will not rest till he has wrested control from him. Qazi Sahib wants power because he thinks his party deserves to rule. During 2000, he successfully held a 'referendum' against the Musharraf government on the subject of signing the CTBT and obtained over 90 per cent yes votes from 3 million people, forcing Musharraf to retreat from signing.

The most intractable problem of the Jamaat is that it is not supported by other parties. Qazi Sahib was close to Hekmatyar and benefited from the attentions of the ISI and the government when Pakistan's Afghan policy was tied

Lashkar, Jaish: Pak's ghosts in the machine

to the foot of Hekmatyar. Since 1994, the Jamaat dominance of the Afghan policy has lessened. Militias belonging to the Deobandi school of thought have become powerful because the ISI was running the Taliban policy.

Although Qazi Hussain Ahmad is a Pakhtun, the Deobandi Pakhtun leaders of the JUI do not see eye to eye with him. Although muted in public, JUI leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman is quite

committed to the state of Pakistan because of their Indian Congress background and think nothing of issuing fatwas of death against foreigners coming to Pakistan on business. It is these fatwas in part that have caused the embassies in Islamabad to issue advisories to their nationals not to visit Pakistan.

The Harkatul Mujahideen was once Harkatul Ansar which was banned by America because of its terrorist charac-

going underground once again.

After his release in 1999 Masood Azhar no longer wanted to work under the leadership of Khaleel. He founded Jaish-e-Muhammad. True to Deobandi tradition, he began shooting off his mouth against General Musharraf which embarrassed his handler, the ISI. The Harkat was split and its assets divided between the leaders. But when the double-cabin vehicles were re-



Anti-US protests are dying out in Pakistan, but the fringe stays firm. Reuters

frank in his criticism of Qazi Sahib. The other JUI leader Maulana Samiul Haq is closer to the hardline Taliban vision than any other cleric in Pakistan and remains distant from the relatively moderate vision of the Jamaat.

THE grand Deobandi alliance is probably the biggest force in Pakistan after the state's armed forces. Based in Karachi, the Banuri Complex houses leaders that sit in the shuras of Deobandi jihadi militias. Its religious scholars sit in the shura of the two militias Harkatul Mujahideen and Jaish-e-Muhammad. Deobandi leaders are less

turned by Jaish to Fazlur Rehman Khaleel in bad repair, the two factions began to fight each other. Osama bin Laden ended the dispute by sending a dozen brand new double-cabin vehicles to Khaleel from Afghanistan.

When Masood Azhar was arrested in India, Osama financed the hijack of an Indian airline plane to spring him out of jail. Along with him was sprung another man close to Osama bin Laden, Sheikh Umar. Umar had opened the office of Al Qaeda in Lahore in 2000 for a brief period before

When Masood Azhar was arrested in India, Osama financed the 1C-814 hijack. After his release from jail, true to Deobandi tradition, Masood began shooting off his mouth against General Musharraf which embarrassed his handler, the ISI

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LASHKAR-ET-TAYBA functions under the aegis of Dawatul Irshad of Muridke near Lahore. It is a rich organisation because of its hold on civil society in small districts where it can actually dictate to the administration. Its leader Hafiz Muhammad Saeed of the Gujjar community is a retired Islamiyat teacher of University of Engineering

and Technology in Lahore. His headquarters, a city within city, in Muridke was built with Arab money. Even when he was an employee of the state-run university he was powerful enough on the basis of his contacts with the ISI, and therefore the army, to insult the government in power and denounce democracy as un-Islamic.

In 1999, when Nawaz Sharif fell foul of Hafiz Saeed the army forced information minister Mushahid Hussain to meet him in Lahore together with governor Punjab to 'patch up' the differences.

The power of the Lashkar also derives from its *salafi* origin. Its contact with the wahhabi camps in Kunar in Afghanistan has never been disowned although Muridke mutes its connection with the Arab warriors in Afghanistan. Its connections with Osama bin Laden have also been craftily hidden although news appearing in the national press have linked the two. Lashkar's office in Muridke used to receive a large number of Arabs on a daily basis and was a transit camp for those leaving for Afghanistan and Central Asia.

There was a time when a lot of funding came in from abroad, including sectarian funding in which Iran and the Arab states competed, but now over 85 per cent of the collections are made in the cities of Pakistan from the common man. In some cases, even prosperous businessmen give funds to avail of the 'arbitration' services offered by the jihadi outfits. This 'leveraged' judicial service is available to anyone who can contribute to the coffers of the outfits.

PAKISTAN'S jihad in Kashmir has created an alternative state apparatus. During the latest round of war in Afghanistan most of these outfits opposed General Musharraf's policy of joining the world coalition against terrorism. Leaders of these outfits know their activity can easily fall in the category of terrorism and therefore try to scare the common citizen by predicting that the next American target will be Pakistan. They see the possibility of a takeover, not by themselves, but by someone else from within that will give them a new lease of life — whose foreclosure became certain the day Osama bin Laden decided to attack New York and Washington.

(The Friday Times)

Did America do a tehelka on Bin Laden?

Washington, December 16

ARE THE Osama bin Laden tapes genuine? Why did he break his tight security to talk? Why didn't he use one of his normally favoured media outlets? Is this Osama at all?

As the debate rages across the Islamic world, Intelligence sources have suggested that the tape, though genuine, is the result of a sophisticated sting operation run by the CIA through a second Intelligence service, possibly Saudi or Pakistani.

"They needed someone they could persuade or coerce to get close to Osama, someone Osama would feel safe talking to. If it works, you have the perfect evidence at the perfect moment," said a security source. "It's a masterstroke."

The needle of suspicion points at the Saudi dissident preacher who seems to have taped the one-hour interview on November 9 (according to the time code on the video), possibly at a guest house in Kandahar.

Though unidentified in the video, security sources say the interviewer, who seems to be disabled from the waist down, is Ali Saeed al-Ghamdi, former assistant professor of theology at a seminary in Mecca.

Saudis who saw the tape said the interviewer's accent betrays roots in the south-west of the country, where most of the Saudi hijackers are from.

Osama bows down to greet the cleric, who does not stand up. Only someone incapable of ris-



Donald Rumsfeld with Hamid Karzai at the Bagram Airfield on Sunday. Rumsfeld is the first top-ranking US official to fly into Afghanistan.

REUTERS

ing would not be on his feet in the presence of such a famous and revered man, Islamic experts said. Al-Ghamdi is a marginal figure who tried to make a name with inflammatory anti-Western speeches before being banned from preaching in 1994, a source close to the Saudi Government said. In the late 1990s, he preached in obscure mosques on the highway leading from Jeddah

to Mecca, but his firebrand oratory drew only small audiences.

"Such men don't have the legitimacy and the religious scholarship that big guys do," said Nawaf Obeid, a Saudi security analyst. "They make a name with how extreme they are. They aggrandise themselves by claiming they are with Osama."

Security sources say that, despite his Islamist credentials,

al-Ghamdi would be a potential point of contact for Pakistani, Saudi or Egyptian Intelligence.

"He was known because he was suspected of being involved in the gathering of international finance for al-Qaida. He is a peripheral figure, ambitious and frustrated. It's a classic profile. They could have turned him," a security official for Gulf Intelligence said in Peshawar.

Experts say the tape bears resemblance to secretly filmed evidence used by the FBI against American mafia figures.

US security officials said there was "no confirmation" that the tape was made by an "Intelligence source", but a Pentagon official said "curious circumstances" surrounded al-Ghamdi, who seemed aware of the recording.

The Observer

THE HINDU

17 DEC 2001

'Osama blueprint' for attack on London

By Hasan Suroor

H.D. 14
17/12
LONDON, DEC. 16. In a report claimed to be the "first hard evidence" that London was a terrorists' target but dismissed by sceptics as a familiar case of "weekend journalism", a British newspaper today said it had stumbled on a "chilling" plan by Osama bin Laden for a "devastating bomb attack" on London's financial district, the City.

The Observer, in a front-page story from Kandahar, said the "blueprint" contained "step-by-step instructions" on how to construct a huge remote-controlled van bomb, and a "scribbled note" on top of one page suggested that the intended target was Moorgate in the heart of London's financial centre. "The intended target is made clear by references to what to expect when entering Britain. The target itself is identified by scribbled notes on how to find Moorgate including reminders to use an A-Z and a Business Directory," it said claiming that it appeared to "confirm" the fears of intelligence services that a "sleeper" Al-Qaeda cell could already be in Britain preparing an attack.

It claimed the plan was found in a "padlocked compound" around Kandahar and, judging from the language, its author was a "British fundamentalist" — a claim which, observers noted, was not consistent with the newspaper's other claim that the note mentioned the need to use A-Z guide to find Moorgate. Moorgate, they said, was a major London landmark and a Briton, even casually familiar with London, let alone a terrorist planning an attack, wouldn't need a guide to "remind" him where it was.

The report said the notebook, containing the blueprint, appeared to be a record of a meeting between an Al-Qaeda bomb-maker an "English-speaking activist" who is guided through each step of the process of bomb-making — down to the catch-line that after detonating it "leave as fast as you can"! "The notebook is a mixture of apparently sophisticated data and simplistic checklists consistent with the tone of documents found in the luggage of the 11 September hijackers," it said in what was seen as a laboured attempt to invest the "discovery" with huge significance.

In another report, *The Observer* quoted intelligence sources as saying that the latest Osama tape, released by the U.S., could be a "sting operation run by the CIA through a second intelligence service, possibly Saudi or Pakistani". "They needed someone whom they could persuade or coerce to get close to bin Laden and someone whom bin Laden would feel secure talking to. If it works, you have got the perfect evidence at the perfect moment. It's a masterstroke", a security source told the newspaper. The focus of suspicion, it said, was the Saudi cleric in the video. "Experts told *The Observer* that the tape bears a marked resemblance to secretly filmed evidence used by the FBI against major mafia figures in recent years," it said. It also quoted the former head of Pakistan's ISI, General Hamid Gul, as suggesting that the figure of Osama in the tape could be a "lookalike".

THE HINDU

17 DEC 2001

VHP raises anti-jihad war cry

FROM OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Dec. 14: The Vishwa Hindu Parishad — which was on a limb after the BJP decided to forsake the Ram mandir to keep a coalition going — has pounced on the terrorist strikes on Parliament as a godsend to do what it is best at: communalise the political and social ambience.

It had decided to observe December 17 as Jagruti Diwas (day of awareness) in the capital. It would also be celebrated on the same day. The programme would be held ostensibly to condole the death of the seven security personnel who were killed while saving Parliament but its main purpose is to get across the message that unless the Centre goes ahead and smashes terrorist

15/12
camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir the "battle" against terrorism will be a non-starter. The VHP was quick to read the Prime Minister's statement in his televised address to the nation yesterday about the battle against terrorism having reached its last phase as "endorsement and acceptance" of its agenda.

The RSS' militant arm, the Bajrang Dal, has circulated leaflets explaining why an Islamic jihad was "disastrous" for Hindus and Hinduism. Boldly captioned Islamic *jihad ke samne ladna padega dharam yudh* (A religious war will have to be fought against Islamic jihad), the leaflet said jihad meant "en masse killing of Hindus, demolition of Hindu temples, destruction of Hindu religion and the Balkanisation of India".

In a set of 11 "statements",

the leaflet alleged it was because of the jihad that Kashmir was bereft of Hindus, Hindu youths took to drugs, counterfeit currency was in circulation, Hindu women were lured to marry Muslims and convert their religion, Hindus were reduced to a minority in the districts bordering Pakistan, and 50,000 cows were slaughtered daily.

But despite the high-pitched rhetoric, senior VHP leader Acharya Giriraj Kishore refused to name Pakistan while speaking to the press today on cross-border terrorism. "I will urge the Prime Minister and the home minister to attack the terrorist training camps in a neighbouring country and declare that country an enemy country. India should snap its diplomatic ties with this country," he said. When asked to name the "coun-

try", Kishore, who is known for his Pakistan-bashing, turned coy and said: "I am not under pressure from anyone not to take the country's name but I have to be diplomatic."

Kishore also met BJP president K Jana Krishnamurthi today to discuss the fallout of yesterday's suicide attack.

RSS today asked the Centre to "take all the necessary steps to get to the roots of the terrorists, wherever they are and whoever they are". It also called on the Opposition to rise above "mere considerations of electoral politics in the face of the serious threat posed by the terrorists and display a spirit of accommodation with respect to Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance with the government, which is responsible for the security of the nation".

THE TELEGRAPH
15 DEC 2001

Patience straining to cross line of control

FROM MYRAMACDONALD

New Delhi, Dec. 14 (Reuters): What do you do if Islamic militants attack the heart of your country?

If you are the United States, the world's sole superpower, you launch a war in Afghanistan. If you are Israel, a close ally of the sole superpower, you bombard Palestinian territory.

If you are India? Though New Delhi blamed Pakistan-based Kashmiri separatists for a suicide attack on Parliament, analysts are wary of saying India will follow the US example and hunt down the militants.

Though the international environment is heavily tilted towards tough action, the stakes in this part of the world are much higher. The Afghans and the Palestinians don't have nuclear weapons. Pakistan and India do.

"Ultimately, the Parliament shootings could be the prelude to something much bigger that will threaten the stability of South Asia," US think-tank Stratfor said on its website.

External affairs minister Jaswant Singh said today India had evidence the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba was behind the attack. He called on Pakistan to close down the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed.

It is a demand New Delhi has made before, and if refused, could point down the same road Washington took when the Taliban regime in Afghanistan refused to hand over Osama bin Laden.

India has threatened action before, but since the Parliament attack, it is sounding even tougher. Home minister L.K. Advani has vowed to "liquidate the terrorists and their sponsors whoever they are, wherever they are".

"We have to do something. Otherwise the credibility of the government will go down," said former foreign secretary J.N. Dixit. "You can't go on being

thrashed by these fellows."

Though the death toll from Thursday's assault was relatively low, it is being compared to the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington, primarily because of what might have happened if the gunmen had not been killed before they made it inside the chambers where lawmakers and ministers were gathered.

"It would have been the destruction of the entire power structure of India," said Dixit.

To a large extent, India has boxed itself into a corner with its own rhetoric. Vajpayee warned Pakistan that India's patience was wearing thin after a suicide bomb attack on the Assembly in Srinagar two months ago, for which the Jaish-e-Mohammed first claimed and then denied responsibility.

This warning would be hard to beat with pure words now, said Brahma Chellaney from the Centre for Policy Research. "He can't say India's patience is still wearing thin, but has not run out."

But adopting the US and Israeli approach of hunting down militants wherever they are would be fraught with danger.

Most analysts reckon it would be near impossible for President Pervez Musharraf to abandon the Kashmiri cause, and Kashmiri separatist groups are deeply embedded in Pakistan, with offices in Islamabad and Karachi.

Though Islamabad says it gives only moral but not military support to Kashmiri "freedom fighters", it would be hard to strike them without risking a war with Pakistan.

Even "hot pursuit" of militants across the Line of Control, which divides disputed Kashmir into Pakistan-ruled territory would involve clashes with the Pakistani army.

"They would still have to kill Pakistani soldiers to get at the militant camps. And Pakistan is not going to sit on its hands if a

WILL WASHINGTON OFFER THE SUPPORT INDIA WANTS?



US ambassador to India Robert Blackwill (centre) in Parliament on Friday. (AFP)

Pakistan soldier is killed," said Brian Cloughley, a defence analyst and South Asia specialist.

Already the two armies face each other along the Line of Control, dubbed one of the most dangerous places in the world after the South Asian neighbours tested nuclear devices in 1998.

Musharraf, a general who upset many of his own people by turning against the Taliban in Afghanistan, would face intense pressure to respond to any Indian intrusion.

"There is no such thing as a limited strike. If these guys go across, Pakistan will go to war," said Cloughley. Analysts expect India to take

its time deciding its response, while also marshalling diplomatic support if it decides to take action against Pakistan-based militants.

One factor will be the views of the US, which until now had been leaning on India to show restraint, especially since it needed Pakistan as an ally in its Afghan campaign.

The collapse of the Taliban has made that Pakistan support less crucial to Washington. Analysts say Washington would find it hard to support Israel's attacks on Palestinian territory, while condemning, if New Delhi had proof, Indian attacks on Pakistan-ruled Kashmir.

"The international environment is now different so it gives greater latitude to the government of India," said Chellaney. Stratfor, a think-tank founded by former US intelligence analysts, said the attacks on Parliament would stiffen India's resolve to launch pre-emptive strikes on Kashmiri militants.

"Washington is likely to offer cautious support for New Delhi's actions, although doing so could further weaken Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf," it said.

There are some other less drastic options left for India, which it is likely at least to review before taking any decision to openly cross the Line of Control.

One, a favourite among the hawks in New Delhi, is to opt for covert action inside Pakistan — enough to destabilise its neighbour without actually having to go to war. It could ask Washington to push Musharraf harder to crack down on Kashmiri separatists operating from Pakistan — though New Delhi has been doing that for a long time, without success.

Political analyst Mahesh Rangarajan suggested India could even use its close ties with the newly-appointed Afghan government to put pressure on Pakistan. India had backed the Northern Alliance, which dominates the new Afghan government.

CORRUPTION ISSUE

A German Lesson

By AG NOORANI

THE Indian debate on combating corruption has, for the most part, concentrated almost entirely on legal and institutional measures for its eradication. Not surprisingly, progress has been inconsiderable. For, the roots of the vice lie in our political culture which is not of recent growth. And it is the outlook that this culture moulds which accounts for the reluctance on the part of every government since independence to devise legal and institutional checks.

The police and prosecution agencies remain under the thumb of the executive. The colonial requirement of prior sanction of the very government whose ministers are to be prosecuted disfigures our statute book. For 30 years governments have tried to establish an Ombudsman (the Lok Pal) and failed. Since 1989 all have followed Rajiv Gandhi's Bill and denuded it of its content. The truth is that corruption does not repel us as it should and political expediency has always over-riden any distaste for it.

Corrupt party men and allies readily receive the mantle of protection. The best of legal and institutional checks will work imperfectly, at best, so long as this culture prevails. It will assuredly destroy the committee system. Ethics committees will split on party lines.

PART OF CULTURE

Therein lies the relevance of what happened in Berlin on 16 November. The Transport Minister, Mr Reinhard Klimmt, a Social Democrat, resigned from the government following a demand by a fellow Social Democrat, Mr Volker Neumann, chairman of the parliamentary committee investigating the donations scandal of the former Chancellor, Mr Helmut Kohl of the CDU. On 13 November, a court in Trier offered Mr Klimmt the option of a fine to close the proceedings or a full trial of the charges of corruption. He had allegedly helped to fake sponsorship contracts that brought £200,000 in illegal donations to a football club, FC Saarbrücken, in his home state, Saarland, in the Nineties. Mr Klimmt was then president of the club which was facing bankruptcy. The money was said to have been paid by a company operating for a charity that wanted to persuade local politicians like him to oppose the closure of hospital beds in the area; a far lesser offence than the ones we know. Yet, Mr Neumann said: "We came to power claiming higher moral standards than we expect from the others." The Chancellor, Mr Gerhard Schroeder, readily accepted Mr Klimmt's resignation.

The Union Home Minister, Mr LK Advani, declaimed in Mumbai on 18 November that politics has become a short cut to money, power and authority. In other countries, it is treated as a profession; but in India people who have nothing else to do enter politics as they find it easier to become ministers. The oration invites two questions. Who makes them ministers? And, why does our system enrich ministers financially whereas in other systems ministers suffer financial loss?

The answer to the first is that it is party bosses, like himself, who award tickets to party candidates for elections. A Volker Neumann can denounce a party colleague and a Joe

Lieberman could condemn President Bill Clinton on the Lewinsky affair because neither owed his seat in the legislature to the bounty of the party boss but to the elected officials of democratically run parties, organised constituency-wise. India is the only country in which a democratic constitution is run by undemocratic parties governed by cabals. It is they who also decide who should be a minister. The system permits, almost encourages, ministers to dip their hands into the public till and line their pockets.

was the order of the day. I am thoroughly disgusted and am now seriously thinking of retiring from public life ... We can do no possible good in the Assembly or the Councils with our present numbers and the kind of men we have. I fear there will soon be defections from our ranks ..." He was referring to the great Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai, no less.

In March 1939, well before the war broke out, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, was curious to know "Bose's prospects of collecting money on his own, the financial capacity of Bose's Congress to carry on" and so on.

His private secretary, Mr JG Laithwaite wrote to Mr JA Thorne, his secretary (public), that the Viceroy was surprised that no study had been made of the Congress's finances by the Director, Intelligence Bureau (DIB). "Can 'Congress' (that is led by Bose) for long conduct an existence divorced from the Gandhian moneybags?" The upshot of this directive was a note by the DIB, Sir John

Ewart, only a week later, on 9 March entitled "Review of Congress Financial Resources".

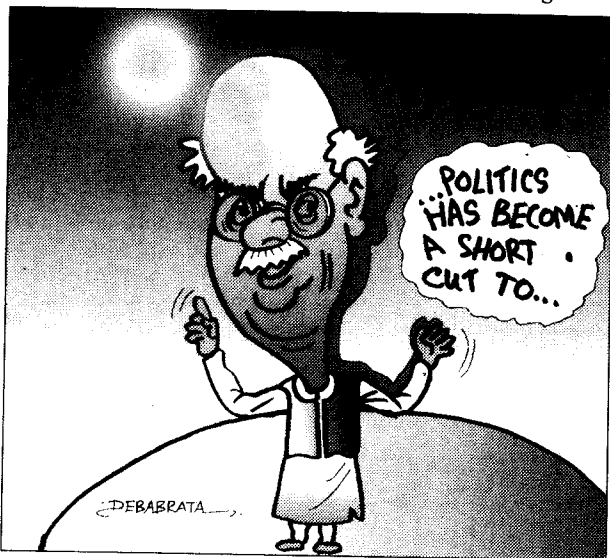
Dr BR Tomlinson's book *The Indian National Congress and the Raj 1929-1942* records some interesting details about the finances of Subhas Chandra Bose. "Even Bose's financial resources were independent of those of the 'Gandhians'."

FINANCING BOSE

The main source of funds open to the "right wing" leaders were donations from Indian businessmen... Nehru had no independent resources; he was completely dependent on the "Gandhians" for money. Bose's sources of income were smaller, but they were genuinely his own. He could rely on payments for favours shown to Bengali businessmen by the Bengal PCC and the Calcutta Corporation (as long as he controlled these bodies) and on "protection money" from large industrial magnates in Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Orissa, given in return for good labour relations. He also had support from a group of non-Bengali businessmen, head by the Delhi mill-owner Shankar Lal, and could use the funds of the Tropical Insurance Company (of which he and his brothers were directors and Shankar Lal Managing Director) to stabilise his finances. From these sources Bose managed to raise Rs 50,000 simply for the expenses of his delegates and canvassers at Tripuri. How much would Rs 50,000 be worth today?

As Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru unfailingly defended every corrupt leader who was close to him - VK Krishna Menon in the Jeep Scandal; RA Kidwai in the airlines case; KD Malaviya, Pratap Singh Kairon, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed - the lot. Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi followed suit as did their successors. As the wise Balfour said: "It matters little what other gifts a people may possess if they are wanting in those which are most important; if, for example, they have no capacity for grading their loyalties as well as for being moved by them; if they know not how to compromise and when; if they have not that distrust of extreme conclusions which is sometimes described as want of logic; if corruption does not repel them, and if their divisions are profound."

Our feudal and colonial past are still with us in some respects. Tolerance of corruption is part of India's political culture.



There is nothing original about Mr Advani's lament. It has been said before and with greater sincerity; notably, by Mr Nabakrushna Choudhary, former chief minister of Orissa in his famous speech on 14 July 1963. He described graphically how pauper politicians became rich ministers.

If Mr Advani did some soul-searching, he would realise that the BJP has contributed handsomely to the decline of standards. It held proceedings in the Lok Sabha to ransom over Mr Sukh Ram's role in the Telecom scandal in late 1995 only to embrace him as an ally months later. Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee was present at the swearing in at Lucknow on 27 October 1997 of the BJP ministry in Uttar Pradesh. It was formed with the support of 37 defectors. All were made ministers. Nineteen of them were "history-sheeters" in police records. They were not "convicts", Mr Vajpayee explained in the manner of the young unwed mother who famously pleaded - it's a small baby, after all.

LONG HISTORY

Other parties are as culpable. On 30 August 1997 the Speaker of the Lok Sabha moved a resolution in the form of an undertaking by all that "no one will be given any ticket from our respective parties to contest any such election (to the legislatures) to any person convicted during the past 10 years or was and has been charge-sheeted or challaned in any criminal case or has been a history-sheeter in the criminal records of the police or is otherwise known as an anti-social in the local community".

But, in the resolution that was adopted on 1 September, this was watered down to read: "All political parties shall undertake all such steps as will attain the objective of ridding our polity of criminalisation or its influences (sic)." The very next day, the Samajwadi Party's general secretary, Mr Kapil Deo Singh, said it would continue to give party tickets to criminals unless all parties decided collectively to weed out such elements from their ranks.

Standards did deteriorate after independence; but the vice prevailed long before that. In a letter to his son, Jawaharlal, dated 2 December 1926, Mr Motilal Nehru bitterly complained of the tactics of "the Malaviya-Lala Gang" in the elections. "Communal hatred and heavy bribing of the voters

The author is a lawyer and commentator on current affairs.

Civil-military ties in India post-Kargil had U.S. worried

By Siddharth Varadarajan
The Times of India News Service

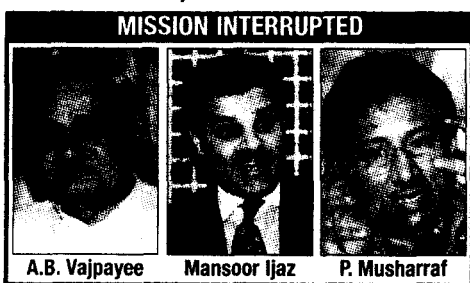
NEW DELHI: Mansoor Ijaz, the Pakistani-American businessman involved in the mediation efforts on the Kashmir issue, may have travelled to India and Pakistan on his own initiative, but his frequent visits to the sub-continent in the past year had the full backing of the Clinton administration. Aware of Indian sentiments on the question of third party mediation, especially U.S. involvement, Mr Ijaz said he had kept Mr Clinton's national security team briefed at every stage of the process, but insisted that he had not acted on behalf of the U.S.

A New York-based investment strategist, Mr Ijaz moves around in Democratic Party circles and has contributed to the campaign funds of party candidates, including Hillary Clinton. He also sees himself moving towards Congressional politics within the next five or six years.

While it was impossible for this newspaper to verify the extent of his access to the U.S. President, the role New Delhi was willing to accord him suggested that the Vajpayee government believed he was a useful and important intermediary. On at least two occasions, he is reported to have come to Delhi on special "out

of passport" visas and full secrecy was maintained about his identity and itinerary.

According to a source familiar with Mr Ijaz's mediatory efforts, a revived ceasefire in August was to have been followed by a meeting between Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and General Musharraf on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York in late



September. Although the Indian government was not averse to an impromptu summit meeting, it balked at the venue, fearing that the move might legitimise the idea that the U.S. or the UN had a role to play in tackling the problem.

Eventually, the ceasefire plan fell apart despite an effort by Bruce Reidel, the State

Department's point man on South Asia, to exert pressure on Islamabad.

The source stated that although Washington had always been keen to mediate, the Clinton administration considered the post-Kargil scenario especially critical. Interestingly, among the reasons given was the opinion that the brief battle had altered civil-military relations in India to the detriment of the political administration.

"This was something which apparently worried the U.S. national security team," the source said, adding, "Previously, when the Prime Minister told the army brass something, the answer was, 'Yes Sir, Mr Prime Minister'. But it changed to, 'Yes Sir, Mr Prime Minister, we'll get back to you.'" Although Indian officials dismissed the validity of this perception, they admitted that in the "aftermath of the Bhagwat episode and some pronouncements by former army chief General Ved Malik, the Americans may well have formed such an impression."

Mr Ijaz himself refused to be drawn into any discussion on the subject. However, he did say that the Indian army chief's recent statement that a political solution was needed to solve the Kashmir problem was itself seen by sections of the Indian political establishment as highly unusual.

Trinamul to take battle to Writers'

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STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE SP1

CHHERUA (Midnapore), Nov. 26. — Three Trinamul workers and a CPI-M cadre were killed in an hour-long gun battle in Chherua village this morning.

The Trinamul alleged that its workers were attacked by CPI-M cadres while returning home, and threatened to march to Writers' Buildings tomorrow with the bodies.

But police tonight seized the bodies of two of the Trinamul workers after partymen had taken them to the Peace Haven morgue on Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road around 10 p.m.

The CPI-M state secretary, Mr Anil Biswas, said the violence had been triggered by heavily-armed Trinamul men, and said the party would "make a grievous mistake" if it tries to violate peace.

The Lalbazar O-C (control) said police hadn't been informed about the time of tomorrow's demonstration.

Two of the Trinamul workers — Samir Mondal and Rubal Mondal — died on the spot. The third, Sheikh Kamiruddin, died at the Midnapore Sadar Hospital late tonight.

Villagers said that several hundred CPI-M gunmen — mostly from adjoining Birsinghpur, Jamkunda, Panchkhuri, Nischintapur, Elahigunge,

Panchami, Anandapur and Amiakuchi — surrounded Trinamul-dominated Chherua and Bhutdanga around 4 a.m. and started firing.

They said the CPI-M men began terrorising Trinamul supporters after losing some Kespur pockets to them.

Trinamul workers put up road blocks choking traffic for about three hours from 10 a.m. in protest against the attack. The Union minister of state for chemicals and fertilisers, Mr Satyabrata Mukherjee, was also held up by the agitation.

The CPI-M state secretary said he would expel any partymen if it was proved that he had attacked home-bound Trinamul supporters. If necessary, he would go to Midnapore.

But, "today's clash occurred when villagers resisted an heavily-armed Trinamul gang going from Chherua to Ramnagar. It has no connection with the return of Trinamul supporters," he said.

Trinamul spokesman Mr Pankaj Banerjee, however, said the incident had "unmasked" Mr Buddhadev Bhattacharya's government. "We humbly ask the chief minister what is the truth — is he directly engineering

■ See CLASH: page 3

THE STATESMAN

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It is urgent that the ceasefire in Kashmir holds this time

Games of desperation

SHAMLAL

“Not a soul/ But faces the fever of the mad and plays/ Some tricks of desperation.” These lines from *The Tempest* define the mindset of all those who have had anything to do with the Kashmir imbroglio, though games will be a more appropriate word than tricks in the new context. The ways of some parties and groups may be devious but all of them share a sense of desperation. This is no surprise after the wounds, neuroses and traumas caused by over a decade of guerrilla war.

Most of them are desperate for a return of peace to the war-ravaged state. This is why New Delhi has opted for a ceasefire during the month of Ramadan which began on Tuesday despite its sad experience of a similar move in July which fizzled out amidst a flurry of bickerings. As for the fever of the mad, it has shown itself in the burning of the prime minister's effigy in Delhi, ironically by members of a constituent of the ruling coalition, as also in the attempt of some fanatical terrorist groups in Pakistan to sabotage the new Indian initiative to give peace a chance.

What is the story from behind the scenes? Ajiz Mansoor, an American businessman of Pakistani origin, has claimed in an article in the *International Herald Tribune* that he was the one to have hit upon the idea of a peace settlement based on “empowerment of the common Kashmiris, civilian and militant, as the central partners for peace”. The phrase sounds as phoney to start with as “all power to the Soviets” in retrospect. But there is no doubt that its author had been in close touch with both Pervez Musharraf and Atal Behari Vajpayee.

That Mansoor was not acting on his own is clear enough from his own narrative. In revealing that his proposal had the backing of Bill Clinton, he gives the game away. It is obvious that the Americans used his services to sound out the parties concerned on a fuzzily worded proposition which might launch the two hostile neighbours on a journey along a tortuous road to peace, with too many potholes and hairpin bends.

Musharraf initially seemed to be receptive to the first ceasefire proposal, according to Mansoor, but developed cold feet when the fundamentalist groups dismissed the idea as a sellout. Is there any reason to believe that he has acquired a new backbone in the intervening months? Or that the fundamentalist groups feel more chastened today? Going by all the evidence at hand, the answer to both these questions is a loud “no”, whatever the ifs and buts hedging the rejection.

On the other hand, if Musharraf refuses to go along with the new Indian move, it will cast doubt on the credibility of his oft-repeated desire for resumption of peace talks between India and Pakistan. L.K. Advani, the Union home minister, has left no easy escape route for him with his statement that if the ceasefire goes through and the traumatized state has a month's spell of peace, New Delhi will consider the sit-

uation favourable enough for a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan. What the Indian initiative amounts to is thus an offer for a renewal of the peace process. It also meets the militants' demand for Pakistan joining the talks, though with the proviso that this will be feasible only

regime in Islamabad, a prospect which sends shivers down the spines of the big shots both in the Pentagon and the state department. But policymakers in the United States have their own sources of information and, whatever they may say for public record, know more about the



after the ceasefire has held for a month.

Any plea by Musharraf that he cannot afford to alienate the fundamentalists will not pass muster. It would be another matter if he frankly admitted to being close to them in his approach to the Kashmir problem and said that, having antagonized the old political establishment at home, he badly needed the active support of those using the paranoiac language of *jehad* to strengthen his stranglehold on the country.

Musharraf's game is one of doublespeak. At home the general does not hide his sympathy for the fundamentalists. This line is dictated not only by political expediency for someone who has nothing to show for his pains during the first year of his rule and has failed to deliver on any of his promises. It is also militarily a safe ploy in a situation in which the virus of the *jehadi* sentiment is said to be spreading fast in Pakistan's armed forces. In any case it was Musharraf himself who masterminded the Kargil operation and decried the Lahore accord.

The propaganda package designed by Islamabad for sale abroad is entirely different. It projects Musharraf as the only person with enough authority to prevent the fundamentalists from taking over in Pakistan and the only bulwark against the *talibanization* of the

implored the military regime to put a stop to the murderous business of cross-border terrorism and prefers New Delhi to deal with this problem.

Another sign of a tilt against Pakistan is its realization that Musharraf, for all his promises to tame the Taliban government, continues to back it to the hilt. Otherwise, the US administration would not have promised help to the Ahmed Shah Masood regime, which controls parts of northern Afghanistan, and decided to work in concert with Russia and Uzbekistan in checking the spread of the vicious form of fundamentalism propagated by the Taliban to other areas of central Asia.

The best New Delhi can do in this situation is hope against hope that the ceasefire will somehow hold this time despite the cries of betrayal by the more fanatical of the terrorist outfits. But there is no reason for it to incur too much expense of spirit on this gamble since, even if it succeeds, it will only clear the ground for resumption of talks interrupted by the Kargil war. The crucial test for a peaceful settlement is whether Pakistan has digested the bitter lessons of the four wars it has fought with its big neighbour enough to come to terms with the political, economic and military realities on the ground. And there is little room for optimism on this score.

There is no disputing the point that New Delhi made a grievous mistake in failing to drive a harder bargain with Z.A. Bhutto at Simla in 1972 and in taking him at his word that the LoC in Kashmir would in due course become an international border without insisting on a written commitment. But nothing since then has changed the nitty-gritty of the problem. The only feasible solution, when it comes to the crunch, still remains the same — converting the line into an international border. An increasing number of people in Kashmir are sick to the bone of terrorism and the more the militants prolong their agony the more alienated they will get.

There is also the tough problem of how to end the alienation of the Kashmiris from India. But the degree of autonomy of the state under any future dispensation is a matter in which Pakistan does not come into the picture at all. The kind of treatment Sindhis, Baluchis and the *mohajirs* have received at the hands of successive regimes in Pakistan should be sufficient warning against any illusion among the militants that Kashmiri identity will be safer under a system where, in any contest between civilians and soldiers, it is the generals who always have the last word.

Faced with a rising tide of public discontent, Musharraf will be tempted to repeat the words of Coriolanus, if he has read the bard's play by that name: “What is the matter with you, you dissentious rogues/ That rubbing the poor itch of your opinion/ Make yourselves scabs?” But then generals in power have a poor memory for such things and, when angry, are more likely to voice their rage in four-letter words.

It was Musharraf who masterminded the Kargil operation and decried the Lahore accord

close links between the Pakistan army and the many fundamentalist terrorist organizations it uses as instruments of its Kashmir policy than any other power.

The crucial question for the US administration is always to what extent a country's policy chimes with its own strategic interests at a given time. It had no qualms recently in waiving sanctions against China for selling missile technology to Islamabad while imposing them on Pakistan for buying it. If it does not want to push Musharraf too hard just now, it is because of the fear that the subversion of democratic institutions and the miserable economic mess have already brought Pakistan to the brink of anarchy.

There is good reason to believe that there has been a shift in US policy in regard to south Asia during the last two years. Its firm insistence on withdrawal by Pakistan of all militants and troops from the Kargil area to its side of the line of control was a first clear indication of this though it is not willing to go beyond

The Kashmir Challenge

As expected, the enemies of peace have exacted a tragic toll of lives on the first day of the unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir. While a number of Kashmiri parties have extended varying degrees of welcome to the ceasefire, there are a number of organisations, besides the jihadis from across the line of control, with vested interests in continued bloodshed. Casualties are inevitable, though the armed forces will do their utmost to limit the damage. The ceasefire initiative is a much greater and riskier act of statesmanship than Mr Vajpayee's Lahore bus trip, and is in conformity with his avowed goal of seeking peace in Kashmir on the basis of *insaniyat*. As the days go by and the casualty list lengthens, political parties and politicised elements in the national media might be tempted to decry the move and run down Mr Vajpayee, as happened during the Kargil war. No army in the world has submitted itself to a civilian political initiative in circumstances which call for such enormous restraint under grave provocation. Our jawans and officers have a right to expect that all parties will unite to extend their solidarity and support to them. To engage in cheap politicking now would amount to a gross betrayal of our men who have exposed themselves to this searing *agnipariksha* in a true democratic spirit.

Preoccupied with the US elections, the West Asian crisis and the likely action against Osama bin Laden, the international community might not pay as much attention to the Indian initiative as it merits. New Delhi's sincerity for peace is reflected in the enormous risks it has undertaken and to which it has subjected the army. It is the sincerity of others which is being subjected to proof. This is a crucial period for Pakistan which has to demonstrate its commitment to peace, along with its donor countries and international financial agencies. During the Kargil war, the Indian government's salutary restraint came to be appreciated by the international community and has stood the country in good stead since then. The Vajpayee initiative has convincingly negated the propaganda advantage sought to be gained by General Musharraf with his offer of talks at any time, any place, at any level. The failure to reciprocate the ceasefire will expose to the world the true designs of the Pakistani army, the jihadis and the Kashmiri organisations supported by Islamabad. A number of Nobel peace prize hopefuls are busy promoting their purported contributions as mediators and honest brokers. Their claims will be tested by the actions of the Pakistani army and Islamabad-supported militant organisations in the next few days. It may be recalled that during the Kargil crisis much was heard about backchannel diplomacy and the proposals of the Kashmir study group plans, which failed to live up to the great expectations raised about them. This is a testing time for the Indian government, the security forces, the country's political parties and its media as a whole. Bringing about peace in Kashmir is not a partisan issue. The stakes involved are worth the risks that have been taken. At this juncture, the nation united has to learn to set aside all partisan and jingoistic considerations and exercise steadfast fortitude and discipline.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

30 NOV 2000

Food, peace & development

By M. S. Swaminathan

HD-12

THE FUTILITY of war as a means of solving problems either between nations or among individuals has been emphasised in our history by both kings and saints. The life and message of Emperor Ashoka serve as a classic example. Even successful war leaders in industrialised countries have expressed similar convictions at the end of wars. Mahatma Gandhi often stressed that *sarvodaya*, or a society characterised by high social synergy, is the means to achieve lasting peace and non-violence, and that *antyyodaya* is the path to *sarvodaya*. In his introspective analysis of the state of our nation on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of our Republic, the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, stated, "Fifty years into our life in the Republic, we find that justice — social, economic and political — remains an unrealised dream for millions of our fellow citizens. We have one of the world's largest reservoirs of technical personnel, but also the world's largest number of illiterates; the world's largest middle class, but also the largest number of people below the poverty line, and the largest number of children suffering from malnutrition. Many a social upheaval can be traced to the neglect of the lowest tier of society, whose discontent moves towards the path of violence."

The Roman philosopher Seneca expressed over 2000 years ago a similar view when he said, "a hungry people listens not to reason nor cares for justice, nor is bent by any prayers". Hunger in our country today is not related to the availability of food in the market, but is caused by inadequate opportunities for sustainable livelihoods resulting in insufficient purchasing power. Since a famine of purchasing power is responsible for the famine of food at the household level, food security is best expressed in terms of million person years of jobs, rather than in million tonnes of foodgrains. Jobs for Indians must be the bottom line in our approach to development as well as to global trade agreements.

From the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Europe, technology has been a major source of economic inequity among nations and among communities within nations. Fortunately, our national capability in frontier areas of sci-

ence and technology is impressive. This opens the door to the conversion of our rich bio-resources into economic wealth, in a manner which is meaningful to the poor. Therefore, if technology has been a cause of economic and social inequity in the past, we now have an opportunity for enlisting it as an ally in the movement for social, gender, and economic equity. Modern information and communication technology provides this opportunity.

While we should admire the prospects of progress and prosperity promised by the virtual world, it would be foolish to overlook the state of poverty, hunger, malnutrition and environmental degra-

tonnes of grain in Government stock, this is not an impossible task. Also, this will be an investment for the future intellectual capability of our nation.

Agriculture, comprising crop and animal husbandry, fisheries, forestry and agro-forestry and agro-processing, is the backbone of our livelihood security system. Our agriculture is now at the crossroads. Prime farm land is shrinking as in the average size of holdings. The groundwater table is falling fast in many areas. The smaller the farm, the greater the need for marketable surplus, so that small farmers can have a reasonable income. Achieving this goal will be possible only if

Imparting greater economic value to the time and labour of the poor through technological and knowledge empowerment should receive priority.

dation prevailing in the real world. My experience in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean has taught me that the poor take to new technologies like fish to water, provided they are enabled to do so through opportunities for "learning by doing" and for producer-oriented marketing. Imparting greater economic value to the time and labour of the poor through technological and knowledge empowerment should, therefore, receive overriding priority. Hunger and deprivation can be substantially reduced provided we launch a community led and controlled food and water security system with the help of gram sabhas and elected local bodies.

The U.N. has designated the first decade of this century as "the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World". Every third child born in our country is characterised by low birth weight, which in turn affects brain development. The most common cause for low birth weight in our country is maternal and foetal malnutrition. Denying a child the opportunity for the full expression of its innate potential for mental and physical development is the cruellest form of inequity and violence. Can we undertake a well-planned programme for the eradication of maternal and foetal under-nutrition by August 2007? With over 40 million

we develop and disseminate eco-technologies rooted in the principles of ecology, economics, gender equity and employment generation. This is the pathway to an "ever-green revolution" in agriculture.

Unfortunately, markets are becoming volatile, causing acute distress to small and marginal farmer families. Eastern India is regarded as the sleeping giant of Indian agriculture. However, thanks to the steps taken by the Central and State Governments to promote irrigation through shallow tubewells during the non-flood season, the small farmers of Assam have brought about a silent revolution in the productivity and production of rice. The price of rice has, however, crashed and farmers will have a hard time repaying their loans. Hence, a systems approach giving concurrent attention to all the links in the production-processing-consumption chain is essential, if farmers are to benefit from their success in improving production.

At the global level, we face a confrontation between products resulting from mass production technologies, and those produced by the Gandhian concept of production by masses. For example, the over 80 million tonnes of milk produced now in our country is the result of the hard work of nearly 80 million women. In contrast, the over 70 million tonnes of

milk produced in the U.S. involves probably less than 200,000 persons. The total number of farm families in the U.S. is about 900,000 in contrast to over 105 million in India. This small number of farm families received from the U.S. Government a direct support of over \$25 billion during 1999. Since the onus of livelihood generation falls on the farm sector, it is important that policies relating to the import of agricultural commodities are based on a careful analysis of their impact on rural and urban livelihoods, particularly of those below the poverty line.

The recipe for poverty alleviation proposed by international organisations and bilateral agencies is micro-enterprises supported by micro-credit. National macro-economic policies and global trade policies, however, often threaten the survival of micro-enterprises. There is no level playing field between the technology, capital and subsidy driven macro-enterprises of the industrialised countries, and micro-enterprises functioning under conditions of poor infrastructure, low investment and high risk. The fast-expanding transnational super-markets are threatening the livelihoods of small scale traders and vendors. The absence of venture capital for micro-enterprises further compounds the problems of the poor. The culture of eternally "talking poor and living rich" characteristic of many international and national organisations will only lead to the perpetuation of poverty and not to its eradication.

Without ethics, technological progress may become a curse rather than a blessing. Without the same love for diversity and pluralism in human societies, as for biodiversity in plants and animals, lasting human peace will not be possible. Experience indicates that population stabilises if children are born for happiness and not just for existence. If we wish to improve "gross national happiness", children constitute the natural starting point for action. Children living in poverty are like blossoms in the dust. There can be no lasting peace if we do not enable such blossoms to flower and bear fruit.

(The article is based on a talk by the writer when he received the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development.)

THE HINDU

3 9 NOV 2000

Guns, governance & ransom

By V. R. Raghavan

The handling of Veerappan reflects a perspective which places the security of the political establishment above that of the state and the people.

HD-12

THE SAFE return of the Kannada actor, Mr. Rajkumar, from his forest captivity has not ended the embarrassment of the Governments of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. It has also done little to enhance their credibility which with every passing week continues to take a beating. It did not take 24 hours before a veritable can of worms opened up on the unsavory episode of obfuscation, misrepresentation and failure of governance and political leadership. It is no wonder that the two Governments are still unable to admit to the realities of the abduction-ransom-release theatre by a white paper. The episode raises serious questions about the state's ability to ensure its security. It proves, if proof was in fact needed, that security is viewed differently by the state, its political leaders and the people. It exposes the misplaced claims of the two Governments to being the enlightened guardians of state. That the two States are ruled by different political parties further confirms that the problem is neither ideological nor administrative, but one of a perspective which places the security of the political establishment above that of the state and the people.

Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are States with a long record of administrative efficiency at higher levels than in most other parts of the country. Yet, at the first sign of a challenge to its authority by a single man, who leads an assorted group of desperadoes ill-equipped to take on the state's armed establishment, the political leadership lost its nerve. It sought alibis for inaction behind fears of breakdown of law and order. It forgot that law and order was what it had sworn to uphold when it took office. It sought to do deals with the challenger by attempting to circumvent the legal processes and agreeing to release individuals in detention who had broken the law. It did everything other than deploy or employ its armed machinery, to uphold the rule of law by forcing hard options on the abductor. The political leadership then abdicated the state's power, and allowed individuals with a record of anti-state beliefs and activities,

to work out a deal to obtain the release of the abducted individual.

It would have been apparent to any sound professional — political, police or administrative — that Veerappan could not possibly have had the elimination of Mr. Rajkumar as his bottom line. That would have led to a total loss of public sympathy for him. It would have brought the forces of the state to his forest lair, for a final solution of the menace he has become. That substantial chink in the Veerappan armour was allowed to be sidetracked by the political leadership. Instead of negotiating from a position of strength, the leadership allowed itself to become petitioners before both the criminal and the highest court of the state. The Governments of the two IT-savvy States were expected to respond better to the situation. These Governments with substantial security 'hardware' proved themselves to be without the necessary security 'software' in meeting a challenge to the authority of the state. The leadership quite clearly abrogated the state's authority and let it pass into the hands of undesirable elements.

The tendency of political leaders to place their interests and those of their cohorts above that of the state has led to a misinterpretation of the meaning of security in recent years. National or state security being viewed as co-terminous with the political security of the leadership is a dangerous trend. Defining security in relation to the vulnerabilities of the ruling regimes amounts to their usurping the position of the state itself. The Supreme Court had observed when it heard the Karnataka Government's deposition on the Veerappan issue that if it cannot maintain security it should make way for others. That comment implied that the well-being of the state must remain a higher goal than of the political regime. It is a commentary on the quality of the po-

litical leadership of the day that the country's highest court found it necessary to define the allegiance the political leadership must bear to the state.

The political theatre of the Rajkumar abduction highlights many faces of ransom. If ransom is a condition extracted for privilege or immunity, then doing nothing to face up to the Veerappan phenomenon is also a ransom. Letting Veerappan go about his customary trade is no different from ransom. Allowing administrative niceties of who will command the STF or waiting for Central aid before taking on the abductor are also forms of ransom. Equating the abductor's long-lost moral claims to leniency with his arrogant conditions laid on behalf of the Tamil people is also no different from political ransom. Delaying action against the kidnapper until action is taken against those accused of police atrocities would be an abject submission to another face of ransom. The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi's statement that he will not permit the abduction drama to become a platform for claims on behalf of the Tamil people came not a day too soon. It has been the one salutary comment so far in an otherwise sorry spectacle of governance through ransom.

Submitting to a ransom demand is neither good policy nor ethical practice. There are, however, occasions when accommodation with ransom-seekers is politic, if lives are to be saved. In such situations, any promises made to save lives are no more than promises made under duress. They cannot be made the pretexts for not initiating determined and relentless action against the ransom-seeker. There is as yet no unambiguous political statement by the leadership in either Tamil Nadu or Karnataka, indicting a resolve to rid the people and the state of the depredations of a criminal at large. The Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr. S. M.

Krishna, says the arrest of Veerappan is an achievable target. He also says the arrest is not his priority. A hundred days is enough to prepare to go to war. That time was strangely found inadequate to place a force in position, to begin operations within hours of the abduction ending! The impression of more than one kind of ransom having been paid will therefore be difficult to erase.

Now that the LTTE involvement with Veerappan is established, there can be interesting developments in the future. Veerappan may well be sprung from the forests of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to those of the Vanni in northern Sri Lanka. Enough time has been allowed by the two State Governments for Veerappan to have shown them a clean pair of heels. If the outlaw leaves for other pastures, it may be welcomed by the two State Governments as a blessing in disguise. It could, however, become a case of mixed blessing if the man starts spilling the beans on what went on over the years in the mountain fastness, with the connivance of political authority. The Governments concerned will, it is to be hoped, realise the value of getting Veerappan before he gets at their reputations any further.

Enough damage has already been done to the Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Governments' credibility. Already lists are being drawn of other potential abduction targets who include actors, industrialists, IT geniuses, CEOs of MNCs etc. All it needs is a Veerappan-like threat and the state will scurry to provide armed guards and create ever-higher categories of protected individuals. Other such individuals and groups in and outside the country will enter the abduction game with incalculable harm to the reputation of the Indian state. The limits of what the state can do to stand up to a ransom demand has already been demonstrated. Worse still, unless the abductor is soon taken in, the leadership's inability to fight for its reputation will receive a body blow. The leadership will then have failed both the people who elected it and the state which invested it with power.

30 NOV 2000

PM's peace offer has Hizbul Mujahideen chief in a quandary

By Siddharth Varadarajan
The Times of India News Service

ISLAMABAD: Several days before Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee made his ceasefire offer, Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin received a telephone call from the Shahi Imam of Delhi's Jama Masjid. According to sources close to the Hizb commander, the call lasted for half-an-hour. When the line got disconnected, the Imam phoned again and the conversation continued. "The Imam wanted Salahuddin to declare another ceasefire," said the source, "but the latter was reluctant, saying that his credibility had suffered after the last ceasefire produced no result." At the end of the conversation, a compromise emerged: "If the Indian government is to offer a ceasefire this time as the first step towards a meaningful dialogue," Salahuddin reportedly told the Shahi Imam, "the Hizb will definitely reciprocate."

When Mr Vajpayee's offer came through last Sunday evening, Salahuddin's instinct was immediately to accept, said a sympathiser who spoke to him soon after. "But unlike the last time (when he had offered a ceasefire), he wanted to carry the Muttahida Jihad Council (MJC) along with him."

This desire to forge a consensus, said an analyst familiar with the politics of the militant groups, "proved to be fatal". Although the Hizb refrained from issuing a statement of its own, Al-Badar, Hizb-ul-Momineen, Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Toiba all came out with statements denouncing Mr Vajpayee. When the MJC convened on Monday, the die had already been cast. Nevertheless, Salahuddin was able to produce a consensual statement which, while rebuffing Mr Vajpayee, differed in tone and tenor from the more adamant pronouncements of the jihadi groups.

"Salahuddin's willingness to explore a political option," said an Azad Kashmiri journalist who has tracked the militant leader's career over the past decade, "parallels the shift that has taken place in the Hizb's orientation in recent months." From being the standard-

bearer of pro-Pakistan militancy, the Hizb, he said, "is now leaning towards the idea of independence for Jammu and Kashmir."

Although Salahuddin himself was unavailable for comment, this shift in the Hizb's line was confirmed by senior commanders of at least two other militant groups which remain staunchly in favour of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. "This change in the Hizb's view is one of the biggest problems affecting our struggle today," said a Hizbul-Momineen representative on condition of anonymity.

According to Islamabad-based Kashmiri journalists, Salahuddin is echoing the sentiments of hundreds of militants who have come across to Pakistan from the Valley. "Pakistani law says every Kashmiri who crosses over is entitled to Pakistani citizenship," said one journalist.

"Before 1989, this rule was applied, but ever since the freedom struggle started and fighters began coming in large numbers, they have not been given the status and rights of Pakistani citizens."

Another important factor bothering Salahuddin, say analysts, is the very real danger of the Hizb splitting in the event of a political process not getting under way soon. "Not every Hizb militant in Kashmir wants a ceasefire, but many do," said a Hizb watcher. "And they are getting impatient." As for the rest, Masood Sarfaraz, leader of the hardline breakaway Hizb faction, the Pir Panjal regiment, told this correspondent that he was confident they would come over to his group.

Further indication of Salahuddin's amenability to a negotiated solution came on Wednesday with the publication of an article by New York-based Pakistani businessman Mansoor Ijaz in the *International Herald Tribune*. Mr Ijaz, an intermediary who claims to have been a catalyst for the Hizb's July ceasefire offer and the Indian government's positive response to it, wrote that he had "resurrected in (late) August our framework to resume the (sic) peace with Salahuddin's blessing. We proposed centering around his call to widen the ceasefire so (that) it would include all militant groups".

Militants abduct six in Valley, kill five

JAMMU: Lashkar-e-Toiba militants on Friday shot dead five of six Hindus after abducting them from the Kishtwar area of Doda district in Jammu and Kashmir, police sources said.

The militants escaped from the spot leaving the bodies in a pool of blood. The police recovered the bodies from the forest. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

25 NOV 2000

President's brazenness was alarming: Warning sent via his mistress

By THOMAS FULLER
International Herald Tribune

Manila, Nov. 14: In April 1999, a group of top Philippine officials took the unusual step of requesting a meeting with one of President Joseph Estrada's mistresses.

The officials had an important message to relay to the President and considered the mistress a capable and politically astute conduit.

A secretive dinner was arranged and included a who's who of the Estrada administration: General Panfilo Lacson, the national chief of police; Jose Pardo, the trade secretary who now is the secretary of finance; Ronald Zamora, the executive secretary to the President; Fernando Barcan, the presidential spokesman, and Leonora de Jesus, the head of the presidential management staff who is now housing secretary.

According to a participant at the dinner, the officials told the mistress that Mr. Estrada, who had been elected less than a year earlier, was on a path to political self-destruction. They were concerned with his high-stakes gambling, late-night drinking sessions and the construction of lavish mansions for other mistresses.

"We told her: 'This will lead to the President's impeachment. If it does not stop,'" the participant said. "The problem was not only what the President was doing, but the brazenness of it all. We were concerned about visibility."

As events of recent weeks here have shown, the message delivered that night was prescient. On Monday, Mr. Estrada became the first President in Philippines history to be impeached and

now faces a trial in the Senate. If Mr. Estrada is convicted, it will be the first time in Asia that a democratically elected leader is removed from office for corruption.

The President says he will prove his innocence and escape conviction. But many Philippines politicians, including some of his allies, say Mr. Estrada's administration has been so badly wounded in the past month that it is probably not capable of again governing effectively.

The story of how Mr. Estrada reached the doorstep of disgrace is a highly personalized tale about an administration that from the first days in office was hampered by the quirks of a President who bumped from one scandal to the next.

It is the story of Mr. Estrada's disdain for the day-to-day tasks of running a government: his refusal to hold regular Cabinet meetings and his unwillingness to read government reports, newspapers or magazines.

During his first two years in office, the President missed appointments and skipped speeches. After hours, when much of the business of government was conducted, family members, corporate figures and friends congregated at the presidential palace, blurring the line between private socializing and public duties. Mr. Estrada's critical shortcoming, former colleagues say, is his inability to reconcile his presidential obligations with his personal excesses: his late-night drinking sessions and gambling.

"There are basic flaws in him that would have been fine if he were not President," said Ms. Karina David, who served 15 months in the Estrada administration as the housing secretary.

"But when you don't study, when you have no discipline, no concept of overall direction - that's devastating for a country."

Ms. David said she resigned from the administration after the President tried to intervene on behalf of his friends and family in land acquisition deals handled by her department.

She described Mr. Estrada as a bon vivant with very little tolerance for policy debates or overall strategies. Government business was often discussed in the dining room of the executive mansion, where such dishes as roast pig, lobster and giant shrimp were placed in the middle of three round tables.

There were two reasons for using the dining room as the main spot for discussions. Ms. David said, Mr. Estrada disliked the formality of his official office, and he enjoyed eating around the clock. The President, Ms. David and others said, is prone to binges of Roman proportions, followed by a dose of Xenical weightloss pills to purge the food.

In the evenings, discussions would often continue over drinks. After being advised to stop drinking hard liquor last year, Mr. Estrada switched to vintage bottles of Chateau Petrus, the renowned Pomerol, said one of his closest drinking partners, Mr. Luis Singson, a provincial governor who has now turned against him.

Depending on how many guests were there, Mr. Singson estimates that the President, with help from friends, would go through 6 to 10 bottles during an evening, each bottle costing around \$1,000.

Aides who witnessed these sessions of food and drink saw their informality made serious

policy discussions nearly impossible.

An informal atmosphere: The informality also meant that there was little control over who was present. As Mr. Estrada's administration wore on, the President's friends, family and business associates joined discussions. "His classmates, his relatives, his children were there all over the place," Ms. David said.

Another former member of the administration added: "The problem wasn't that the President had people over for drinks. The problem was that there were unsavory characters around who wanted to cut deals." There was little that could distract the President during these drinking and eating sessions, based on Mr. Singson's recollection of one such incident.

Mr. Singson, whose allegations of gambling payoffs led to the impeachment proceedings, recounted one particular drinking session when the foreign secretary, Mr. Domingo Stazon, entered the presidential mansion to request that Mr. Estrada attend a scheduled speech.

Mr. Stazon informed the President that there would be many members of the diplomatic corps in attendance and that they were all expecting him to attend.

"No," Mr. Estrada replied in his characteristic gruff manner. "Mr. Zamora will read my speech," he said, referring to the executive secretary.

Mr. Stazon left the room but returned several minutes later. "If you could reconsider, Mr. President, there are foreign dignitaries waiting," Mr. Singson recalled the foreign secretary as saying. The President refused a second time. Mr. Singson said the President gave no reason

for not wanting to attend the function.

"We were just drinking and eating," Mr. Singson said.

Mr. Stazon, contacted for this article, said he could not remember the specific incident.

Mr. Estrada's distaste for official functions became well known in the administration as more and more Cabinet members were asked to deliver speeches in his place.

"I would get a call the night before saying, 'You're speaking for the President tomorrow,'" said Ms. David, the former housing secretary. "I would say: 'Where's the speech?' They would say: 'It's a women's thing, say anything you want.'"

When Mr. Estrada was obliged to attend formal discussions, he often became fidgety, former aides said.

"He told me at least twice: 'Do you really think that there's anything we get out of Cabinet meetings?'" Ms. David said.

Mr. Renato de Villa, defense secretary in the administration of Mr. Estrada's predecessor, Mr. Fidel Ramos, said he did not remember a time when Mr. Estrada, who was vice-president in that administration, sat through a full Cabinet meeting, which usually lasted about three hours.

"He would sit there for maybe 15 or 30 minutes and he wouldn't say anything," Mr. de Villa recalled. "After a while, he would ask the President for permission to leave."

In pointing out Mr. Estrada's many personal quirks, his detractors often portray the President as an inept college drop-out who has no place in national politics.

But people who have worked with the President, a former action movie star, say this view discounts Mr. Estrada's personal charm, loyalty and street sense.

The President, they say, has a gift for communicating with the common man, a talent he will use in defending himself against the impeachment charges.

Throughout his political career, and despite his upper-middle-class background, Mr. Estrada has managed to portray himself as an anti-establishment underdog.

He describes the current impeachment process, for example, as a campaign by powerful business interests to unseat him. When criticized about his messy personal life, he has managed to use a potentially damaging fact — that he has 11 children from his wife and five other women — to his advantage.

In an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country, the way Mr. Estrada divides his time between his wife and three other households would seem to be a significant political liability.

Yet until now, he has justified this by saying he wants to be a good father to his children, give them a good education and avoid any inheritance complexes they might have. (In a further personal quirk, Mr. Estrada's 11 children all have names that begin with the letter J.)

Several requests for an interview with Mr. Estrada went unanswered. But he did raise the issue of his lifestyle at a rally on Sunday. "You all know I am not a saint, and I never said that I am a saint," he told his supporters in the province of Ilocos Norte.

■ **Tomorrow: Numbers game dispute**

Meet to review NDA Govt.'s policies

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, NOV. 13. The All-India Democratic Convention would organise a meeting here on December 2 and 3 to take a stand against the policies of NDA Government like review of the Constitution, attack on secular values and economic policies.

In an appeal issued here, the Convention organisers charged that the NDA Government was bent on removing existing secular, democratic rights and principles enshrined in the Constitution in the name of review entrusted with a 'highly partisan Commission.

"The changes proposed in the system of reservation are designed to further curtail the rights of the socially oppressed sections of the society," it said.

This apart, the proposal to introduce Criminal Law Amendment Bill was aimed at making the existing criminal law system more 'draconian' and suppressing peoples resistance against the effects of economic policies.

The organisers said the people were also coming under increasing attacks due to globalisation and following the 'dictates' of the IMF, World Bank, WTO. The economic policies, they said, were causing massive unemployment and impoverishment.

"While all secular values upheld by the Constitution are

Convention disarmar

By Our Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI, NOV. 13. The three-day National Convention for Nuclear Disarmament ended here today with the establishment of a National Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and a collective resolve to work for a rollback of India's nuclear weapons-related preparation.

Announcing the formation of a "rainbow coalition" at a press conference here today, the former Chief of Naval Staff and keen advocate of nuclear disarmament, Admiral (Retd.) L. Ramdas, said the Charter for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace adopted at the convention lays out the basic principles of the Indian peace movement's opposition to nuclear weapons. Besides presenting an alternative vision of human security, the charter also explains the peace movement's rejection of reliance on nuclear weapons.

The convention identified an agenda for India, and another for nuclear weapon countries and those on the nuclear threshold. As per the agenda for India, there should be no assembly of nuclear weapons, no induction and deployment of nuclear weapons and no acquisition and development of nuclear weapon-specific delivery system.

Besides a no to explosive testing, sub-critical tests, and production or acquisition of weapons-usable fissile material tritium, the activists have called

Bush, Gore camps step up rhetoric

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, NOV. 13. The next few days are crucial for the Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, and the Texas Governor, Mr. George W. Bush. And the challenges are not only on the legal front, but on the political and public relations fronts as well. Keeping away from the media for the most part in the last four days has done both candidates well, but the fact that aides and operatives are doing the "job" at the candidates' bidding has not been lost on the public at large.

The first attention is on what

injunction against manual counting is sustained, what will the Gore campaign do? By the same token, if the Judge favours manual recounting in four counties, what is the next step for the Bush campaign — all the way to the Supreme Court?

The argument of the Gore campaign that it was not behind the eight or so individual law suits filed in Florida courts is not being taken seriously. The campaign has said that it will support the cases and it was actively involved in setting up phone banks to take calls from disgruntled voters. The

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Sonia camp shows who

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 12. — Mrs Sonia Gandhi looked set to win today's Congress presidential election that was reduced to a farce by open voting, naked show of muscle power and manipulation of ballot papers.

The ballot papers were marked in a manner that would easily identify who voted for whom, leaving a large number of delegates no choice but to vote for Mrs Gandhi.

Though the chairman of the Congress Election Authority, Mr Ram Niwas Mirdha, described the "90 per cent" polling as "peaceful", several supporters of the challenger, Mr Jitendra Prasad, were assaulted and browbeaten into submission across the country.

Many PCC delegates, particularly senior leaders close to the leadership, didn't use the secret polling code as they openly stamped the ballot in favour of Mrs Gandhi. In many centres, some zealous supporters of the dynasty demanded that voters show them the ballots before putting them in the boxes.

Even before the election ended, several PCCs reposed their 'faith' in Mrs Gandhi and

requested her to 'nominate' state and AICC office-bearers. These included Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa.

Mr Ashok Gehlot, Rajasthan chief minister, personally supervised the poll in Jaipur to ensure maximum votes for 'Madam'. Mr Digvijay Singh and Mr Ajit Jogi did the same in Bhopal and Raipur.

The West Bengal PCC president, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, was confident that Mrs Gandhi would win. Some 35 delegates didn't turn up for 'ill health'. Curiously, there were two polling agents for Mrs Gandhi and none for Mr Prasad, adds SNS from Calcutta.

In Delhi, the chief minister, Mrs Sheila Dikshit, proudly held aloft her ballot to show the world where her loyalties lay. With the leader having shown the way, nothing could stop Sonia followers from demonstrating their loyalty to her, which they did by bullying and intimidating Prasad supporters. Most PCC delegates followed Mrs Dikshit's example of openly casting vote.

When the Prasad camp protested, Sonia supporters pushed them back. Mr Hari-

bans Mishra, a Prasad follower, demanded a repoll. "We will move court. This is a mockery of democracy," he said, alleging that Mr Subhash Chopra, Delhi PCC president, stayed in the booth to influence voters.

Sonia supporters also tried to ensure that Prasad camp followers did not get to speak to the media. When reporters were interviewing Mr Anand Seth, a Prasad camp leader, Seva Dal workers caught him by the collar and told the reporters that they would have to conduct the interview outside the PCC office.

Mrs Gandhi denied allegations of irregularities, but said there could be some "discrepancies in a massive exercise like this", quickly adding "they are not as bad as is being made out to be".

On the issues raised by Mr Prasad, she said everyone had the right to express views. "It shows that there is democracy in the party. There is nothing wrong in raising any issue." She also ruled out Mr Prasad's expulsion from the party. "Contesting elections are part of a democratic process."

She said the Central Election Authority was created to

ensure free and transparent organisational elections. The election would strengthen the party.

Mr Prasad alleged large-scale irregularities. On the

possibility of his expulsion from the party, he shot back: "Is it a crime to contest elections?"

The counting will start on Wednesday after the ballot

boxes are brought to Delhi from all voting centres except Assam and Kerala, where polls were not held today.

THE STATESMAN

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Oslo and West Asia

By P. S. Suryanarayana

THE U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, may have momentarily pulled a peace rabbit out of Uncle Sam's diplomatic hat at the recent emergency summit at Sharm-el-Sheikh on the specific aspect of an Israeli-Palestinian truce. However, the tentative truce has almost predictably remained a dead letter. Moreover, although Mr. Clinton is once again holding direct but separate talks with the leaders of the Palestinian Authority and Israel, Mr. Yasser Arafat and Mr. Ehud Barak respectively, at the present juncture, the outgoing U.S. President is surely racing against time to revive parleys for a new West Asian political order. Not only that.

Gaining currency at the moment is the perception that Mr. Clinton is perhaps beginning to lower his diplomatic sights by seeking merely to goad Mr. Arafat and Mr. Barak towards a 'political process' of settling the issue of the latest cycle of violence. While Mr. Clinton finds it difficult to fast-forward the larger West Asia 'peace process', the stark reality is the dimming of the original spirit of the Oslo process itself. This will be a factor in the moods and methods of the next U.S. President in dealing with West Asia.

For nearly a decade, the Oslo process has been diplomatic shorthand for the dream of a peaceful resolution of Israel's various disputes with its Arab neighbours, principally the question of possible sovereignty for the Palestinians in their "homeland", where the present Jewish state had come into being several decades ago. A perceived congruence of the interests of the U.S. and the now-defunct Soviet Union had at that time brought Israel into being as a sovereign entity for a historically dispossessed Jewish community. The formula was a derivative of the fleeting period of give-and-take among the principal victors of World War II.

With Britain gradually bowing out as a lead player from the international stage in the 1950s and 1960s, the explosive issues of Jewish-Arab animosities — a defining feature of West Asian life since the creation of Israel — finally came to be addressed in a meaningful manner by the U.S. and a fast-fading Soviet Union at the

beginning of the 1990s. Their joint activism later became an exclusive American responsibility in the "unipolar world" that came into existence with the demise of the Soviet Union. Prior to 1991, both the U.S. and the former Soviet Union had over time acquired allies and "client states" in West Asia. Therefore, as a "neutral" Norway facilitated an Arab-Israeli dialogue in the early 1990s, the West Asian peace process, made possible in the first place by the U.S.-Soviet detente during a de-escalating phase of the Cold War, came to be known broadly as the Oslo process, after Norway's capital. Much of

dynamism of post-Nasser Cairo's pragmatism that predated the emergence of the Oslo process. The Jordan-Israeli interactions, too, have taken place without reference to pan-Arab issues in certain circumstances, but the Hashemite kingdom has been a key catalyst of the Oslo process.

In a twist of history, Jordan was first uneasy over the 1991 war by a U.S.-led international coalition, aided by some Arab states too on re-political considerations, against Mr. Saddam Hussein of Iraq over his annexation of neighbouring Kuwait. But Washington's triumph in that

guru of the U.S. foreign policy of the old zero-sum games. The predominant U.S. strategy in West Asia during the Nixon presidency was "to demonstrate that the Soviet Union's capacity to foment crises was not matched by its ability to resolve them." The limitations of the old Soviets in that region were first fully exposed in 1973. Dr. Kissinger notes that "there was no evidence that the Soviet Union actively encouraged Egypt and Syria to go to war (against Israel in 1973)" and that, "Mr. Sadat of Egypt told us (the Americans) later that Soviet leaders were pressing for a ceasefire from the beginning." In his account, "nor was the Soviet resupply of its Arab friends remotely comparable in scope and impact to America's airlift to Israel."

The bottomline in the Kissinger thesis is this: "When the (1973) war ended, the Arab armies had fought more effectively than in any previous conflict. But Israel had crossed the Suez Canal (in Egypt)... American support would be needed (by the Arabs), first to restore the *status quo ante* and then to make progress towards peace. The first Arab leader to recognise this was Sadat... Even Syrian President Hafez Assad... the one more closely tied to the Soviet Union, appealed to American diplomacy about the Golan Heights (captured by Israel)". Obviously, the fundamental U.S.-Soviet disequilibrium of the Cold War era itself could be seen to have gradually given the U.S. a dominant access to the commanding heights of diplomacy in regard to West Asia. Seen in this perspective, Mr. Bush rewarded a fading Soviet Union with a role at the 1991 Madrid meet only on account of a shrinking Kremlin's tacit and open cooperation with the U.S. at the U.N. to wage the war against Mr. Hussein.

A possible future scenario now is that the U.N., rather than the post-Soviet Russia, may qualify as a partner for the U.S. in reviving what is left of the Oslo spirit if Washington stays engaged in West Asia as an 'honest peace broker'. Although Russia is keen at present to renew its 'peace' activism in West Asia, Mr. Arafat has already begun to ask for a U.N. peace force as a buffer between the Palestinians and the Jewish people.

The stark reality is the dimming of the original spirit of the Oslo process. This will be a factor in the moods and methods of the next U.S. President in dealing with West Asia.

war impelled Jordan to back a new West Asia peace process which formally began with the Madrid international conference in October 1991. The Madrid meet, in one sense an aspect of the overall Oslo process, was the result of a felt American need to address the basic issue of Israeli occupation of Arab lands. By the early 1990s, the U.S. could not afford the irony of having liberated Kuwaitis from Mr. Hussein's suzerainty (both being Arabs) without applying this principle to the case of the Jewish occupation of Arab lands. The then U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, said he "had asked the Soviets to co-sponsor" the Madrid conference, which "was one of the direct fruits of the Gulf War (against Mr. Hussein)". But the underlying reality was that the fervour that Mr. Bush had displayed in evicting Mr. Hussein from Kuwait could have been sustained only on the understanding that Washington's Arab allies in that venture would receive as a reward some arm-twisting of Israel by the U.S. on the basic West Asian issues.

The logic of the claim about Washington asking a fading Soviet Union to co-sponsor the Madrid conference was presently set out by Dr. Henry Kissinger,

the Norway-facilitated talks took place in camera, and this has come to be reckoned as a key aspect of possible success in parleys.

The Oslo process as a phraseology has not been very much in vogue since the signing of a historic accord by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, under the overall auspices of Mr. Clinton in Washington in 1993. The accord itself was facilitated by the "secrecy" of the Oslo process, and Norway was prominently represented at the signing ceremony. The centrepiece of the agreement was a nominal self-rule if not entirely a notional one for the Palestinians. Several other significant West Asian developments, too, can be traced varying to the efficacy of the spirit of the painfully slow Oslo process. These are the 1998 accord at Wye Plantation on the Palestinian willingness to concede Israel's right of existence among other themes, the more recent evacuation of Israeli military units from southern Lebanon, Tel Aviv's self-proclaimed security zone, and the intermittent contacts between Israel and Syria. Egypt's separate peace deal over a diplomatic co-existence with Israel was brokered by the U.S. in 1979, and it was the result of a distinctive

Too close to call ^{6/1-8}

As the United States winds down from the most tantalisingly poised presidential race in its history, uncertainty over the fate of Messrs Gore and Bush reigns supreme. A couple of thousand overseas voters may ultimately determine who occupies the White House come January. Exciting as all of this may be, chances are that the outcome will not make too much of a difference to India. For one, India is largely peripheral to the agenda of any US President, whether it be Gore or Bush. For another, there has been a growing convergence between the two parties on a wide variety of policy stances, including those that would be of relevance to India. Most important, governmental links between the two countries are increasingly taking a back-seat as business ties assume growing importance.

Consequently, any interest that India has in the outcome of the presidential race is likely to be more academic than material. At the same time, the outcome is not entirely irrelevant to our interests either. Given their public stances, India may marginally prefer a Bush presidency. To begin with, this is likely to ease pressure on India to sign the CTBT, since Bush himself is no votary of the CTBT. Also, the Republicans are less likely to adopt quite as high a moral posture on "human rights" as the Democrats. Hence they may be more understanding of India's problems in Kashmir. The Republicans would also arguably be less keen on bringing things like labour standards into the ambit of the WTO and that may suit India too. Ultimately, however, more significant than the subtle differences on these issues will be the ability of the new presidency to keep the momentum in the US economy going. Agreed, the economy is in the capable hands of Alan Greenspan and the President alone cannot either make or mar prospects for growth. But the US remains the engine for global economic growth and India's own economic prospects are now inextricably tied up with developments on the global scene. We can only hope, therefore, that the new President, whoever he may be, will remember the dictum: "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". //

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Bringing peace to West

By Chinmaya Gharekhan

The peace process cannot die since there is no alternative to it; the option of allout war is unthinkable.

HP-12

WHILE ANALYSING the situation in West Asia, two considerations should be kept in mind: contacts, almost always secret, among the parties — whether Israeli-Palestinian, Israeli-Jordanian or U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian — are going on most of the time, and, flowing from the first factor, one must always expect the unexpected. These trends are more pronounced in the post-Oslo phase, but were also present in the phase of mutual non-recognition.

It is axiomatic that there can be no peace in West Asia unless and until the Israeli-Palestinian equation has been resolved; in other words, until the Palestinian people have realised their legitimate political rights. To say this is not to take sides, it is simply a fact of political life in the region. Responsible Israeli leaders and even Israeli people acknowledge this reality. No regime in West Asia will be allowed by its public opinion to fully normalise relations with Israel or to accept a situation wherein the Palestinian people are denied their due or in which they are forced to swallow a solution perceived by them as patently unfair and unjust. The Palestinian leadership just might have been able to sell a less than fully satisfactory package to its people until the present outbreak of hostilities six weeks ago. Recent events have made its task infinitely more difficult.

When the Oslo Agreement was announced in September 1993, Palestinian and Arab reaction was divided. While there was a general sense of relief and an exaggerated air of expectations, a significant minority felt let down. However, barring a few, nearly everyone was willing to give the peace process a reasonable chance. Even the extremist elements such as the Hamas and the Jihad, sensing the public mood, decided to lie low. Not surprisingly, anti-Oslo sentiment was, and continues to be, stronger among the diaspora Palestinians than among Palestinians living in the occupied territories.

Over the years since Oslo, support for the peace process among the Palestinian people has declined, though it remained at about 50 per cent. Strangely, in Israel, acceptance of the eventual reality of a Palestinian state has gained increasing support, rising to 75 per cent of the Jewish population. The one million Arabs

in Israel are naturally wholeheartedly with their kith and kin in the occupied territories. Such was the situation until early September, when Mr. Ariel Sharon, whose name is forever linked in Arab and Palestinian minds with the 1982 massacres of Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatilla camps in Lebanon, provocatively accompanied by a massive security contingent, visited Haram Al Sharif or the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Mr. Sharon did it for political reasons, to ward off a looming challenge from Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu to his leadership of the Likud party, but his action generated a reaction among the Palestinian masses, the ferocity of which seems to have taken everyone, even perhaps Mr. Yasser Arafat, by surprise. Even those so close to the ground in the region are not always ready for the unexpected.

Mr. Sharon's visit to the third holiest place of worship for the Muslims, in itself inflammatory, happened at a time when the level of frustration and bitterness among the Palestinian people had reached near breaking point, following the failed Camp David Summit in July, 2000. Even before that, the "street" in Palestinian areas was seething with discontent with the other side's bullying of Palestinian leadership during all the years of protracted and, from the Palestinian view point, futile negotiations. Anger at Israel was mounting and some of it was directed at the Palestinian leadership which was perceived as making too many concessions without obtaining adequate *quid pro quo*. Certain issues, such as the release of about 2,500 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, many of whom have been in administrative detention for years, arouse extreme emotions cutting across party lines. In one instance, the house of Mr. Abu Mazen, widely regarded as Mr. Arafat's deputy and likely successor, was attacked in Gaza by a mob since he was held responsible, wrongly or rightly, for failing to secure the release of about 250 Fatah political prisoners during the Wye plantation round in November 1998.

Oslo was supposed to usher in prosperity for the Palestinian people. Mr. Shimon

Perez, co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize with Yitzak Rabin and Mr. Arafat, spoke of converting Gaza into a Singapore. The international community certainly did more than its fair share by extending generous assistance and the U.N. family also played its part. The efforts of the donors and their Palestinian partners, however, were largely frustrated by repeated and sustained closures imposed by Israel over Palestinian territories. The closures were decreed following terrorist attacks such as suicidal bus bombings, but were regarded as collective punishment of the Palestinian people even by many external observers. Closures were, in fact, the response of Israeli Governments which felt the need to 'do something', to show the 'iron fist'. A responsible Israeli politician, who, as a senior diplomat, personally conducted the secret negotiations in Oslo, admitted that closures, first imposed by the Labour Government in 1993, were a mistake. They had a devastating effect on the social and economic life of the Palestinian people. Palestinian students in Gaza could not go to attend universities in the West Bank, friends and relatives could not visit one another and even Ministers of the Palestinian Authority, of which Mr. Arafat is the President, were denied entry-exit privileges at Israeli check-posts.

For these and other reasons, the situation was ripe for another *intifada* type of explosion. A few Palestinian intellectuals did see the writing on the wall. Dr. Sari Nusseibeh, President of the Al Quds university, warned of such a possibility during a U.N. seminar in Hanoi in February, 2000. Mr. Sharon's defiant gesture provided the proverbial spark.

Have the events of the past few weeks dealt a death blow to the peace process which, in any case, was not exactly alive and kicking till then? An interesting fact of political life in West Asia has been the anxiety of either side not to be held responsible for causing the process to close down. Also, both sides are alike in wishing to be perceived by their respective constituency as being tough and even intransigent in negotiations, while being regarded by the

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Munda declines minister post

proper information", said Kailashpati Mishra, BJP vice president who is in charge of party affairs in Bihar. Munda is learnt to have conveyed his refusal of the Cabinet berth to Mishra late yesterday night who in turn informed senior party leaders including the Prime Minister, of Munda's desire. Efforts were then on to pacify Munda but the latter would not agree to accept anything less than Jharkhand's chief ministership, BJP sources claimed. Only last night he had given some TV interviews outlining his priorities once he took over as first chief minister of Jharkhand.

Munda however, preferred discretion today and refused to comment on the controversy. "I was not prepared to take up the assignment. I need some time to think", is all he told a group of reporters.

INDIAN EXPRESS

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come about in the valley, but they
are no longer being asked and answered
in privacy but are candidly debated in
the press. This is partly the result of the
success of counter-insurgency but has
been pushed up by recent events. The
Kargil operation was one among them,
which showed people that even when Pa-
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By Jai Sen

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Collectively, this clearly suggests that as
of the date of the Court's order, the pro-
ject authorities were still not ready; and
that since the Court has itself held the
Tribunal's order in 1979 to be inviolable
(which said that "In no event shall any
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[etc, are completed]"), this in turn means
that the Court's order has itself directly
contradicted the provisions of the Tribu-
nal's order in this area.

Overall, one of the clearest and most
important positions of the judgment is in
relation to its assertion of what most lib-
erally could be termed the autonomy of
Government and of governmental proc-
ess — including in terms of its setting
sharp limits on how the Courts should
relate to public policy, projects, and plan-
ning. In short, it has observed that policy
and project implementation are purely

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THE HINDU

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40-16 U.S. POLL / CAMPAIGN REACHES FIN

Candidates target each

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, NOV. 6. The election campaigns in the United States are finally winding down. In the final hours, the Presidential candidates, Mr. George Bush of the Republican Party and his Democratic counterpart, Mr. Al Gore, will be concentrating on the swing States. Mr. Gore will make a pitch in Missouri and Michigan in addition to Iowa and Florida. Mr. Bush will be in Wisconsin and making another push for Tennessee and Arkansas, the home States of Mr. Gore and of the President, Mr. Bill Clinton.

If the latest polls are anything to go by, the race is still too close to call, at the Presidential and the Congressional levels. A *New York Times/CBS News* poll gives Mr. Bush a five point lead; but a *Reuters/MSNBC* tracking poll gives Mr. Bush a lead of only one percentage point. This poll also shows Mr. Bush dropping his lead by two points over the last three days.

The tracking poll also shows that the match-up in the six battleground States of Florida, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Washington, Wisconsin and Tennessee are too close. These States post a combined tally of 92 Electoral College votes. Mr. Gore continues to lead in Florida and Pennsylvania but the margin has come down in the last few days. Mr. Bush has opened a lead in Wisconsin and widened the same in Mr. Gore's home State of Tennessee.

Mr. Bush has to win Florida to keep his chances alive on the election day.

The battle is also intense for the House of Representatives and the Senate. The thinking is that the Grand Old Party may be able to hold on to Capitol Hill, even if the Democrats seem to have a fair chance of making it to the House of Representatives. In the Senate, the Democrats may be able to pick up three or four seats. And for a campaign that made a lot of noise on campaign finance, Congressional candidates would have raised and spent close to \$ 1 billion for their races this season, the highest ever.

In the most watched race for the Senate seat in New York, the First Lady, Ms Hillary Rodham Clinton, continues to maintain a slender lead over her opponent, Mr. Rick Lazio. But the Congressman from Long Island is said to be closing the gap in the final hours. The race is also in the category of "too close to call" even though some pundits believe that Ms Clinton has a narrow lead.

What merits a lot of attention this time around is the voter turnout. The perception is that even if the Presidential race is too close, it is not going to have any appreciable impact on the voters on Tuesday. As many as 100 million Americans are expected to "sit out" the election. In 1996, the voter turnout was 49 per cent, the lowest in 72 years. The big question is if 2000 will see an even lower turnout.

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Comparing chauvinisms

MUKUL KESAVAN

After the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh gathering in Nagpur, it is useful to think about the ways in which some of India's Asian neighbours have dealt with their minorities. Comparing chauvinisms might help us understand why some Asian countries have gone further down the majoritarian road than India has and, conversely, why the Indian state has generally resisted majoritarian pressure to stand out as the protagonist of the Hindus. A comparison might also help us assess the weight of the *sangh parivar's* claim that India's minorities, especially Muslims, have been pampered by a "pseudo-secular" state.

The complaints of Hindu chauvinists nearly all relate to Muslims. This is not unusual: chauvinism anywhere in the world is always directed against an "alien" community that doesn't automatically "belong" to the nation in the way that the "host" community does.

In Malaysia, the Malays consider themselves the original owners of the country and see Malaysia's Chinese citizens as outsiders whose citizenship is conditional on their recognition of the prior and organic claim of the Malays to Malaysia. Malays and their culture, in this view, define Malaysian nationality. The language of the Malays by its very name proclaims Malay ownership of Malaysia: it is simply called Bahasa Malaysia, just as its Indonesian counterpart is called Bahasa Indonesia. The Chinese nationals of Malaysia and Indonesia are pressed to acknowledge *bhumiputra* hegemony by taking on "indigenous" names, by incorporating a "local" (Malay or Indonesian) partner in any ethnic Chinese enterprise, by acquiescing in their *de facto* exclusion from high political office despite their numbers (a third of the Malaysian population is ethnic Chinese).

The idea of the *bhumiputra* or the son of the soil is central to the construction of national identity in these countries. *Bhumiputra* insecurities are fed by the success of the Chinese business community and the obvious importance of Chinese enterprise to the economic life of the nation.

Less than a decade after independence, the Sri Lankan state under Bandaranaike's Sri Lankan Freedom Party, moved to enthrone the majority by proclaiming Sinhala as the sole national language, and by explicitly promoting and subsidizing Buddhist institutions. When Sri Lanka became a republic in 1972, the new constitution formally gave Buddhism "the foremost place" in the life of the nation. Given K.S. Sudarshan's tirade against Christianity's foreignness it is important to remember that Sirimavo Bandaranaike's first government in the early Sixties nationalized all private schools in response to Sinhala Buddhist allegations that Christians had a stranglehold on the nation's educational system. The Sri Lankan flag is a symbolic statement of Sinhala hegemony: the Sinhalese-Buddhist icon of the lion rampant dominates it and tolerated at the margins of this Sinhala standard are two coloured stripes, orange and green, symbolizing Sri Lanka's Tamils and Muslims.

Language, geography, ethnicity and religion distinguish the Sinhalese from the Tamils. The Tamils were concentrated in the north and east, they were non-Buddhists, their language was Tamil and their social origins lay in India's Tamil country. Sinhala chauvinists saw the Tamil minority as a threat well before the Jaffna troubles degenerated into civil war. The heterogeneous Tamils, made up of plantation workers, subsistence peasants and a high-

a chronically unstable condition. Second class citizenship is so contrary to the basic assumptions of a democracy and such a reproach to its functioning, that a democratic polity which cannot accept its minorities as full citizens quickly moves to disenfranchise them politically or to expel them physically on the grounds that despite being resident they aren't nationals at all, that they actually belong elsewhere, in India or China or Pakistan or Tamil



Bridge over troubled waters

ly educated and socially mobile middle class, were clubbed together and characterized as an encroaching elite minority with a presence in the professions and government service that Sinhala chauvinists decided was out of proportion to their population. It is worth remembering that the political flowering of Sinhala chauvinism in the Sixties was, in terms of law and order, peaceful. It took 20 years of majoritarian rule before the first anti-Tamil pogroms of the early Eighties were organized and before the civil war in the north began in earnest. The *sangh parivar's* prescriptions lead us down that road.

In Bangladesh, once East Pakistan, the substantial Hindu minority was resented as an exploiting landed elite that had for centuries oppressed the mainly Muslim peasantry. Hindus were distrusted as an urban *Babu* community and, after relations with India deteriorated, suspected of being Indian fifth columnists. A pattern of systematic discrimination and second class citizenship forced large parts of this Hindu population out of East Pakistan/Bangladesh.

To be tolerated at the majority's pleasure is no substitute for full citizenship in modern democracies. It is a state of limbo,

Nadu or Palestine.

What is interesting about these examples and any others we may choose to examine — the Jewish community in Weimar Germany for example — is that the demonized minority in each case is resented for being socially or economically more powerful than the "indigenous" majority. So the Jews are rootless financiers responsible for the subversion of the German economy, the Tamils are guilty of monopolizing Sri Lanka's professional and bureaucratic institutions, the Chinese in southeast Asia stand accused of shutting local populations out of business through racial conspiracy (besides being guilty of being different) and Bangladeshi Hindus are stigmatized for the centuries of oppression their educated and (relatively) prosperous co-religionists visited upon Bengal's plebeian Muslims.

The Muslim minority in India doesn't fit this pattern. Even before Partition, the much larger Muslim community of British India wasn't economically dominant anywhere in the subcontinent. Punjab was a partial exception, partial because Muslim prosperity, such as it was, was based largely on landholding; trade, commerce and urban business were domi-

nated by non-Muslims. The United Provinces (modern Uttar Pradesh) was home to a class of influential Muslim landowners and Muslims had a larger share of education and government employment in that province than they did in the rest of the country but it would be hard to show that they dominated politics or administration or business anywhere in north India. There was a tiny Muslim community in Bombay province of which the visible and prosperous tip was a community of Ismaili merchants and businessmen; there was a Muslim elite in Hyderabad city parasitic on the Nizam's administration but apart from these islands of privilege and prosperity, the Muslim community contributed more than its fair share to the ranks of India's urban and rural poor.

This partly explains the other difference between India and countries like Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh: the unwillingness of the independent Indian state to formally sponsor majoritarian demands or to systematically discriminate against its most significant minority. The independent states of Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh succumbed to the temptation of institutionally entrenching the majority's interest partly because in these countries minorities could be shown to be or were perceived as more privileged, more prosperous or more powerful than the rest. In India it was hard to sell such an idea and not only because the Congress, the party of anti-imperialist nationalism, was a pluralist and secular organization, though this was important. Despite the catalogue of historical and political sins attributed to predatory Muslims, there was no general sense of resentment born of envy simply because it was clear to everyone that Muslims as a community were backward rather than privileged.

If the Muslim population of India was relatively backward just before Partition, its economic and social standing after Partition declined further. It was numerically weaker: the larger part of the community was lost to Pakistan and what remained was a rump, an impoverished rump because many educated Muslims from parts of India other than the Pakistan areas migrated to the new Muslim state. By every criterion used to measure development — education, income, employment, life expectancy — the Muslims of independent India were a depressed community even by the low standards of a poor country.

Today, 53 years after independence, Muslims lag behind every major religious community in India. If the United Nations development programme's country reports on human development were to organize information in community categories, the visible gap between Muslims and other Indians would embarrass the republic. It is in the context of this demonstrable backwardness that I want to explore, the next time round, the appeal of the *sangh parivar's* conviction that the Indian state has pampered minorities in general and appeased Muslims in particular.

10-15

A titan bids adieu



Mr. Jyoti Basu... end of an era.

THERE IS a new face of Mr. Jyoti Basu on view these days. In a remarkable contrast with the aloofness of the past 23 years — with the hallmark dour expression, stern eyes, purposeful stride with a phalanx of securitymen in tow and, of course, the occasional retorts when anyone tried to breach the air of impenetrability about him — Mr. Basu's face is cracking into smiles, his eyes are sparkling and full of warmth and his walk slower, with smaller steps.

Ever since he announced his plans to retire after a 23-year innings, making way for a much younger Mr. Buddhadev Bhattacharya, Mr. Basu has become unbelievably accessible. The doors of his chamber at Writers' Buildings are virtually open to anyone who wishes to present him a bouquet or shake his hand or get photographed with him. The operator at his official residence at Salt Lake takes no more than a minute to connect a caller to the patriarch if his business is genuine.

By Sunday, Mr. Basu will have stopped visiting Writers' Buildings, almost his second home for more than two decades. The very next day, Mr. Bhattacharya will be sworn in under the benign gaze of Mr. Basu. With this, a new phase of politics will begin in West Bengal where a major electoral showdown between the communists and a centrist-rightist combine is set to happen in the days ahead.

The outcome of the showdown is difficult to predict as the event

A larger-than-life figure like Mr. Jyoti Basu was a virtual banyan tree in whose shadow everyone could feel safe.
MALABIKA BHATTACHARYA on his stepping down from office.

itself is still in the bowels of the future. But, it can be said with certainty that Mr. Basu's departure from the Government will have a broad connection with whichever way it works out.

Predictably, Ms. Mamata Banerjee, whose Trinamul Congress in collaboration with the BJP will take on the ruling communists in the coming Assembly elections, saw in Mr. Basu's retirement a fleeing from the battlefield ahead of the elections. The Congress president, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, who had spoilt Mr. Basu's chances of becoming Prime Minister and thereby cleared the decks for the installation of the Vajpayee Government at the Centre, displaying belated perspicacity, recalled Mr. Basu's contribution to Indian politics and complimented him for his "sense of perfect timing and circumstance".

As far as the last bit of the observation goes, she will find many disbelievers because the opinion in and outside the CPI(M) as well as the ruling Left Front is divided on the timing of retirement. One large school feels that Mr. Basu, 87, though in poor health, could have

done a service to the CPI(M), in an expanded sense, the ruling Front, had he retired after ensuring the sixth electoral success in a row. The ruling communists, without him at the helm, might find it difficult to replicate the previous successes.

"I have no doubt in predicting yet another electoral success for the Left in the coming elections. If you care to go through the recent election statistics, we have been doing well," Mr. Basu said.

The impact of Mr. Basu's departure from governance cannot be fully measured now because the future of West Bengal is going to be determined by large body of factors. Regarded in isolation, his leaving may appear to be having the potential to raise questions to the voter's mind about his successor's abilities to retain the enviable stability, communal harmony, growing social infrastructure and quality of law and order maintained by the Basu Government.

But the counter-argument is no less substantial. Coming after a gap of more than two decades, a change of helmsman could work out to the advantage of the com-

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Another setback

THE CENTRAL hills of Sri Lanka are home to tea, one of the most civilised things about mankind. A few days ago, they witnessed some of the most barbaric acts that man can inflict on fellow beings. A ghastly attack by an armed mob on a Government open prison in Bindunuwewa near the hill town of Bandarawela, 230 km from the capital Colombo, left 27 of the 41 inmates, all of them Tamil, dead, and the rest seriously wounded.

It only made it worse that the inmates of the camp were not hardcore militants, but those picked up on suspicion of helping the group in minor ways, and cadres who had run away from the LTTE. This was a Government facility to rehabilitate them.

For the People's Alliance-led coalition Government formed after last month's parliamentary elections, it was hardly the most auspicious beginning. The massacre at the camp was followed by rioting by Tamil mobs in the nearby district of Nuwara Eliya, placing the Government, re-elected last month for a second term, under immense pressure, both at home and internationally.

The President, Ms. Chandrika Kumaratunga, acted swiftly to control the damage. Police officials in Bandarawela and at the camp were suspended, and the Human Rights Commission (HRC) began an enquiry parallel to the police investigation. The HRC has already submitted its interim report indicting the police for "dereliction of duty" in failing to prevent the attack. It has also said that the attack was "planned and premeditated".

Posters had appeared in the small hill town on the night of the attack demanding that the camp be moved out of the area. "You have given away Jaffna to the LTTE, is Bandarawela next," asked one of the posters.

First in the line of suspicion are the hardline Sinhala nationalist groups, some of them recently formed, that have made no secret of their communalism. These groups were nearly decimated in the elections, but the attack carried the unmistakable odour of a ploy to further their agenda.

But the PA came in for its share of criticism. Observers said the attack was the direct consequence of the "we will eliminate LTTE" campaign in the run-up to the elections by the PA, most notably, by the Prime Minister, Mr. Ratnasiri Wickramanayake.

Said the National Peace Council: The incident at Bandarawela



One of the victims of the Bandarawela massacre... fanning ethnic hatred.

For the LTTE, the Bandarawela incident was a massive propaganda victory... Ms. Kumaratunga was quick to see this and reminded the people that it was Sinhala racism that had in the past fattened the LTTE.
NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN reports.

demonstrates that the war mentality cannot be limited to the north-east theatre of operations. Unless the Government speedily emphasises constitutional reform and a political solution, we fear that the larger society itself will be brutalised beyond repair."

The NPC said the killing of the LTTE prisoners in Bandarawela possibly reflected the internalising of a frame of mind in which the only solution seems to be the anni-

hilation of the enemy.

For the LTTE, the incident at Bandarawela was a massive propaganda victory. Swiftly, it put out a statement that the inmates of the camp were not members of the LTTE but innocent Tamil civilians who had been picked up on suspicion and had been kept prisoner at the camp without being charged. Not all its military successes in the north could have given it this mileage.

The President was quick to see

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Insat-2B lost and i

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & UNI

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BANGALORE, Nov. 4. — Indian space scientists today successfully retrieved multi-purpose satellite Insat-2B which had almost slipped out of their hands after losing the earth lock yesterday at 2.30 p.m.

Indian Space Research Organisation sources said all services operated from the satellite's transponders had been restored. Engineers at the Insat master control facility at Hassan had been working relentlessly to retrieve the satellite.

As the satellite had completed its mission life of seven years in July, recovering the lock had become difficult because of the depleted condition of the oxidiser in the satellite.

Insat-2B, part of the largest constellation of communication satellites in the world, was launched on 23 July, 1993, from

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Kourou in French Guyana. It carries C-band, extended C-band, S-band transponders and meteorological payload.

Co-located at 53.5 degrees east longitude along with Insat-2C, the satellite has 12 national coverage telecommunication transponders, six extended C-band transponders, two high-power national coverage television broadcast transponders and a data relay transponder with global receive coverage for meteorological, hydrological and oceanographic data from unattended and ocean-based automatic data collection-cum-transmission platforms.

It also has an extended C-band search and rescue distress alert transponder. The weather monitoring payload consists of a very high resolution radiometer for meteorological earth imaging.

Isro sources had earlier said the satellite

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Suhart declarec

STRAITS TIMES
ASIA NEWS NETWORK

JAKARTA, Nov. 4. — Indonesian prosecutors, who went to the home of former President Suharto's son, Mr Hutomo Mandala Putra, to arrest him yesterday, have declared him a fugitive as he was nowhere to be found.

State Prosecutor Fahmi, accompanied by dozens of policemen, stood in pouring rain and banged on the front door of Mr Hutomo's home in central Jakarta's plush Menteng district for 40 minutes, but no one opened the door. "We've come here to execute the sentence for Tommy," he said, using the 38-year-old businessman's popular name, before retreating to his car. He said he intended to wait till midnight outside the house, pending further instructions from the chief prosecutor.

An AFP report quoted prosecutor Fahmi as saying: "At 12.00 am (1700 GMT) his name will go on the wanted list." The Indonesian Attorney General Marzuki Darusman too confirmed this after midnight, when asked if Tommy had been declared a fugitive. Mr Hutomo's lawyers have been keeping mum about his whereabouts.

Asked why he did not force his way into the house and conduct a search, Mr Fahmi said: "I was only given instructions to arrest him, not to search for him."

The tycoon and his business partner, Ricardo Gelael, were sentenced to jail terms of 18 months each and fined 36 billion rupiah each for having caused the state a 95.4-billion rupiah loss in a shady land deal.

Mr Hutomo was seen leaving his home at 1 pm yesterday, around the time he was expected at the prosecutor's office to begin his jail term. The move to arrest Mr Hutomo and get him to begin his jail term was stalled yesterday by sluggish bureaucracy: a copy of President Abdurrahman Wahid's rejection of a clemency appeal — issued on Thursday — was not delivered to his lawyers.

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may not affect his chances

breaking the law but did so in a quiet fashion instead of the "Do you know who I am" routine.

The political columnist, Mr. Dick Morris said, "Most impressively he didn't pull strings to avoid prosecution... George W could have tried to throw his weight around — as Ted Kennedy did at Chappaquidick, for example. Bush didn't. He was arrested. He was convicted. He paid his fine. His licence was suspended in Maine." It would have been a wholly different scenario if Mr. Bush, on that night in 1976, had been involved in an accident that ended in injuries. If that had indeed happened, Mr. Bush's political goose would have been cooked a long time ago and he may not even be in the Presidential fray.

The political environment is highly charged as the candidates are running neck and neck in the national polls. One estimate of the electoral college vote tally shows Mr. Bush having a firm 217 votes, Mr. Gore 200 and 121 being too close to call. The latest tracking poll shows the Texas Governor ahead of the Vice-President by four per cent. Mr. Ralph Nader, the Green Party candidate, continues to poll five percentage points

him an apology for the impeachment. And on a popular radio talk show in California, Mr. Clinton, when told that a third term would have been nice, remarked, "But you can get the next best thing". The Gore campaign tried to make the best of the statement saying it was a reiteration of Mr. Clinton's commitment to the Vice-President. The Bush campaign saw it differently. "Enough said. Thank you for making our case," said its spokesperson.

The close race has meant that both Mr. Bush and Mr. Gore have had to travel to areas otherwise way down in priority. Apart from Michigan, Mr. Bush will be in West Virginia today and in New Jersey on Saturday — both traditionally Democrat strongholds. Mr. Gore is doing intensive campaigning in Missouri, Iowa and Tennessee, his home State. Mr. Clinton, after his tour of California and a stop in New York, will head to his home State of Arkansas to canvass for the Vice-President. Mr. Bush is leading in Tennessee and too close in Arkansas. Mr. Bush could not resist taking a dig at this scenario. "I am flattered. We must be doing something right," he quipped.

'Violations of human

By Our Special Correspondent *NOA*

CHENNAI, NOV. 4. Adoption of a humane approach while dealing with the public, implementation of the recommendations of the National Police Commission and in-service training to police personnel were stressed by speakers at a training programme on human rights for police officers on Saturday. It was pointed out that the subject of 'human rights' was more important to police, particularly in the context of the existence of the universal declaration of human rights and growing awareness among the people. The police had to bear in mind that crude and rude methods alone would not bring results.

The training was jointly organised by the Madras School of Social Work (MSSW), People's Watch (PW) — Tamil Nadu and FEDCOT for city police officials.

Inaugurating the programme, the city Police Commissioner, Mr. P. Kalimuthu, explained that Tamil Nadu had the barest minimum number of human rights violations, compared to other States. The State Government's strict warning that custodial deaths would be viewed as serious violations of human rights has had the desired results and the number of such deaths had drastically come down. The subject was also being reviewed critically by the law enforcement agencies. He had sent circulars to the personnel on the need to adhere to human rights codes. In the city, so far, this year there had been only one incident and last year there was no case of death in custody.

He said certain 'unpleasant happenings' and stray incidents were being blown out of proportion by vested interests and the media leading to an errone-

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Bush's folly

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, NOV. 4. There are just three days to go before the U.S. Presidential elections. With the revelation of his arrest and conviction in 1976 for driving under the influence of alcohol hanging over his head, the Texas Governor, Mr. George Bush travelled in the mid-west telling voters that it was time to end the bitterness and fingerpointing in Washington D.C.

In Grand Rapids, Michigan, the Republican nominee took part in the damage control exercise when he spoke briefly, but indirectly, of the story that was the focus of all talk shows on Friday. "I made mistakes in my life but I am proud to tell you I've learned from these mistakes."

The Bush campaign has accused the Democrats of "last minute dirty tricks" at this stage of the campaign. The Gore campaign, on its part, insisted that it had nothing to do with the revelation that Mr. Bush was in fact stopped, arrested and convicted for driving under the influence of alcohol on September 4, 1976. The Gore campaign maintains that the Vice-President got the news only on Thursday and Mr. Gore himself made it clear on Friday that he did not want to discuss the subject, he'd rather stay with the issues. Agency reports quoted a Democrat, Mr. Tom Connally, as saying that he had tipped off the media about Mr. Bush's drunk driving record.

Many questions

THE HINDU

NOV 10 1992

Rebuilding after 1997, southeast Asia is happily toppling the old gods

Birth of an attitude

SUNANDA K. DATTA-RAY

9-10 2004

Within moments of flying into Singapore from Bangkok, I was regaled with the latest Lee Kuan Yew joke whose very unkindness testifies to the new spirit of assertiveness that is abroad throughout the region, and which has a serious political dimension. Out of the dust and mortar of economic reconstruction might arise one day an edifice of political liberalism of which Marx and Engels might have been proud.

Apparently, Lee bought a suitlength and took it to a tailor in Singapore. The man measured it and him, then said it would just suffice for a twopiece suit. Lee then went to Kuala Lumpur where a Malaysian tailor told him that apart from a suit, he could squeeze out an extra pair of trousers. A Taiwanese tailor went one better with two extra pairs from the same material. Then, the veteran Lee went to Washington where an American tailor said the cloth would easily suffice for three full suits.

Surprised but impressed, Lee complimented Bill Clinton on the efficiency and economy of his tailors. "Not at all!" replied the American president. "You see, the farther you travel from Singapore, Mr Lee, the smaller you become."

I was told that the story was posted on the Internet and read and repeated widely. But knowing Singaporeans, I would not be at all surprised if one of them — they are a people with an unsuspected mischievous sense of humour — posted it himself.

The internet plays havoc with closed or excessively deferential societies. It has made nonsense of Singapore's bilateral agreement with Malaysia that one country's newspapers should not circulate in the other. A high Singapore official who imported a number of expatriates to revitalize the net may have been hoisted with his own petard when they set up the Singapore Internet Company which promptly created a website called "Not the Straits Times Forum".

The joke is that "Forum" is the title of the paper's letters to the editor page — the new website gleefully publishes masses of letters that the *Straits Times* supposedly rejected as being too bold or liberal. Again, I would not be at all surprised if many of these iconoclastic letters were deliberately created for the internet, and also, perhaps, to give the conformist *Straits Times* a bad name.

Conformism is unfashionable. As southeast Asia rebuilds again after the economic crash of 1997, it is discovering virtue in toppling all the old gods.

The Thais are boldly accusing Thaksin Sinawatra, a telecom tycoon and the most hopeful prime ministerial candidate for the December election, of concealing his vast wealth in a series of fake trusts.

In Indonesia, the lawyer representing 37-year-old Hutomo (Tommy) Mandala Putra, Suharto's favourite son, says that his client has been in jail for the last 18 months, unknown to anyone. Tommy and his five siblings are accused of extensive fraud involving hundreds of billions of dollars. The most revolutionary develop-



┌ An extreme swing will serve little purpose. History will reassess both Suharto and Lee Kuan Yew and give them greater credit for their solid achievements. It is also true that democracy alone is not the panacea ┐

ment is that their 79-year-old father, Suharto, revered for so long as the saviour of the nation, can avoid facing trial only by pleading one illness after another.

A Malaysian journalist, Hoo Ban Khee, associated editor of *The Star*, is not afraid to complain openly that "the same coalition government has been in existence" since the country became independent in 1957, only changing its name from time to time. Hoo also admits that Mohamad Mahathir's commitment to the flamboyant multimedia super corridor and, therefore,

to allow cyber news to run free will eventually have a profound impact on political thought and media operations.

Why do I bring Marx and Engels into all this? Because it is not often remembered that both were convinced votaries of the free press. "The censored press has a demoralizing effect," wrote Karl Marx. "It is potentiated evil, from which hypocrisy is inseparable, and from this fundamental evil flow all its other weaknesses." Engels wrote in August 1882, "You simply must have a press in the party which is not di-

rectly dependent on the executive and the party congress, i.e., which is able within the programme and the accepted tactic to oppose without fear individual party steps and...freely to expose to criticism the (party) programme and the tactics."

Few southeast Asian rulers would have permitted such heresy when fortunes rode high and the miracle seemed everlasting. "We no longer believe in that miracle," Singapore's personable young nominated member of parliament, Simon Tay, regarded by many as the voice of responsible liberty, told a seminar on media and democracy organized by the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre earlier this week.

"We have seen property and currency bubbles burst in our faces. We have come to recognize the corruption and cronyism in so many of our elites and their dealings. We have come to see the faces of the poor, the children, women and others, who have been marginalized in the process of development. In this context, the first and most important change in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region is the rise of democracy." That was Simon's verdict.

Soon after the crisis when I wrote that the future might see the region's "soft authoritarian" states replaced by liberal regimes, there were bitter protests all round. Loudest of all were the Americans and Europeans in the region who accused me of wishing to visit the chaos of India or the lawlessness of Chicago on the orderly ASEAN countries. But all that is changing. "In the broader region of Asia, this shift towards democracy can add to the democratic examples in India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan," Simon, who describes himself as a committed democrat who was not democratically sent to parliament, told the seminar. "For the first time in history, potentially, the balance of the region's countries will be democratic."

But, of course, an extreme swing would serve little purpose. I have little doubt that history will reassess both Suharto and Lee Kuan Yew and give them greater credit for their solid achievements. Simon Tay is the first to admit — and Indonesia proves — that democracy alone is not the panacea. The last word belongs, I think, to Fidel Ramos, former president of the Philippines, Southeast Asia's least developed country.

Chided by Lee for allowing too much democracy, Ramos replied with realistic dignity: "Today, we Filipinos are competing hard to catch up with our vigorous neighbours in economic and ideological growth. But perhaps we are more than abreast of them in one key component of modernization. We Filipinos have already gone through — and succeeded in — our democratic revolution. History has made our culture proof against tyranny. While freedom by itself does not bring about progress, it does provide the most enduring foundation for the good society we are trying to build for ourselves and our posterity."

I find in that statement the only acceptable justification for the raucous, violent and corrupt operations of our own political pluralism.

Flood froth

Basu threatens suit against ad

BY A STAFF REPORTER

Sept. 28: Mud flew in flooded Bengal in an unparalleled confrontation today as chief minister Jyoti Basu threatened to sue Eastern Railway for releasing an "objectionable" advertisement and ridiculed Mamata Banerjee for alleging that the calamity in the state was "man-made".

"We will file a case against them. This is not only unethical but also unprecedented," Basu said at Writers' Buildings.

The railway's advertisement was in the form of an appeal to the flood victims, asking them not to hamper restoration work on rail tracks. The appeal said: "We understand your sentiments and resentment for relief not having been provided to you by the state government...."

A livid Basu, who held a meeting with party colleague and barrister Somnath Chatterjee and deputy chief minister Buddhadev Bhattacharya, instructed chief secretary Manish Gupta to contact the railway's general manger and seek a clarification.

Eastern Railway general manager I.I.M.S. Rana told a news conference that the controversial sentence appeared because of a "clerical" error and a revised advertisement would be brought out on Friday. "It was just an appeal asking the people not to attack railway workers trying to restore the tracks," he added.

But Chatterjee said the railway could not evade responsibility for the "scurrilous observation". "The officers behind this move will not be spared. They have spent public money for political gain," he asserted.

Bhattacharya gave the railway two days to rectify the appeal. "If they do not do so, we will fight them to the last," he added.

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Like her department, Mamata also drew virulent criticism from the chief minister for dubbing the floods "man-made" yesterday. "Is she mad? I have no words to counter her irrational statement. These words can only be uttered by an inferior politician," Basu said.

"Lakhs are suffering in the floods and relief cannot be reached to many of them. Is this the time to play dirty politics or rush to the people's aid? She has lowered herself to such depths that I feel constrained to comment on her," he added.

Mamata suffered another snub from an unlikely source, too. Congress president Sonia Gandhi, who went on an aerial survey of the flood-affected areas, said she did not "see any evidence that the floods were man-made. Mamata Banerjee will be in a better position to say". Sonia also supported Basu on Article 356. "One must apply one's mind very, very carefully and cautiously before imposing the Article," she said.

The state government opened another flank against the railway, charging it with tardy progress in restoring tracks. Urban development minister Ashoke Bhattacharya wrote to the railway minister, asking for her intervention to speed up the repair. "The railway effort to get things back on track is lukewarm. It seems that they are progressing slowly," Bhattacharya said.

The state also protested against the railway's charge that the water released from the Tilpara barrage had washed away the tracks at Nalhati where the Teesta-Torsa Express was nearly swept away on September 19. "They do not know geography. The Nalhati area is upstream from Tilpara and no way could the water have reached that area," said finance minister Asim Dasgupta.

Rehabilitation works under Sarovar proje

By Manas Dasgupta

GANDHINAGAR, SEPT. 29. The prestigious Club of Tokyo of water management experts from all over the world has appreciated the "excellent rehabilitation" works done under the Sardar Sarovar Narmada dam project in Gujarat, it is claimed.

The Club, currently in session in Tokyo, evolved a general consensus that any development project would necessarily entail some displacements but a "detailed mechanism of rehabilitation such as the one being carried out in the Sarovar project would "definitely mitigate" the hardships involved in involuntary resettlement and sometimes might also improve their economic lot better than ever before, a State Government spokesman said here today.

The Minister for Narmada Affairs and Major Irrigation, Mr. Jaynarayan Vyas, who is the only non-Japanese Asian member inducted in the Club, made a presentation before the club on large dams and

sustainable development with special reference to the Narmada dam in its plenary session.

Success stories should serve as model

Some of the experts pointed out that a few selected success stories of resettlement as in the case of the Narmada dam should be circulated to serve as a model for other projects to follow.

It was felt that for lack of a coordinated communication strategy on the part of the various Governmental agencies implementing such projects provided an opportunity to the "few misguided and misdirected individuals and institutions" to spread deliberate "misinformation about the excellent rehabilitation work being carried out in such projects."

The Club decided that in future definite attempts be made to highlight the achievements of these projects to remove the misgivings in the minds of the people.

The meeting, which was being attended by, among others, Dr. Ismail Serageldin, vice-president of the World Bank, and Prof. Benedito P. F. Barga, president of the International Water Resources Association, was informed by Mr. Vyas about the emerging water scenario in various parts of Gujarat. Making a graphic representation, he pointed out that constantly falling water tables, increase in fluoride and nitrate and salinity in ground water with frequent failure of the monsoon had created a situation whereby thousands of people and cattle were forced to migrate every year, uprooting them socially, culturally and economically.

He pointed out that like vitamins that help the body but could not become a substitute for staple foods, the rain water harvesting, by creating checkdams, percolation tanks and other micro water shed management structures could prove supplementary and complementary to the Sardar Sarovar project but not a substitute for it.

While there is a glimmer of hope for the Narmada dam finally receiving international acceptability despite opposition and protests by the environmentalists, back home the Madhya Pradesh Government is demonstrating a change in its stance, to rectify its image as a strong opponent of the Sarovar dam.

The Chief Ministers of M.P. and Rajasthan, Mr. Digvijay Singh and Mr Ashok Gehlot, were here on Thursday to attend a Pradesh Congress(I) function, and also had brief meetings with the Gujarat Chief Minister, Mr. Keshubhai Patel.

Mr. Singh said Gujarat and M.P. should together counter the propaganda by the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) against large dams. He denied M.P. was not co-operating in speeding up the rehabilitation, but admitted that while most of the affected in his State were unwilling to move to Gujarat, there was not sufficient land available to rehabilitate them.

He said the NBA publicity hype against the project was

Prague and after

By C. Rammanohar Reddy

The Bretton Woods twins may be imperfect and more sensitive to the concerns of the donors than those of the needy. But, their relevance cannot be questioned.

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THE IMAGE that will probably linger of the 2000 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank is one that was splashed on newspapers across the world — of an angry demonstrator preparing to hurl a stone at the police on the day anti-globalisation street marches turned violent in Prague. But despite what their critics may feel, this image of the two institutions being under siege is not a very accurate one.

The protestors may have brought the annual meetings to an end a day earlier, but the Bretton Wood twins will be with us just much as they have been around for more than half a century. The tide of criticism in national parliaments, especially in the U.S. Congress, has passed and while all the donor countries may not have met their funding commitments, there is little likelihood of a major overhaul, of the kind that the Metzler Committee of the U.S. recommended some months ago, taking place. The IMF and the World Bank leave Prague in much the same shape as before, though in small but definite ways both are showing change though of different kinds.

When it was decided in 1995 that this year's meetings would be held in Prague, the hope was that the occasion could be used to showcase the successful transformation, within a decade, of east Europe from statist economies into thriving market societies. That has not happened. Indeed, a World Bank study released during the Prague conference showed a sharp worsening of poverty in east Europe, though not all countries (certainly not the Czech Republic and Poland) have witnessed such a deterioration. If the change in east Europe as a theme for the annual meeting was pushed aside by the anti-globalisation protests, the policy-making bodies of the Bretton Wood institutions tried briefly to play a role in two contemporary issues, neither of which fell directly in their domain. When the International Monetary and Financial Committee of the IMF met against the backdrop of high oil prices, it tried to make out as if it had got an agreement from the oil producing nations on greater price stability. But in the event it was the

U.S. decision to release a part of its reserves that did more to bring down prices than any pronouncements from the IMFC. Then the IMF tried to talk up the falling euro and the coordinated central bank intervention during the meetings seemed to suggest that the west European and north American Governments were heeding the IMF's advice. But by the time the meetings ended the central bank intervention seemed just a fleeting event and the euro was no longer showing any sign of reversing a 20-month-long decline. It was never really going to be possible for the IMF and the World Bank to have much say on either oil prices or the euro's value. What then is the change that was witnessed at Prague? There

were two. The IMF's Managing Director, Mr. Horst Kohler, came with some new ideas and suggestions for an IMF that would be different from the old one. Not all the changes were substantive and not all of them were in directions that the developing countries may applaud. But after the battering the IMF took over its handling of the East Asian crisis of 1997 and then the siphoning off of loans to Russia it was in need of a new image. There was change too at the World Bank but this was of an organisation that was increasingly looking tired and which did not seem to be getting anywhere in its mission of poverty eradication.

The IMF's proposals for an enlarged role in surveillance and crisis prevention and for drawing back on loan-based activity was by and large endorsed by its share-holders. It was left to India to point out the pitfalls in how the IMF was formulating its crisis prevention strategy. The focus entirely on the development of uniform regulations in banking, insurance and securities or transparency in the functioning of Governments sees the roots of financial crises in domestic economies rather than in the functioning of world financial markets. The other

danger, again something that India pointed out at Prague, was that the adoption of standards and codes had to be calibrated according to a country's stage of development. By the time the 2000 Annual Meetings were over, there seemed to be a greater acceptance of this argument.

But by far the biggest change that Mr. Kohler can possibly bring about in the IMF is in the skewed pattern of voting rights. A shareholding pattern that gives so much power to the industrial countries has been a bone of contention for decades. Mr. Kohler has already ruffled many feathers, especially in west Europe,

by announcing his intention to bring about a little less inequity. This cannot be done in a few months and the developing countries will have their eyes on Mr. Kohler; to see if he too gives up as others before him did.

The World Bank resembled a moribund organisation. The speeches of its President, Mr. James Wolfensohn, increasingly sound tired and seem to convince neither developing countries nor NGOs about what it was doing for poverty eradication. The World Bank presented to the Development Committee, the other policy-making body of the Fund-Bank, a proposal to work on what it called global public goods — areas of intervention where every country could benefit. Confusing as this term was for World Bank intervention in the global environment, the digital divide, immunisation and even world trade; the suggestions seemed like an already over-extended organisation trying to take on yet more roles. The Development Committee wisely asked the World Bank to do some more home work and come up with more focussed proposals.

More ominous was the U.S. proposal for a radical change in the terms and coverage of World Bank loans. First, middle-income countries (those with per capita incomes of \$750 to \$3,000) would be

made ineligible for World Bank loans. This would at one stroke take out many countries in East Asia and South America. Second, the poor performers will have to pay a higher interest rate than the better performers. At least for now, the Development Committee has been able to reject this suggestion.

If there was one thing that would have won the World Bank much public support, it would have been expanded relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. Civic groups have campaigned hard to increase debt write-off under the HIPC but both NGOs and indebted countries in the developing world complain that progress has been very slow. A year ago the Group of Seven Industrialised Countries promised a major expansion of the terms of debt write-off. In the event, progress towards true relief — in coverage and quantum — has been excruciatingly slow. Only ten of the 41 eligible countries have reached the decision point after which they will be entitled to a gradual waiver. So far, the country which is to make the biggest contribution, the U.S., has yet to make its funding of the HIPC Initiative. While the keys to the register are ultimately controlled by the Governments of the industrial countries, it is a fact that in Prague neither the IMF nor the World Bank showed much interest in pushing for a bigger HIPC.

After Prague, the Bretton Wood institutions remain as much part of the landscape as they have been since 1944. There is the argument that in a world where global private capital flows are so much larger than official and multilateral assistance, the two have lost their relevance. This is not quite correct. For one thing, with private capital so volatile there will always be a need for an overseer or a lender of last resort like the IMF. Second, with global private capital concentrated in less than 20 countries the role of the World Bank in supplementing domestic resources in most poor countries is clear. The two institutions may be imperfect and more sensitive to the concerns of their donors than to those of the needy. But their relevance cannot be questioned.

MACROSCOPE

■ Centre's relief package after minister's report ■ Zoo, .

Nitish on flood visit to silence Left complaint

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE ⁵⁹¹

NEW DELHI, Sept. 28. — The Union agriculture minister will reach Calcutta on Saturday to assess the flood situation in the state.

Though earlier the Centre had decided to send only a joint secretary-level team on Friday, the Prime Minister later reportedly told Mr Nitish Kumar, now in Bihar, to change his programme and go to West Bengal. The agriculture ministry has confirmed Mr Kumar's visit.

Mr Kumar was asked to visit the state to counter the Left Front government's attempts to accuse the Centre of not paying enough attention to the floods, officials said.

The minister and the agriculture secretary, Mr Bhaskar Barua, will reach Calcutta at 1 p.m. and undertake an aerial survey of the flood-hit districts. Mr Kumar will then be briefed by the joint secretaries' team, which will hold a meeting with state officials after reaching Calcutta tomorrow.

Mr Kumar is likely to call on Mr Jyoti Basu and leave for Patna on Saturday night.

The minister's team will comprise agriculture, finance, surface transport, water resources and Planning Commission departments' officials. The Cabinet secretary, Mr Prabhat Kumar, discussed the flood-situation at a secretary-level meeting tonight.

The Centre today said 42 Army-boats, 50 speed boats and about 850 boats are helping relief operations. Rs 860 crore has been released in advance from West Bengal's entitlement of Central assistance in various sectors. Two calamity relief fund instalments — Rs 44 crore — will be released in addition to Rs 75.83 crore already sent to the state.

In October, the Centre will send about 70,000 tonnes of foodgrains at below poverty line rates for the 3.4 million affected families. Also, 10,000



Flood victims being served food at Panji Pukur in Hooghly on Thursday. — The Statesman (Another photograph on page 3)

tonnes of kerosene that the state had sought will be sent along with halogen tablets and bleaching powder. Adequate supply of drinking water too will be provided.

Mr Kumar had visited Hyderabad on a fact-finding mission after the recent flash floods had devastated Andhra Pradesh. Senior leaders reportedly felt that if the Central team had only joint secretaries, the Left Front would have got another chance to allege Central apathy.

The Centre will announce the flood relief package after Mr Kumar's visit.

Left offensive: The Left Front plans counter to Miss Mamata Banerjee's demand for President's rule in the state by reportedly alleging Central apathy towards the flood vic-

tims.

A four-man parliamentary delegation — Mr Biplab Dasgupta (CPI-M), Mr Ajoy Chakraborty (CPI), Mr Abani Roy (RSP) and Mr Debabrata Biswas (Forward Bloc) — today called on the President and the Prime Minister. They demanded adequate Central assistance to tide over the flood situation.

They asked

Mr KR Narayanan and Mr Vajpayee to declare the floods a national calamity and

demand that the Centre release Rs 962 crore as flood relief.

BJP demand: The BJP today demanded that Mr Basu convene an all-party meeting to apprise opposition parties of the flood relief operations. Mr M Venkaiah Naidu, party spokesman, said the Centre wouldn't discriminate in giving

assistance.

The Centre has promised to give the state foodgrains it needs as flood relief, he said.

Mr Naidu and the party vice-president in-charge of West Bengal, Mr Kailashpati Mishra, had earlier asked Mr Vajpayee to send a Central team to the state. A BJP team too will visit the flood-hit areas after the water recedes. Mr Naidu appealed to all political parties to begin massive relief and rehabilitation operations.

Mr Naidu suggested that the state set up all-party committees in the flood-hit districts for better and prompt relief operations.

The Congress and Trinamul have alleged discrimination in the state's relief to flood victims. Mr Mishra said the state was trying to divert the people's attention from the floods by attacking Miss Banerjee and Mr LK Advani.

■ Editorial: The real disaster, page 8
■ More reports on pages 3 & 4

backs NDA in race

For details
57-8 874

Prasad Yadav today assured his support to the NDA in the latter's efforts to form a government.

40 MLAs as of now and I am concerned about the government led by the JMM-S", Mr Yadav said during a meeting with the RJD chief at Patna. He said he is willing to part ways with the NDA from the very beginning. "The NDA has neglected the tribals and poor masses of the state and the post to Mr Soren".

In support to Mr Soren, some RJD workers rushed to a local hotel where Mrs Joba Majhi and Mr Sudesh Chandra were staying. The RJD men were looking for support from them in the favour of Mr Soren. They said they had given their support to the NDA yesterday in support of the government. But Mrs Majhi said she had extended support to the RJD men before they reached there. Mr Yadav called up the party workers to get Mrs Majhi and Mr

Chandra to support the Congress and the Left parties in their efforts to form a "non-BJP government" with the strength to form my government by November."

The BJP has decided to make Mr Prasad Yadav the minister of Jharkhand, the supporters in Ranchi were up in arms against

him and sent him a message requesting him to decline the offer to join the Union government.

Mr Yadav is said to be "extremely dejected" and is unwilling to "impose" a "junior" leader as the new minister of Jharkhand state BJP chief, Mr Prasad Yadav from Ranchi, Mr Ramdayal Singh from the Khunti region.

Mr Yadav is very upset. "I don't know why the party is denying me the opportunity to serve the people of Jharkhand."

Mr Yadav's decision to make Mr Marandi the minister of Jharkhand is in the interest of Jharkhand". He, however, is a long-time party worker... and ...I will

Mr Yadav's support to the JMM-S, Mr Prasad Yadav's government. It's because the NDA is not a member of the 16-member House, and Mrs Joba Majhi has extended support to them.

Mr Prasad Yadav, Mr Deepak Prakash, said he will not support the party.

Mr Prasad Yadav has an edge over Mr Soren in the eventuality of horse trading.

Mr Prasad Yadav's support can hardly be washed away. The support of the RJD in Jharkhand for the fodder scam will be taken to the courts of the new state. Mr Prasad Yadav will be taken to the courts of Jharkhand in the eventuality of horse trading. Mr Prasad Yadav will like to have a "favourable"

munists who have lately been considering various ways and means to woo the young voters, born after Mr. Basu took office as Chief Minister, unfamiliar with his struggles, his direct participation in mass movements and his contribution to the evolution of the Left in Parliament.

Ms. Banerjee has shrewdly been articulating the new generation of voters' sentiments for change after cracking cheap jokes about Mr. Basu's health and the preponderance of grey in the Government.

In hindsight, a larger-than-life leader like Mr. Basu — the best Prime Minister India never had — was a virtual banyan tree in whose shadow everyone would feel safe, secure, growing but would not be required to run the extra mile to be known as "the leader". After Mr. Basu's exit, all the present leaders, Mr. Bhattacharya in Writers' Buildings and Mr. Biman Bose and Mr. Anil Biswas at the party headquarters on Alimuddin Street, find themselves outside the "banyan tree", working out the tasks for the future.

One thing is certain, both the government and the CPI(M) will witness a greater interface between the administration and the party as part of an emerging collective leadership. Mr. Bhattacharya, between now and April, will concentrate on sharpening the edge of governance on which, to a great extent, will depend the outcome of the Assembly elections.

Mr. Bhattacharya, known for honesty, uprightness and ability to go into issues in depth — qualities he attributes to studying Mr. Basu from up close as his deputy — matches the challenger, Ms. Banerjee, almost point to point. Being young and intellectually stimulating, he is in a better position to articulate the sentiments of the new generation.

Mr. Biman Bose and Mr. Anil Biswas, who are doing an admirable job in coordinating the Government-party interface for the reconstruction of the nine flood-ravaged districts, will soon have to start addressing the issue of activating the party machinery in view of the Assembly elections. With Mr. Basu in the background for the first time, but alert and watching as usual, the trinity will experience, so to say, baptism by fire.

All the three will have two more jobs to perform. One of them is to develop measures to retain the large body of pro-changers many of whom identify themselves with Mr. Basu's line of thought. Mr. Subhash Chakraborty, Mr. Samir Putatunda and a few others are believed to be sympathetic towards the expelled leader, Mr. Saifuddin Chowdhury. The other job is to sculpt in the popular mind their image as modern, change-oriented leaders receptive to ideas.

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rights less in State'

ous impression in the public about police.

The Commissioner referred to the compliments the Director of People's Watch, Mr. Henry Tiphagne, paid to the Cuddalore district police led by the then SP, Mr. C. Sylendra Babu, for their adherence to the Supreme Court guidelines laid down with regard to arrests two years ago and said the police in other parts of the State should emulate the example.

Mr. R. Gopalswamy, a retired IAS officer, said regular inservice training for the personnel on human rights would help prevent violations.

Air Commodore (retd.) R. Sampath, secretary and Dr. D. Varadarajan, principal, MSSW, also spoke.

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this. In an unambiguous address to the nation following the violence in Nuwara Eliya, Ms. Kumaratunga reminded the people that it was Sinhala racism that had in the past fattened the LTTE and and warned that going down that road again would be unmitigated disaster.

The incidents have once more focussed attention on the Government's strategy for resolving the nearly two-decade old ethnic conflict. In the aftermath of the incidents, but not arising from them, a landmark meeting was held between the Norwegian special envoy to Sri Lanka, Mr. Erik Solheim, and the LTTE leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, at the latter's initiative.

"The timing, even if inadvertent, could not have been better, coming as it did just after the Bindunuwewa massacre and the communal clashes... elsewhere in the hill country," said the National Peace Council, which advocates talks with the LTTE.

The NPC said the 'new environment' created by the meeting would do much to allay communal tensions that had been building up in different parts of the country. "The new opportunity that has presented itself is that the Government and LTTE may be more prepared to seek political rather than military means of attaining their goals," it said.

The Norwegians have stated that the LTTE leader is "serious" about a negotiated political settlement. Mr. Solheim also conveyed to Prabhakaran that such a settlement would have to be within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. According to him, the LTTE has laid down no pre-conditions for a dialogue with the Sri Lankan Government.

There are many theories on why the LTTE leader has chosen to extend the olive branch to the Government at this juncture, including the group's military weakness, international pressure and dwindling support for its cause on the ground.

But the inescapable fact is that by doing so, Prabhakaran has upped the stakes, and it is now Ms. Kumaratunga's turn to play. If accepting the outstretched hand could send Sri Lanka tumbling into yet another "peace trap" of the LTTE, rejecting it, especially in the context of the ugly incidents of the last two weeks, could be playing into the hands of the Sinhala hardliners and losing international goodwill. Ms. Kumaratunga has some tough decisions ahead.

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Jyoti Basu writes final chapter of 24-year-long romance with Writers'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CALCUTTA, NOV 3

OUTGOING West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu today bid adieu to Writer's Buildings from where he ran the state for a record 24 years as the head of the nine-party Left Front government, but said that he was not quitting politics.

Escorted by Chief Minister-designate Buddhadev Bhattacharjee, Basu arrived at the state secretariat for his last day at 11.30 am and walked briskly to his chamber where he spent some time before attending a farewell meeting organised by scribes.

The octogenerian Chief Minister was also given a reception by the CPI-M-Backed Coordination Committee at the same place outside the central gate of the secretariat, where he was ushered in on June 20, 1977.

Basu, who joined the Communist party way back in 1940, said he had stepped down from office as he could not do justice as Chief Minister of a state like West Bengal because of his failing health, but said he was not quitting politics.

"I will continue to be a politburo member of the party and work for the state unit as well. I will discharge my duties till my last. But my future programme will depend on my health".

Basu will remain in office, however, till November six, when Bhattacharjee will be sworn in as Chief Minister.

Listing the achievements of his government, he however sounded a note of caution to his party-men saying, "at times we get alienated from the people. We have to rectify this".

He ended his day at the state secretariat lambasting the press for alleged lies as the CPI(M)-Backed Coordination Committee members kicked and pelted him during Basu's felicitation on his last day.

"Two or three newspapers have been lying." Basu told a massive gathering organised by the Coordination Committee and State Government Employees' Union.

Calling upon state government to take a guard against 'false propaganda' against the press, the veteran Marxist advised them to work with

INDIAN EXPRESS

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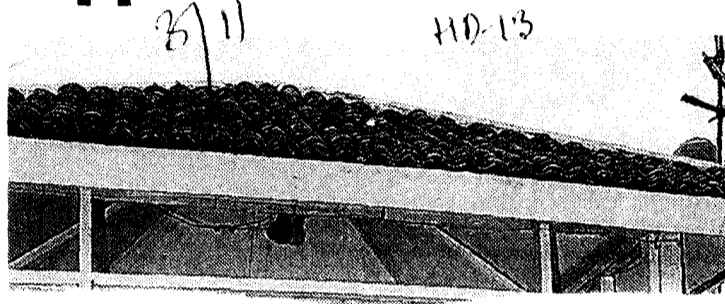
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Prasada appeals for conscience votes

By Our Special Correspondent

CHENNAI, NOV. 2. Dissident leader and CWC member, Mr. Jitendra Prasada, who has challenged the Congress(I) chief, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, in the party presidential election, kicked off his campaign for "conscience votes of the workers", at the Rajiv Gandhi memorial in Srinagar near here.



sible for the present situation and that his intention was not to lay a chargesheet against the present Congress(I) leadership.

On dynastic politics, all he would say is that the contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi "is unparalleled". Asked about Mrs. Sonia Gandhi's contribution, he shot back "it will not be proper for me

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Social struggles & human

By Neera Chandhoke

10-12 2/11
IT IS more than a little sad that our Supreme Court armed with the magnificent majority of one has, in its infinite wisdom, deemed fit to dismiss the 15-year-old struggle of the people of the Narmada valley against the building of the complex of dams in the region. Not only has the judiciary, as one of the defining institutions of the Indian state, set aside the people's struggle as of little consequence; it has also put aside with a metaphorical shrug every significant issue that the movement has raised for the people of India. None of the important issues that have been placed on the agenda of politics in India — such as the impossibility of resettlement — has been taken into account when it comes to ordering that work on the dam be restarted. The verdict has been given; the defence rests, the case is closed.

But is the case really closed? Can the issues raised by the struggle in the Narmada valley be put aside so easily? For has not the struggle expanded our conception of what it means to be human? The one significant lesson that we have learnt from the movement is that the right to be human means that every individual has the right not to be displaced in the name of some amorphous entity called the larger good; that people have the right to habitat. We have been told that to infringe the right to habitat is to violate a basic human right. Correspondingly, among the basic rights catapulted onto the agenda of Indian politics through the struggle, the one right that has made history is the right to habitat.

And it is time that this was done, for, as our post-independence history has shown us, mega projects, whether established for irrigation and power, heavy industries, mines, thermal and nuclear power, along with restricted forest areas, sanctuaries and parks, and firing ranges for defence training, have displaced enormous numbers of people. It has been estimated that 1,600 major dams and thousands of medium and small dams have displaced more than three lakh people. This statistic does not cover involuntary displacement through land degradation, urban planning, building of

Social movements do not go away; neither do the issues raised by them disappear into thin air because the state mobilises its might to coerce ordinary people into conformity.

roads and infrastructure, or the displacement of all those who make a living out of resources, so easily appropriated by the Indian state. And by now everyone knows that since development projects are planned in those areas that possess natural resources, local people who have been subsisting upon them for generations under custom are deprived of access to the means of subsistence. If perchance Marx had written his Capital volume one in contemporary India, he may have suggested that primitive accumulation takes place not only when people are deprived of their means of production, but when they are alienated from their means of subsistence. The costs that people have had to pay for projects, once hailed as the temples of modern India by Nehru, are incalculable.

They are incalculable when we recollect that displacement is not only a matter of taking people out of one location and resettling them in another. Displacement is not only a question of removing people from their homes and giving them what may even amount to a better standard of living. As any victim of the partition, which continues to sear collective memories, can tell us, displacement means sundering of communities, the rupturing of ways of life, and making people rootless through denial of history and agency. Can we compensate people for this? Can there be compensation for uprooting people and throwing them onto soulless, arid, and desolate resettlement sites, miles away from their own, and aeons away from their own history?

"What is the state compensating us for," asks Bava Mahalia of Alirajpur tehsil, district Jhabua, of the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Digvijay Singh. "For our land, for our fields, for the trees along our fields? But we don't live only by this. Are you going to compensate us for our

forests?... Or are you going to compensate us for our great river?... What is the price of this?... What price this land? Our gods, the support of those who are our kin — what price do you have for this? Our adivasi life — what price do you put on it?" Powerful questions indeed, reminding me at least of the petitions of Indians who used to protest to the British crown against the appropriation of their lands.

Ironically, we are re-enacting the same colonisation that we once fought against — this time against our own people. And like we fought the British through the articulation of new rights — the right not to be colonised for instance — the people of the Narmada valley have articulated new rights in and through their struggle — the right not to be displaced, the right to habitat. The assertion of the right to habitat is significant because the Indian state has failed to recognise the trauma that accompanies displacement from the habitat, that habitat that is familiar, that habitat which is dear because it is here that people have historically chalked out their relationship to land and to other people, that habitat around which myths and ceremonies, histories, and narratives consolidate themselves, that habitat which is the source of memory and continuity, that habitat which gives people a sense of the self and therefore, identity and dignity.

After all, people do have the basic right to live in dignity amidst their own communities; in conditions of their own choice. Take away this right and you take away a part of their selfhood, their identity, and their dignity. We may recollect in this connection that the Government of India happens to be a signatory to a resolution adopted on March 10, 1993, by the U.N Commission on Human Rights. The resolution condemns the practice of involuntarily removing people from their

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Pinochet and Fujimori; now: Narasimha Rao joins their ranks

Tokenism won't do

BY M.K. TIKKU

Corruption

ional record — that Rao has landed with a jail sentence. Had the JMM beneficiaries been more 'deft' at handling cash of this kind, there was little chance that the Government's investigative agencies — who happen to be just as efficient as their banks — would have been able to prove their point of substance. The little progress made with several other corruption cases involving even bigger sums of money bears testimony to this fact.

The underlying theme of *l'affaire JMM* is that while the prover has dealt with the cash he received, the other alleged beneficiaries who actually could have been 'orse off) have most passed notice except that the court has structured that the source of their sudden enrichment around that



Birds of a feather: Suharto & Pinochet

int of time be probed further. If one were to consider the size of some of the transactions attracting allegations of corruption in the media in the past decade — which range from disinvestment give-aways to fertiliser and telecom deals — even the Bofors' Rs 64 crore payment (that contributed to the fall of the Rajiv Gandhi government in 1989) must look like small change. This should give one some idea of the way in which high level corruption has progressed in the decade since the economic liberalisation policy was introduced. Corruption — to use a phrase from the Seventies'

vocabulary — has become a 'global phenomenon'. This is particularly true of the developing countries. All the way from the Czech republic — where the former communist bosses bought State enterprises for a song, sold their assets and stashed the cash in banks abroad — to nations such as Indonesia, Chile and the Philippines, this has been the running theme in public discourse and newspaper headlines.

In this background, the JMM might begin to

look like pocket money handed to naive kids who suddenly find themselves in all the wrong places. Yet, it may perhaps be an odd feature of the Indian legal system that big guys, when (and if) they get caught, tend to be netted on relatively minor technicalities. Indira Gandhi's defeat in the 'election

case' was a classic instance; and for someone who emerged nearly unscathed from the Harshad Mehta controversy, Rao's recent comeuppance was not much different.

Thus, despite the middle class yawn to see in the Rao verdict, an answer to their anxieties about the state of corruption in public life, such expectations could be missing the mark. It may be because corruption tends to be perceived in terms of persons — and as in the case of a Greek tragedy — the fall of the person becomes the occasion for a collective catharsis. That done, everything else gets back to work as usual.

Actually, it is not the moral of the story that moves the society; it is the fall of a big man that generates the emotion. As for corruption, it takes its course — very much like law does — unaffected by any personal tragedies.

Last August, some senior leaders of the Servants of People Society — an organisation of selfless workers set up by Lala Lajpat Rai way back in the Twenties — drafted a plan of action for the Government and the political parties to root out corruption in public life.

They wrote to the Prime Minister with their proposals, but their communications remained unacknowledged. Next, they turned to the parliamentarians; not many of them were prepared to associate with the campaign. Finally, they (including several former judges of the high courts — all in their 70s and 80s), decided to go on a hunger strike to attract public attention.

Nothing much happened, leaving them angry and frustrated. The reason is that while everybody loves to fight against corruption as a little bit of theatre (like the Delhi Chief Minister's recent resolve to get her top bureaucrats to write notes certifying absence of corruption under their charge), nobody wants to take the bull by the horns, as it were. That can be pretty rough and boring.

Of course, more people in positions of power are now netted in corruption than before. Whether it is an Estrada in one country, a Fujimori in the second, a Suharto in the third, and a Pinochet in the fourth, the list keeps getting longer. Some may see this as an index of increasing transparency in public life, while others could also interpret it as a coefficient of the higher volumes of money transacted in deals in a 'globalising economy'.

The fall of the powerful in this game may seem tragic in the Greek fashion; but one must look beyond cases of personal nemesis. The malaise of corruption is so entrenched that combating it with token fights makes it look pretty much like the theatre of the absurd.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

2 NOV 2000

Protecting farmers' rights

The adoption of the legislation for the protection of plant varieties and farmers' rights by Parliament could have far reaching implications, says Biswajit Dhar

AMONG the more significant pieces of legislation that the monsoon session of Parliament gave its approval to was one that provides for the protection of the rights of plant breeders and farmers. This legislation is ready for inclusion in the statute books more than a decade after the issue of plant breeders' rights was raised in a systematic manner by the growing private sector seed industry in India. In fact, it was a combination of this pro-active agenda of the seed industry, coupled with the initiatives taken primarily by Dr M S Swaminathan, that the first steps towards enacting this legislation was taken in 1994.

Although introducing plant breeders' rights in India was part of the set of commitments that the government had taken under the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), legislative action on this front was slow moving because of the myriad controversies that were raised. Questions were raised as to whether traditional rights of the farmers to save a part of a year's harvest for use as seeds for

the next year were safe when the breeders were given monopoly control over the market. Besides, arguments were made that if the modern plant breeders could be "rewarded" for providing new varieties of plants, a similar mechanism should be made available for traditional farming communities in countries like India who have constantly been engaged in on-farm innovations. These were some of the more contentious issues that the law makers were confronted with when the discussions on the plant breeders and farmers rights took place.

These areas of concern were quite legitimate given the developments that had taken place in the developed countries. These countries have been members of a multilateral treaty, the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (more commonly known as the UPOV Convention, its French acronym), which has provided a harmonised system of plant breeders rights since the late 1960s. The UPOV Convention was last amended a decade ago. The amended UPOV allows the traditional farmers to re-use the seeds only on their own farms for non-commercial purposes. This means, in other words,

that the farmers would be infringing the rights of the breeders if they either re-use the seeds for production for the market or exchange seeds with their farm neighbours. These developments in the UPOV thus provided the backdrop to the legislative action on plant breeders' and farmers' rights in India.

A broad reading of the legislation as has been passed by Parliament would convey the message that most of the key concerns that were raised in India in the run up to its enactment have been taken care of. The most visible message goes out in the form of the title of the legislation, which declares that protection of plant varieties and farmers' rights are being provided under the Act. What this means is that the Indian legislation effectively protects the interests of the actors involved

tion by the plant breeder. In case the seeds or the planting material fails to perform in the manner claimed by the breeder, the farmer may claim compensation from the breeder.

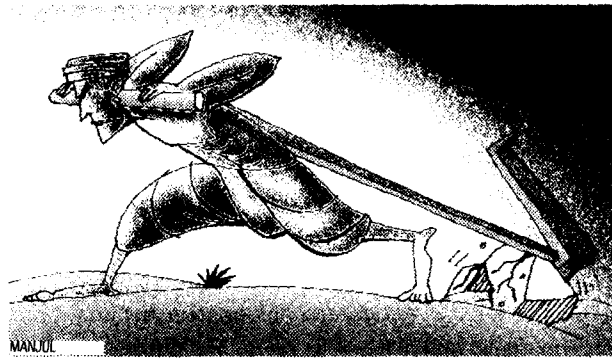
The legislation also proposes to "reward" the farmer "who is engaged in the conservation and preservation of genetic resources of land races and wild relatives of economic plants and their improvement through selection and preservation". This provision is similar to the concept of "farmers' rights" contained in the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, which is currently being negotiated under the aegis of the FAO. India has thus become the first country to recognise the contribution of the farming communities towards the development of agriculture.

The adoption of the legislation for the protection of plant varieties and farmers' rights by the Indian Parliament could have far reaching implications not only for India but for similarly placed developing countries. For a number of years now, several developing countries have been discussing the modalities of enacting suitable legislation for

fulfilling their commitments under the Agreement on TRIPs, which take care of the interests of their farmers. The African countries have been the other prominent participants in these discussions with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) having enacted model legislation for consideration by its member states. Among others, Namibia has made considerable progress towards enacting its national legislation using the OAU framework. The progress made by countries like India and Namibia to develop laws that protect the interests of their farmers could set the stage for many more to follow this precedent.

These countries should, however, be mindful of the lurking danger in adopting an independent stance. Over the past few years, UPOV and its membership have taken the view that the system of protection of plant varieties that this treaty provides would alone be consistent with the provisions of the Agreement on TRIPs. Developing countries like India would certainly be called upon to defend its legislation in the WTO and that is where resoluteness would be crucial.

(The author is with RIS, Delhi. These are his personal views)



in the development of new varieties of plants, which is in line with the commitment that India has taken under the Agreement on TRIPs.

The provisions on farmers' rights are particularly significant in this context. These contain specific provisions that seek to safeguard the interests of farmers and other village communities engaged in plant breeding. The interests of these farming communities are proposed to be addressed in two ways. The first is by preserving their on-farm activities; and two, by providing incentives in the form of rewards in recognition of their contribution made to farming. Two specific provisions have been proposed for preserving the on-farm activities of farmers. The first of these provisions provides that the farmers would be "entitled to save, use, sow, re-sow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a protected variety" under the proposed legislation "in the same manner as he was entitled before the coming into force" of this legislation. The second provision for protecting on-farm activities of farmers relates to the full disclosure of the expected performance of the seeds or planting material of the varieties protected under the legisla-

The Economic Times

5 OCT 2002

Greenspan's Blues

Thirty-nine years. That's how far back one has to go to find another time when the US benchmark interest rate was as low as 2.5 per cent, where it now stands after the Federal Reserve's ninth rate cut this year. But the situation the US finds itself in today — engaged in a virtual war with a shadow enemy — is unprecedented in its history. No one knows for sure how long this uncertainty will last, and what kind of impact it will have on consumer confidence or business sentiment. The Fed has indicated as much in its latest statement, which says, "The risks are weighted mainly toward conditions that may generate economic weakness in the foreseeable future", though "long-term prospects... remain favourable and should become evident once the unusual forces restraining demand abate". Here's the translation: The situation is going to get worse, but will eventually improve — though we don't know exactly when. A consensus does seem to be emerging on one issue, though: a US recession is now inevitable. Or, as a recent *Fortune* issue put it: "Forget any talk about whether there will be a recession. It's here". Cynics may ask why the Fed is still bothering with rate reductions, since they seem to be having little effect. The counter-argument is that the US economy was showing signs of finding its feet, but has been knocked off the edge by the unexpected terrorist attacks on Black Tuesday. Besides, things would have been a lot worse if the Fed hadn't kept cutting rates. Also, Fed chairman Alan Greenspan really didn't have much of a choice. The markets were expecting a rate cut, and not obliging could have proved dangerously destabilising.

To make matters worse, the US, Japan and Europe are all encountering economic difficulties simultaneously. Still, though recessions are undoubtedly unpleasant, they're not exactly the end of the world. Economies have emerged from them before, with few prolonged ill-effects. The big question is, how soon will the US be able to do so? One thing is for sure — monetary policy isn't going to do it alone. A fiscal stimulus is desperately needed, and one is said to be along the way. A figure of \$100 billion is being spoken about, though the components remain unclear. President George W Bush is known to favour further tax cuts. But given the bipartisan spirit prevailing right now in Washington, he may well also incorporate Democratic suggestions to raise minimum wages and ensure health insurance and unemployment benefits to laid-off workers. At some stage, the combined effect of low rates and fiscal stimulus is bound to get the economy moving again — though not at the supercharged rates witnessed in the late 90s. In the meantime, we are likely to simultaneously witness increased lobbying by US manufacturers for protection from foreign exports — and strong efforts by the developed nations to further prise open emerging markets. India will have to look out for its best interests, and firmly but gently draw the line when needed. But the Indian government should be careful not to over-react. Sops and protection will be sought — vociferously — by Indian industry as well. The guiding principle for the government should be that long-term changes necessary for enhanced competitiveness are good, short-term benefits that only make businesses more dependent are bad.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

4 OCT 2001

Khaleda's return to power worries North-east

HT Correspondents
Guwahati/Agartala, October 3

THE PEACE-LOVING people of North-east are worried by the landslide victory of Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and her Islamic allies in the Bangladeshi parliamentary election.

The BNP was always known to be instigating people against the alleged "colonial approach" of India. The last BNP Government led by Khaleda had a working relation with New Delhi. But she did not take a single solid step to improve bilateral ties.

BNP's return to power has caused concern particularly in the States bordering Bangladesh. The cause for concern is Khaleda's pre-poll statements where she supported the outfits like Uifa and NDFB in their "fight for independence against India".

The United Liberation Front of Asom, National Democratic Front of Bodoland, National Liberation Front of Tripura and All Tripura Tiger Force are known to have bases in Bangladesh. Dhaka has long been accused by New Delhi of backing these militant outfits as well as some 11

Islamic fundamentalist and militant organisations active in the North-east.

"The developments in Bangladesh are worrisome," said an Assam minister. "We are watching what stand Khaleda takes vis-à-vis the insurgents after she assumes power."

The Uifa has over Rs 4,000 million extorted money in Bangladesh's two banks — Sonali and Rupali. Intelligence reports suggest that almost a similar amount extorted by Uifa and NDFB is deposited in banks across Europe and the US.

Senior police officers say

India's efforts to have these accounts frozen have fallen flat. Given Khaleda's stand — and that of her allies Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Jatiya Oikya Jote — chances of any action in this regard are slim, they add.

More than the Uifa, the authorities in the North-east are worried about Bangladeshi patronisation to outfits like Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Muslim Liberation Tigers of Assam (Multa) and Islamic Liberation Army of Assam.

These organisations are believed to work among the predominantly Bangladeshi immi-

grant population in at least eight districts of Assam.

Documents seized from five Multa activists arrested by the Army last week and from 24 Harkat members 45 days ago, reveal that some 600 Muslim youths recruited from Assam were fighting with the Taliban and the J&K militants.

"Bangladesh supplies arms to the militants in the North-east. The counterparts of Indian Islamic radicals in Bangladesh also ensure safe passage for the jihad recruits," said an Army spokesman.

The erstwhile Awami League

Government of Sheikh Hasina did not take required measures to flush out Indian extremists from her soil. But her government did not provide any support to them too.

It is too early to say that the extremists operating in the North-east would get support from the new Bangladeshi Government and there would be more violence in the region. There is also fear of fresh unrest among Chakmas in the Chitragong Hill Tracts and in that case, there are possibilities of fresh influx of refugees into Tripura.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 OCT 2001

AFGHAN TIMELINE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL evidence at Hindukush showed Afghanistan among the world's earliest places to domesticate animals and plants.

►3000-2000 BC: Bronze is believed to be invented around this time. Urbanisation and trade grows, making it an important point between Mesopotamian and other civilisations to emerge as the present day's "Crossroads of Asia".

►2000-1500 BC: Kabul founded.

►522 BC: Persian leader Darius the Great extends his empire to encompass Afghanistan. The tribal revolts in Kandahar and Quetta begin, which plague the country throughout history.

►329 BC: Alexander the Great conquers Persia and Afghanistan to establish Greek rule, but unrest and bloody revolts become the regime's hallmarks.

►400 AD: The first record of the country's culture and cities being wiped out during the invasion of the "White Huns".

►652: Arabs introduce Islam that was to influence the course of Afghanistan's history.

►962: The Islamic era begins with Mohammed Ghazni and Afghanistan becomes the centre of Islamic power and civilisation. In 1030, Ghazni dies.

►1219: Ghengis Khan and his Mongol army invade Afghanistan. When Afghans resist his savage march to establish the largest kingdom, Khan turned farmlands into deserts.

►1273: Marco Polo crosses Afghanistan on his voyage from Italy to China to discover the "Silk Route". Revolts and battles between smaller kingdoms mark the next two centuries.

►1504: Babar begins to take control of Afghanistan. The introduction of Hinduism sparks revolts that spill over and dominate the next century.

►1708: Mir Wais, considered by some to be the father of Afghan independence, takes over Kandahar. His son, Mir Mahmud, invades Persia and liberates Herat.

►1722: The Durranis revolt to throw out Persians from Herat. Three years later, Mir Mahmud goes mad and dies mysteriously and Afghanistan starts to lose control of Persia.

►1736: Persian King Nadir Shah occupies the south-west and later Kandahar; assassinated in 1747.

►1750s: Ahmad Shah Durani, regarded as the father of modern day Afghanistan, begins his rule, consolidating and enlarging Afghanistan while governing India. But the kingdom faces invasions from the Persians and Sikhs but is known as the greatest Muslim empire of the 18th century. Revolts force his successor Timur Shah to shift the capital to Kabul from Kandahar.

►1819: After Timur Shah's death, his sons fight for the throne plunging the kingdom into anarchy. It loses Sindh.

►1826: The Afghans lose Peshawar to the Sikhs. Later, their general Akbar Khan defeats the Sikhs. General Hari Singh is killed.

►1836: Dost Mohammad Khan begins reunifying the country when the British, in corroboration with ex-king Shah Shuja invade Afghanistan to curtail the growing Russian and Persian influence.

►1839: First Anglo-Afghan War. Dost Khan surrenders and is deported to India. The Afghans build their fight against the British.

►1842: Afghan hero Akbar Khan is victorious against the British. The ferocity was such that the 16,500-strong British garrison with 12,000 support staff and dependents were wiped out. Only one survived. By 1843 the nation declares independence, Dost Khan returns to occupy the throne. In 1844, Akbar Khan dies.

►1859: British take Baluchistan. Afghanistan is landlocked. Four years later, Dost Khan's son Sher Ali succeeds him to the throne.

►1873: Russia establishes a fixed boundary with Afghanistan and promises to respect its territorial integrity.

►1878: The British launch their second war. For the second time, the Afghans' spirited resistance forces them to withdraw. Sher Ali dies. Mohammad Yakub Khan takes over but concedes to the British such key territories as Khyber and Pischin. The Afghans will never get back these regions.

►1885: Russian forces seize

territory in northern Afghanistan. They keep most of the area but pledge to respect Afghanistan's territorial integrity. More territory is lost as the Durand line, another boundary agreement eight years later between Afghanistan and British India leaves several Afghan tribal areas in present day Pakistan.

►1907: Afghanistan is on its slow climb towards modernisation under Habibullah Khan's regime.

►1919: Present day journalism with several newspapers introduced by Mohammad Tarzi, a respected personality. Habibullah is assassinated. His son Amanullah Khan continues the reform process.

►1921: Third Anglo-Afghan war breaks out. Afghanistan wins again. Amanullah establishes diplomatic ties with major nations and introduces reforms. The moves alienate many tribal and religious leaders and generate political turmoil.

►1929: Amanullah is overthrown and the country plunges into unrest. Nadir Khan takes over, abolishes reforms.

►1933: Nadir Khan is assassinated by a college student. His son Zahir Khan succeeds him. Rules till 1973. Tarzi dies in Turkey despairing about his country.

►1934: The USA recognises Afghanistan.

►1947: The British start to leave India and carve Pakistan from out of India and Afghanistan.

►1949: Afghanistan's parliament refuses these new boundaries. Pashtuns' declaration as independent Pashtunistan goes unacknowledged. The USA refuses military aid, forcing the country to turn to the USSR.

►1959: Women begin to work and study in co-educational universities. By this time, the USSR and Bulgaria agree to help Afghanistan.

►1963: Zahir Khan sacks his Prime Minister of 10 years, Prince Mohammed Daoud.

►1965: Afghan Communist Party secretly formed by Bab-



Najibullah: tortured and hanged

rak Karmal and others. He is elected to parliament in the first nationwide elections and accused of instigating riots. He wins the next election in 1969.

►1973: Daoud and the Afghan Communist Party overthrow the ruling Afghan government and long-time king Mohammad Zahir Shah who is on a vacation in Europe. Daoud abolishes the monarchy, ousts opponents from the gov-

ernment and presents a new constitution enshrining women's rights.

►1978: Daoud is killed and his government falls in a bloody Communist-backed coup. Taraki is President and Karmal named deputy Prime Minister. Mass killings, arrests and tortures follow. The Afghan guerrilla or Mujahideen movement is born. The Afghan flag is changed.

►1979: Taraki is killed and his successor Hafizullah Amin executed and replaced by Karmal. In December, the USSR invades Afghanistan.

►1984: The Mujahideen, known by supporters as "freedom fighters", begins receiving military and logistical assistance from the USA and other countries. The UN sends investigators to report human rights violations.

►1986: Najibullah replaces Karmal and proposes ceasefire, Mujahideen refuse to listen to a "puppet" and continue to register major gains.

►1988: The Soviet Union and USA sign the Geneva Accords calling for Soviet withdrawal. The Mujahideen do not take part in the negotiations, and do not accept it. The Soviets, after losing an estimated 100,000 soldiers in the war leave the next year. The Mujahideen continue to fight Najibullah's government.

►1992: The Mujahideen take over Kabul and declare Afghanistan "liberated". They form an Islamic state, headed by Professor Burhannudin Rabbani. Najibullah lives under UN protection.

►1994: The radical Taliban militia comprising religious scholars is born. Within a year, it registers major gains against Rabbani's government.

►1996: Taliban captures Kabul and drives out Rabbani and his government. Taliban executes Najibullah. Women are banned from work and education. Men are forced to grow beards. Buzkashi, the Afghan national sport is outlawed.

THE STATESMAN

4 OCT 2001

India vital to our war: Blackwill

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, October 3

ON A whistle-stop visit to the city, US Ambassador Robert D Blackwill today said the US was concerned about terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir and India was very much a part of the global war against terrorism launched by the US President.

"In the meeting between Colin Powell and Jaswant Singh, Powell said terrorist attacks like the one in J&K on Monday should be stamped out. As we proceed to wage a war against global terrorism, India must become a part of it. President Bush has made a point after the September 11 disaster that it's a global war and should be carried out wherever it exists," he said. He pointed out

that there is moral reason why it should be a global war. "Thousands of people from 80 countries were killed on September 11. We will also destroy the sanctuaries of the terrorist outfits operating in different parts of the globe."

Talking about the American policy towards India, especially neglect of India's constant demand to draw the US attention to terrorism in J&K, Blackwill said: "We should not delve into the past, but begin stamping out terrorism. Imperfection in the policies must be put behind and the world should move forward to take up the new challenge."

As for the sanctuaries provided by Pakistan to terrorist outfits operating in J&K, he said: "We have urged Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf to cooperate

with us. He has agreed to support us in our objective. But at present, we are focused on Afghanistan to capture Osama bin Laden and destroy al-Qaida. It's going to be a long struggle to stamp out terrorism from the world."

He said the operation would be a coalition action against terrorism and over 100 countries were sharing intelligence with the US. The September 11 incident has evolved an "unprecedented" improvement in Indo-US relations, he added. "Our military ties have improved and the sanctions that were imposed in 1998 have been withdrawn. But we want to make one thing very clear — we never asked for air base facilities for this operation from India."

Talking about Operation Enduring Freedom, the Amba-

sador said: "President Bush has made it clear that it's a long struggle. It's not an endeavour that will end with the capture of Osama or by destroying al-Qaida. It's a challenge that will go on for years to stamp out those who are trying to destroy the treasure we preserve, our freedom of expression, our dedication to rule of law and our right to elect leaders. We should have the determination to fight them back and win. We will win."

Blackwill said the operation was not just a low-intensity long-drawn war or psychological warfare against the terrorists, but has military, financial and diplomatic dimensions."

He ruled out that America had any intention of establishing a permanent military base in the subcontinent.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 OCT 2001

Musharraf coup foiled US bid to kill Osama



S Rajagopalan & Agencies
Washington, October 3

GENERAL MUSHARRAF'S military coup in October 1999 put paid to a CIA operation to capture or kill Osama bin Laden under a deal worked out between the Clinton Administration and the ousted Nawaz Sharif regime, *The Washington Post* reported today. According to the paper, CIA had secretly trained and equipped about 60 Pakistani commandos for entering Afghanistan. As a quid pro quo, the US had promised to lift the

sanctions on Pakistan and provide it an economic package. But the plan was aborted immediately upon Musharraf's coup. Sharif and his intelligence chief had "arranged" the operation, which was set in motion less than 12 months after bin Laden escaped US cruise missile strikes in Afghanistan. Musharraf, according to the *Post*, "refused to continue the operation despite substantial efforts by the Clinton administration to revive it." Just before the coup, the Pakistani commando team was "up and running and

ready to strike." The paper quoted an official as saying: "It was an enterprise. It was proceeding". Though Pakistani intelligence has a lot of information about bin Laden and what is going on in Afghanistan, joint operations with Pakistan are regarded as "dicey." A former US official, attributing this to the Taliban's penetration of Pakistani intelligence, has told the paper: "You never know who you are dealing with. You're always dealing with shadows".

Going into the failure of earlier US missile offensive (66 cruise

missiles targeted bin Laden's camps on August 20, 1998), the paper quotes some officials as saying that the Taliban could have tipped off bin Laden after getting word from Pakistani intelligence services.

The Post said a record of missed opportunities has provided President George W Bush and his administration with some valuable lessons as well as a framework for action in their war against Laden and his al-Qaida network in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks.

In response to the blowing up

of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the Pentagon suggested several plans, including a helicopter-borne night assault with small US special operations units on Laden's camps.

Clinton decided to attack with unmanned Tomahawk cruise missiles, which meant no American casualties. He also decided to hit Sudan with 13 missiles in the mistaken belief that there was a chemical weapons factory there associated with Laden.

"Pakistan had not been warned in advance of the cruise missile attack but Air Force General

Joseph Ralston, then vice-chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, met with Pakistani officials at the time of the launch to tell them of the operation and assure them that Pakistan was not under surprise attack from India," it said.

Then defence secretary Stephen Cohen came to suspect that bin Laden escaped because he was tipped off that the strike was coming. Several other former officials, however, disputed the notion of a security breach, saying that bin Laden had plenty of notice that the US intended to retaliate.

There were attempts to follow up the 1998 raid. Special forces troops and helicopter gunships were kept on alert in the region, ready to launch a raid if intelligence pinpointed Laden's whereabouts.

Twice in 1999, information arrived indicating that Laden might be in a certain village in Afghanistan at a certain time. "I can't tell you how many times we got a call saying, we have information and we have to hold a secret meeting about whether to launch a military action," said Walter Slocombe, then undersecretary of defence policy.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 OCT 2001

Bangla faces turmoil as Hasina springs boycott

FROM ASHIS CHAKRABARTI

Dhaka, Oct. 3: Bangladesh looked all set to plunge into another spell of political uncertainty as the Awami League today demanded that Monday's elections be cancelled and fresh polls be ordered under the direct control of President.

Party workers will be out in the streets from Friday to press for the demand.

Setting at rest any doubts about the participation of the 62 elected party candidates in the new parliament, Sheikh Hasina announced after a meeting of the party leaders here this evening that none of the party candidates would take oath as member of the

new parliament.

From Friday till October 9, the League activists will organise protest meetings across the country to press the demand for the cancellation of the elections. From October 10, they will put up road blockades. If their demand is not met by then, the party will launch a bigger, "non-cooperation" movement.

The League agitation comes at a time when the country will pass through a critical stage of political transition. Not only will the new government of Khaleda Zia take over, replacing the caretaker government, but the new parliament has to elect a new President.

It is certain that the present President Shahabuddin Ahmed,

who has held the office since 1991, will be replaced by someone closer to the BNP. It is therefore unlikely that either Ahmed or his successor will do anything to satisfy the Awami League. If the League MPs do not join the parliament, the government will have no option but to order fresh elections to fill the vacancies. The League will boycott those elections too.

Although the BNP has refrained from reacting to the League's rejection of the polls, the former's supporters may get into confrontations with their rivals once they launch their agitations. The BNP has tried to restrain its activists so far by asking them not to take out victory celebrations.

THE TELEGRAPH

4 OCT 2001

Tiger poaching trail leads to China, Thailand

TIRTHANKAR MITRA & SOMA MUKHERJEE
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, Oct. 3. — An international gang is behind the poaching of tigers in the Sunderbans, senior forest officials said.

The gang, they said, operates in South-east Asia and the recent killing of full-grown tiger at Kishorimohanpur in Sunderbans the day before the forest week started has shocked the administration. They said a poacher had possibly infiltrated into an angry mob and killed the tiger.

To combat the menace, a file containing pictures of some of gang members has been opened, the officials said.

The state forest minister, Mr Jogesh Barman, has also admitted to the presence of this gang and said it sells tiger skin and nails at high prices in China and Thailand. He said poaching is threatening the tigers of Sunderbans. The Kishorimohanpur killing was surprising as the forest protection committee set up in the area is very effective, he added.

Mr Barman, however, said the killings at

Gosaba earlier this year and at Kishorimohanpur yesterday are isolated cases.

But officials said both incidents are related. In the Gosaba incident, some body parts of the beast were found to be missing raising the apprehension of poachers, they said.

They said the nature of the injury on the head of the tiger which was killed yesterday suggests that a crack shot had fired the rifle and such a person is unlikely to be found in a village of fishermen and farmers. Moreover, a villager enraged over the injury of his neighbours by the tiger is unlikely to have an unwavering aim and firing at the fierce beast from amongst a jostling crowd makes the shot all the more difficult indicating the presence of an expert shot, officials said.

The tiger's corpse has been sent for post mortem to Sajnekhali today. Officials said incident occurred after the tiger swam across Herobhanga river and sneaked into human habitation near Kultali forest beat office. Though it had entered the village at dawn, panic spread later in the day after

the detection of its pug marks.

The agricultural workers raised alarm on sighting the tiger in a crop field. Angered by the shouting, the beast mauled six men. A crowd had gathered after the beat officer went to the spot with a rifle. However, tension mounted and the forest department personnel were overpowered.

Seeing the mob couldn't be pacified, the officials sent message to Roydighi range office and the Nalgoda beat office for reinforcements. The Tiger Reserve office in Canning was also contacted to bring in a tranquilising gun.

However, before the tranquilising gun could be used, the mob snatched the rifles and shot the tiger. The presence of forest department personnel, officials felt prevented the skinning of the tiger's corpse and escaping with its body parts as happened in Gosaba earlier this year.

Meanwhile, two rifles, snatched from the forest guards have been recovered. The rifle belonging to the Nalgoda beat office of the forest department was used to shoot the beast, according to the latest reports.

THE STATESMAN

4 OCT 2001

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Bush seeks Mahathir's support for coalition

By Amit Baruah

SINGAPORE, OCT. 3. New alignments are coming into being and old ones are being given a quiet burial. As the United States seeks new allies in its battle against terrorism, moderate Muslim nations have a major role to play in the coalition against extremism.

The U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, telephoned the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohammad, and set up a meeting to discuss global terrorism on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference in Shanghai on October 20-21. Not so long ago, the Americans were lambasting the Malaysian Government for taking "anti-democratic" measures and using preventive detention laws against the Opposition. The tone and tenor of American policy, it would appear, now has the anti-terrorism coalition as its underpinning.

In 1998, the then American Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, angered Dr. Mahathir and many Malaysians when he compared Malaysia unfavourably with Vietnam. However, after the Clinton Presidency, Malaysia hoped for a change in the antagonistic relationship that existed between the two countries. Now, it appears that the post-September 11 scenario provides the right kind of environment for the two countries to start on a new footing. According to the official Malaysian news agency, Bernama, Mr. Bush had assured Dr. Mahathir

on the phone that a war against terrorism was not a war against Islam.

For his part, the Malaysian Prime Minister said he would write to Mr. Bush in detail, setting out his views on how to combat terrorism. (Dr. Mahathir has already proposed that a global conference should be held to fight terrorism). The U.S. President, who thanked Dr. Mahathir for his support in the battle against terrorism, said since the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington, he had learnt many things about Islam and the good things in the religion. "While both leaders agreed that the world should be mobilised against terrorism and that each country should pay its part in its own way, Dr. Mahathir stressed that fighting terrorism was different from an ordinary war as the enemy is invisible," said the Bernama report.

In Washington, a White House spokesman was quoted as saying that Mr. Bush informed Dr. Mahathir that the American "war" against terrorism was "against evil and not Islam". "The two leaders agree that the unprecedented nature of the terrorist threat requires new type of tactics and new forms of international co-operation," the spokesman said. There is little doubt that the equation between Washington and Kuala Lumpur has changed after the September 11 attacks. While the U.S. is courting Malaysia as a moderate Muslim nation, Dr. Mahathir is aware that co-operating with the international community has its own

benefits. The activities of groups like the Kumpulan Mujahideen Malaysia (KMM) came to light even before the September 11 attacks and the Government had taken steps to combat such elements. However, Dr. Mahathir is aware that there is a domestic dimension in his position against terrorism. The killing of innocents in the American "war" can complicate matters for him given the fact that hardline Islamists are waiting in the wings to mobilise public opinion against the Government. While dealing with the U.S., Dr. Mahathir has to simultaneously wear his Islamic hat as well. Malaysia regards itself as an important "Islamic" player on the world stage and is active in the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) as well.

The Malaysian Prime Minister has also spoken to the Iranian President, Mr. Mohammad Khatami, on the war against terrorism. According to one account of their conversation, the Iranian President called on the "Islamic world" to take a united stand on terrorism. Mr. Khatami was quoted as telling Dr. Mahathir that the "Muslim world" should take a common and united position against terrorism as well as arrive at a "clear and positive definition of terrorism".

In the days ahead, positions taken by leaders like Dr. Mahathir and the Indonesian President, Ms. Megawati Sukarnoputri, can make or break the credibility of any alliance against terrorism.

THE HINDU

4 OCT 2001

Proof shown to me: Jaswant Singh

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, OCT. 3. India's External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, today said he had seen the evidence linking Osama bin Laden with the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. The U.S., he told reporters here, had "shared the evidence with India and me" and pointed out that in any case the real evidence was the "evidence we have been living with all these years" — a reference to India's experience of cross-border terrorism.

His statement came even as some of the U.S. allies, including Pakistan, were reported to be unhappy that Washington had not yet shared the evidence with them while expecting them to support any military action against Afghanistan.

Mr. Singh who arrived here today from Washington had talks with the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, and the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Jack Straw. He said he briefed them about his discussions in Washington and in response to a question he said rather emphatically that India wanted the international commu-

nity to show an understanding of New Delhi's experience of fighting terrorism. India's fight against terrorism, he said rather acidly, did not start on September 11.

"We have been fighting it for 20 years," he said adding that India had shown great restraint in the face of grave provocations.

The terrorist attack on the As-

sembly building in Srinagar on Monday figured in Mr. Singh's talks with the British leaders. Mr. Straw condemned the attack, calling it an "outrage" and said: "We have to be united in the fight against terrorism."

He recalled the steps he took when he was Home Secretary to curb terrorism, and said the British Government was now in the process of strengthening the anti-terrorist law.

About the action India planned to take after Monday's attack in Srinagar, Mr. Singh it would be decided by the Cabinet. Mr. Straw, when asked if Britain and the U.S. proposed to offer any "concrete" military help to India, said military decisions were entirely India's prerogative but there were "many things we can do to fight terrorism."

Blair backs India's stand

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 3. Expressing solidarity with India's stand on tackling terrorism on a global scale, the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, today told his counterpart, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, that terrorism could not be dealt with in compartments and had to be "viewed globally and tackled globally." During the 10-minute telephonic conversation with Mr. Vajpayee, Mr. Blair expressed deep sympathies and condolences to the victims of the suicide car bomb attack outside the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on October 1. "This is the kind of terrorism governments should cooperate in rooting out," Mr. Blair told Mr. Vajpayee.

According to a spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry, the two leaders agreed that the campaign against terrorism has to tackle the menace globally. India has said that an international coalition against terrorism should not adopt a piece-meal approach.

INDIA

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Keshubhai quits as CM

By Manas Dasgupta

GANDHINAGAR, OCT. 3. In a swift turn of events today, the Gujarat Chief Minister, Mr. Keshubhai Patel, submitted his resignation to the Governor, paving the way for Mr. Narendra Modi to take over.

The BJP legislature party will meet here at 10 a.m. tomorrow to formally elect Mr. Modi, the party general-secretary, as their leader. His name will be proposed by Mr. Patel himself and seconded by his second-in-command, Mr. Suresh Mehta, who had expressed reservations on Tuesday about continuing under a "relatively junior leader". The swearing-in ceremony will be held on Sunday and is likely to be attended by the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani.

The Governor, Mr. Sunder Singh Bhandari, accepted Mr. Patel's resignation.

Contrary to the hard posture adopted by Mr. Patel earlier, the

smooth changeover was apparently facilitated by the party's former president, Mr. Kushabhau Thakre, and the vice-president, Mr. Madanlal Khurana, who is in-charge of Gujarat.

Immediately after their arrival from New Delhi here today, they drove down straight to the official residence of Mr. Patel and were closeted with him for about half-an-hour. They reportedly lambasted Mr. Patel for adopting a defiant posture and informed him that the high command had taken a strong view of his statements at the Ahmedabad airport on Tuesday, where he talked of a majority support in the Legislature Party to decide the leader. The modalities that he himself propose Mr. Modi's name and that Mr. Mehta second it were decided at the meeting; this would present a cohesive picture of the party. He was informed that Mr. Modi was the high command's choice and that

there was no question of who enjoyed majority support in the Legislature Party.

Mr. Modi was summoned to seek the "blessings" of the outgoing Chief Minister. Mr. Thakre and Mr. Khurana, along with Mr. Modi, also called on Mr. Mehta to ensure that no last-minute hitch arose. Initially reluctant, Mr. Mehta is also understood to have agreed to continue in the Cabinet if desired.

Talking to presspersons in his "last press conference as the Chief Minister", Mr. Patel denied that he had ever threatened to resign from the party in case he was removed from office, he said he would continue as a member of the Assembly and would serve the party.

He, however, sounded hurt at the way he was made to quit. The high command, he said, should have adopted some way by which "my self-respect and status" were not injured.

THE HINDU

4 OCT 2001

It's Central Asia's turn to take revenge

After five years of Taliban rule, no country in the world has fewer friends than Afghanistan. Of the six countries that border it—Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan (all fellow-Muslim states) and China—not one has come forward to argue against the imminent anti-terrorist attack. Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, indeed, have offered assistance to America and its allies.

Small wonder. Under the Taliban, Afghanistan has become an exporter of instability that not only affects its immediate neighbours but, as America now knows, reaches much farther afield. The Taliban's sheltering of Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida movement is only one reason why Afghanistan is so feared. Other extremist groups, harboured and supported there, have struck out into Kashmir, into the Fergana valley, where Uzbekistan, Kirgizstan and Tajikistan intertwine, and probably even into China.

For their own reasons, these countries' undemocratic governments have tended to demonise the Taliban. But there is some truth in their charges. The Taliban may not have set out deliberately to destabilise the region; but they have allowed their territory to become a base for the worldwide export of terrorism. At the top of the list of vulnerable states comes Pakistan, which is much to blame for the rise of the Taliban in the first place. Pakistan is reaping the whirlwind sown by its own policies in Afghanistan.

But the problem faced by the Stans, the five former Soviet republics of Central Asia, is different. They have

neither supported nor encouraged militant groups in Afghanistan. On the contrary, it is the Taliban regime that has given refuge, training and arms to dissidents from within them. And the Stans, in differing degrees, have reacted so repressively that they have increased the dissidents' appeal.

Not all the five countries are equally affected or to blame. Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have managed largely to escape the attentions of Taliban-backed groups. The primary target of the Islamists is Uzbekistan, the most populous of the five. The most dangerous Central Asian guerrilla organisation, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), grew up in the 1990s as a direct result of the repression of milder forms of Islamic opposition to the rule of Islam Karimov, the Soviet-era placeman who turned himself into independent Uzbekistan's first and only president.

But their prize, the Fergana valley, the lushest and richest part of Uzbekistan, is also shared by

In return for being allowed to use bases in Afghanistan, the IMU, whose numbers are estimated at 1,000-3,000, has sometimes assisted the Taliban's campaigns against the Northern Alliance. By doing so, they have made themselves too valuable to the Taliban to be surrendered. It is said that Juma Namangani, the young military leader of the IMU, carries a warrant signed by Mullah Omar, the Taliban's leader, designating him as the regime's second-most-honoured guest after bin Laden.

The IMU first came to international attention in February 1999, when Uzbekistan's government accused it of planting bombs in its capital, Tashkent. There was no real evidence, but later

that year, the IMU launched an attack on Uzbekistan from bases in Tajikistan, where it had been fighting with the United Tajik Opposition in that country's civil war. The incursion got only as far as Kirgizstan, where the IMU took several hundred hostages. The militants said they intended to

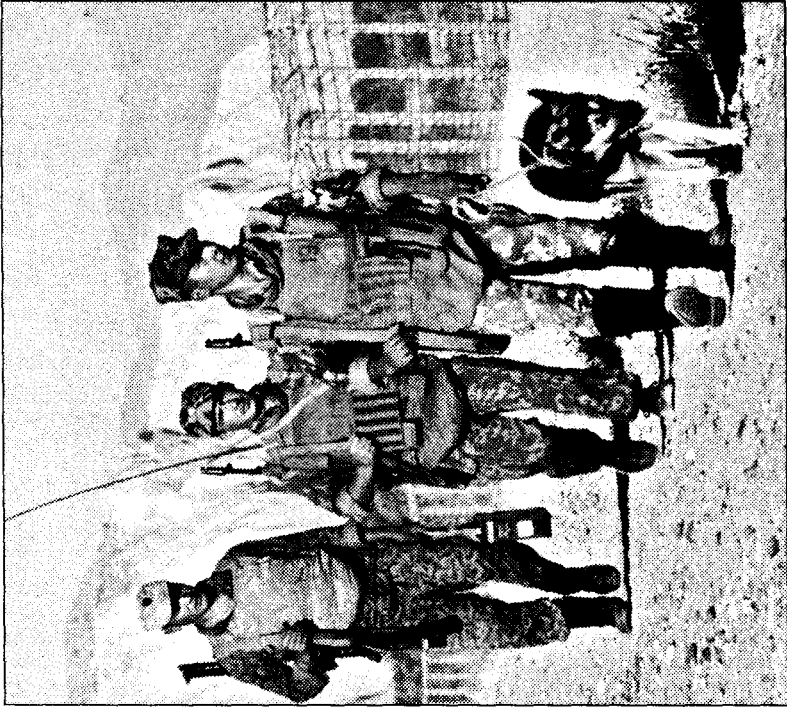
overthrow Uzbekistan's government and to establish a caliphate, a form of religious government, in the Fergana valley. They then retreated to Afghanistan, but were back last year.

This time, the incursion got within 80 km of Tashkent. To prevent further attacks, the Central Asian republics have tried to strengthen their defences. For this, the price has been high. Across the region, even in once-liberal Kirgizstan, the ruling regimes have cracked down hard on Islamists, and by extension on all forms of opposition. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that they have taken the Islamists' activities as an excuse to tighten their grip on power.

In Uzbekistan, and to a much lesser extent in Kirgizstan, there have been mass arrests of members of a Muslim group called Hizb-ut-Tahrir (Freedom Party), which wants to install a caliphate, across the whole of Central Asia. Unlike the IMU, it insists that its methods are peaceful. Yet the arrest of thousands of its supporters could easily convert it to violence.

The governments of the region are now allied in a number of ways. The bodies they belong to include a Russian-led collective security alliance and the Chinese-organised Shanghai Six, which are increasingly aimed at the Taliban. (Russia has a particular animus against the Taliban, accusing them of supporting Chechen terrorists.) Now the Stans are falling into line behind America, too.

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have been quick to offer the allies the use of its territory for operations against the Taliban. Tajikistan, it is thought, has privately done the same. (*The Economist*)



KEEPING TALIBAN AT BAY: Russian guards keeping a tight vigil at the Tajik-Afghan border.

Tajikistan and Kirgizstan, and so these countries too have been dragged into the conflict, and relations between all three have been badly strained. Uzbekistan has upset Tajikistan and Kirgizstan by laying mines along their common borders, often on the neighbour's side.

Risk of chemical weapon attacks by terrorists is low

Questions abound about the real risk of nuclear and biochemical weapons. Here are some answers.

Q: Could terrorists make and set off a nuclear bomb?

A: Yes, providing they had the right materials. Guidance on how to make a nuclear device is available on the Internet, and only 9lb of plutonium is needed to make a bomb that could destroy a city. But getting hold of plutonium is far from simple. Unskilled bomb-makers might need 15lb or more of plutonium - and it is very rare. The British Ministry of Defence believes that no terrorist group has obtained anything like sufficient nuclear material.

But what if terrorists had a small amount of nuclear material?

They might try to make a "dirty bomb" - one that uses conventional explosives to spread radioactive material over as wide an area as possible. Some intelligence experts believe Osama bin Laden is trying to make such a device, but there is no evidence he has succeeded.

Okay, if the terrorists do not have a bomb, might they attack a nuclear power plant?

Nuclear installations in the UK are designed to take the impact of light planes or military aircraft, but not commercial airliners laden with fuel. Scientists fear a terrorist could fly a plane into radioactive liquid waste tanks at Sellafield, causing a disaster worse than that at Chernobyl. Short of placing anti-aircraft batteries outside

such plants or ordering the RAF to shoot down suspect aircraft, experts believe little can be done immediately to improve security.

What about chemical weapons? Are they a real threat?

When the Aum Shinri Kyo cult in Japan released sarin nerve gas on the Tokyo subway in 1995, it forced western governments to accept that terrorists could use chemical weapons. Getting hold of chemical agents, however, is only half the story; deploying them effectively is far more difficult. They are dangerous to handle and need to be spread widely. Hence the concerns in America about crop-spraying planes. Britain has very few such planes. A defence ministry study concluded that the risk of chemical attack by terrorists was low.

But if there were an attack, what would they use?

The security service believes terrorists are trying to make or buy chemical agents including phosgene, which damages the lungs; hydrogen cyanide, which interferes with the transfer of oxygen from the blood to human tissue; and mustard gas, which causes painful blisters.

They sound terrible. Would anyone survive?

Most people would. All the chemicals can be fatal but it depends on the dose. The sarin attack on the Tokyo subway killed 12

people. They were either nearby or elderly people with other health conditions that were exacerbated by the gas. If you can get away from the gas and receive prompt chances of survival are high. Chemicals tend to attack internal or external organs and can be countered. The problems will come if medical facilities are overloaded with thousands of serious casualties.

Okay, but what about biological weapons - might terrorists try to use these instead?

Evidence from a terrorist trial indicates that Osama bin Laden has been trying to obtain anthrax. Other potentially deadly agents are botulism, smallpox and Venezuelan equine encephalitis (VEE). Again, there are difficulties in creating, storing and using such weapons.

How harmful are these bugs?

Theoretically, 100kg (2cwt) of anthrax spores spread over London by plane could cause 3m fatalities, although some studies put the figure much lower, at about 200,000.

This presumes that everyone exposed develops the disease. But many people have natural immunity, and anthrax can be cured with large doses of antibiotics. Whether there are enough antibiotics and health services to cope with such huge number of casualties is another matter. There is also a vaccine that would be useful if applied in time. Smallpox kills between 30% and 50% of its victims, but a vaccine is available.

Good medical treatment usually leads to recovery but a cure is not certain. Neither is there a known cure for VEE, which is fatal in humans. In theory, botulism could kill millions of people, but fortunately it dies off quickly once released and anti-toxin treatment can reduce the severity of the disease if it is recognised and treated early.

So should I buy a gas mask?

Modern gas masks have two barriers to lethal agents. The first filters catch tiny particles in the air such as anthrax spores; behind them, discs of porous carbon offer further protection against biological agents and chemicals such as cyanide. The problem is that by the time you have realised an attack is taking place, it may be too late for a mask to be of any use. Biological agents can spend several days incubating in the body before the illnesses they cause become detectable. Unless you wear a mask 24 hours a day, you cannot hope to be fully protected. Most gas-mask filters last for only three to 12 hours, depending on the type of agent and its concentration. The government and scientists believe protective measures are of only limited use. Instead, efforts are centred on prevention.

Aside from nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, what about ordinary bombs?

Some cells of Islamic terrorists may be present in the UK. But judging the likelihood of an attack now more than at any other time can only be speculative. The Home Office says "there is no intelligence at the moment to suggest that there is any immediate threat". (The Sunday Times)



A detachment of US Marines prepares to enter the gas chamber during NBC (Nuclear, Biological and Chemical) warfare training. They spent five minutes in a gas chamber exposed to CS gas and removed their masks for ten seconds during the exercise.

Barbarians at the gates

India alone will have to fight the Masood Azhars

THERE was nothing arbitrary or rash about this attack. When a four-member Jaish-e-Mohammad suicide squad targeted the Srinagar Assembly complex on Monday, they sought to convey a clear message. In choosing the legislature — symbol of Jammu and Kashmir's forever threatened democracy — and in disregarding the casualties that could accrue among civilians simply going about their daily tasks, the militants have served notice. That their very Talibanised brand of jihad would carry on apace. Survey the number of myths they have shattered in one cruel afternoon. We have been repeatedly informed by spokespersons for militants as well as their patrons in Islamabad that the confrontation in Kashmir is specifically aimed at the Indian state, not civilians. Well. As leader of the hurriedly cobbled global coalition against terror, the US has attempted to address Indian concerns by banning the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. A direct offshoot of the HUM, the Jaish-e-Mohammad has now exposed the ineffectiveness of such piecemeal endeavours. And just the other day, Musharraf claimed that there were no terrorists in his land. Not only was the attack on the Assembly undertaken by residents of Pakistan, but the Jaish is one of the most active jihadi groups on Pakistani soil.

The Jaish strike poses an awkward challenge for the American-Pakistan collaboration against Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. For it amply highlights the deep linkages among America's top enemies today, the Pakistani establishment and the terrorists being smuggled into Kashmir. The Jaish was founded by Masood Azhar, who was handed over to the Tal-

iban in Kandahar two years ago in exchange for hijacked Indian passengers. He next surfaced in Karachi, then broke away from the now banned Harkat to found the Jaish — which was christened by a cleric who formed part of the choice team that flew into Afghanistan last week to plead with Mullah Omar on Pakistan's behalf that he hand over bin Laden. In turn, it is bin Laden's Al Qaeda that has been training Harkat members for terrorism in Kashmir. And on and on it could go as the threads in this complicated web are traced. But the bottom-line is this: if the so-called war against terror is to have any credibility, current apprehensions that terrorists are being divided into two camps — those who will not be tolerated (bin Laden and friends) and those who are chastised with just a strongly worded statement or two (the troublesome boys in J&K) — must be addressed. If Masood Azhar and his ilk are allowed to crisscross Pakistan chanting virulent rhetoric and spinning malevolent plots against India, the entire effort will remain duplicitous.

But if India has with reason demanded that Pakistan immediately crack down on the organisations involved in terrorist incidents in this country, it must also appraise its internal security. For, national security is but an extension of internal security. True, suicide attacks are virtually impossible to anticipate, and security forces need to focus upon real-time intelligence and stringent sanitising drills. However, the ease with which militants on Monday distracted security guards on the perimeter of the Assembly compound with their car bomb points to grave lacunae in policing procedures. This is distressing, for the war against terror is already in progress.

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Jaswant springs post-Taliban plan

FROM K.P. NAYAR

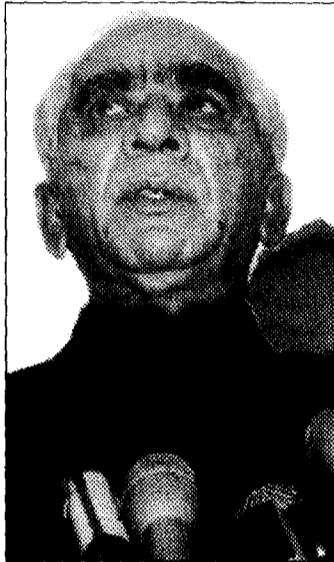
Washington, Oct. 2: External affairs minister Jaswant Singh has conveyed to the Americans his assessment that the Taliban will not hand over Osama bin Laden to them and that the US response to the September 11 terrorist attacks have to be "selectively military".

Talking to reporters after meeting President George W. Bush yesterday, Singh said the Taliban has to go because it has been harbouring terrorists.

He said it should be the effort of the international community to strengthen the "legitimate government" of Afghanistan headed by President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the Northern Alliance. "They will deal with the Taliban very adequately," he later argued in a local television appearance.

Questioning that the Taliban represented Afghanistan, Singh said that to perpetuate the Taliban regime is to perpetuate terrorism. "The Taliban is really a surrogate for the al Qaida, and the Taliban currently really is being run by al Qaida and Osama bin Laden."

While calling for a change of regime in Kabul, Singh cautioned



Jaswant Singh talks to reporters after meeting US national security adviser Condoleezza Rice at the White House. (AP/PTI)

against putting all the eggs in the King Zahir Shah basket.

What is needed in Afghanistan is not a personality-based transition. Instead, the change should be based on a process, he argued.

Singh's comments immediately put him at odds with Pakistan.

Shamshad Ahmed, Islamabad's permanent representative to the UN, last night questioned the claim that the Northern Alliance would provide representational government in Kabul.

The Alliance does not reflect the ethnicity of Afghans, Ahmed said. It cannot represent Afghan society.

Ahmed's comments came even as Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf virtually wrote the Taliban's obituary in an interview to the BBC.

But reports reaching here from Islamabad said Pakistan was desperately looking for "moderate elements" in the militia to replace Mullah Mohammad Omar so that it could preserve its hold on Kabul.

The Pakistani effort appears to have been triggered by the leak of a White House memo, which made it clear that the Bush administration had cast its lot in favour of overthrowing the repressive regime headquartered in Kandahar.

Singh said military action has to take place "after all the economic and other measures have been taken to the satisfaction of the coalition" and in accordance with what the UN Security Council has said so far.

THE TELEGRAPH

3 OCT 2001

J&K ultras gain from Pak, US doublespeak

Arun Joshi
Jammu, October 2

US PRESIDENT George W Bush's failure to book Kashmir extremist groups in his first list of the targeted terrorist outfits, and Pakistan's high profile campaign on what it calls the "Kashmir cause", has so emboldened the Kashmiri groups that they dared to launch the deadliest attack of the past 12 years on the Legislative Assembly building in Srinagar yesterday.

The sudden escalation in violence in Kashmir is attributed to the developments in the US and Pakistan. Sources in the security forces said that after lying low for a while following the terror attacks on New York and Washington, Kashmiri militants have again reared their ugly heads.

First it was President Bush who did not include any of the Kashmir militant outfits in the list of the groups whose assets he ordered to be frozen.

"That was enough message for all of them that they are off the hook and American interests were Afghan centric," sources said.

"It was a big sigh of relief for groups like Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Tayyeba," the sources said. These two groups have been quite active in Jammu and Kashmir and are responsible for most of the suicide attacks.

Jaish-e-Mohammad, headed by Maulana Azhar Masood, the terrorist leader released in exchange of hijacked Indian Airlines aircraft in Kandhar in December 1999, had owned responsibility for Monday's

ADVANI VISIT

UNION HOME Minister L K Advani will visit Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday with a team of Home Ministry officials. Another team headed by the Special Secretary (J&K Affairs), Ashok Bhandari, has already left for Srinagar for security discussions. Advani will meet the Chief Minister, chair a meeting of the Unified Headquarters represented by senior officers of the Army, the paramilitary and State police, and officials from the intelligence agencies.

HTC, New Delhi

"fidayeen" attack. The attack left 38 dead and almost 60 others wounded.

Earlier, Lashkar-e-Tayyeba had carried out two suicide attacks on Army convoys in the

preceding two days and killed nine soldiers.

"It is significant to note that the serial attacks started after Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf let another balloon go up on Kashmir when he said that his decision to side with the US in its strike against Taliban ruled Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden was guided by his 'Kashmir cause' — 'The Kashmir cause would be benefited by my decision'," Sources said.

This was seen as a green signal to step up violence, sources said. They tried it in small measure first and in the deadliest fashion on Monday. "It was an attack on democracy," Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah said with all the emphasis at his command.

The US stand is ironical when on considers that it is throwing

virtually its entire military and diplomatic machinery to hunt down Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaida on the suspicion they were involved in the September 11 attacks.

"Jaish-e-Mohammad, operating from Pakistan, has claimed responsibility. There is no doubt about it. So does Lashkar-e-Tayyeba for its violent acts in Kashmir. It is clear that they operate from Pakistan and that country provides all support to them. Why does America hesitate in calling these groups terrorists," Farooq wondered.

Pakistan's foreign office has condemned the attack by "those who want to defame the Kashmir movement". But what prevents it from taking action against the group that operates from its soil, analysts have asked.

Fidayeen strike toll touches 38

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, October 2

THE DEATH toll in Monday's *fidayeen* attack on the Secretariat in Srinagar has risen to 38 with the recovery of eight more bodies late in the night. Those killed included seven personnel of Jammu and Kashmir police, two BSF men, one CRPF man, nine employees of the State Assembly and Legislative Council, four employees of other Government departments and five pedestrians, an official spokesman said.

Ten other bodies including those of four militants were yet to be identified. The Jaish-e-Mohammad, which claimed responsibility for the attack, said four cadres of the outfit who formed part of the suicide squad were Wajahat Hussain alias Saifullah of Luckmarwat NWFP (Pakistan), Mohammad Irfan alias Omer (Karachi), Abdur Rauf alias Arabi (Sahiwal) and Tariq Ahmad alias Ayubi (Pakistan).

Wajahat Hussain blew up the explosive-laden Tata Sumo vehicle near the main gate while three other Jaish cadres stormed the



A securityman stands guard outside the damaged Assembly building in Srinagar on Tuesday.

J&K Assembly reopens today

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, October 2

THE JAMMU and Kashmir Assembly will sit again on Wednesday. Speaker Abdul Ahad Vakil told newsmen in the Secretariat this morning that both the Houses of the Legislature, Assembly and Council, were intact and the House would convene on Wednesday.

The Speaker, who was present in the Secretariat when militants stormed it on Monday, said the determination and fortitude he had seen among the police force and staff yesterday made him confident that the forces of darkness will never be able to destroy "our democratic institutions" and "militants will never succeed in their unholy designs".

He complimented the State police and the security forces for the unparalleled courage they showed after the militant attack.

Chairman of Legislative Council Abdul Rashid Dar, who had a narrow escape in yesterday's attack, said there was no question of succumbing to militant designs. Dar said that the attack has shaken the conscience of mankind and strengthened the fight of civilised society against terrorism.

Secretariat, the spokesman said. The Jaish said the three activists were killed in a 6-hour-long gun-battle with Indian forces inside the Assembly complex.

Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah, Speaker Abdul Ahad Vakil, Chairman State Legislative Council, Abdur Rasheed Dar, Minister of State for Home Khalid Najeeb Sahurwardi,

Chief Secretary Ashok Jaitley and Director-General of Police A K Suri and several other senior officers visited the Secretariat this morning.

The scene at the complex after the blast was appalling with blood splattered all round. The administrative block was all rubble after the building caught fire during the operation against the

militants. All official records in the building were destroyed.

Two fire tenders were employed to control the blaze.

All the roads leading to the Secretariat as well as shops and business centres outside the complex were closed. Hundreds of security men including police, BSF and CRPF were camping outside the main gate.

The Western powers must look beyond the impending war in Afghanistan

Life after the taliban

CHANDRASHEKHAR DASGUPTA

Looking beyond the impending war in Afghanistan, the international community must start planning for the political and economic reconstruction of that ill-starred country. This is imperative from a humanitarian as well as a realpolitik view-point. The war against terrorism will produce lasting results in Afghanistan only if it brings political stability and addresses the desperate economic problems which have made that country a breeding ground of narco-terrorism. Unless the Afghan economy is rehabilitated, al-Qaida and its taliban hosts will be succeeded by other terrorist malefactors.

It is now fairly clear that the advance on the battlefield of the forces of the Northern Alliance will be a prelude to American military action against the taliban. Russia has promised to maintain its military assistance to the Northern Alliance. It is possible that the United States of America will provide air support, seizing the opportunity to degrade or destroy the taliban's air force, armour and heavy artillery. This scenario is consistent with reports that the US has obtained permission from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to use their air space as also certain airfield facilities. The Northern Alliance will provide the ground forces which the US is loath to commit in the conflict.

Pakistan has already voiced its apprehensions about such moves. "We fear any such decisions on the part of foreign powers to give assistance to one group or the other is a recipe for great suffering for the people of Afghanistan," the foreign minister, Abdul Sattar declared on September 25.

Ever since the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan, the generals in Islamabad have pursued the chimera of a client state in Afghanistan. They have cherished the fanciful notion that this would provide "strategic depth" for Pakistan. The reality, of course, is that Pakistan's close links with the taliban have proved to be more of a political embarrassment than a strategic asset. The collapse of its ambitions of exercising a dominant influence in Kabul will not cause any damage to Pakistan's real interests.

Nevertheless, Islamabad is apprehensive that a government led by the Northern Alliance will lean towards its current benefactors, including India. These fears are as unfounded as Pakistan's earlier hopes of domination. Political allegiance does not flow from recollection of past favours but from expectation of future benefits. A new regime in Kabul will hopefully maintain good relations with all countries of the neighbourhood — including India — but it will have to pay particular attention to its ties with the Western donors and its principal source of military aid, probably Russia.

The author is a former ambassador to China and the European Union

President George W. Bush has disclaimed any interest in "nation-building" in Afghanistan and this is obviously not his primary objective. Yet it is difficult to see how the US — and the countries supporting it — can avoid involvement in assisting the emergence of a new centre of authority in Afghanistan. How else can they obtain Afghan cooperation for tracking down Osama bin Laden and his associates and for

require substantial foreign aid not only for relief and reconstruction but also for consolidating its political control over the regional chieftains. Ever since it was founded in the 18th century, Afghanistan has been a loose tribal confederacy. Only through a combination of force and patronage has the central authority in Kabul been able to exercise a modicum of control over the provinces. The proliferation of automatic weapons has

arrangements must be in place before the onset of the bitterly cold Afghan winter.

The longer term task of reconstruction will entail repairing or rebuilding the physical infrastructure of a country devastated by twelve years of war and civil strife. In the chaotic conditions existing at present, narco-terrorism offers the only source of gainful employment available to many Afghans. As a result, the badlands lying astride the Afghan-Pakistan border have overtaken the notorious Golden Triangle to become the world's principal source of opium and heroin. They have also become a major breeding ground of terrorism, sending the so-called *mujahedin* to such far-flung theatres as Kashmir and north Africa, Chechnya and Xinjiang. There is often a close nexus between the drug smuggler and the terrorist since the revenues generated by the opium and heroin trade are one of the principal sources of financing terrorist activities.

Aid to Afghanistan will yield rich dividends for donor countries in terms of containing terrorism and the drug menace. By promoting internal stability it will also open up the commercial prospects of major gas and oil pipelines from central Asian fields to markets in Pakistan and India.

Nevertheless, it will be an uphill task to raise resources of the required order from international donors. During the Cold War era, East-West competition generated sizeable foreign aid outflows to the third world. Overseas development aid has registered a sharp decline since the end of the Cold War. Fashionable economists from affluent countries have provided ideological respectability for this phenomenon by pointing to the bracing remedies of free capital markets, shutting their eyes to the unfolding human tragedy in Africa and some parts of Asia.

The post-Cold War period has witnessed a wide mismatch between the threat perceptions of the great powers and the instruments they employ for defence against these threats. After the Cold War, non-military threats such as international terrorism, drug trafficking and refugee flows figure prominently in the list of security challenges identified by major powers. Yet military force continues to be the exclusive instrument of security policy, apart from diplomacy. The great powers have yet to fashion new instruments designed specifically to meet the security challenges of the 21st century. Economic aid and social engineering will be essential instruments for coping with the new threats to national security.

The need to supplement military means with these instruments is crystal clear in the case of Afghanistan. We must hope that Afghanistan will prove to be a turning-point in the evolution of a new and more sophisticated security doctrine for the Western powers.



destroying the terrorist bases in the country?

While the Northern Alliance will play a central role in the initial task of freeing Afghanistan from the taliban's stranglehold, it cannot by itself provide a stable regime for the entire country. Afghanistan is composed of diverse ethnic groups, among which the Pushtuns are the most numerous. The alliance is dominated by the Tajiks and Uzbeks of the northern areas. In order to create a more representative government, leaders from other ethnic groups will have to be inducted into the regime. In particular, adequate representation must be given to the Pushtuns. After the taliban have been removed from the scene, the government will have to be reconstituted if Afghanistan is to be given a chance for peace and stability.

One possibility is to bring back the 86-year old ex-king, Zahir Shah, as the titular head of a broad-based government. Press reports indicate that some Western governments and Afghan factions have already made initial contacts with Zahir Shah in Rome, where he has been living in exile since 1973.

A new Afghan regime will initially

Economic aid and social engineering will be essential instruments for coping with the new threats to national security

strengthened the centrifugal tendencies within the confederacy. It will take time for a new national government to build up unquestioned military superiority over the tribal warlords. Its hands will have to be strengthened by funneling foreign aid through the central government, thus endowing it with powers of financial patronage.

In any case, Afghanistan will require massive funds for relief and rehabilitation. United Nations agencies have warned of an impending humanitarian disaster unless relief measures are urgently taken in hand. Food and shelter must be provided to refugees returning from camps in Pakistan and Iran as well as to tens of thousands of displaced persons within Afghanistan. Relief

THE TELEGRAPH

3 OCT 2001

India to US: if you can, so can we

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Oct. 2: India is making out its case in Washington for hot pursuit of terrorists into Pakistan — and for legitimising New Delhi's right to take any action it may deem fit to destroy the machinery in Pakistan which produces terrorists who sneak into Kashmir.

Implicit in Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's letter to President George W. Bush is a warning that just as the US has reserved the right to attack terrorists anywhere in the world who threaten America's security, India, too, has the right to take similar action.

"We fully understand that in resolutely countering the terrorism that attacked USA on September 11 you are discharging your core responsibility for the interest and security of the people of the United States of America," Vajpayee wrote to Bush.

Referring to the suicide-bomb attack in Kashmir yesterday, the Prime Minister wrote that "incidents of this kind raise questions for our security, which as a democratically elected leader of India, I have to address in our supreme national interest".

Vajpayee then sent an unambiguous warning to Islamabad. "Pakistan must understand that there is a limit to the patience of the people of India."

During a 75-minute meeting with national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, foreign minister Jaswant Singh said the US should not make the mistake of treating the problem as the solution.

Bush dropped in at that meeting and spent 40 minutes with the minister, just as he did during Singh's last visit here in April.

In an interview to a local television channel, Singh later elaborated on this key message which he carried to the Bush administration from Vajpayee.

"I have always believed that the whole epicentre of the spread of terrorism now in the region...

the focus of terrorism had become Afghanistan and Pakistan. So they are, to my mind — and we know it — they are a part of the problem."

He continued: "Our approach to terrorism cannot be uni-dimensional. It would be simplistic and a great error for us to think that simply by eliminating one manifestation of terrorism — al Qaida or Osama bin Laden — we have eliminated a global threat."

Singh continued: "At the moment, you wish to concentrate, focus your attention and be applying yourself to al Qaida, absolutely fine. But believe me that if you think that by eliminating al Qaida and leaving every other organisation intact, the problem would have even begun to be resolved. No."

Yesterday, the urgency of the message was registered in Washington after the suicide bomber in Srinagar killed and maimed scores of people.

It was buttressed by Vajpayee's letter, in which he directly blamed Pakistan for the latest spurt in violence in Kashmir.

India may not take any precipitate action which will raise tension with Pakistan during this moment of crisis. Vajpayee said as much in his letter to Bush: "We are with you and do not wish to overload the agenda in any way."

But the objective of Vajpayee's letter and the missions by Singh and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra earlier were to keep Pakistan-sponsored terrorism on America's policy radar screen.

That the message was going down well in Washington was obvious when state department spokesman Richard Boucher, shedding his ambivalence, said: "India is a key partner in the global coalition against terrorism and we do believe that terrorism must be ended everywhere."

He added: "We have continued to maintain a policy on Kashmir. It looks to everybody with influence to reduce the violence and to try to see that the situation there is resolved peacefully."

IN LETTER TO BUSH, VAJPAYEE BUILDS CASE FOR HOT PURSUIT INTO PAKISTAN



A resident and his son inspect the shattered window of their government quarters, damaged in Monday's blast outside the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. (AFP)

Jolted in Pak, Jaish draws away

FROM MUKHTAR AHMAD, IDRES RAHMTIAR AND AGENCIES

Srinagar and Islamabad, Oct. 2: Jaish-e-Mohammad today denied its involvement in the suicide bomb attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly as furious Pakistani militant outfits condemned the strike, labelling it as "pure cruelty".

Delhi insisted that the bomb attack that killed 37 was the work of Pakistanis belonging to Jaish. Police identified the suicide squad members as Wajahat Hussain alias Saifullah of the North-West Frontier Province, Mohammad Irfan Zaman alias

Umar of Karachi, Abdul Rouf Ahsan alias Arabi and Tariq Ahmad alias Ayubi, both residents of Sehwal-Punjab.

In a delayed denial, Jaish faxed a statement to Reuters saying that yesterday's attack could have been the work of the Indian government to "browbeat its puppet administration" in the region.

But a newspaper, *Daily Islam*, that is believed to be close to the group, carried the attack story with the banner headline: "Devastating attack by Jaish on Kashmir puppet legislature".

A group claiming to represent the Jaish issued a press release in Kashmir, saying the two

militants alleged to have been killed by security forces in a gun battle had actually escaped. The group had yesterday claimed responsibility for the attack.

Sources in Pakistan said most mujahideen were enraged by the attack that had cast a shadow on their, 11-year-old struggle. "It is one of the most terrible incidents in the entire history of jihad,"

QUOTE

This is not jihad, it is pure cruelty

A MILITANT IN PAKISTAN on the J&K Assembly attack

said one militant leader. "This is not jihad, it is pure cruelty."

Almost all the main militant groups were furious at the attack, which they feel certain will strengthen India's hand. "Most of those killed in Monday's attacks are Muslims. It is hard to understand what is going on," said a senior militant leader.

India seized on the attack to send a letter to US President George W. Bush, who is assembling a global coalition against terrorism that includes Pakistan, accusing Islamabad of aiding militants in Kashmir.

The suicide strike came as Musharraf is trying to contain domestic opposition to his back-

ing for the US demand that Afghanistan's Taliban hand over Saudi-born fugitive Osama bin Laden, prime suspect in the September 11 attacks.

"This is distinctly bad timing," said Shaukat Qadir, a retired brigadier and political writer. "This is a particularly vulnerable time for Pervez Musharraf."

In a recent BBC interview, Musharraf had described the militancy in Kashmir as a "freedom struggle". Changing the focus of terrorism to Kashmir would be the most contentious issue, he said, and in Pakistan, "it will not be accepted at all".

See Pages 6, 8

The rhetoric of warfare is singularly inadequate for the US's new imperial role

Battle hymn of the republic

PARTHA CHATTERJEE

Let me say at the outset that I consider the attacks carried out in this city on September 11 as heinous and barbaric. I am not one of those who proclaim political non-violence. As a student of politics in colonial and postcolonial countries, I have become convinced that when the structures of domination in the modern world are so deeply rooted in the ability to deploy massive and efficient violence, it is neither possible nor justified to insist that those who fight against unfair domination must at all times eschew the use of political violence. But I know of no anti-imperialist or anti-colonial politics that will justify the killing of more than five thousand ordinary men and women in a deliberate act of violence against a civilian target.

Even if, by some contorted political logic, one were to think that one was at war with the United States, it would be a hard act to justify, even as an act of war. I believe that such deliberate and calculated acts of massive terror have emerged out of a politics and an ideology that are fundamentally mistaken and that must be rejected and condemned. Such ideologies of religious or ethnic fanaticism are widespread today and they are by no means restricted to any one religious community. I am one of those who argue that we must sympathetically understand the reasons why so many people all over the world are persuaded by such ideologies of fanaticism. However, that is not to say that we must sympathize with or endorse their politics.

Having said that, let me turn to the question of the response to these acts of terror. Within hours of the event, the US president announced that his country was at war. Immediately, the analogy was being drawn to Pearl Harbour. Not since World War II, we were told, had America been attacked in this way. I have been asking ever since, why was it necessary to make that announcement? How was the determination made so quickly? Was it because war is such a familiar trope in the public memory of Western countries?

From fiction to history books to the cinema, there are innumerable sources of popular culture in the West that have taught people what war means and what one ought to do when one's country goes to war. We saw it in this country last week when people flew the flag, lined up to donate blood or sang the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* in memorial services in church. An unprecedented act of violence was made comprehensible by framing it as an act of war. Perhaps George W. Bush, inexperienced

in the affairs of state, was closer to the popular understanding than the seasoned veterans of the state department when he said that he wanted Osama bin Laden "dead or alive". Revenge and retaliation are also familiar sentiments of war. So when President Bush said, albeit within his somewhat limited political vocabulary, that he would "smoke 'em out and hunt 'em down", he was using a rhetorical long familiar in the American national language of warfare.

It is now clear that by declaring a war so quickly, the US decision-makers have found themselves pushed into a corner from which they are having a hard time getting out. Three weeks after the attack, there has been no visible military response. Experts are trying to tell people that this is not a conventional enemy; it has no country, no territory, no borders. There are no obvious targets that could be attacked. It could take a long time to build an international coalition and strike effectively at the enemy.

This is not a war against a country or a people. It is a war against terrorism. But having been told that this was a war, the people are dismayed by the lack of any recognizable response. There is a virtual volcano of rage and frustration that has built up in this country. The people are in no mood for metaphorical wars. They are, if I may use some plain language too, baying for blood.

In the absence of a clear enemy or target, the rhetoric is frequently slipping into unconcealed religious, ethnic and cultural hatred. And it is not merely rhetoric either, because there have been attacks on mosques and temples, assaults on foreign-looking men and women and at least two killings. Senior leaders, including the president, have attempted to reassure Arab-Americans that their safety will not be jeopardized. And yet the rhetoric of cultural intolerance continues.

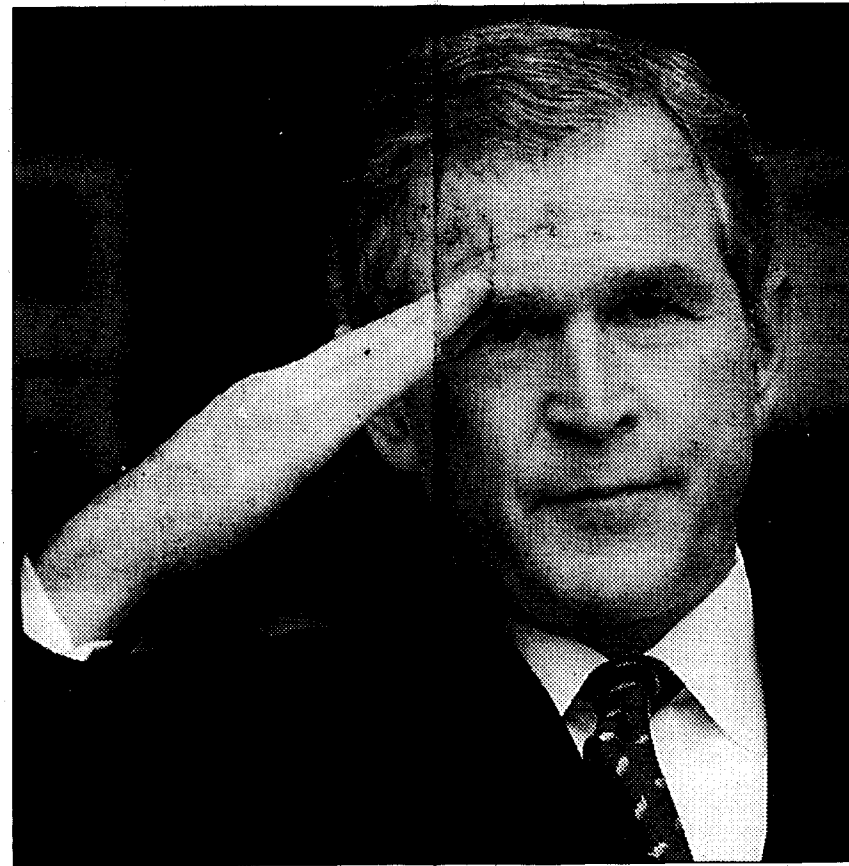
Responsible leaders speak on radio and television of what must be done with the uncivilized parts of the world, of keeping a close watch on neighbours with Arabic names and of people who wear diapers around their heads. They speak of "ending" states like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya and "finishing off" Islamic militants in Lebanon and Palestine. If this is how the elite speaks, can we blame ordinary people for making sense of this war as a conflict of civilizations?

We can and should, I think, ask questions about responsibility and accountability. If the war on terrorism is a war unlike any other this country has fought, as we are now being told, that should have been clear from the first day. Why then mislead everyone by invoking the familiar language of retaliation against enemy countries and enemy peo-

ples? If the US is indeed the only superpower in a new world without borders, the cultural resources of traditional war will be singularly inadequate and inappropriate for that new imperial role.

Has the leadership acted responsibly in preparing both itself and the country for such a role? I do not think so. We see and hear all around us the signs and languages of traditional American nationalism, unmindful even of the fact that the patterns of immigration into this country in the last few decades have

Intelligence Agency operation in history. The US — in collaboration with the military regime in Pakistan and the retrograde conservative monarchy of Saudi Arabia — organized, trained, funded and armed the Afghan militants, encouraged their Islamic ideology and applauded when they successfully drove out the Soviet troops. I heard Zbigniew Brzezinski, a familiar figure in the corridors of Columbia University, say on television last night that when the last Soviet soldiers crossed the Amu Daria back



By declaring a war so quickly, the US decision-makers have been pushed into a corner from which they are having a hard time getting out

into the Soviet Union, he felt very very good. He also said that he would have felt even better had he known at the time that that would be the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

I don't suppose he even thought for a moment the disastrous consequences the American involvement would have on the region. The Taliban was born in

the Eighties in the *mujahedin* camps in Pakistan. Osama bin Laden became a hero of Islamic militancy at that time. The Pakistani army itself became deeply afflicted by the ideology of Islamic fanaticism. The results are now there for all to see. Has the US ever accepted that it has some responsibility for what was done to the region and what the region is now doing to the rest of the world?

The question should be asked today when battleships, bombers and commando units are taking up positions for military operations. Is anyone thinking what might be the consequences for Afghanistan of another deadly war? We heard the other day that the council of *ulema* has recommended that Osama bin Laden be asked to voluntarily leave Afghanistan. There is only one conclusion to be drawn from this. The religious leaders are terrified of what might become of their country and people if the US chooses to attack. And what about the consequences for Pakistan where a reluctant army, the only organized institution of the state, is being forced to lay the ground for an American invasion? What about the consequences for all of south Asia where there are two countries with nuclear weapons and a political atmosphere seething with religious and sectarian conflict?

Like it or not, comprehend it or not, the US is today the world's only imperial power. As such, everything it does has consequences for the world as a whole. It is not only the collateral damage of military action that American defence analysts must think of. American leaders must also necessarily think of the collateral damage they do to the history of societies and peoples all over the world. If the US is the world's only superpower, it must be responsible for its actions to the people of the whole world, not to some mythical international coalition hurriedly and cynically put together, but to countries and people — yes, ordinary and innocent people — who suffer the consequences of its actions.

I am not persuaded that either the American leadership or the American people are aware of the enormous moral responsibility contemporary history has put on them. In the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center, President Bush could only think of the "Wanted" poster he had seen in Western movies. While the whole world is looking for an American policy that is flexible, sensitive, attuned to the enormous changes that have taken place in the world in the last decade or so, what we will probably get is more of the familiar American arrogance, bludgeoning and insensitivity. Perhaps, sadly, the first war of the twenty first century will end up no differently from the many wars of the twentieth.

The author is director, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta and visiting professor, Columbia University. This is the text of a lecture delivered in a meeting in Columbia University

Stuff of baroque death

COUNTED, the murders in the sky on 11 September would be probably somewhere near 6,000, enough to make us immune to murders here, sit up and take notice – nowhere deaths at some place else.

But seen on the screen, heard, and read, their effect is apocalyptic. From death in the sky in two strikes, it has transformed into a world phenomenon, which deaths of thousands and millions in the Middle East, Rwanda, and the Balkans in the last decade could not achieve.

It could be achieved not by similarity, but by difference between deaths. Thus, if your deaths are 50,000, they are not much; if our deaths are 6,000, they should belong to humanity. If your deaths are on the ground, they are banal; if our deaths are on the sky, they are extraordinary.

If the killing field was in your country, then it was your country's 1,000 years' past and the present that was at fault; if the killing field is in my imaginary space of innocence for 250 years, then our innocence must outshine your culpability, because these deaths have hit the cradle of civilisation.

If you have demanded your way of life, you are dangerous; if we have demanded our way of life that is because we have the inalienable right of self-determination. Your response to the killings of your kinsfolk should be reconciliation; our response is retribution.

Our dream of greatness is historical necessity, yours is fascism. All the rules apply to you not to us. Perhaps this is what baroque death is, a chasm between single deaths and death universalised, deaths that become universal not by numbers, but by the density of death achievable only by acceleration of its effects. The attacks from the sky to murder people who were literally unable to escape to the ground were a major atrocity.

In scale they may not have reached the level of Bill Clinton's bombing of Sudan destroying half its pharmaceutical supplies, and Senior Bush and Jefferson Clinton's blockade of Iraq killing unknown numbers of people, but in intensity, they will be more, with harsh security controls and many possible ramifications for undermining civil liberties, internal freedom, racial tolerance, and the little geopolitical sanguinity still left.

This crime is a gift to the baroque art that had almost died, an art whose utility lay in making the significance of death universal, and the denial of whatever was living.

In one shot, to be correct two shots, old wickedness has been wiped off the register, which had the record of American missiles smashing into Palestinian homes and US helicopters firing missiles into a Lebanese ambulance in 1996, American shells crashing into a village

called Qana, Lebanese Right-wing militia, paid and uniformed by America's friend Israel, raping, hacking, and butchering their way ahead through refugee camps, the bombing of a baby food producing plant in Baghdad, the massacre at My Lai, but that is long enough past to forget, and much more.

What is terrorist killing and terrorist death? Not killings of terrorists not even killings by terrorists, but killings that arouse terror – a terror-death, a death that terrorises, a terror that produces death, a death that will not be considered normal, banal, but exceptional and so different from the living as to produce terror.

Therefore, part of the population in various parts of the world unable to fathom the deaths in the sky will not be terrorised at the deaths up there in the buildings touching the sky, but terrorised at the prospects of deaths that those deaths in the sky will have brought upon them.

Terrors of different kinds, and this difference that the baroque cannot erase – in fact the more universal the death the more are the differences.

Americans were not terrorised at the deaths in Rwanda, Tamils were not terrorised at the killings in Punjab and Bengal; death is therefore universal while terror is differential. We know that for the past 50 years, killings have gone on with indifference of many not affected immediately, but we also know that deaths have become now a matter of concern, they produce terror, death has become a being, an act that leaps into universality.

Torture of the dissenting sects in medieval times, regular throttling of infants and

The murders in the sky is a gift to the baroque art that had almost died, an art whose utility lay in making the significance of death universal, and the denial of whatever was living. In two shots, old wickedness has been wiped off the register which had the blemished record of America's deeds in West Asia, Iraq and the massacre at My Lai, writes RANABIR SAMADDAR. And yet, death in My Lai is and is not death in Manhattan, death on the ground is and is not the death in the sky



children to death by the Ottoman emperors, stoning of liberals to death in the rugged squares of a city, or shooting of Communists by firing squads in a soccer stadium – in all these death is protocol.

The protocol is of establishing what should be alive, compared to the great anonymous slaughters in wars. The latter scarcely rank as events, though these are acknowledged as facts. These are slave massacres, unknown, collective, plebian. But paradoxically in making death a baroque act, the singularity is

destroyed. Massive deaths become banal, in time what the anonymous deaths have been.

Death is an occasion always for states to come to their senses. Revolution needs deaths much more than a statist counter-revolution needs death as the necessary protocol.

The state, to make a come back, requires a murderous rite. The victim holds office, he is innocent, he is

clean, he had no complicity with murders, he typifies the daily life of rule – he was not exceptional.

His death is therefore dying at the hands of a murderer, the duration of an act, the slaughter of innocence, the catastrophe of silence, a death that requires baroque funeral – in the form of wholesale incarceration of family and clan members to death, of the wife led to the pyre, of rounding up members of a locality to the execution ground, a memorial, or forming a state or states.

The effects outshine the occasion, or the effects outshining the cause are the occasion, the monumental Taj Mahal in building and destroying in honour of death.

We must not eat for some days, observe certain purifying rites, force others into penance, silence, and agony, kill a few or thousands to avenge, build a mausoleum – a kind of denial of death by absorbing immediately this death into monuments of other acts that include the dying of others, an avenging angel that will make killing (of others) look like suicide (of selves).

In this way, the state returns with all controls. It returned repeatedly in Mughal India, in Ottoman Turkey, in Agrippina's Rome, in Socrates' Athens, in Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Bangladesh, or after the killings of

Prince Ferdinand and then thousands and thousands who followed the Serbian Prince into dying in the second decade of the last century.

In revolution, more in restoration, power needs the protocol of dying. Death by terrorist or

terrorist death is like life, for it brings so many back to life. Consider for example the following: the state that comes alive after some deaths (in Indira Gandhi's case in India or Premadasa's case in Sri Lanka, after a single death), victim who becomes the decor of life (Mahatma Gandhi, John F Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr), unconcerned who become the anxious victims-to-be (Central Asia in the 1990s), and the counsellors who find their vocation snatched from them by the banality of life and death restored back to them (US government to the Afghans, Europeans to the Balkans).

The change in the form of murderous tool does not matter. Hand (throttling), rope (tying), knife (assassinating), rifle (shooting), bombing (*en masse* destroying), ramming aircraft (piercing), atom bomb dropping (finishing everything in fire and smoke), chemical weapon (poisoning), death by injection (pleasant death), and guided missiles (revolutionary killing, the RMA) – all these are incidental.

Essential is death achievable through killing and achievable of terror. The fundamental principle is that, this death was not certain, terror did it, it may visit me. Even after the most furious act of omission or commission, the most severe ruler like Emperor Aurangzeb would have pardoned me, but this death may visit me any time.

Therefore, the ghost must be laid to rest, rubble must be turned into ashes, the corpse must be taken out of the grave and given a new burial – again the mode is purely instrumental, the murderous function of a killing is the protocol of the power that is living.

To die is then to perceive life, whence the question – how did the death come, how did death become so liquid, how did terror become real, leaping to life from fantasy, what were the gods and bystanders doing when the killer was taking position – in other words does death have a structure, death that is supposed to do away with all structures?

In other words, what do we mean when the philosopher says that terror-death is not "bookkeeping, but vegetation", reproduced but not repeated, death in My Lai is and is not death in Manhattan, death on the ground is and is not the death in the sky?

(The author is Director, Peace Studies Programme, South Asia Forum for Human Rights, Kathmandu.)

first managerial ministers. It is wisely ~~man never had.~~

HT-06

Jihad as national interest

MW

GENERAL PERVEZ Musharraf's claim that there are no terrorists in Pakistan will be regarded with incredulity and derision in India. That a head of government has to make an assertion of this nature is in itself an indication of how low the status of Pakistan is at the moment. In any event, it is clear that as a frontline State serving the American purpose — a fact which General Musharraf stressed with pride in his interview with CNN — he may no longer find it easy to harbour the terrorists as before. As it is, two outfits linked with the Sunni and Shia extremists which operated within Pakistan have been banned. Of the others which used Pakistan as a base while indulging in murder and mayhem in Kashmir, two have been put on the American blacklist. The others, like Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, are still around, but it is obvious that Pakistan will now have to be far more careful about aiding them lest it be caught by the Americans.

There is little doubt, therefore, that the entire *jehadi* enterprise which Pakistan had nurtured with the Taliban's help is in danger of coming apart with the international community turning so determinedly against terrorism. In addition, there are muted voices inside Pakistan warning against the encouragement of the *maulvi* mentality, thereby tarnishing the country's reputation. It isn't that Islamabad was unaware of how the Taliban connection was harming Pakistan. But it carried on nevertheless in the hope that even if

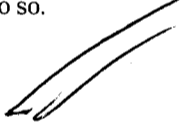
this link bred religious extremism in Pakistan, the damage caused by it would be compensated by the possible success of Islamabad's proxy war in Kashmir. But the fire went out of control on September 11 and now not only the Taliban, but Pakistan, too, is evidently under close observation.

But even while protesting his innocence, the general let the cat out of the bag when he said that Pakistan's ties with the Taliban were a matter of national interest. What interest was served by the drugs-Kalashnikov culture except that it helped the *jehadi* cause in Kashmir? A major objective of Pakistan in propping up this medieval outfit in Afghanistan was to create a warlike atmosphere in South Asia and induce Afghan and other mercenaries to create terror in Kashmir. But now, General Musharraf has had to admit that Pakistan has changed its stance under international pressure, showing that what was in Pakistan's national interest was considered harmful for the rest of the world. Given this acknowledgement, India has to play its cards with care to ensure that the world's attention is not diverted from Kashmir. Russia appears to have already extracted its pound of flesh by persuading the West to concede that Moscow is facing a genuine threat of Islamic terrorism in Chechnya. India's case is much stronger but it has not been fully able to convince the world about it. Now it has an excellent opportunity to do so.

THINK IT OVER...

I had seen birth and death...

But had thought they were different



THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

2 OCT 2001

If the US resumes nuclear experiments, India will face a challenging situation

An American somersault

J.N. DIXIT

1-10
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The world at large remains concerned and bemused by the policy statement made by the president of the United States of America, George W. Bush, on May 1 at the US National Defence University that the US will proceed with the implementation of the national missile defence system, and even before that proceed towards deploying theatre missile defence for the protection of Taiwan and Japan. There are reports from Washington since September 2 that the Bush administration is likely to resume underground nuclear tests in the foreseeable future. The last publicly declared nuclear tests were conducted by the US in 1993. The Clinton administration refrained from conducting nuclear tests, limiting itself to computer simulation experiments in the context of US's strong advocacy for the finalization and implementation of the comprehensive test ban treaty which was negotiated between 1994 and 1997 in Geneva.

The operational aspects of the US non-proliferation agenda during the last eight years were, first, extending the nuclear non-proliferation treaty indefinitely (read permanently), changing the stipulation of this treaty being reviewed every 25 years. Second, to put in place two additional treaties to comprehensively prevent horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, namely, the CTBT and then to move on to finalize the fissile material cut off treaty.

The CTBT stipulates a complete ban on all categories of nuclear tests. The FMCT aims at stipulating pre-emptive measures which will prohibit the processes of nuclear weaponization at their very root in terms of acquisition, production or processing of raw materials which could lead to the production of nuclear weapons. Parallely, the US desired and desires universal application of the missile technology control regime which has not been discussed in any United Nations forum nor has yet received any general consensus from the international community.

In addition, the US, in cooperation with other major like-minded powers, has initiated and implemented restrictive regimes on the transfer of what is called "dual use" technologies, which can be used for both civil and/or military purposes. The US still remains committed to these processes, but the new ingredient in the US's strategic security policies is not just to sustain its superior military position as it exists today, but to acquire higher levels of military technology capabilities to ensure its long-term political and military superiority in the emerging international political and strategic order. This is the motive inherent in the reported decision of the US to revive its programme of nuclear tests.

The logic behind this inclination of the Bush administration is that a ban or

long-term moratorium on nuclear testing would prevent the US defence experts and scientists from checking and updating the safety and reliability of the US's nuclear weapons. This is apart from the argument that there is no reliable guarantee about the Chinese and Russians upgrading their nuclear weapons capacities and apprehensions about further enhancement and improvement of nuclear weapons capacities of new nuclear weapons powers like India and Pakistan. The macro-level strategic argument not openly articulated is that in terms of strategic balance of power between different regions of the world, the US has to potentially meet the ramifications of the Eurasian region, having some nuclear weapons powers or nuclear weapons capable powers, namely, the Russian Federation, China, India and Pakistan and potentially Japan.

Just conducting further nuclear tests for nuclear weapons would not complete the process of acquiring decisive military technological superiority. It is logical to anticipate that the US would also conduct tests to improve its strategic long-range missile capacities and delivery systems because ultimately the deployment of an effective theatre missile defence system and a national missile defence system in space would depend on rockets placing such weapons systems in space. This orientation of US policies is a logical consequence of the Bush administration refusing to ratify the CTBT and its advocacy to abrogate the anti-ballistic missile treaty of 1972.

These reports about the US resuming nuclear tests come after discussions between Bush and his high level envoys with top leaders of the Russian Federation, China and members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It is significant that these reports about the US reassuming nuclear tests have not been contradicted by US authorities so far. Even more important, this reported decision comes just before Bush goes for his first official visit to China in October. The national security advisor, Condoleezza Rice, who has already had detailed negotiations on this subject with the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, and his advisers, announced in the first week of September that Washington will undertake intensive negotiations over the next few weeks to convince China that the NMD and theatre missile defence plans of the US would not pose any threat to China.

She elaborated: "We want to have serious talks with them as to why this is not a threat to them. We want to have serious talks with China about why we think stability in the Asia Pacific will be well served with this (US) capability." Accompanying these statements of Rice are pronouncements by senior US administration officials that the US and China would also discuss possibilities and procedures for resuming underground nuclear tests, if they were considered necessary to assure the safety

and reliability of their nuclear arsenals. Indications have also been given that similar possibilities have been discussed and are under discussion with the Russian government.

The short and long-term ramifications of the US decision to revive nuclear and missile testing and to endorse similar actions by Russia and China are a matter of serious concern. The NMD scheme would erode the present Russian and Chinese capabilities to deter the US from nuclear confrontation. The concept

nations of the present nuclear weapons powers, thus germinating prospects of further horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The movement towards deploying the NMD system would inevitably lead to demands for the deployment of anti-satellite weaponry in outer space to defend the NMD itself which in turn will violate the 1967 treaty banning weapons from outer space. The main ingredients of arms control arrangements, namely, selective and calibrated disarmament,



Condoleezza Rice has already had detailed negotiations on this subject with Vladimir Putin

of effective deterrence by these two countries will go off into a spin. This is a serious security challenge to China and Russia for whom nuclear and missile deterrence is important. The NMD system will take some time to become operational, and it is obvious that the Chinese will rapidly augment and technologically improve their nuclear weapons and missile capacities. There is every likelihood of the Russian Federation pulling back from START-II and START-III agreements and taking parallel steps to improve their weapons capacities.

Indications that the US may allow the Chinese and the Russians to conduct further nuclear and missile tests to assuage their threat perceptions, which also means that Chinese and the Russians would continue to maintain stockpiles of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, will destroy the logic of the non-proliferation treaty even further as India has been arguing for many years. Non-nuclear weapons states and nuclear weapons threshold states will be more convinced about the domineering incli-

pers have calculated that a fool-proof progress towards operationalization of the NMD should take 15 to 20 years.

US experts have also speculated that the first stage deployment of NMD cannot provide effective missile defence because the potential enemies, mainly China and Russia, who already have intercontinental ballistic missile capabilities, can manufacture tactically effective counter-measures to penetrate the NMD in the initial stages. This assessment has been endorsed by the national intelligence estimate report of the US of the year 1999.

Implications of these developments are even more serious for India in terms of their impact on the regional security environment. First and foremost, it will initiate a new arms race by super powers located in our region, Russia and China. Given Chinese defence cooperation programmes with Pakistan, particularly in the spheres of nuclear and space technologies, any expansion and improvement of Chinese capacities will increase the strategic security threats to India. The security environment in the south Asian region will be destabilized. Augmentation of the Chinese and Russian nuclear and missile capacities may lead to the US endorsing Japan becoming incrementally self-reliant for its defence in these specialized sectors.

The logic behind two important policy decisions by the government of India becomes subject to doubts in the context of the likely revival of nuclear and missiles tests by the US. India, after its nuclear weapon tests in 1998, had announced that it will not hold any further tests and that there would be a moratorium on them. India had also given general indications that it will develop its missile and delivery systems subject to some self-imposed restraints. Should India remain committed to these goals given the prospects described above?

The second decision of the government of India was to support those sections of Bush's NMD policy statement of May 1 in which he asserted that the objective of the NMD was to reduce the nuclear arsenals and delivery systems of the existing nuclear weapons powers. India's support was a nuanced one, emphasizing that this aspect of US policy had a congruence with India's objectives of nuclear and missile disarmament.

If the US resumes nuclear tests and other related experiments, and if China and Russia follow suit, these policy pronouncements of ours become irrelevant. Our nuclear missile defence planning is still in its initial stages. We must give deep thought and careful consideration to the implications of these most recent reports about what is basically going to be a resumption of the nuclear arms race at much more sophisticated levels.

The challenge that India faces now, post-Pokhran II, is both technological and political. Coping with it is not going to be easy.

This article was written before September 11. The author is former foreign secretary of India

There's a time bomb close by

The world today reveals a major fault line. It involves on one side those who attack civilian targets — something the communists did not do *vis-à-vis* innocent citizens of countries who opposed their policies. The Russians, Chinese and Vietnamese did not attack American civilians in the United States of America; they focussed on military targets. On this side of the fault line there is no sign of a connection between the political goals and the military method or a sign that the public good is being served. To this day the connection cannot be made between the political aims of the bombers of the World Trade Center and the method of attacks. What was intended and what was gained? On the other side of the fault line are those who seek to develop a web of modern states, and are tied to a process of economic and political reforms and peaceful pursuits and self-defence, and not the liberation of the non-believers.

For the first time an international coalition is being built against *ihadis* whose actions have radicalized the politics of areas which historically formed the Asiatic buffer belt from Turkey to the Indian subcontinent in the days of the struggle between the Russian and the British empires during the 19th century. Islamic terror has become a growing force in this belt following the retreat of empires and the proliferation of new and weak states: most of them are undemocratic.

Since the ex-colonies gained independence this kind of terrorism was as much an anti-Western and anti-Israeli revolt, as it was a revolt by traditional Islam against their Muslim rulers who represented strongholds of power but had limited internal legitimacy. Hence the internal fights between Islamic forces and the professional military in Pakistan, between the Khomeinis and the modernizing Shah of Iran, between the Muslim brotherhood and the Egyptian leadership, between Hizbullah and the multi-religious Lebanese governments of the Fifties and the Sixties, between the Palestinian militants and the moderate Jordanian king and so on.

The internal fights are between the modernizers and the traditionalists; the external fights are between the believers and the non-believers. And when the modernizers align themselves with the Westerners, the alignment is called a sellout or betrayal of the Islamic cause.

The challenge before the US and India is not only to deal with the problem of terrorism in Afghanistan but also to deal with Pakistan which,

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M.L. Sondhi and Ashok Kapur discuss the explosive situation within Pakistan and argue that India and the US need to work together to root out terrorism



With a little help from friends

on the one hand, is seething with Islamic ferment and, on the other, is an important player in the American-led coalition. Since the mid-Eighties, Pakistan has developed a strong jihadi culture. Following Moscow's retreat from Afghanistan and the end of the Cold War, Washington lost interest in Pakistan's Afghan policy. But Pakistan, with the help of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic militants from Egypt, Sudan and Kashmir, maintained and nourished the pipeline of support into the taliban.

Arms bought in the marketplace through Dubai and Hong Kong, funds from international sources, and petroleum supplies were channelled to the taliban by Pakistan. Pakistani military officers and military tactics played a role in the taliban victory in Afghanistan in 1996. The Islamic fighters were prepared in camps in Pakistan occupied Kashmir, inside Afghanistan and within Pakistan. Two aims were pursued:

to build the taliban as Pakistan's strategic rear, as the gateway into central Asia of Pakistani and Saudi Wahabbi influence, and as the vehicle to liberate Kashmir from Indian rule.

Pakistan thus saw itself as a powerful hub at the crossroads of the Persian Gulf, south Asia and central Asia. For these aims, it developed a dual personality, first, as the jihadi and the guardian of Muslims in the subcontinent, and second as a moderate Muslim state. The two policies were contradictory, but they co-existed until September 11 when the low-risk policy of supporting the taliban and jihad became a high-risk position for Pakistan in the world community.

‘The internal fights are between the modernizers and the traditionalists, the external fights between the believers and the non-believers’

Now a situation has arisen which puts Pakistan in a dangerous position whether it supports the US or the taliban. Furthermore, in the context of the new Bush policy, it is imperative that organizations like Laskhar-e-Toiba be placed on terrorist list. Apparently, these are

Pakistani groups who are engaged in Kashmir — and this shows Pakistan's hand.

Islamic Pakistan can no longer sustain the image of a moderate Muslim state given the evidence which is emerging about the location of training camps and the 6000 *madrassahs* which are the breeding grounds for militants. It may happen that as the power of the Islamic forces appears on the street, Pervez Musharraf and the corps commanders may not be able to contain the violence and to carry out his promise to the US to aid the cause against Osama bin Laden and the taliban. Pakistan has been a failing state since the Nineties and now it faces the prospect of becoming a failed state unless it gives up its support of terrorism, and if it does so, it faces the prospect of internal civil war.

The challenge before the US and India is to work together because a civil war throws up the prospect of a power vacuum in a critical geo-political region. The issue now is that the fates of Afghanistan and Pakistan are tied together. India will have to be proactive and work with the US to ensure that the western flank of the Indian subcontinent is stabilized.

The danger is that the geo-politics of the region will change if Pakistan breaks up under the weight of its internal social and policy conditions. If Pakistan breaks up or its internal balance of power tilts in favour of the militants, outside force may be required to correct the imbalances or to fill the power vacuum. So consideration must be given now to plans to safeguard against the danger that the unrest within Pakistan — which will grow as Afghanistan or the taliban or Osama bin Laden are targeted, and as more Afghan refugees enter Pakistan — could spill into the Indian political system.

The Indian armed forces may need to prepare for the contingency that if Musharraf and the corps commanders fail to root out the terror network in the region, if the Pakistan authorities continue to maintain that jihad in Kashmir is acceptable, then India and the US have a natural reason to combine on the issue of terror as well as the safety of Pakistan.

The time has come for the armed forces of the two democracies to work together to manage the danger of unrest in the region. Within Pakistan the unrest is likely to be uncontrolled but within India it is likely to be controlled. Hence the need to twofold: to contain Afghanistan and to stabilize Pakistan, and to do so by the application of diplomacy as well as the presence of the American military machine in the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf area and the Indian military machine in the Arabian Sea and the desert leading to Sind. Pakistan is now a time bomb which is ready to explode and India and the US will need to work together to secure regional security.

THE TELEGRAPH

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An uninspiring and disconcerting picture

Education is...the most important dominion of our national life. Needless to reiterate that education holds the key to development and progress in every sphere of our existence. From an integrated and synergic viewpoint, the educational system constitutes the foundation of the legal, administrative, civic and developmental domains of unfolding an India of tomorrow...

Discussion on this theme has been in motion since pre-independence days. Aware of the fact that the system of education devised by the erstwhile alien rulers was not in consonance with our national goals and aspirations and realizing the deleterious effect it had on our young minds, several leaders of the freedom movement initiated efforts to establish nationalist educational institutions...The service of these institutions in infusing a spirit of patriotism and national outlook cannot be forgotten.

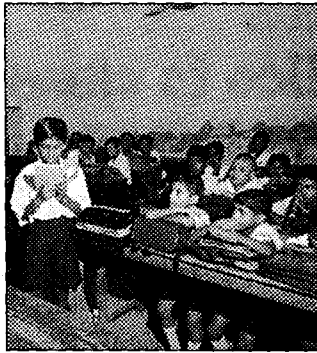
In independent India, several committees and commissions were set up to propose recommendations for change in the educational system. The Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) on University Education, the Laxmanaswamy Mudaliyar Committee (1952-53) on Secondary Education, and the Kothari Commission (1964-66) on Education can be mentioned as the more prominent ones in this connection.

Notwithstanding the voluminous material that is available in the form of suggestions and recommendations flowing from these committees and commissions, educational reform continues to remain an elusive goal and no significant breakthrough could be achieved in bringing about fundamental changes in the system and making it an effective instrument of national reconstruction. The same incongruous system devised by the erstwhile colonial rulers continued to rule the roost with mi-

Extracts from the government of India's 1997 concept paper on "Education reforms: issues of priority"

nor alterations mostly concerning the exterior details. As a result, we find a directionless drift in the system today. The educational scenario presents an uninspiring and disconcerting picture.

The crisis in education is essentially a crisis of implementation. There is no dearth of ideas or suggestions regarding educational change. But enough effort in putting the ideas



Learning to cope

into action is lacking. The following facts bear out the truth of this statement.

In the realm of primary education, the goal of universalization that we set before ourselves as a constitutional directive is a distant dream. Whatever gains were made in terms of enrolment are set at naught by the high incidence of drop-outs. As a result, the number of illiterates in the population continues to swell.

The infrastructural facilities have remained extremely inadequate. The document entitled "Challenge of Education" (1985) gave a vivid picture of the pathetic conditions of the schools in the country. It is

evident that enough resources were not made available even for providing the basic minimum facilities to the schools. The allocation for education continued to remain far below the recommended 6 per cent of the gross domestic product.

Vocationalization of secondary education was accepted as a policy decision. The aim was to see that 25 per cent of the students at the secondary level opt for the vocational stream by the year 1995. The time target was later revised to the year 2000 but even this target was not achieved and the scheme failed to take-off.

The objective of strengthening higher education is far from being accomplished. Rather, we are witnessing a fast deterioration in the standard of university education. Indian universities, by and large, have failed to function as centres of excellence and vibrant intellectual activity. Dissonant with their sprawling stretch out, their role in widening the horizons of knowledge and providing intellectual leadership to society leaves much to be desired. Hence, it is time that we make an earnest attempt to identify the causes of failure in achieving the declared objectives and remove such obstacles.

"Challenge of Education" candidly admitted that the objectives of the National Education Policy of 1968 could not be achieved to any considerable extent. The failure was attributed to following factors: tardy and haphazard implementation, progressive decline in the allocation of resources, absence of an operational strategy as well as functional instruments. It is imperative that sufficient care is taken to see that the mistakes are not repeated. The failures of the past must become the guidelines for the future if the reforms are to become a reality.

TO BE CONCLUDED

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Sri Lanka: dimensions of a crisis

By Jayadeva Uyangoda

WHILE SRI LANKA'S present political crisis deepens, the ruling People's Alliance administration of Ms. Chandrika Kumaratunga has averted a regime collapse by entering into a surprise understanding with the radical Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), which has ten seats in the present Parliament. If the JVP had not come to the PA's rescue two weeks ago, the Opposition coalition led by the United National Party (UNP) would have forced the President to call its leader, Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe, to form the new administration. Given the deep personal and political acrimony between Ms. Kumaratunga and Mr. Wickremasinghe, a scenario of their sharing power would have been truly miraculous.

The Kumaratunga regime's present crisis, which forced it to enter into an uneasy alliance with the JVP, could have been averted with a little patience and prudence. It began in the aftermath of the anti-Muslim riots in Mawanella early this year. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, a crucial partner of the PA, was unhappy over the reluctance to take action against local SLFP politicians believed to be behind the violence. The SLMC then initiated a no-confidence motion against the Minister, Mr. Maheepala Herath. When the UNP extended support to the SLMC move, the rift between the PA and the SLMC widened. Things reached a crisis point when Ms. Kumaratunga this July sacked from the Cabinet the SLMC leader, Rauf Hakeem. Mr. Hakeem took the SLMC out of the ruling coalition, reducing the PA to a minority. The UNP seized the moment and proceeded with a no-confidence motion against the Government. In the face of defeat, Ms. Kumaratunga prorogued Parliament while announcing a referendum on whether the people wanted a new Constitution.

This galvanised the divided Opposition into joint action. The polarisation between the Government and the Opposition began to turn into a conflict between the Executive — the President — and the Legislature. Deprived of a parliamentary opportunity to defeat the Government, the Opposition took to the streets in Colombo, raising fears of greater political instability and chaos.

This type of Government-Opposition polarisation has always provided space for the LTTE to intervene, decisively and dra-

matically, often forcing the Colombo-based political forces to react in panic. In early July, the LTTE struck — a dramatic, high-visibility attack on the Katunayaka Airport — with unprecedented economic costs.

Against this backdrop, two significant processes occurred. The first is the pressure mounted by many civic, religious and business organisations on the PA and the UNP to arrive at a consensus and form a government of "national unity". These social constituencies feared the collapse of the political order. There were also right-wing as well as Sinhalese majoritarian political impulses that found expression in this demand for PA-UNP coalition. The PA too initiated discussions with the UNP conveying the impression that a joint, crisis management administration was in the agenda. However, three days of PA-UNP talks collapsed in greater acrimony, each

The Kumaratunga regime's present crisis, which forced it to enter into an uneasy alliance with the JVP, could have been averted with a little patience and prudence.

party accusing the other of being power-hungry. This demonstrated the extreme degree to which Sri Lanka's Sinhalese ruling elite is bifurcated. It is quite clear that the two sides approached unity talks giving their own partisan agendas paramount importance. The PA strategy was to involve the UNP in a coalition regime under Ms. Kumaratunga as a subservient partner. The UNP, meanwhile, had a totally different agenda. It wanted effective governmental power by making Mr. Wickremasinghe the Prime Minister.

The inability of the PA and the UNP to arrive at even a minimum consensus has laid bare some crucial dimensions of the crisis itself. First is the deep divisions in the Sinhalese ruling elite. The second is the continuing crisis of political leadership in Sri Lanka. Third, the two main political formations of the Sri Lankan capitalist class seem to be able to defy the wishes and interests of the class that they are supposed to represent.

Still more dramatic among the political events was the alliance forged by the PA and the JVP. For the PA, the JVP brought in ten votes to secure parliamentary majority. It also enabled the PA to dispose of the proposed constitutional referendum the

outcome of which appeared unfavourable. It also made it possible for the Government to postpone parliamentary elections that could have favoured the UNP. For the JVP, the prevention of a PA-UNP alliance was paramount for its own survival. Such an alliance could have brought the right wing elements of both the SLFP and UNP into a dominant power bloc, closing out the JVP's political space.

The memorandum of understanding signed by the PA and the JVP represents a remarkably populist political programme with a tight agenda and a limited timeframe. But on the ethnic question, the MoU's promise is an unfortunate one. The relevant clause binds the Kumaratunga administration not to bring in, during the one year the MoU is in force, "proposals for devolution of power or any other proposals that may lead to controversy until such time that a broad consensus is arrived at through a wide-ranging dialogue

with the participation of all segments of society aimed at reaching a reasonable solution to the ethnic question." Notwithstanding this commitment to the JVP, the Government has been at pains to assure the Tamils and the international community that there is no bar to negotiations with the LTTE. The Government has also told foreign investors that the accord would not inhibit direct foreign investment. However, the MoU gives a strong impression that the PA Government, for political survival, has capitulated and accepted the most retrograde components of the JVP's ideology and agenda. What appears now is that in three crucial areas of public policy — devolution, economic growth and constitutional reform — the Kumaratunga administration has abandoned its own broad agenda on the pretext of maintaining the alliance with the JVP. This might make it crucial for the PA to take other initiatives in order to restore the confidence of the Tamils, the business and investor communities, donor and global civil society groups and the international community. But, as long as the MoU is in force, the Government's options are rather limited.

It is somewhat intriguing that the PA

leadership preferred an understanding with the JVP, a political movement representing the class interests of rural and urban petty-bourgeois strata, to a consensus with the right-wing capitalist UNP.

Obviously, the PA Government's crisis management measures were conceived in desperation and executed in a hurry, with exclusive focus on political fire-fighting. These have given the JVP a rare opportunity to make serious claims to political respectability. Those who remember the JVP's bloody insurrectionary campaign for power in 1987-89 might still remain sceptical about its commitment to parliamentary politics.

In the uncertain and unpredictable politics in Colombo, there is also another crucial factor in the political equation — the LTTE —, awaiting a ripe moment to strike. There are quite a few possibilities that might constitute Sri Lanka's political trajectory in the coming months. Dissolution of Parliament by the President in late October is one. The PA Government's current understanding with the JVP is probably designed to gain breathing space till October — which mark the end of the first year of the present Parliament thereby making it possible for the President to call fresh elections. The second is for the present arrangement with the JVP to go on even after October. In such an eventuality, the PA-JVP accord is mostly likely to come under severe strain. The LTTE's strategy and agenda for the coming months is the third factor that can certainly shape the emerging trajectories. At a time when the Kumaratunga administration's capacity to resume the Norwegian initiative for negotiations with the LTTE remains constrained, the LTTE's thinking is very likely to be on an agenda to seize fresh initiatives and gains in the military, political and diplomatic fronts.

The coming months do not seem very good for Sri Lanka's politics. The crisis might explode again at an unanticipated moment. This may require Ms. Kumaratunga to seek a consensus with the UNP again. Objectively speaking, the only way to avert a major crisis is for Ms. Kumaratunga to launch a fresh and imaginative political initiative, combining consensus politics, constitutional reform and negotiations with the LTTE through international mediation.

(The writer teaches Political Science at the University of Colombo.)

Government may find it difficult to prove case against SIMI

By Aunohita Mojumdar
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Within the next four weeks, the Union home ministry will have to defend its order banning the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). The ministry will have to prove in a tribunal its charges and its assertion that the ban was the only option available.

So, what constitutes the offences as delineated by the home ministry? The organisation has been generally charged with communal and anti-national activities, but some of the specific charges do not appear to stand the test of scrutiny, raising questions about the government's hurry to ban the organisation.

Several of the charges SIMI faces could also be levelled against other organisations, raising scepticism about the administration of justice. Besides, while specific instances of involvement of individuals belonging to SIMI in criminal activities are being cited, the distinction between an organisation and its individual members is being blurred.

Several SIMI activities are no doubt objectionable, but the ban does not seem to have been pre-

ceded by any government effort to proceed against it under the provisions of the CrPC. This raises the question whether the government has utilised the prevailing atmosphere of suspicion about Islamic fundamentalism to take a step that fits in with its larger political agenda.

SIMI has been charged with reportedly eulogising Osama bin Laden. The home ministry speaks of pro-Taliban leaflets, the Union home secretary denied this was the

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immediate provocation for the ban. He, however, spoke of evidence of links with Al Qaida and other pan-Islamic organisations. The implication is clear: Even if no criminal linkage is proven, the suggestion of links is sufficiently damaging.

Similarly, the allegation that Palestinian organisation Hamas's chief had been a guest of SIMI several times. If this was a cognisable offence, no visa should have been issued to the Hamas chief.

The charge of communal incitement, surely, cannot be limited to SIMI. The Union home secretary, in fact, accepted that evidence of

the Bajrang Dal's activities leading to communal incitement "could be" available with the home ministry.

Yet another "charge" pertains to SIMI's protests against the alleged burning of the Quran in Delhi in March 2001 and publicising the same through internet and posters. Why are such protests being classed with unlawful activities has not been disclosed. The burning of the Quran was something the home ministry should have acted upon.

SIMI has been charged with being in "touch with militant outfits". How can that per se become an "offence" when the Union government itself had held much celebrated meetings in Srinagar as also in Amsterdam with leaders of various militant groups?

Curiously, most of the criticism of the ban order has not come from SIMI supporters but from those who reject its communal politics. The issue is not whether communal violence by any organisation requires to be countered, but that the government has apparently chosen to act in a selective manner, chiefly in the context of a prevailing international mood.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

1 OCT 2001

Osama in our custody: Taliban

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 30. Even as Washington declared that it would settle for nothing less than the hand-over of the terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden, prime suspect in the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington, the Taliban today announced that the Saudi dissident was under its "protective custody" and it had no intention of obliging the U.S.

"Osama is in Afghanistan, but he is at an unknown place for his safety and security. Only security people know his whereabouts... He is under our control," the Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, said at a news conference here today.

Reiterating that there was no proof of Osama's involvement in the September 11 attacks, Mullah Zaeef said the Taliban was prepared to discuss the issue with the U.S. It had already asked the United Nations and the Organisation of

Islamic Conference to conduct an impartial probe into the attacks.

Accusing the Bush administration of being unreasonable, he said there was no way the Taliban would give in to Washington's demands. The U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, had taken an uncompromising line against the Taliban, expecting it to accept all his demands.

"Mr. Bush should respect Islam and Islamic principles if he wants to deal with Muslims. I want to state categorically that Osama will not be handed over to anyone."

Mullah Zaeef said the Taliban had not invited the American human rights activist, Rev. Jesse Jackson, to end the current crisis. "A Pakistani friend contacted me and said Mr. Jackson wants to do something for the solution of the current crisis. I conveyed his request to the leadership in Afghanistan and our Foreign Ministry said it has no objection."

U.S. no to negotiations

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 30. As the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush returned to the White House from Camp David, Washington once again rejected any negotiations with the Taliban over Osama bin Laden.

The White House demanded that Osama be turned over. This was in response to the Taliban statement that the Saudi fugitive was being held at an unknown place "for his safety and security".

A White House spokesperson, Mr. Ken Lisaius, said, "the announcement does not change anything," adding that "the President was extremely clear in his address to the American people and the Congress that the demands that he outlined were not open to negotiation nor were they open to debate".

Details on Page 13

'No base for attacks on Muslims'

RIYADH, SEPT. 30. The Defence Minister of Saudi Arabia, Prince Sultan, has said that no troops would be allowed to use bases in his nation to launch attacks on the Arabs or the Muslims, according to an interview published on Sunday. "We will not accept in our country even a single soldier who will attack Muslims or Arabs," he was quoted as saying in an interview to the Government-controlled *Okaz* newspaper.— AP

THE HINDU

FBI asks U.K. to extradite suspect

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, SEPT. 29. The first test of the British Government's anti-terrorism campaign has come sooner than expected with the FBI demanding the extradition to the U.S. of a 27-year-old Algerian pilot, Lotfi Raissi, arrested here in connection with the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington.

The FBI have described him as the "biggest find we have had so far" and of being of "crucial importance" to their investigations. First arrested last week, he was re-arrested on Friday on an international warrant seeking his custody on charges of "conspiracy to murder". Raissi, who was produced in a court on Saturday on the charge of having trained four of the suicide hijackers behind the attacks, has become the most public face of the so-called British "connection" with America's "Black Tuesday" prompting demands that the Government deliver on its tough anti-terrorism rhetoric by speeding up his extradition.

The Home Secretary, Mr. David Blunkett, who has promised to amend the time-consuming extradition procedures, came under pressure to expedite the process and make the proposed changes retrospective in order to facilitate Raissi's extradition. The former Shadow Home Secretary, Ms. Ann Widdecombe urged Mr. Blunkett to "fast-track" all outstanding extradition proceedings where there might be the "slightest terrorist connection". The new Shadow Home Secretary, Mr. Oliver Letwin was even more scathing saying: "We must put a stop to this nonsense of Britain harbouring people accused of terrorism in other countries, particularly when those people may also pose a threat to our own national security."

The Times, describing Raissi's case as a "massive test of Britain's pledge to fight international terrorism", reminded the Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair of his statement on the day of the attacks that Britain would "stand shoulder to shoulder with all peaceful nations, taking every step necessary to hunt down those responsible and to ensure that terrorism will never prevail". Human rights activists, however, opposed any move to curb civil liberties and insisted that Raissi was entitled to a proper extradition trial under the current laws. They warned against any attempt to extradite him by tinkering with the existing pro-



The arrested Algerian pilot, Lotfi Raissi (right), being brought to Bow Street Court in London on Friday on the U.S. warrant seeking his extradition. — AP

cedures and denying him his right to defend himself. Commentators said it could take up to three years to decide the case under the present extradition laws. Raissi's lawyer said he had "adamantly denied any involvement in the recent appalling tragedy and he is confident he will be absolved of all involvement". The FBI agents who were present during Saturday's hearings insisted that he was a key suspect. "It is no secret that we are looking at charges of conspiracy to murder. What we say is that Mr. Raissi was in fact an instructor for four of the pilots that were responsible for the hijackings, and the one we are particularly concerned about is the one that crashed into the Pentagon," the counsel for U.S. administration told the court.

Raissi, who arrived in Britain early this year to train for a European pilot's licence, is alleged to have visited the U.S. several times this

summer and in June he was at the Nevada flying school the same day as the pilot who was to crash his plane into Pentagon three months later. It is alleged that he was the "lead instructor" for the hijackers. His family have protested dismissing the charges against him as "nonsense". His wife, who is French, works at Heathrow airport was arrested as also his brother but both were released later.

Meanwhile, Downing Street has sought to play down alarmist reports about a terrorist threat to Britain. Mr. Blair's spokesman said there was no evidence to back up such reports, which gained currency after the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Jack Straw, and his junior colleague, Mr. Peter Hain suggested that Osama bin Laden was planning terrorist attacks. A massive security operation has been launched in Brighton ahead of the Labour Party's annual conference starting there tomorrow.

THE HINDU
SEP 30 2001

Indo-US tech collaboration gets a boost

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, September 29

THOUGH BOTH India and Pakistan have been taken out of the US "watch list", India is expected to gain more in terms of technology collaborations. Experts feel that the lifting of sanctions will kick-start technological cooperation between India and the US.

Former US president Bill Clinton had talked of promoting scientific collaboration with India during his visit here.

"The India-US Science and Technology Forum had become stagnant due to the sanctions. Now it can proceed, giving India an edge over other countries as far as scientific developments are concerned," says Ficci secretary general Amit Mitra.

The forum is expected to promote research and development, technology transfer and the creation of a "comprehensive electronic reference source".

Mitra feels that companies, which do not have any direct link with defence production, may benefit from this. The list that has 39 Indian companies under scrutiny includes Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL).

The other beneficiaries will be the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Science (IIS). The IIT's Mumbai and Chennai aerospace divisions were also on the US watch list.

Interestingly, trading houses like Allied Trading Co, ANZ Importers and Exporters, Orient Importers and Exporters and Prime International were also on the watch list.

It is believed that all these traders usually import technology to Pakistan. But in any case, they will continue to be under "watch" for their earlier involvement in the defence sector and it will be difficult for them to import technology.

However, almost all the chemical plants of both the countries will have to obtain licenses following the fear of chemical warfare.

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30/9

Summary justice

WHILE THEY unequivocally condemn terrorism, Middle Eastern leaders often ask the rest of the world to take cognisance of the existential angst and the political conditions that breed terrorism. But when it comes to dealing with terrorists on their soil these same leaders go about it with a ruthless efficiency. Trial in a special court, a swift verdict and a prompt execution usually forms the three-step dance between the act of terrorism and the end of the terrorist.

An international magazine recently defined Al-Qaeda as an essentially Egyptian organisation with a Saudi head. To an extent this description results from the journalistic practice of encapsulating a broad theme in a pithy form to attract attention but it is nevertheless not far off the mark. Most of the 19 persons identified as the likely perpetrators of the September 11 terrorist strikes in the U.S. were either from Egypt or Saudi Arabia.

Assuming that these terrorists were linked to the Al-Qaeda setup of Osama bin Laden, the above description seems apt. What is also been known about Al-Qaeda is that while Osama might be the nominal head, the real operators are Ayman al Zawahiri (on the ideological and organisational front) and Mohammed Atef a.k.a Abu Hafs (on the operational front). The latter two are Egyptians while Osama, whose family originated in Yemen, was a Saudi citizen till his family and his country disowned

him. In trying to understand the jihadi phenomenon, analysts talk of the conditions that youth confront in the countries of West Asia and North Africa. They live either under dictatorships or monarchies with little opportunity to vent their grievances. Their rulers are either corrupt or self-centred or inefficient, and their well-being and their culture is under constant threat from more powerful economies and influences from without.

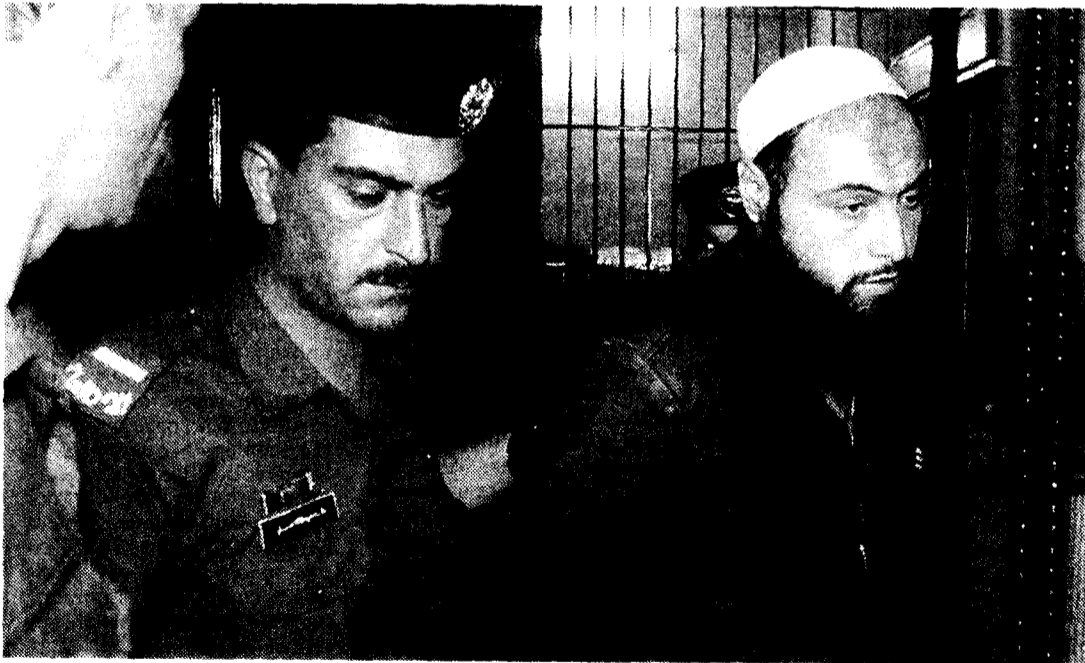
When it comes to dealing with terrorists on their own soil, Middle Eastern leaders go about it with a ruthless efficiency, says Kesava Menon.

In such a situation it was but natural that Egypt and Saudi Arabia should have provided particularly fertile ground for the jihadi mindset to flourish. Egypt has been the intellectual and cultural leader of the Arab world while Saudi Arabia of course is the birth-place of Islam.

Egypt has had to contend with the Gama'a al Islamiya and the Islamic Jihad (the Egyptian group does not seem to have any connection with the similarly named Palestinian outfit). There is some confusion about which of these organisations is the senior one. In the 1990s when fundamentalist terrorism was raging in Egypt, the

Gama'a was more prominent and its leader, Sheikh Omar, is currently in a U.S. jail having been convicted for complicity in the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center. But the Egyptian Islamic Jihad claims a longer pedigree. Khaled Islambouli, leader of the assassins who killed the former Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat, was a member of the group, and his brother and several other members were prominent among the Arab Afghans who fought the Soviets during the 1980s.

Even before Sadat's assassination, Egypt launched a crackdown on fundamentalism notably with the arrest of Sayyid Qutb, an Islamic ideologue who bears fair claim to being the original designer of the jihadi format. Fundamentalism revived with intensified force in the 1990s and while the Gama'a claimed responsibility for a slew of terrorist acts, the worst incident — the knifing to death of 56 tourists in a temple in Luxor — was attributed to the Jihad. It is a measure of the ruthlessness with which the Egyptian Government has tackled terrorism that those Egyptians who want to pursue jihad have been forced to do so elsewhere other than their country. Similarly, the Saudis too have shown no hesitation in dealing with the phenomenon within their country. Those responsible for the car-bomb attack in Riyadh in 1996, in which two Indians and four Americans were killed, were dispatched by the executioner's sword before the FBI had a chance to interrogate them.



A militant in a Jordanian military court... retribution is quick.

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30 SEP 2001

action: A lesson for India

MF 8 3079



SUPPORT BASE: Students at the Haqqania madarsa at Akora, Pakistan. Many of the Taliban recruits are from this school.

Realising that there are uncertainties and divisions within the Bush Administration, the Pakistanis are cleverly playing on American fears of the bodybags that are likely to go back to the United States in the event of any military operation involving ground troops. They also appear to be pointing out that with over 80 Stinger Missiles in their possession, the Taliban could pose a significant challenge to American helicopter-borne operations. At the same time, the Americans have been told that Pakistan would not be in a position to host a significant American ground troop presence and that Pakistan's interests cannot be ignored in the future political scenario in Afghanistan.

The message to the Americans is that they should give up their earlier plans to replace the Taliban and settle for a Taliban-dominated administration that excludes any meaningful role for the Northern Alliance. In the meantime, the Pakistanis are working overtime to convene a high-level meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) where they will try and get resolutions passed

by Islamic countries that effectively circumscribe the content of any anti-Taliban military operation.

General Musharraf and the ISI know that if they can stall the Americans for another couple of weeks, the advent of winter snows will render any strike by opposition forces on Kabul difficult, if not impossible for several months. Their first objective is to prevent the Americans from using air power to assist the Northern Alliance for as long as possible. It is evidently the Pakistani expectation that with the passage of time American ardour for military force against the Taliban will cool, even as Pakistan basks in the glory of international attention and fills its coffers with the Dollars, Yen and Euros that will pour in. If an isolated General Zia could achieve all this in the 1980s, why can't General Musharraf do the same in the first decade of the 21st century? General Musharraf no doubt feels that given New Delhi's almost pathetic dependence on American goodwill to deal with Pak-sponsored terrorism, he can rest comfortably in the belief

that even as he stalls the Americans, he can keep his *jehadis* occupied with increasing support to strike in J&K and elsewhere in India. There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that given what transpired in Kandahar and Agra, we are perceived as a weak and soft state by the Pakistan military establishment.

Indian response

NEW DELHI's response to these moves appears to have been primarily if not excessively American-centered. It was fortuitous that just before the September 11 carnage, Minister Omar Abdullah was visiting Dushanbe and Tashkent to review developments after the attempted assassination of Ahmad Shah Masood. His visit proved useful in exchanging views with not only his Central Asian hosts but also with key supporters of the Northern Alliance, Iran and Russia. It was this development that prompted Musharraf's "lay off" diatribe against India. We seem to have forgotten in recent days that American policy on the Taliban has been remarkably inconsis-

tent and focused almost exclusively on the Taliban's links with Osama bin Laden. The Americans have often appeared more interested in containing Iranian and Russian influence in Central Asia and Afghanistan rather than rooting out the Taliban. It is precisely this approach that has inhibited Russia and Iran from being more supportive of efforts now being undertaken in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

As Mr Jaswant Singh proceeds on his current European and American Odyssey, he would be well advised to share Indian concerns about some of the directions that American policy seems to be taking. There would be little point in New Delhi talking of "unconditional support" if the American gameplan is to go easy on the Taliban merely to pander to Pakistan's so-called "sensitivities". We should tell our interlocutors that what we seek is nothing less than the installation of a broad-based and representative Government in Afghanistan. The Pakistan military establishment and the Taliban are not keys to dealing with global terrorism. They are the root cause of global terrorism. There is little doubt that former King Zahir Shah would have to play a key role in seeing that the Pashtun population is suitably represented in any future Government in Afghanistan. It is imperative that high-level exchanges are vigorously and discreetly pursued with Iran, Russia, Afghanistan's Central Asian neighbours, the leaders of the Northern Alliance and Pashtun expatriates including notably Zahir Shah.

The Americans are now realizing that the struggle against terrorism is going to be a long haul. As a fellow pluralistic democracy we should extend wholehearted support, including where necessary, military facilities for this effort. Most Indians, however, find our constant whining for American support and understanding for us to deal with our problems of cross-border terrorism demeaning. Have we dropped the term "self-reliance" from our national lexicon? The Americans are planning military strikes against terrorist bases wherever they exist. Does this not serve as an appropriate international precedent for us to act similarly when our people and our cities are subject to terrorist outrages?

(The writer is a former Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan)

Putin supports worldwide coalition

BERLIN, SEPT. 25. The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, underlined his country's commitment to an international coalition against terror after talks with German leaders on Tuesday, calling for the "complete ideological and political isolation" of international terrorists.

Already assured a warm welcome by Russia's staunchest friend in Europe, Mr. Putin earned praise from the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder, for supporting the United States after the devastating attacks in New York and Washington.

"This shows that we are well-advised to work with Russia as a partner to combating worldwide threats," Mr. Schroeder said at a news conference. "That wasn't everywhere so clear. Now it is." Though the two leaders have established a close relationship, past meetings have often raised disputes such as Moscow's foreign debt. Now, Russia's experience in combating Islamic extremism, its knowledge of Afghanistan and influence over neighbouring Central Asia give it new political leverage.

On his first trip west since the Sept. 11 attacks, Mr. Putin was received earlier by the President, Mr. Johannes Rau. He also was to give a speech in the German Parliament.

After meeting Mr. Schroeder, he reiterated Russia's readiness to combat international terror, but gave no new clues on how far Russia will go to support U.S.-led efforts to hunt down Osama bin Laden, the Saudi multimillionaire that Washington suspects was behind the attacks.

"We must give no quarter to terrorists," Mr. Putin said. "They must feel themselves in complete ideological and political isolation."

Mr. Schroeder welcomed a speech Monday by Mr. Putin, in which he offered broad support for the U.S. anti-terrorism drive, opening Russian airspace to humanitarian flights and pledging to arm opposition forces fighting Afghanistan's Taliban Government.

In a speech on national television, Mr. Putin also said Moscow would be ready to help in search-and-rescue operations.

Mr. Schroeder also said that the terror attacks must also lead to a "new evaluation" of Russia's battle against Islamic rebels in Chechnya. Russia has been accused of human rights abuses in that struggle.

The United States accuses the Taliban of sheltering Osama bin Laden, who it accuses of masterminding the Sept. 11 attacks.

For Mr. Putin, the three-day State visit to



The German President, Mr. Johannes Rau, (right), and his wife Christina, welcome the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, second from left, and his wife Ludmilla, second from right, in Berlin, on Tuesday. — AP

Germany is a chance to work on the "strategic partnership" with Moscow that Europe, and especially Germany, have been eager to promote since the end of the Cold War.

Mr. Putin's rapport with Germany has been helped by his command of German. In four previous summits, images of Mr. Putin and Mr. Schroeder riding a Russian sled or chatting with each other's wives in the Reichstag also conveyed a sense of German-Russian camaraderie.

Even the debt issue won't ruffle relations this time because Russia has kept to its repayment schedule this year.

Germany holds nearly half of the about \$ 48 billions Russia owes to the Paris Club of Creditor Nations, more than any other country. A smaller amount of debt is also left over from former East Germany.

Mubarak's stress on W. Asia

Meanwhile, the Egyptian President, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, said today that finding a solution in the Middle-East was the only way that

the United States would be successful in its "war on terrorism".

"We support the United States in fighting terrorism... But without solving the Palestine problem with the help of the United States and Europe, we will see a new generation of terrorists threatening world security," Mr. Mubarak told a joint news conference with chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder.

Mr. Mubarak, who is seen as one of Washington's key allies in the Middle-East, was in Germany as part of a whistle-stop European tour, which began in France yesterday.

The German and Egyptian leaders held about an hour of talks before Mr. Mubarak flew to Rome.

"The Middle-East and what is happening with the Palestinian situation is set to increase terror," Mr. Mubarak said.

"Dealing with war is easier than dealing with terrorism. There is no doubt that the next measures must relate to the Middle-East," Mr. Mubarak said. — AP, Reuters

Instead of going overboard to help Bush, India should learn from Russia

War cry

By A.G. NOORANI

11-8
28/9

TRAGEDIES ARE cruel tutors. Not only the United States but the world at large must learn lessons from the horrendous terrorist attacks on symbols of America's economic and military might on September 11. Pearl Harbour, to which it has been aptly compared, demolished isolationism. Unilateralism should suffer the same fate now. It will be a while before its full impact on the US' image of the world order, and on the image others have, will become apparent.

The September 10 issue of *Time* had as its cover story the decline in influence of Secretary of State Colin Powell. President George W. Bush would do well to heed his counsel on engagement with others and unlearn the tutorials on world affairs he received from Condoleezza Rice whom he made National Security Adviser. Let alone interlocutors like Russia and China, even NATO allies felt uneasy as the president began to bare his world view.

In March, the US Commission on National Security, 21st Century (the Hart-Rudman Commission) warned that a "catastrophic attack against American citizens on American soil is likely over the next quarter century. The risk is not only death and destruction but also a demoralisation that could undermine US global leadership. In the face of this threat, our nation has no coherent or integrated government structures" — nor a coherent, considered policy, either. Even "global peace" can be undermined.

That can happen either by the terrorists going scot-free or by over-reaction by the US. In the aftermath, the commission's executive director, Charles G. Boyd, warned against "striking out in revenge... before we can be certain who the perpetrators were." The US can neither disengage nor go it alone. "The world will not function as it now does without engagement of the United States, nor can America function without engagement with others."

This implies an understanding between the US and the "others" on the nature of the threat and the price each side is willing to pay to cooperate in combating the threat. We live in a world of nation-states with each player acting according to its perception of the national interests, narrow or enlightened. The threat is altogether different from any the world has known.

Three features make it unique — the apparent anonymity of the masterminds; the stupendous planning and daring execution by a small group, and potentialities for yet graver harm. It could have been far worse. Chemical, biological and even



SMOKE THEM OUT?: A US soldier walks past local cops in a South Korean military base

nuclear weapons can be used by terrorists. It can happen to any country. Which is why an enlightened response is called for by "the others" as well as by the US.

Richard N. Haass, director of policy planning at the state department, is among the few who have grappled with problem in his book *The Reluctant Sheriff*. "It is important to distinguish between the United States as sheriff and the United States as policeman." The latter can act alone. "A sheriff must understand his lack of clear authority in many instances, his need to work with others, and, above all, the need to be discriminating in where and how he engages." He mentioned terrorism as one of the dangers facing the world today; especially the open societies.

Haass rules out isolationism, its twin, unilateralism, as also hegemonism. The sheriff must forge a "foreign policy by posse" in which selected nation-states combine for specific tasks as they emerge. This "coalition of the willing" as distinct from alliances would be informal. "Membership is open to those able and willing to participate." Borders count for less today. We have to contend with groups that have the means to deliver weapons across great distances.

But the posse would necessarily rest on a commonality of interests. Its basis is the doctrine of collective security — an attack on one is perceived by the rest as

one against themselves. States did not act on the doctrine in cases of aggression. Will they act on it now that they are faced with a new danger? It is futile to expect accord on terrorism in all situations and of all varieties. It is far more realistic to forge accord on it in its worst forms and on tackling the problem at its roots.

As William Pfaff wrote on the morrow of the tragedy, "The only real defence against external attacks is serious, continuing and courageous effort to find political solutions for national and ideological conflicts that involve the United States." A noted defence analyst, Robert A. Levine, urged that "military efforts should be counter-balanced by the political". On the Arab-Israeli issue, for instance, "the United States has not been perceived as impartial, and the perceptions are correct".

Neither commentator advocates leniency towards the terrorists. On the contrary, they urge effective and deliberate military response. Such realism was sadly lacking in Indian leaders who rushed to offer help to the US while berating it for not extending its wrath to militants in Kashmir. The Russians made no such complaint on Chechnya. Nor did they rush to offer tangible help while offering fullest cooperation against the menace of terrorism.

On September 13, the Minister for External Affairs, Jaswant Singh,

responded with an emphatic "Yes" when asked whether the prime minister's letter to the US president, on September 12, implied logistical help or a staging ground for a US military operation. On September 16, he admitted, "We are yet to be asked for any specifics." Why, then, did he rush to offer logistical support?

On the same day (September 16), "an Indian official" told *Washington Post*: "We have given unconditional and unambiguous support for any action the United States may take to deal with the problem of global terrorism." Besides, "Indian officials have privately told the US that, if requested, they will allow US troops and equipment to be temporarily based on Indian soil, for the first time in the country's history." The *Post* added that no formal request had been made for such help. The report was denied, predictably.

None should have been surprised when help was demanded of Pakistan or at its prompt compliance with US demarches. In 1995, in better circumstances, Pakistan agreed to the seizure and extradition of Ramzi Ahmed Yousef.

The US would hardly countenance Pakistan's conditions for help. While, in the nature of things, the relationship will grow, they cannot reach a point where India's interests would be imperilled even though its expectations of Pakistan's quarantine are belied. They were unwise anyway.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee rightly said that "no region is a greater source of terrorism than our neighbourhood". On July 24, the LTTE destroyed half the fleet of Air Lanka and eight military planes in Colombo's airport. New Delhi's response was strange. It was "concerned and disappointed about these developments in Sri Lanka. There is no room for violence and terrorism in the effort to achieve a political solution of the conflict. We would urge all concerned to resume steps for the commencement of talks for a political settlement". It had earlier expressed its "great disappointment" at the bombing of the LTTE's positions by Sri Lanka's air force.

India is too strong to be affected by the turn in US-Pak relations and should be mature enough to understand why the rest of the world does not view our problems the way we do. The best course is to cooperate internationally, on a basis of enlightened national interest, without demanding that our immediate concerns should be met. They are for us ourselves to address realistically and politically.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

26 SEP 2001

Pak eats into India's basmati

Garment export quota extension?

New Delhi
20 SEPTEMBER

INDIAN BASMATI exports are expected to fall by one lakh tonnes (lt) in the current crop year due to surplus stocks with Saudi Arabia, a quality deterioration and the inroads made by Pakistan into the European market.

"A host of reasons may bring down Indian basmati exports to around 7 lt from 8.5 lt in 1999-2000 (October-September), but things will improve next year if the new seeds are introduced and demand increases in the US," KRBL Ltd chairman-cum-managing director Anil Mittal said.

He said that in the European Union, the tax concessions available for Pakistani basmati were earlier 50 ecus, but had now been brought at par with India's 250 ecus.

As a result, the market for Pakistani basmati had increased to 65,000 tonnes from 30,000-40,000 tonnes earlier, at the expense of Indian exports.

Even otherwise, there was an increased preference for Pakistani basmati among price-conscious Europeans as it was cheaper by around \$150-250 per tonne. India was exporting about 1.45 lt basmati, mostly raw, to Europe, at \$675-750 per tonne.

Mr Mittal, whose company is the largest exporter of basmati, said Saudi Arabia was expecting prices to move up and had imported five lt in 1999-2000 against a demand of 4.25 lt. With a surplus of 75,000 tonnes with them, demand had fallen this year, he said. Quality had also been hit as the seed currently being used had been damaged by heavy rains four years back and was yet to be replaced.

Mr Mittal said the basmati seed being used at present had been picked in 1997, but due to heavy rains the following year in November (just before harvest) it had been damaged somewhat.

The seed needed to be replaced immediately with new certified ones as the faded aroma, length and strength of Indian basmati was suffering. This had also affected exports and the prices it fetched in international markets. This, he said, was a long winding process as scientists had to process seeds as "nuclear," "breeder" and "foundation," before they could be certified.

— PTI

New Delhi
20 SEPTEMBER

GARMENT EXPORTERS have asked the government to grant a one-month extension to all the quota entitlements in view of the postponement and cancellation of shipments by buyers in the US.

"The attacks on the US last week have severely affected business sentiments of the American buyers and buying houses, who have asked Indian garment exporters to hold on all shipments by air for the time being," K.L. Madan, president, Garments Exporters Association, said.

He said the situation in the US had further crippled the garment industry which was already suffering because of the recessionary trends in the international market.

He warned that unless immediate relief was provided to garment exporters, the situation will get worse.

Mr Madan said the association had received requests from a large number of exporters for general extension of the first-come-first-serve (FCFS) entitlements, which expire on September 24.

is because they were unable to arrange their shipments with the validity period of the quota certification.

"This is primarily because of postponements and cancellations of shipments by the US buyers and buying houses," he said, adding that the association had written to the textiles ministry, seeking extension of the entitlements by 30 days.

"We have also requested for revalidation of the other entitlement certification, expiring on September 30, for at least 30 days to provide another opportunity to garment exporters to arrange for shipments to their overseas buyers," he added.

Mr Madan said the exporters were worried as the attack on the US had come at a time when they were still grappling with the delay in disbursement in duty drawback claims.

"We have written to the finance ministry and urged them to take action on this account as undue delay in the payment of drawback claims will have an adverse effect on the financial viability and efficient functioning of the exporters," he said.

— PTI

INDIA ABROAD

The Economic Times

21 SEP 2001

Let there be not another Milosevic

WORLD VIEW

THE War Crimes Tribunal for rump Yugoslavia that is preparing its case against former President Slobodan Milosevic is sitting on a time bomb, concocted by Mr Milosevic.

He has made it plain that he is going to conduct his defence on a political level - not by hiring a team of smart lawyers to challenge witnesses' veracity over accounts that he ordered or sanctioned mass murder, rape and torture, but by mounting a solo political defence that will seek to turn the tables on his Western prosecutors. He will accuse them of bombing his country in defiance of the UN Charter. It is they, he will say, who need to defend themselves against legitimate charges of breaking international law.

They bombed a sovereign foreign country without the approval of the Security Council, the UN's supreme organ. It is going to be a difficult trial and the prosecutors will have to hope that the Bench of judges, despite having a strong non-Western component, will rule such a defence out of order. If they don't, the proceedings could well end up as a trial within a trial, an outcome that should have been foreseen when the West chose to bomb Belgrade without a UN mandate.

The great danger with bending UN rules is that it doesn't always spring back to shape like a rubber band when

you need it next. But something positive will come out of this confrontation, if it forces a debate in the West about the relationship between invasion and bombardment and the cause of human rights.

There is a powerful school of thought, marked out by such diverse personalities as David Holbrooke, Bill Clinton's Ambassador to the UN, Canadian writer Michael Ignatieff and the Oxford don, Timothy Garton Ash, that argues that massive human rights abuses strengthen the presumption in favour of military intervention.

But war is war, even if it is launched in a "good" cause and human rights is too often the loser, however stringent the control exercised by democratically elected politicians of their fighting machine.

Indeed, if the preservation of human rights is the first and paramount purpose of policy, the whole approach to the kind of political impasses that lead to war becomes very different. Simply put, one avoids the recourse to war and leaders are compelled to search for alternative ways of dealing with the situation. Human rights crises can and should be prevented. They are never inevitable.

As Pierre Sane, the remarkable

Belgrade are the same governments that were willing to wheel and deal with Mr Milosevic's government during the break-up of the original Yugoslavia and were unwilling to address repeated warnings about the growing human rights crisis in Kosovo. Six years be-

fore the bombing, Amnesty was arguing in public: "If action is not taken soon to break the cycle of unchecked abuses and escalating tensions in Kosovo, the world may find itself again starting at a new conflagration." A similar argument can be made for the West's other great preoccupation during the 1990s - the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, defeated and driven back after an attempted invasion of neighbouring Kuwait. (President George Bush Senior did seek and win the approval of a

UN Security Council vote for this action.) It was Amnesty which called for international pressure on Iraq in the mid-1980s, especially after the 1988 chemical weapons attacks by Mr Hussein's troops on the town of Halabja, which killed an estimated 5,000 unarmed Kurdish civilians. Amnesty also drew attention at this time to Mr Hussein's notorious conduct towards his political enemies, incarceration and torturing their children. Yet, Western governments were then four square behind Iraq as it fought a World War-style conflict of attrition with its neighbour Iran, when the USA could not forgive either for its fundamentalist stridency or for taking hostage US embassy diplomats a few years earlier.

The West simply turned a blind eye to Mr Hussein's human rights violations, while it sold him increasingly sophisticated weapons of war. Prevention work may be less newsworthy and more difficult to justify to the public than intervention in a time of crisis, argues Mr Sane.

"It requires the sustained investment of significant resources without the emotive media images of hardship and suffering". It's the hard day-to-day slog of human rights

vigilance - using diplomatic means to persuade governments to ratify human rights treaties and implement them at home. It means ensuring there is no impunity and that every time someone's rights are violated, the incident is investigated and those responsible brought to justice.

Not least, it means the speeding up of the establishment of the International Criminal Court, meant to take over from the Yugoslavia War Crimes Court and to have universal jurisdiction, wherever there are crimes against humanity. If the West had thought a little more about prevention in the early days of the Yugoslavian conflict, much of the subsequent horror could have been avoided.

Now with Mr Milosevic's trial in the offing, the West stands in danger of being hoisted on its own petard. It will be good

PERSONAL

(Continued from page 6 col. 1)

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Slobodan Milosevic: Trial in the offing.

Cowboy diplomacy with love song

FROM ANDREW MARSHALL

Hanoi, July 27 (Reuters): US secretary of state Colin Powell, who first came to Vietnam as a soldier and returned this week as a diplomat, found himself in yet another role yesterday, as a gun-toting cowboy entranced by Japan's foreign minister.

After a week of high-level talks in Hanoi on global security, Powell donned a red bandana at the gala dinner and — with senior state department officials providing backing vocals and guitar — crooned a tragic song about a doomed, lovesick cowboy. But in Powell's version of *El Paso*, one of his favourite songs when he fought in Vietnam more than three decades ago, the cowboy was in love, not with a Mexican girl but with "a Vietnamese maiden" — played by Japanese foreign minister Makiko Tanaka.

"Blacker than night were the eyes of Makiko, wicked and evil while casting her spell," sang Powell. "My love was deep for this Vietnamese maiden. I was in love, but in vain, I could tell."

The song tells the tale of a cowboy who kills a love rival in a Texas cantina and flees town. He returns for another glimpse of his beloved, and is promptly shot dead by a posse of vigilantes.

As Powell acted out his death throes at the end of the song, Tanaka — in traditional Vietnamese dress — flung her arms around his prostrate body and kissed him on the cheek.

The audience — according to a state department official at the dinner — "just went wild".

Cabaret performances by foreign ministers have become a ritual at the end of the annual regional security meeting of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) and their global dialogue partners, who include the US, Japan, China and Russia.

This year's acts included a Beach Boys cover by Australian foreign minister Alexander Downer, complete with surfboard, an Asean version of Hotel California by the Indian delegation, and a song by Thailand's foreign minister accompanied by the minister from military-ruled Myanmar on an electric keyboard.

The Russian delegation staged an elaborate show with ~~Court~~ist-era costumes and a version of *Yellow Submarine*. Vietnam's foreign minister, more soberly, sang a traditional folk song.

Officials said most of the songs poked fun at the US, and in particular the controversial missile defence plans of President George W. Bush, one of the points of contention at the summit. "We got mentioned in every song," the state department official said.

In his autobiography, Powell says that during his wartime service, he used to lead South Vietnamese soldiers in rousing renditions of *El Paso*.

Before his performance yesterday, he told the assembled delegates he would sing them a ballad about a young man at war, but that now he was an older man in search of peace.

Powell has said his return to Vietnam this week was an emotional moment. It was his first time back since the war.

THE TELEGRAPH

2007-07-27 2007

Bush plan to deny World Bank loans will affect India adversely

By Priya Ranjan Dash

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: India, home to every fourth poor person in the world, will be adversely affected if the World Bank is to follow US President George W. Bush's plan and give grants instead of loans. The good news, however, is that the Bush plan has very little chance of being adopted. It is bound to be shot down by the World Bank's European and other influential shareholders.

"I am afraid the Bush plan is not positive for India," said additional secretary in charge of the IMF- Bank division of the finance ministry. This is because the overall kitty of assistance is limited. India will not be eligible for grants which will go to countries not capable of repaying loans. India is the World Bank's largest borrower with loans over \$1 billion annually and a cumulative portfolio of Rs 50 billion. It gets loans both from the bank's highly concessional IDA window as well as from the IBRD window where the interest rate is market-related.

Of later, India has come under pressure of being pushed out of the IDA facility. China, the other large borrower from the World Bank, "graduated" out of

the IDA window last year and is now eligible to borrow only from the IBRD window at near-market terms. India's credit worthiness — that is its capacity to repay World Bank loans — has ironically been cited against it. The argument is India, being a middle-income country with per capita income of \$840, can do without the IDA facility. India managed to ward off



George W. Bush

the pressure during the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in April and got a reprieve for another three years, 2002-2005. The last word on it, however, is yet to be said. The final verdict is expected to come in Geneva in November when the 13th round replenishment of the World Bank is expected to be finalised.

Essentially, two factors will work against the U.S. proposal. One, if it is to give grants instead of loans, then the banking character of the World Bank will be lost. Two, if grants are to be provided, the European and other shareholders of the World Bank would prefer to extend those directly as official development assistance (ODA) rather than giving it indirectly through a "faceless multilateral institution".

Messages from home transformed the 'darling of Delhi'

KEITH FLORY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, July 18. — Messages from Pakistan on the evening of 15 July that the all-is-hunky-dory images flowing like a flood from the summit were not going down well in critical sectors at home, are believed to have transformed President Pervez Musharraf from the "darling of Delhi" to the "aggressor at Agra".

Those messages, highly placed sources here said, are understood to have warned the Pakistani President that the atmosphere of goodwill abroad was developing into a storm at home and there was no way in which his writ would continue

to run unless he returned with something substantial on Kashmir.

Signals to that effect are believed to have emanated from two quarters: his powerful corps commanders and the clerics who wield influence, if not a high degree of control, with the *jehadis*. The convergence of those views left him with little option but to change tack, take the hard line on 16 July, the business end of the summit.

General Musharraf, in fact, was said to have been cautioned by both those entities in his pre-summit consultations that returning empty handed would be disaster and it would be advisable to break off the meet rather than accept a non-

committal, even wishy washy, formulation that could be interpreted as compromising on the basics. There was to be no give and take solution. He acquiesced. He was reminded of that on Sunday evening.

The revulsion among the hardliners at home began with his paying eloquent tribute to Gandhi when visiting Rajghat and his hailing the Mahatma's call for peace in this part of the world. That was fuelled by reports of his being effusive at the luncheon hosted by Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, and a display of sentimentality when he went to his birth place.

Now monitoring the situation carefully, the hardliners were further upset with the diplo-

matic tenor of his banquet speech at Rashtrapati Bhavan, his first public address in India. President Musharraf appeared to have turned soft, which the hardliners apprehended might result in his becoming pliable when subjected to the political wiles of Vajpayee & Co.

The bubble really burst when the General and his wife went to the Taj Mahal, posed for photographers in *filmi* fashion. Those carefree postures and broad smiles flashed "five" on TV screens in Pakistan made the common folk smile but they caused the blood of the hardliners to boil.

They did not see the General and the Begum against only the background of the marble

monument to eternal love. They viewed them against the image created by Mrs Sushma Swaraj that not only were the talks going "beyond expectations" they had gone beyond Kashmir too.

It was after the visit to the Taj and the messages received thereafter that the summit began to lose its positive momentum. The next round of talks were devoid of the cordial tinge and those who attended the dinner laid out by the UP Governor returned with an impression that the acidity was developing. Late that night the Pakistani delegation in Agra fired its opening shots. It waited till

■ See Messages: page 8



Harkat-ul-Mujahideen activists read reports of the India-Pakistan summit on Wednesday in Muzaffarabad, Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. — AP/PTI

MESSAGE

(Continued from page 1)

after midnight to issue its strong statement on Mrs Swaraj's comments — a matter which could have been clarified within moments from the Indian participants in the discussions.

Had the Pakistani delegation really been so awestruck over the remarks of the minister for information and broadcasting it would not have endorsed the brief statement that was issued to the media which spoke of the talks being held "in a very cordial, frank and constructive manner." No, it was not the I & B minister's remarks, needless though they might have been, but the signals from Pakistan that provoked the late night condemnation.

There were other strong signals too in the violent turn of events in Jammu and Kashmir. A string of explosions, according to one count along the international border, an attempt by over 30 armed intruders to cross the Line of Control, two attacks by *fidayeen*, and a bid to blow up the secretariat in Srinagar. The klaxons blared out the President Musharraf was to go no further down the reconciliatory path.

By the morning of 16 July the Pakistani delegation was committed to upping the ante and the heavy artillery fire was brought to bear during President Musharraf's breakfast meeting with Indian editors. His opening statement was just a few steps short of belligerent, his tone combative.

The telecast of that meeting was no accident. It provided the President with an opportunity to address not just the media but more importantly, his constituency back home. He may not have laid stress on the term "core issue" but made it clear that he saw it as nothing else.

Hence his insistence that Kashmir was at the root of every India-Pakistan problem.

The clerics and *jehadis* were appeased when he insisted that the violence in the Valley was a reflection of a fight for freedom. They lapped up in appreciation his comparing that situation with the Intifada in Palestine.

The corps commanders too nodded approvingly when he spoke of the mujahideen element to Kargil and it was music to their ears when he spoke of India's training, arming and inducting the Mukti Bahini in what was then East Pakistan and accused India of taking the fight to Siachen.

It may have sounded cocky, but there was also a bit of an appeal when he said that if he was to "ignore Kashmir I might as well buy Neharwali haveli and live here." It fell on deaf ears.

Initially shocked at what they unexpectedly saw on television, the Indians decided to dig in too. And though they might have lost the ensuing battle-through-media, they refused to give in on de-linking Kashmir from cross-border terrorism. If the General wanted his pound of flesh on Kashmir, he would have to work for the end to bloodshed. It required no Shakespearean skills to bring the curtain down on Agra.

India has the will and the resolve to fight terrorism'

REUTERS
AGRA, JULY 17

FOLLOWING is the text of a statement issued by External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh on Tuesday, following the failed summit between Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf.

"At the invitation of Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the President of Pakistan H.E. General Pervez Musharraf visited India on 14-16 July, 2001.

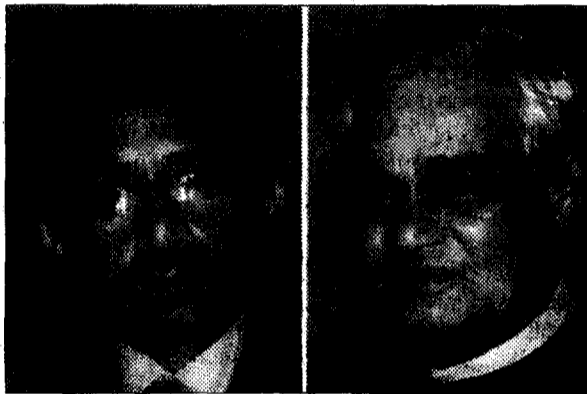
"In keeping with his abiding vision of good neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan, the Prime Minister had invited President General Pervez Musharraf to walk the high road of peace and reconciliation.

"Our commitment to that noble objective, upon the attainment of which rests the welfare of many, is not transitory. It is that commitment which was demonstrated at Simla, in Lahore and recently during President General Pervez Musharraf's visit.

"Significant CBMs that were announced prior to President

1872
Musharraf's visit would be fully implemented on our part. It is our conviction that, when put in place, they will make an important contribution to our relations.

"During his visit, the President of Pakistan had extensive discus-



sions with our entire leadership. These included three rounds of one-on-one meetings with the Prime Minister and an hour-long farewell call prior to his departure yesterday night.

"There were also detailed discussions during delegation level talks. All these meetings were marked by cordiality and candour. They provided an invaluable opportunity to both sides to understand each others' view points, concerns and compulsions.

"Our negotiations for an agreed text of a document were seriously pursued. There were long hours of discussions at official and political levels. During these negotiations India did not shy away from any issue.

"In keeping with the confidentiality, which is necessary for these negotiations, and the maintenance of which is essential for the future of bilateral relations themselves, it would not be proper to go into details.

"However, it needs assertion that, during the negotiating process, India fully respected all established international norms. As a mature and responsible democracy, we negotiate to improve bilateral relations with our neighbours, not to indulge in public relations.

"We will pick up the threads from the visit of the president of Pakistan. We will unceasingly endeavour to realise our vision of a relationship of peace, friendship and cooperation with Pakistan."

7-10 Slow and Steady 14/7

Looking at Delhi's newly-spruced up streets, it might be difficult to believe that the red carpet is being rolled out for the same man who masterminded an invasion of this country's territory only two years ago. No doubt owing in part to this historical burden, both sides have been striking extreme postures in the run-up to the much-hyped summit between general Musharraf and prime minister Vajpayee. Unfortunately, the aggression, especially from Pakistan's side, doesn't look like giving over. In an interview, given hours before his departure for New Delhi, general Musharraf, toughened his stand further and rejected the Simla and Lahore summits as of no consequence. With just a day to go for the big event, this attitude is hardly likely to help. However, the two leaders have little option but to try and build mutual confidence. The Agra summit starts with an enormous overburden of mistrust. Nawaz Sharif had four meetings with I K Gujral and three with Mr Vajpayee, before he hosted Mr Vajpayee at the summit in Lahore, a climax which many in India see as a betrayal. Pakistanis have their own version of India not abiding by its commitments. In other words, it is vital that confidence building precedes any attempt by the two sides to solve long-pending issues. Indeed, this is the core issue, insofar as this summit is concerned. As much for India as for Pakistan, though the latter has deliberately side-stepped confidence-building measures so as to keep the focus unwaveringly on Kashmir. And yet, without a measure of mutual trust, India may not be able to discuss Kashmir with Pakistan.

The Middle East and Northern Ireland experiences tell us that peace processes are not one-shot affairs — as the general seems to believe — but prolonged engagements involving successive meetings and sustained negotiations. In the case of general Musharraf and prime minister Vajpayee, this is the first time they would be meeting. This makes it even more improbable that either side will have its concerns — whether it is cross-border terrorism or Kashmir — fully addressed. The only way out is to set up an institutionalised mechanism which would initiate and nurture a sustained peace process. If that is agreed to, both sides may have something to count on at the end of the summit. An outline for the institutionalisation of the peace process is not difficult to work out — a six-monthly meet between the two heads of government, a regular three-monthly interaction between the foreign ministers and working groups to address various issues which underpin the whole range of confidence building. As the two countries move from one summit to another and one foreign ministers' meeting follows the previous one, they should be able to take additional steps in confidence building, besides developing a better understanding regarding each other's constraints. Pakistan has to understand that no Indian government can accept demands based on the two-nation theory. India in turn should be aware both of the uncertainties enveloping Pakistan's political future and general Musharraf's own fears about making any move that could be seen domestically as a radical departure from traditional policies. Both sides may still be able to reduce tension and hostile rhetoric if the two leaders develop a rapport which is admittedly a time-consuming process and will need several more summits.

THE TABLES OF INDIA

14/7

'Biotechnology must come with accountability'

By G. Venkataramani 11/17

BANGKOK, JULY 12. Governments and the biotechnology industry should prepare dossiers not just to satisfy the regulatory process but as part of an exercise in accountability to civil society, countries and the environment, indeed to all stakeholders. This was one of the major conclusions that emerged at the closing session of the international conference on "New Biotechnology Food and Crops: Science, Safety and Society," organised here by the U.K. Government in co-operation with the OECD and the Government of Thailand.

"This implies a complete review of not how the data is collected and presented but what use is made of it to engage in a dialogue. The recommendation has implications for inter-governmental organisations, governments, industry and those who advise on communication. It has set the trend for international processes for consensus-building with more openness and inclusiveness," said the Earl of Selborne, Chairman of the conference.

Addressing a media conference here today, the Earl said the need for transparency in consultations with all stakeholders was emphasised and it was observed that greater transparency by all parties would help to promote more constructive and meaningful dialogue. There is need for an accelerated, internationally co-ordinated programme of capacity-building activities which, in turn can

help speed up the implementation of biosafety protocol.

The Earl stressed the need for high quality, accessible and relevant science throughout the world to support risk assessment. "Several speakers drew attention to the decline in publicly funded research, and the increasing dependence that society has on research data that might not be considered impartial. Publicly funded research provides greater confidence and might be easier to channel into regions for which no financial return on the research investment can be expected. National governments are invited to ensure that there is an acceptable balance between public and private research funding for biosafety applications," he said.

In a statement signed by some non-government organisations (NGOs) from developing countries which participated in the three-day conference, their representatives said though they were not of the view that the conference reached consensus, it provided an opportunity to isolate contentious issues for further considerations. Lofty claims that GM foods and food production would address the problems of hunger and malnutrition in developing countries should be debated. These claims were made by developed countries and industry in developing countries. "We welcome their concern for hunger and malnutrition in developing countries. However, the solutions for these problems, as indeed other develop-

mental challenges of the South, must be decided by the South," the statement read.

The problems of hunger in developing countries must be seen in all their complex ramifications. Without considering these and other factors, GM foods will not address these issues. "For us, biotechnology and GM foods may have a role in addressing hunger and malnutrition only if embedded in the wider matrix of economic and development policy of the South. We oppose the idea that any technology and products arising out of that technology, on their own and outside of policy variables answer humanity's development needs," said the signatories.

The NGOs called for a fresh debate on the strategies for combating world hunger and what role, if any, GM foods could have in such an endeavour. Such a debate should consider the current global socio-economic and political environment. "It is crucial that such a debate is freed from the manipulative arts of public relations and marketing," they said. Now the research and development of GM food is concentrated in the hands of private industry and developed countries. Their claims that it would benefit developing countries give rise to suspicions that existing field trials may well be designed as testing grounds for future commercial production. Besides, the industry-based-research initiatives in developing countries are closely linked to bio-piracy.

THE HINDU

40-17 'Genetic engineering, a useful tool' 177

By G. Venkataramani

BANGKOK, JULY 11. "Genetic engineering and genomic techniques offer new opportunities to develop new crop varieties with higher yield potential, dense micro-nutrients and yield stability. We have to use all the tools at our disposal to develop more productive varieties and genetic engineering is a modern tool in our tool box," said Dr. Gurdev S. Khush, a renowned rice breeder from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines.

A distinguished rice scientist and World Food Prize winner, Dr. Khush said to feed a world population of eight billion by 2025, food production must increase by 50 per cent and it will have to be achieved using less land, less water, less labour and less chemicals. Hence, agricultural scientists should explore all possibilities to achieve the goal.

Speaking at the international conference on "New Biotechnology Food and Crops: Science, Safety and Society" organised by the U.K. and OECD in co-operation with FAO, WHO, UNEP and the Government of Thailand here, Dr. Khush pointed out that GM (genetically modified) foods and food products did not inherently present any unintended toxic properties than those already presented by conventional breeding practices, which had an impressive food safety record. He cited the conclusion of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), a 29,000-member, non-profit society for food science and technology which conducted a comprehensive review of biotechnology.

"Much has been said and written about the safety of GM food. The main concerns are about the introduction of allergens, toxins and anti-feedants resulting from the presence of foreign proteins. However, biosafety protocols in place ensure that GM foods are thoroughly evaluated for any such adverse human health aspects before introduction into commercial production," he said.



Thai demonstrators hold banners during a protest against an international conference on biotechnologies organised by the United Nations and the Governments of Great Britain and Thailand, outside the United Nations office in Bangkok on Tuesday.— AP

Discussing the environmental sustainability of GM crops, he said the main concerns were about the possibility of transfer of transgenes to wild relatives leading to the emergence of super weeds, consequences for biodiversity and the impact on non-target organisms. "Numerous disease and insect-resistant crop varieties have been developed during the last 100 years and there is no evidence of escape of

resistance genes to wild relatives or development of super weeds. GM crops, in reality, help protect the bio-diversity through increased food production from favourable lands and thus reduce the need to open up fragile ecosystems such as wetlands and forests for agriculture. GM crops also enhance biodiversity and environmental sustainability through a reduction in pesticide use," he explained.

Dr. Jan van Aken, a German cell biologist representing Greenpeace International, said there was still no scientifically sound basic concept to assess the risks of living modified organisms. "Traditional risk assessment procedures are not applicable to the release of self-reproducible organisms into the environment. This has been acknowledged for years by most scientists in the field. However, even after more than a decade of research and discussion, no alternative and scientifically sound basic methodology is available to assess the specific risks of a specific crop with a specific trait in a particular environment," he said.

There is no development without taking risks but the risks posed by new technologies must be manageable. Likely negative effects must be reversible to guarantee a sustainable, environmentally-friendly and socially just development. "As long as GM crops are grown anywhere in the world, measures are urgently needed to guarantee traceability and to prevent contamination of food and especially of seeds, to protect consumers, non-GM crop growers and the environment from an uncontrolled spread of GM crops," he said. The OECD and the G-8 should fully endorse and express their unambiguous support for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and call on all nations to ratify it as soon as possible, according to him.

Dr. Suman Sahai of Gene Campaign, an NGO from India, said the private sector controlling biotechnology should be forced, at least to some extent, to contribute to the creation of public good. After all, they were using the genetic material which is a public resource to create private wealth. "All monitoring of GM crops should include independent experts, NGOs and farmers' organisations along with the regulatory authorities. Besides, there should be international standards for monitoring and they should be transparent," she said.

THE HINDU

Did Stalin's men kill Walter Benjamin?

NY 10 9/8

London

THE RENOWNED German writer and critic may not have died by his own hands. The Jewish intellectual long thought to have committed suicide was killed by Stalinist agents during his wartime flight from the Nazis, according to a new theory.

Since his death in September 1940, it has been believed that the German writer and critic who posthumously became one of the most celebrated intellectuals of the twentieth century killed himself while on the run.

His body was found in a hotel room in the Catalan town of Port Bou and it is generally thought he took a drug overdose. The myopic, weak-hearted, 48-year-old philosopher had just crossed the Pyrenees to Franco's Spain with other Jewish refugees, fleeing certain death in his adopted home of Paris.

But a new study suggests it is

more likely that Benjamin, a renegade Marxist, was killed by Stalinist agents.

Obscure during his lifetime, Benjamin achieved posthumous success when his writings were published in the Sixties and Seventies. Essays such as *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, as well as studies of Kafka, Brecht and book-collecting, established him for many as a brilliant critic and social theorist.

Benjamin fled Berlin for Paris in 1933, but in 1940 Vichy France signed an armistice with the Third Reich and refugees, especially Jews, from Hitler's Germany were in danger of being sent to the death camps. Fleeing to Marseille, Benjamin made an unsuccessful attempt at escape aboard a freighter bound for Ceylon. He was discovered and put ashore. Later he decided to walk across the Pyrenees to avoid border patrols. He had an

American visa and hoped to join Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, who had re-established the Frankfurt School in the US.

But soon after his arrival in Spain he was betrayed by the hotel owner. Fearing the Spanish would turn him over to the French border police, who would hand him to the Nazis, Benjamin is said to have taken his life.

'Benjamin's famous fate,' wrote Lesley Chamberlain in the *Times Literary Supplement* earlier this year, 'was to fall afoul of the Spanish police... who determined to put him on a train to France the next day. Ill, exhausted and hearing that he was would surely lead to his death in a concentration camp, he overdosed on morphine.' But this account is challenged by Stephen Schwartz, a Montenegro-based journalist and specialist in the study of communism

Hitler-Stalin pact. In response Stalinist agents, often recruited from socialist intellectuals - Schwartz called them 'killerati' - were carrying out assassinations. In the late Thirties, argues Schwartz, Stalinist agents in Spain were assigned to track down German-speaking anti-Stalinists and torture them into false confessions of betraying the Republic.

'Moscow wanted a parallel, outside Soviet borders, to the infamous purge trials, and the targets of attempts to realise such a judicial travesty included George Orwell,' he writes.

Schwartz argues in his article for the American magazine *The Weekly Standard* that the suicide theory is tenuous. Documentation by a Spanish judge shows no evidence of the presence of drugs. A doctor's report states that a cerebral haemorrhage, perhaps aggravated by the exertion of crossing the

Pyrenees, killed him.

Henny Gurland, one of the refugees who accompanied Benjamin across the Pyrenees, claimed that he gave her two suicide letters which she later destroyed. She then reconstructed the notes, which were published in *The Complete Correspondence of Adorno and Benjamin* two years ago.

Schwartz suggests this is not authentic, not least because Benjamin wrote in German, not French, and because Port Bou is not a village but a seaside town.

One further mystery remains. As Benjamin fled, he was hugging a manuscript. The American writer Jay Parini has suggested this was the masterwork he had been working on in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris. But the briefcase was entrusted to a fellow refugee who lost it on a train from Barcelona to Madrid.

The Observer

THE HINDUSTAN

China's empty promise

The way Hong Kong handles the applicability of local laws to Chinese government offices there shows whether the SAR has the rule of law, writes EMILY LAU

SUNDAY was the 4th anniversary of the establishment of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong. Looking back, it is reassuring to see that Hong Kong's free way of life has been largely preserved, thanks to the people's vigilance in safeguarding their basic rights. The government will argue this is because we have the rule of law. But do we? A cardinal principle of the rule of law is that no person or organisation is above the law. Developments since July 1997 show that the administration of Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa has consciously undermined this important foundation.

Last week, acting Secretary for Constitutional Affairs Clement Mak Ching-hung tried to explain to the Legislative Council why, after four years of Chinese rule, not one law of the SAR is applicable to the Central People's Government (CPG) offices set up in Hong Kong. During negotiations on sovereignty transfer, China reassured the people of Hong Kong that after 1997, English-style rule of law would be preserved and the mainland authorities and personnel in Hong Kong would abide by the SAR law. This undertaking is enshrined in Article 22 of the Basic Law.

In April 1998, the unelected, provisional Legco amended Section 66 of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1), replacing the word "Crown" with "State." Under this definition, "State" refers to the SAR government and the three CPG offices in the SAR. They are the Office of the Commissioner of the foreign affairs ministry, the Hong Kong Garrison of the People's Liberation Army and the Liaison Office of the CPG. One effect of the amendment is that offices falling within the definition of "State" are not bound by a law unless it clearly says they are. As a result, those Ordinances which expressly bind "the Government", but make no mention of the State, apply to the SAR administration but not the CPG offices.

To make such laws binding on the CPG offices would require amending the relevant Ordinance. There are about 600 Ordinances and about 1,000 pieces of subsidiary legislation in Hong Kong. Though Article 22 of the Basic Law stipulates that mainland authorities have to abide by SAR laws, this was undermined by the amendment to Section 66 of the Interpretation and General Clauses. Since no SAR laws apply to the CPG offices, this reinforces the impression that the mainland authorities are above the law.

The administration argued that the amended Section 66 is not inconsistent with the Basic Law because Article 22 does not provide guidance as to whether any Ordinance should be binding on the CPG offices. Many laws are irrelevant to the CPG's activities and it would be inappropriate for them to bind the CPG. However, the administration reviewed 17 Ordinances which expressly bound the SAR government but were silent on their applicability to the CPG offices. In October 1998, the administration told Legco that, as a matter of policy, 15 of these Ordinances should apply to the CPG offices.

The relevant policy bureaux and departments would prepare legislative amendments to this effect. On the applicability of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (PDPO), the administration said no decision had been taken because it had to discuss with the CPG whether and how the Ordinance would affect the operation of their offices. In 1999, amendments to the Arbitration Ordinance were introduced in Legco. That was one of the 15 Ordinances identified as applicable to the CPG. The amendment did not show that the law was binding on the CPG. In January 2000, the Bill was enacted without referring to the CPG offices.

The administration promised to work on a formula for the law to bind them but ruled out a direct expression: "This law binds the CPG." Without an "appropriate formula," amendments to the other 14 Ordinances could not proceed. Discussions on amending the 15 Ordinances and the review of the PDPO have taken almost three years. Legco members are dissatisfied with the administration's procrastination. The matter was raised at the Legco House Committee in May and the administration decided to brief the Legco Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services last week.

According to a paper supplied to the panel, little progress had been made on the 15 Ordinances because the relevant bureaux and departments had their own priorities. Amending the law to bind the CPG is considered a minor matter. Of the 15 Ordinances, the administration agreed that five of them have direct relevance to the CPG offices in their capacity as employers. They are the Sex Discrimination Ordinance, Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance, Disability Discrimination Ordinance, Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance and Family Status Discrimination Ordinance. As long as these laws are not amended, the CPG offices can defy them and their employees will not have legal protection. This must be contrary to the administration's policy intent and rule of law.

The delay on the applicability of the PDPO is also inexcusable. The law gives data subjects the right of access to personal information held by local organisations. There is no reason why the CPG offices should be exempted. Another area of zero progress involves the PLA. The administration said the work covered 90 Ordinances and subsidiary legislation and the garrison was being consulted. There is no telling when legislative amendments will be introduced in Legco.

Mr Mak told Legco that Chief Secretary for Administration Donald Tsang had recently ordered that amendments to the 15 Ordinances be given top priority. But there is no undertaking when amendments would be introduced in Legco. I have often said how the administration handles the Falun Gong is a litmus test for the "one country, two systems" because it shows whether the people of Hong Kong can enjoy freedoms denied to the people in the mainland. Similarly, the way the SAR handles the applicability of local laws to the CPG offices is an indication of whether the SAR has the rule of law.

Before the change of sovereignty, Beijing pledged that the mainland authorities would abide by local laws. Four years later, it is an empty promise, undermining claims that Hong Kong has the rule of law.

'POLICE INTERESTS WILL BE PROTECTED'

T.N. backs down, drops cases against Ministers

By Our Tamil Nadu Bureau ⁴¹⁷ 110-1

CHENNAI, JULY 3. Trying to avoid a confrontation with the Centre, the Tamil Nadu Government today dropped the cases against the two Union Ministers, Mr. Murasoli Maran, and Mr. T.R. Baalu, who were taken into custody during the course of the arrest of the former Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi.

In what looked like a climbdown, the Government announced that the charges against the two Ministers were withdrawn "considering the need to maintain cordial relationship with the Government of India."

At the same time, it assured the State police that "due care will be taken to protect their interests." Therefore, the police should "continue to discharge their duty conscientiously as always without fear or favour."

An official press statement pointed out that with the permission of the court the State Government had ordered the release of the two Ministers on July 2 as the investigating officer felt their continued detention was not necessary. "However, for reasons best known to themselves, Mr. Maran has refused to come out of the hospital and Mr. Baalu out of the prison," it said.

"The police guard at the hospital was removed and Mr. Maran was informed that he was free to go, but he chose to remain in hospital. Similarly, Mr. Baalu was informed by the Prison Superintendent that he was free to go out. When he refused, the District Collector met him and informed him about his release, but he refused to come out of the prison."

The Centre's feelings that the detention of the two Ministers, even if under specific charges, was undermining its cordial relationship with the State under the federal set-up were communicated informally to the State. "While the Government of Tamil Nadu reiterates that the charging of the Central Ministers was for explicit offences committed by them, considering the need to maintain cordial relationship with the Government of India and out of deference to the views expressed by the Government of India and more specifically the Prime Minister, the Tamil Nadu Government has decided to drop the cases against the two Central Ministers," the statement said.

On being released, Mr. Baalu said: "The atrocities committed by the State police against myself and Mr. Maran would be taken to the Privileges Committee of the Lok Sabha."

The arrests were an attempt to destroy the DMK.



The Union Minister, Mr. T.R. Baalu, coming out of the Vellore Prison on Tuesday.

The cases against Mr. Karunanidhi, like the cases against him and Mr. Maran, were "foisted", he said. The release of the Ministers was a victory for the DMK, he added.

Mr. Maran, who remained in hospital today, was yet to receive the formal order of the dropping of charges against him. As the remand period was due to expire tonight, Mr. Maran would, in any case, be deemed to have been freed tomorrow, his counsel, Mr. R. Shanmugasundaram, told reporters.

The delay in Mr. Maran getting the formal order was attributed to four cases registered against him in different police stations.

Sacked ICHR head alleges Joshi grudge

Sridhar Kumaraswami
New Delhi, July 2

CHAIRMAN OF the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) and eminent historian Prof K S Lal has been given the marching orders by the Union Human Resources Development Ministry. Prof Lal described his ouster as illegal and alleged that it was the result of his differences with Union HRD Minister Dr Murli Manohar Joshi on the selection of the candidate for the post of ICHR Member-Secretary.

A livid Prof Lal received a terse communication from the Ministry this evening that Prof M G S Narayanan had been appointed as the new ICHR Chairman. "According to Rule 8 and Rule 9 of the ICHR rules, my

HISTORIAN APPOINTED NEW CHAIRMAN

THE WELL-KNOWN historian from the South, Prof M G S Narayanan, a member of the ICHR, has been appointed its new chairman.

A notification issued by the Ministry of Human Resource Development today said his appointment was for three years from the date he assumed charge. Prof Narayanan succeeds Prof B R Grover who passed away on May 10, 2001, following which Prof K S Lal was asked to look after as a temporary measure pending the appointment of a regular chairman by the Government.

Dr Narayanan has been Professor and Head of the Department of History, Calicut University. He has a brilliant academic record topping Madras University in History in 1953. He has been teaching since then and has taught in India and abroad.

tenure is till October 2002," he said. Lal was appointed as chairman in May this year following the death of the then ICHR Chairman Prof B R Grover. But even Lal's appointment letter had made it clear that his

appointment was temporary.

"Even that letter was flawed. As per the rules, in the event of the death of the chairman, the senior-most council member residing in Delhi takes over as ICHR Chairman and com-

pletes the remaining tenure of the previous chairman. As Prof Grover took over as chairman in October 1999, my tenure was to last till October 2002," Lal said.

He also lashed out at the Union HRD Minister and the Ministry's bureaucrats. "The HRD Minister wanted me to appoint an archaeologist R C Agarwal (a director in the Archaeological Survey of India) as the ICHR Member-Secretary but I refused saying that the ICHR required a historian and not an archaeologist. Dr Joshi then spoke to me on the phone and ordered me to make the appointment which I then had to," said Prof Lal. "But even today I wrote to him saying that the choice was not proper," he added.