

'Pervez came as a soldier, not President'

Vajpayee reveals at a BJP meet why the Indo-Pak talks failed HFA

Shekhar Iyer
New Delhi, July 28 29/7

PRIME MINISTER Atal Bihari Vajpayee today sought to put an end to the continuing criticism of the Agra Summit within the BJP and outside by coming out with the most candid account yet of how the talks went.

As a leader, Pervez Musharraf lacked experience of politics, exposure to international diplomacy and did not quite understand the sub-continent's history, he said at the BJP conclave.

Shortly after this speech, the BJP National Executive adopted a resolution virtually ruling out any summit-level dialogue if Pakistan doesn't give up its "jehadi" agenda.

Speaking after many BJP leaders had severely criticised the Government's handling of the summit, Vajpayee said Musharraf came as a soldier on an assignment and not as the President of Pakistan with a vision for the future.

Then the damning bit. "I knew on the first day itself that the summit will not be successful. He was quite clueless about our history, politics and rules of international diplomacy."

The PM said Musharraf was not exposed to any international diplomacy. He had no per-

spective nor any understanding of Indian politics or political leaders and about the consensus in the country on Kashmir as an integral part of India and Pakistan's role in cross-border terrorism.

Vajpayee said Musharraf was clearly unnerved when he reminded him of what lies at the core of the so-called core issue of Kashmir. "I told him it is Pakistan's illegitimate occupation of one-third of Jammu and Kashmir, which began with armed invasion by so-called tribals, along with Pakistani Army regulars in October 1947." This apparently left the General speechless.

Contrary to the impression in the media, he said Musharraf went back a very disappointed man because there was no agreement or a joint statement to show Pakistan had forced India to compromise on Kashmir.

And the gains, according to him: India showed to the world where Pakistan stood on the issue of terrorism. "We have gained a deep understanding of the Pakistan military regime, which will enable us to develop a sound strategy for the future," the PM said.

On Page 9: Musharraf formally invites PM for Islamabad summit

Keep Talking to Pakistan But Formulate Realistic Strategies

By K SUBRAHMANYAM

BARRING the views of some fringe elements, there is unanimity in this country on the imperative need to engage Pakistan. This is also influenced by the fact that India and its neighbour are nuclear weapon states with mutual hostility going back to 1940 when the two-nation theory was proclaimed in the Lahore resolution. For any engagement to be fruitful and result-oriented, it should be based on harsh reality, not sentiment. The talk of engagement between two countries arises only when they have or expect to have long-term unfriendly relations which need to be improved. Such engagements are, therefore, necessarily prolonged processes and cannot lend themselves to overnight resolution of conflicts. Such a strategy of engagement is called for where there is an acute confidence deficit as in the case of India and Pakistan, and engagement is necessary to build up confidence over a period of time.

After dealing with Pakistan in seven summits, the Lahore declaration was signed. Now we know that even as he was signing the declaration, the Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif had initiated the Kargil aggression. Indian political leaders, not adequately versed in international politics could not believe that Mr Sharif could have done that and they defended him, laying all the blame on general Musharraf. They had to be reminded that even as Nazi-Soviet pact was being signed, Hitler had no intention of abiding by it. When ambassador Kurusu was negotiating in Washington in December 1941, the Japanese imperial navy had set sail to bomb Pearl Harbour. As Mr Henry Kissinger was negotiating peace with his Vietnamese counterpart, he was urging president Nixon to intensify the bombing of North Vietnam.

These historical developments teach us that it was totally unrealistic to have expected to sign a joint declaration or statement with the Pakistani leadership after a few hours of talks between the two leaders who were meeting for the first time after a war which was viewed as a betrayal by India and by Pakistan as a victory snatched away by the Nawaz Sharif-Clinton parleys. Was it necessary to have a joint declaration in Agra? There is a widespread but erroneous impression among leaders of various political parties in India that the failure to arrive at a joint declaration was due to inadequate homework. General

Musharraf had clarified that such homework was superfluous since he had only a one point agenda — to extract from India a public recognition that Kashmir was the core issue without Pakistan agreeing to address India's core concerns. He had been hammering it home every day to Indian, Pakistan and international mediapersons.

In other instances, when leaders of nations meet for the first time they do not always issue a joint declaration or a statement. President Bush met president Putin in Slovenia and both of them treated it as a 'getting acquainted' event. They met again at Genoa and took an important decision on offensive and defensive missiles without issuing a joint declaration. If it is made clear to Pakistan that there will be no joint declarations and statements unless there is a breakthrough, there will be less temptation for it to grandstand and convert every Indo-Pakistan meeting at secretary, ministerial and summit level into an information war battle.

IN BRIEF

- Joint declarations with Pakistan are unrealistic at present
- There can be two forms of engagement with Pakistan depending on its strategy
- Pakistan has built up an erroneous self-image of itself

The Indian foreign minister asserted that Kashmir was the core of Indianhood. Obviously he meant that secular India could not permit Pakistan to claim Kashmir on the basis of two-nation theory. Undoubtedly, that is the national consensus in India. In that case, why does India fight shy of asserting that Kashmir is not the core issue but only a derivative of the Pakistani two-nation theory — now popularly known as the clash of civilisations thesis. If the Pakistanis are serious about the two-nation theory, then it will not be possible for the Pakistanis, including general Musharraf's brother, to accept American citizenship. The Mirpuris in Britain would be denied, under the two-nation theory, all benefits of British citizenship and will forever remain aliens. Pakistan does not accept its own citizens stranded in Bangladesh.

Engagement with Pakistan can take two alternative routes. If there is a realistic assessment among the Indian leadership that general

Musharraf has the potential to lead Pakistan away from the obsession over the two-nation theory and religious extremism, then the engagement should be through low-key secret diplomacy. His intentions could be monitored through the level of terroristic killings in Kashmir. If the assessment is that he will not be able to steer Pakistan away from the two-nation theory obsession, then the engagement has to be public and take the form of public diplomacy conducted through information campaigns to isolate Pakistan internationally while politically and diplomatically engaging it.

Identifying Pakistan's two-nation theory and its claim to Kashmir with the clash of civilisations thesis would help to present the Kashmir issue in the correct perspective to the international community and to expose Pakistan as an ideological threat to multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic states and unions like the US, European Union, Russia and China. Pakistan's fundamentalist jehadi Islam is a threat to moderate Islamic states like Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Central Asian Republics, Gulf states and others. One does not expect the government of India to discuss its strategy in public, as many of our intellectuals and mediapersons demand, but it should formulate a course best suited to Indian national and security interests. In either case, there is no place for joint statements and declarations at the end of every meeting. That expectation, which still seems to linger in the minds of the leadership even after the Agra experience, does not make sense at all.

As Altaf Gauhar wrote in his series of articles Four wars and one assumption, Pakistan continues to believe India is a soft state which cannot sustain its unity for long. Pakistan has built a self-image of itself as a state which defeated a superpower (Soviet Union) through jehadi means. They were able to build their nuclear weapon by outwitting the international community. They have succeeded in projecting to their people every defeat as a victory, the fruits of which were denied to them by others. The basic issue between India and Pakistan is not cross-border terrorism as the Indian prime minister avers or Kashmir as general Musharraf holds. They are only derivatives of the basic problem — the two-nation theory and the dream of Pakistanis that India can be broken up.

MINUTE OF INDIA

POWs DISCLAIMER

g.p. Musharraf's word on test 30/7

THERE should be no surprise at the Interior Ministry in Pakistan stating that a week-long search through the records did not reveal the names of any Indian prisoners-of-war in 1971 remaining in jails in that country. That is the position that Pakistan has consistently taken, one which has rendered fruitless all Indian initiatives through normal diplomatic channels. Organisations in this country working for the release of members of the armed forces, 54 according to an official account, have long suspected that those men are no longer classified as POWs and their names have probably been transferred to another list. Showing them as POWs would constitute a violation of the relevant Geneva Convention to which Pakistan is a signatory, and such a violation would cause that country more than discomfort. The search for them, if undertaken with any sincerity, would have to be of a non-routine nature.

If there was any hope generated by President Musharraf's expression of concern — "as a soldier" — on the issue it was because during his visit to India he repeatedly sent out signals that he was not the sort to get bogged down by files and other bureaucratic paraphernalia. Now his word is on test. If he does not comply, India will have to tackle the issue differently. A good first step would be making public the information that had led IK Gujral to tell parliament that 54 POWs were languishing in jails across the border. The next would be compiling the material available with the various organisations that have been following the matter, and then seeking the assistance of international groups working on the human rights front.

THE STATESMAN

People's verdict: Meet again, but be careful

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri
and Yashwant Raj
New Delhi, July 28

DON'T WORRY about great expectations when India and Pakistan get together to talk of cabbages and kings. Media and government can beat the drum as hard as they like — the Indian public knows a summit between these two rivals will yield less not more. However, the majority also believe that despite all this, New Delhi and Islamabad need to keep talking.

Hence the seeming contradiction brought to light by an opinion poll done by TNS Mode for the *Hindustan Times*. Indians are pretty much split in half as to whether India and Pakistan can ever resolve their problems. But a solid majority of 63 per cent want the two to keep talking.

Which is why, after the dust raised from Agra has settled, most Indians don't think that a clear winner emerged from the summit. And contrary to what the chattering classes may think, they're also relatively positive about Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's performance during the summit. Vajpayee's Teflon *dhoti* remains in place.

In a poll of 841 respondents from four metros — Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai — of different ages, gender and economic background, a solid 77 per cent said India did not succeed in Agra. Chennai was the most positive — nearly a third of respondents there felt India had done well at Agra. Mumbai was the least with an 83 per cent negative vote.

But contrary to what many commentators have said, 71 per cent of all respondents said Agra had also been a failure for Pakistan — despite talk of Pervez Musharraf having scored heavily in the media and earned laurels from the right wingers back home. Indians recognise that peace is not a zero-sum game.

However, about a third of Delhiites felt Pakistan had won Agra — much more than in other cities.

The Indian government can be less defensive about Agra after this poll. Vajpayee received a mild endorsement: 56 per cent of Indians rated his performance at Agra as Good or Excellent.

Curiously, Kolkatans gave the lowest grades with 63 per cent saying Vajpayee's performance was Average or Poor. And in a straight choice between him and the General,

77 per cent of Indians declared him the victor of Agra. Delhi was the



WE'LL TALK AGAIN: General Pervez Musharraf leaves after the last one-on-one with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

most sceptical: only two-thirds said Vajpayee was the better performer.

But the Prime Minister should be pleased. Despite his Taj Mahal tour, his wardrobe and his breakfast with the editors, Indians gave Musharraf a dismal summit performance with only 31 per cent giving him Good or Excellent ratings. His scores were particularly poor with Mumbaikars, and highest among Delhiites.

And Indians continue to distrust the General. An *HT* poll before Agra had said about two-thirds of Indians didn't trust the dictator.

After Agra, a little more (70 per cent) believe Musharraf is insincere about solving the problems bedeviling the two countries.

Only Chennai was willing to give him a chance: 40 per cent of respondents there thought the Pakistani leader was genuinely interested in peace.

One surprise for the experts' brigade was the public response to the question: Which country used the media better. Despite Pakistan's on-air press conferences, media leaks and breakfast TV stunts, the overwhelming view (74 per

cent) was India had been the media star. But there were some stark regional discrepancies here. Delhiites and Kolkatans joined hands to give India low ratings. In these two cities, only 67 per cent and 56 per cent, respectively, said India won the media battle. Mumbai and Chennai put the numbers in the high eighties.

Consider two contrasting stances on Kashmir. When asked whether India should discuss Kashmir with Pakistan, 67 per cent of Indians said Yes.

When asked whether India should recognize Kashmir as the main cause of bilateral friction between the two countries, "as demanded by Pakistan", 61 per cent said No. And to top it off, 76 per cent of all respondents said India should concede nothing to Pakistan until Islamabad stopped cross-border terrorism.

One interpretation of this is that the common India understands the difference between ground realities and tough negotiating positions. In other words, they know Kashmir is the first and foremost reason why the two South Asian coun-

tries don't get along. However, they don't believe India should concede that diplomatically or legally. And it is Pakistan that needs to establish its peace credentials first — by curbing support for militancy.

Geographical distance from Kashmir seems to have some impact on opinion in India. By a few points, Delhi was more inclined to feel India should recognize that Kashmir is the key. Chennai and Kolkata, the two cities furthest from the troubled valley, saw the strongest support for holding discussions on Kashmir with Pakistan.

These two cities were also more willing, by a few percentage points, to tie everything to an end to cross-border terrorism. However, there were solid majorities in every city for the national opinion on all three points.

As to the future, the city of Mumbai stood out as the most negative among the four metropolises. Only 38 per cent of Mumbaikars wanted Vajpayee to continue peace talks with Musharraf — the only city where supporters for further talks were a minority. All-India the figure was 63 per cent in favour of continuing peace talks.

But Mumbaikars were surprisingly beaten by Kolkatans when it came to the more abstract question of whether Indo-Pakistani problems can ever be resolved. Only 41 per cent of the Mumbai respondents believed the two countries could ever come to terms while a mere 37 per cent of Kolkatans felt the same. Delhi and Chennai had moderate majorities who took a more positive point of view. But this split meant that, all India, the vote was split in half.

The Indian government may take some solace in the fact that most Indians seem to have taken Agra's non-summit and Musharraf's media antics in their stride. The Bharatiya Janata Party may have less to cheer about as the two cities near their centres of support — Delhi and Mumbai — seem to take a dimmer view of Agra, Vajpayee's performance and Indo-Pakistani relations in general.

One final note: there remains a consensus on foreign policy, especially when it comes to Pakistan, between classes, genders and, more or less, regions.

The polls showed almost no difference between rich and poor in their assessments of Agra and even less between men and women. When it comes to their neighbour to the West, Indians have learnt to not expect too much good news but accept that some news is better than no news at all.

Pervez invites Atal, raises J&K

Udayan Namboodiri
New Delhi, July 28

PERVEZ MUSHARRAF'S letter to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee inviting him for another summit in Pakistan has the predictable Kashmir focus. Naturally, New Delhi is not in a great hurry to respond. Official sources today ruled out the possibility of a return visit by the Indian Premier in the near future.

Pakistan High Commissioner Ashraf Jehangir Qazi handed over the President's official invitation to Foreign Secretary Chokila Iyer last night. Though the spokesperson of the Indian foreign office was tight-lipped about its contents, sources disclosed it was "along familiar lines". Musharraf referred to the Kashmir issue, calling it "the path to normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan".

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar has simultaneously invited his Indian counterpart, Jaswant Singh, to Pakistan. On this score too the MEA offered no indication about the likely dates. But both invites have been accepted in principle.

FAROOQ ROOTS FOR AUTONOMY AGAIN

FAROOQ ABDULLAH has ruled out submission of any new proposal on devolution of power to Jammu and Kashmir and said he would instead pursue the issue of autonomy to the hilt.

He stressed that the Centre would have to concede the autonomy demands, which were endorsed by the State legislature.

The Chief Minister today said in a radio programme: "We won't relent on the issue of autonomy and will continue to press for its acceptance."

The rejection of the autonomy report without going through it was not sagacious, he added. Abdullah's assertions came a day after Union Home Minister L K Advani rejected any concession to Jammu and Kashmir on autonomy and said that the Centre could rather consider some more powers to the State under the proposition of devolution of powers to the States.

The Chief Minister said his party was honor-bound to fight for the State's autonomy as it got the massive mandate in the last Assembly elections on the issue. Describing the Centre's readiness to discuss this vital issue as a victory, he said a dialogue with the people should be initiated on this.

HTC, Srinagar

The Indian caginess follows Vajpayee's unambiguous statement in Parliament on July 24. He had said India would persist with its efforts to "convince" Pakistan that bilateral cooperation should not be held hostage to the resolution of its concern on cross-border terrorism in any document

that future negotiations would try to conclude.

Musharraf's letter leaves little doubt that he is looking for another media event. Next time round, India is likely to insist on official-level talks ahead of the Summit for preparing a structured format. Jaswant had mentioned the

lack of such preparedness as one of the reasons for Agra's failure to produce a joint statement — an index of success.

With India insisting on a discussion on all issues, including Kashmir, and Pakistan remaining firm on Kashmir-or-nothing, it's anybody's guess how the next Summit can be organised.

Agra, to the Indian side, is not worth emulating because the unstructured format had given the Pakistanis the latitude to push their one-point agenda. A once-bitten-twice-shy India is expected to pose serious objection to a repeat, particularly since the Vajpayee Government has come in for serious criticism from Opposition parties for breaking all precedent by agreeing to a dialogue without a pre-determined agenda.

Musharraf's letter thanks Vajpayee for the "excellent arrangements" during his Indian trip. Delhi, while emphasising the need for continued talks, has stated that the composite agreements reached in Lahore and Simla, and not the drafts of Agra, will form the basis of future summits. That's another standoff for observers.

Clues lead to lover in scribe killing

Soni Sangwan
New Delhi, July 28

MORE THAN two years after the murder of *Indian Express* journalist Shivani Bhatnagar, Delhi Police have been able to crack the mystery. Masterminded by a senior Government officer, the January 23, 1999, murder was the second attempt on Shivani's life. The breakthrough came when police were able to track down the hired assassins who had made an unsuccessful first attempt on her life.

Through their statements, the police have been able to piece together the mystery, identify the real killers, and also link the senior official to the murder. Two prime suspects had been Shivani's husband and the Government official. Investigations have also unravelled the close connections between Shivani and two Union Cabinet Ministers.

The police had been unable to make any

definite moves in the absence of corroborative evidence. Now with the linking evidence of the three persons tracked down and the circumstantial evidence available, the police are finally in a position to make arrests.

The story dates back to the days when Shivani was covering the PMO. During the course of her assignments, Shivani developed a close relationship with a senior officer at the PMO. Shivani became pregnant in early 1998 and began pressurising the senior official to marry her, saying that the child she was carrying was his.

The police have, however, not been able to establish whether this was a fact or a ploy by Shivani to put pressure on the official. Both Shivani and the senior officer were married.

Sources said when Shivani continued to pressure the officer to divorce his wife and marry her, he became desperate. The officer had earlier been posted near Delhi and had

then become friends with a local resident. He reportedly approached this man for help in getting rid of either the girl or the unborn child. The friend hired three men for the contract killing, and even paid them Rs 20,000. The three men who have helped the police in cracking the case had been hired to do the job. They were, however, unsuccessful and the child was born in October 1998.

After the birth of the child, the officer met both the child and Shivani at a hotel in Ghaziabad. Soon after, Shivani was murdered. Between September 1998 and January 1999, the officer had made 39 STD calls to her from Mumbai, where he was posted. He also called her at her parent's residence 16 times.

Shivani had made 154 STD calls to him at both his office and residence in Bombay. Though her husband underwent a polygraph test, the senior officer managed to evade the lie detector test on medical grounds.

'MUSHARRAF SPOKE LIKE AN ARMYMAN AT AGRA'

Pak. must drop 'jehadi' mentality, says BJP

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, JULY 28. The Bharatiya Janata Party today said there could be "no meaningful dialogue with Pakistan" as long as the "jehadi mentality" dominated Pakistan's establishment even as the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, blamed the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, for speaking like a "fauji" (armyman) who had "not come to make peace".

The party said that as Pakistan continued to adopt a "negative posture" the Government should draw "appropriate conclusions" and "plan for the future accord-

ingly". Adopting a three-page resolution on the Agra summit, the party left no one in doubt that there could be "no compromise" on "cross-border terrorism" and "religious extremism," points stressed by Mr. Vajpayee and the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, who were both present during the discussions. The party spokesperson, Mr. Sunil Shastri, later made it clear that the BJP was "not in favour of engaging Pakistan unless it agreed to address India's major concern, terrorism, as a key issue."

Mr. Vajpayee categorically said that India had learnt a lot from the summit. "We met and under-

stood the new Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf," and this would help "in any future strategy related to India-Pakistan relations," he said. The discussions at Agra were "frank" and when the General repeatedly emphasised Kashmir as the core issue, "on the very first day, it seemed the summit would not work," Mr. Vajpayee said.

The party general secretary, Mr. Narendra Modi, who later briefed reporters on Mr. Vajpayee's address said the Prime Minister found Gen. Musharraf to be "task-oriented" repeatedly bringing up Kashmir as the core issue. Mr. Vajpayee then reminded him

that the "core of that core issue" was in the 1947 October attack on Kashmir after which Pakistan continued to "occupy" one-third of the State.

The Prime Minister also said it had become clear at Agra that Gen. Musharraf "did not want to go back empty-handed" and as far as India was concerned, the summit had sent a strong message: continued terrorist activities would not be tolerated and India had the will and the means to deal with the problem.

"Peace was not a 'majboori' (compulsion)" for India but a "commitment" as it was "necessary for fighting poverty in both the countries."

There was no doubt at all that the party fully backed the Prime Minister's peace initiative even as it recorded the violation of diplomatic norms by the presidential guest, and his discourtesy in converting an informal breakfast meeting with editors into a "media spectacle" where he made statements "unacceptable to his Indian hosts". Laying the blame on Gen. Musharraf for the failure of the summit, the party resolution said, "he poured cold water on any prospects of a positive outcome by his injudicious utterances."

Will consult allies on PMK: PM

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 28. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, was today lavish in his praise for the party president, Mr. Jana Krishnamurthi, on two counts: he had tried to learn Hindi, and he had given valuable suggestions for norms for re-entry into the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

Talking to reporters outside the venue of the national executive meeting, the Prime Minister seemed relaxed till he was asked about the Unit Trust of India. What his comment was on the allegations that the former UTI Chairman, Mr. P.S. Subramaniam, had made investment decisions on the advice of the

Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha? "Do you believe that man," Mr. Vajpayee shot back, and then walked away from the glare of television cameras and the group of reporters.

But before that he volunteered: "the PMK has not yet formally joined the NDA" and he would be "consulting all parties concerned".

He was happy with the BJP president's suggestion that norms should be framed for the "re-entry" of constituents who had earlier left without provocation for "their own purposes" as Mr. Krishnamurthi had said yesterday, and were now trying to "re-enter the NDA" (and bargaining hard for ministerial berths as well).

THE HINDU

29/7/2001

7/27 HD-11

India willing to accept 29 prisoners

gnd pwr ✓

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 27. New Delhi is willing to accept 29 of the 31 prisoners, claimed by Islamabad as Indians, as it believes that the two women among them could be Sri Lankan citizens.

(The Pakistan Foreign Office had announced on Thursday that the Government had decided to release 31 Indian prisoners lodged in different jails in Baluchistan. They were taken into custody early this year for crossing over illegally from Iran).

"Pakistan Government is right when it talks about 31 Indian prisoners... When Islamabad allowed consular access to these prisoners on May 30, we did establish their identity as Indians.

But the list we have received today contains names of two women, perhaps Sri Lankans, who are married to Indians," a senior official in the Indian High Commission said.

A diplomat in the High Commission said when an official of the mission had gone to Quetta in May after Pakistan agreed to provide consular access to the prisoners, he found 29 of them lodged in a jail and two others in another jail. "The list we got today does not contain the names of the two Indian prisoners lodged in the Quetta jail", he said.

The Indian mission is expected to take up the issue with the Pakistan Foreign Office and is hopeful of sorting it out amicably. The 31 prisoners were mostly youth who travelled as stowaways in

search of greener pastures in the West. Their tragedy began when the Greek police caught them. From Greece, they are believed to have travelled to Turkey. They were later sent to Iran. "Perhaps they were pushed into Pakistan" the officials said.

On the two women, the officials said "how can we take responsibility for them even assuming they have married Indians? It would give room to all sorts of legal and technical problems."

In a related development, the fate of another 51 Indian prisoners, reportedly languishing in Pakistani jails even after completing their terms, continued to hang in balance as both the countries traded charges in establishing their credentials.

The News said in a report today that the Indian authorities had refused to accept that 51 'Indian' prisoners had been detained at Kot Lakhpat jail, Lahore, though they were ready for release.

Clarifying, Indian diplomats here said they were aware of only 49 Indians in Kot Lakhpat jail and they fell under different categories. Of the 49, Pakistan, it was believed, had refused consular access to 14. And India was not convinced of the identity of four others.

Pakistan wanted to send a few prisoners without following the procedures, they said. On the steps initiated by New Delhi for the prisoners' release they said "steps are under active consideration."

THE HINDU

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JUL 27

Vajpayee denies pressure to call off Pakistan visit

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & AGENCIES

BHUBANESWAR, July 29. - The Prime Minister today said he was under "no pressure" to call off his proposed visit to Pakistan.

"I do not work under any pressure," Mr Vajpayee said at a Press conference here today when asked whether NDA allies had urged him not to visit Pakistan.

Dispelling notions that he was under pressure from a section of his party leaders to cancel the visit, Mr Vajpayee said he had "accepted the invitation" of General Pervez Musharraf.

The date of the visit as well as the venue of the meeting, however, had not yet been decided, he added. The hardliners within the BJP were reportedly opposed to Mr Vajpayee undertaking another trip to Pakistan.

Farooq slams Pak: Pakistan's reluctance to respond positively to India's confidence building measures stemmed

SP-1 30/7 920s POK

FORMER ARMYMAN POK PRESIDENT

ISLAMABAD, July 29. - The All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference today nominated the Pakistani army's former vice chief, Major General Sardar Mohammad Anwar Khan, as the President of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. He will replace Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim of the Pakistan People's Party, who has completed his tenure. Maj-gen Anwar Khan was retired from the army last night under an ordinance issued by Gen Pervez Musharraf. The ordinance also waived the restriction on government servants to accept any political post before two years of retirement. - UNI

from the fear that it would be exposed in front of its people, the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Dr Farooq Abdullah, said here today, UNI adds from Srinagar.

"Pakistan's scare is obvious as it has been feeding the people malicious propaganda against India," Dr Abdullah said at a function organised by the J&K Rural Development Society.

'Summit our victory': Union human resource development minister Mr Murli Manohar Joshi today claimed that Pakistan had been defeated diplomatically at the Agra

summit, UNI adds from Varanasi.

Five Pak intruders killed: Five Pakistani intruders were gunned down by the BSF today when they sneaked into the Indian side via Ramgarh, PTI adds from Jammu.

Call for self-determination: Islamabad's ambassador to Russia Mr Iftikhar Murshed has called for granting the Kashmiris the right to self-determination under UN resolutions and denied his country was promoting cross-border terrorism, PTI adds from Moscow.

THE STATESMAN

2 JUL 2001

I am under no pressure to call off Pak. trip: PM

HD-1

By Prafulla Das

BHUBANESWAR, JULY 29. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today asserted that he was not under any pressure to cancel his proposed visit to Pakistan. "There is no pressure. I don't work under pressure," Mr. Vajpayee said, replying to a query whether he was under pressure

from the National Democratic Alliance or his own party not to visit Islamabad on the invitation of the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf.

"I have accepted the invitation. However, the date of my visit and the place of the meeting have not been decided yet," the Prime Minister told presspersons at the

Raj Bhavan here after conducting an aerial survey of the flood-hit districts of Orissa.

The Prime Minister assured the Orissa Government that the Centre would heed the request of the State Government to provide additional three lakh tonnes of rice estimated to cost Rs. 210 crores to undertake Food for Work in the flood-affected areas and one lakh additional Indira Awas Yojna units estimated to cost Rs. 225 crores for rebuilding houses of those below the poverty line in the flood-affected areas.

Mr. Vajpayee landed here this afternoon after an aerial survey of the flood-hit areas. Later he reviewed the situation and the rescue and relief operations with the State Government officials, the State Governor, Mr.M.M. Rajendran, and the Chief Minister, Mr. Naveen Patnaik. Mr. Vajpayee said he would ask the Planning Commission to consider drawing up a long-term action plan for Orissa in view of the frequent natural calamities affecting developmental works in the State.

More relief under study: Page 13



The Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, making an aerial survey of flood-hit areas in Orissa on Sunday. — Photo: Partho Sarkar

30 JUL 2001

Pak. to examine CBMs 'on merit'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 26. Even as India officially conveyed the proposals on Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs), announced in the run-up to the Agra summit, Pakistan today maintained that it would 'examine them on merit.'

The Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman told a news conference here that Islamabad had received 'a number of proposals on CBMs' from New Delhi and it was in the process of examining them. The announcement is slightly at variance with the earlier stand of Islamabad. When India had unveiled the CBMs before the summit, Pakistan's response was that they should follow, rather than precede, the summit.

In a press conference a day after the summit (July 17), the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, had said that no proposals on CBMs were discussed at the summit. Three days later, at his televised news conference, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, said that resolution of the Kashmir dispute was the biggest CBM.

The various pre-summit Indian proposals on CBMs included a dia-

logue among nuclear experts at the official level; relaxation of visa and travel regime; fellowships to Pakistani scholars and a policy on the release of fishermen who inadvertently strayed into territorial waters.

At the news conference today, the spokesman did not elaborate on the Indian proposal to send the

Indians to be freed

By Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 26. Pakistan has decided to release 31 Indian prisoners, including two women, detained in the Quetta jail in Baluchistan for illegal entry.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman told a news conference here today that the Government had allowed the Indian High Commission in Islamabad consular access to the detained youth on May 30. "We have decided to repatriate these Indian citizens and requested the Indian side to complete the formalities of identification and arrange for their travel documents. They would be set free as soon as the formalities are completed," he said.

Director-General of Military Operations (DGMO) to discuss various issues related to border management.

Enquiries with New Delhi revealed that some of the CBMs, announced on the eve of the summit, were conveyed before the summit and others after the summit. "We have merely articulated the CBMs already announced and given it to Islamabad in the form of formal proposals," a senior diplomat said.

Western diplomats based here see a link in the relatively flexible attitude adopted by Islamabad on the CBMs to the coming visit of the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Ms. Christina Rocca, to Pakistan.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman did not respond to a question on the Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani's statement in Parliament on Wednesday. Asked if the 'hardliners' in India were responsible for the two countries' failure to reach an agreement at Agra, he merely drew attention to the observations of Gen. Musharraf, who had, in his press conference, talked about the 'hawks' on both sides and the need to ignore them if meaningful progress were to be made in bilateral ties.

THE HINDU

27 JUL 2001

India, Pak N-projects getting foreign aid: CIA

WASHINGTON: India is continuing its nuclear weapons development programme and relies on foreign assistance for key missile and dual-use technologies which it gets from entities in Russia and Western Europe, the CIA claimed in its semi-annual report to Congress.

On Pakistan, it said, the country is moving towards serial production of solid-propellant short range ballistic missiles (SRBM) with Chinese entities continuing to assist its missile programme.

India, it claimed, continues to rely on foreign assistance for key missile and dual-use technologies, where "it still lacks engineering or production expertise in ballistic missile development." Entities in Russia and Western Europe remained primary conduits of missile-related technology transfers during the first half of 2000, it said, adding India is continuing an across-the-board modernisation of its armed forces through Advanced Convention Weapons (ACW), mostly from Russia, although many of its key programmes have been plagued by delays.

The Russian entities, the report claimed, continued to supply dur-

ing the period a variety of ballistic missile-related goods and technical know-how to countries like Iran, India, China and Libya. Russia remains a major supplier of conventional arms and its commitment, willingness and ability to curb proliferation-related transfers "remain uncertain", it said.

According to the CIA, during the first half of 2000, Chinese entities provided significant assistance to Pakistan's ballistic missile programme enabling the country to move rapidly towards serial production of solid-propellant SRBMs. "The impact of North Korea's assistance throughout the reporting period is less clear," it commented.

Pakistan also continued to acquire nuclear-related and dual-use equipment and material from various sources, principally in Western Europe. "Islamabad has a well-developed nuclear weapons programme, as evidenced by its first nuclear weapons tests in May 1998. Acquisition of nuclear-related goods from foreign sources will remain important if Pakistan chooses to develop more advanced nuclear weapons," the report said. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

28 FEB 2001

Ball in India's court, says Salahuddin

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 25. The Hizb-ul-Mujahideen today offered to cease fire in Kashmir if India was prepared to accept the proposition of the pro-Pakistan Kashmiri leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, for resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

In a press statement here, the Hizb chief, Syed Salahuddin, said "the ball is in India's court. If the Indian Government is ready to accept the formula suggested by Mr. Geelani, we are prepared to cease fire."

In his statement on Saturday, Mr. Geelani had said that if India was sincere in resolving the Kashmir dispute, the Government should move a resolution in Parliament acknowledging Kashmir as a disputed territory and commit itself for a solution on the basis of "historical background."

Syed Salahuddin has supported Mr. Geelani for two reasons. Both of them swear by the ideology of the Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan. More important, Mr. Geelani has advocated what the Hizb has been demanding, particularly since it called off its shortlived ceasefire in the second week of August last year.

"If India accepts the proposals by Ali Geelani and takes concrete steps for implementation, then the Mujahideen would be ready to stop their armed activities. Mr. Geelani's proposals are advisable and timely," the Hizb chief said.

The Harkat-ul-Mujahideen described Mr. Geelani's statement as beyond its understanding and said withdrawal of the Indian troops from Kashmir was the only solution. The Harkat secretary, Information, Mr. Amiruddin Mughal, said the Mujahideen would not stop operations unless the Indian troops quit Kashmir.

SPO killed

SRINAGAR, FEB. 25. A Special Police Officer (SPO) was killed and five others injured in a militant attack at Arkhai Mohalla in Doda district of Jammu region late on Saturday night while elsewhere in the State, two people were killed and another injured since Saturday evening.

Militants attacked a police station at Handwara in north Kashmir with automatic weapons and grenades. Police guards retaliated, but no casualties were reported. The ultras also fired at a security force camp in Anantnag.

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THE HINDU

25 FEB 2001

Our patience is not infinite: PM to Pak

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: The Prime Minister told the Lok Sabha on Thursday that his government had decided to extend the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir until the end of May.

While expressing the hope that Pakistan would abjure violence and take the path of peace through bilateral talks, he warned, "Let this opportunity not be missed by all those that desire peace, for our patience is not infinite." The peace process "is to enable our citizens in Jammu and Kashmir to live peacefully. It is their voice that has to be heard, not that of the militants or foreign mercenaries", he said.

The PM made it clear that the ceasefire on the border did not mean that the militants would have a free run. Stating that he would not let the peace process "be derailed, diluted or misused", he added. "For such organisations or elements as have vowed to disrupt the peace process, or intend to continue with violence and the killings of innocents in J&K, my message is

unequivocal and clear. If you inflict injury on any Indian citizen in Jammu and Kashmir or elsewhere, or commit any act of violence or terrorism, then the security forces have clear instructions to act decisively and to defeat such intentions."

Earlier, Mr Vajpayee quoted the President's joint address to the two Houses of parliament in which Mr K.R. Narayanan had said that the government's peace initiative had been welcomed by the people of the state as well as supported by the international community. Making an appeal to Pakistan, the PM said, "It is my hope that Pakistan will act, even now, and abjure violence, give up their continuous hostile propaganda against India, stop promoting and aiding cross-border terrorism, take the path of peace through bilateral talks as enshrined in the Simla agreement and the Lahore Declaration, thus creating a conducive atmosphere so that the comprehensive dialogue process can be resumed, resulting in a lasting solution to the problems."

THE TIMES OF INDIA

23 FEB 2001

Ceasefire extended with patience warning to Pak

Forces on alert for subdued offensive

Atal gives peace three months

FROM CHANDAN NANDY

New Delhi, Feb. 22: It will be white flag in one hand and gun in the other.

Away from the limelight of the Kashmir truce extension, security forces have been put on "full combat preparedness" and asked to "go after" terrorists in the embattled state.

The action plan does not mean a return to the "pro-active" days before the Ramzan ceasefire was announced last November. But indications are that by February-end, the Centre is keen to implement a "short-term" strategy for the next three months.

The Centre has prepared a strategy paper which details the role of security forces during the ceasefire. The focus will be on continued anti-infiltration operations along the Line of Control (LoC) and the international border in Jammu and Kashmir as well as protection of minorities, remote settlements and vital installations.

Government sources said the "predominance" of security forces would be restored to a significant extent and they would have a "greater degree of freedom".

The home ministry has called a meeting tomorrow of the operations group, which will review the security scenario for the truce period. Senior North Block and intelligence officials and the army's representatives will attend the session. So will Kashmir home secretary C. Phunsong and director-general of police A.K. Suri.

Intelligence agencies have been asked to provide "specific" and "pin-point" information on the movement of militants and their hideouts. The inputs will be passed on to security forces and smaller units who would "go after" the militants. The army and paramilitary forces have been told to act fast once they are tipped off and in tandem with the police wherever necessary.

"Cordon-and-search" operations, virtually stopped since the ceasefire came into effect, will resume in a limited way, but care will be taken to ensure that common people are not harassed. "As far as possible, all precaution will be taken so that security forces do not take any harsh measures while going about performing counter-insurgency operations," a government official said.

Another aspect of the strategy is a short-term and a long-term plan to tackle infiltration. The army has been told to "take all steps" to prevent violation of the LoC and to shoot anyone carrying weapons.

Sources said infiltration could have increased because of the ceasefire. Statistics show that more civilians have been killed during the ceasefire while the number of militant casualties has come down.

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Feb. 22: Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today gave Pakistan and militants a last chance to talk peace by extending the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir by three months but laced his offer with a stern warning to foreign mercenary groups which have debunked the truce.

"Having examined all aspects of the question in its totality, the government has decided to further extend the period till the end of May. Let this opportunity not be missed by all those that desire peace, for our patience is not infinite," Vajpayee said in the Lok Sabha.

Shaking an iron fist at Pakistan, the Prime Minister asked it to give up its "continuous hostile propaganda against India" and instead create an atmosphere conducive to talks by ending terror export.

Pakistan dismissed the ceasefire as "another attempt to mislead world opinion". Spurred by US President George W. Bush's letter to Pervez Musharraf yesterday, Islamabad said: "There must be world pressure on India to resume dialogue with

Pakistan to solve the issue."

The truce announcement came a day after an all-party meeting endorsed a further extension of the ceasefire, which came into effect on November 22 last year. Foreign minister Jaswant Singh was prevented from making a statement in the Rajya Sabha by members of Left parties and the Rashtriya Janata Dal, who stalled proceedings protesting against

All-Party Hurriyat Conference chairman Abdul Gani Bhat today escaped an attempt on his life during a visit to Tarzoo in northern Baramulla district.

"The timely detection of the bomb tied to my vehicle saved me and nine others," Bhat said.

■ See Page 6

the government's bid to sell Balco.

While extending the ceasefire a third time, the Prime Minister sent a stern warning to Pakistan-based militant outfits that security forces would not allow the people of the state to be sitting ducks and would act "decisively" in tackling terror.

"I wish to make it abundantly clear that the peace process is only for those who wish to benefit

from it. We will not let this process be derailed, diluted or misused. For such organisations or elements who have vowed to disrupt the peace process or intend to continue with violence and killing of innocents in Jammu and Kashmir, my message is unequivocal and clear," Vajpayee said.

"If you inflict injury on any Indian citizen in Jammu and Kashmir or elsewhere or commit any act of violence or terrorism, the security forces have clear instructions to act decisively and defeat such intentions."

Vajpayee, however, waved the olive branch at militant organisations in the Valley and said the Centre was ready to sit at the table with groups which "abjure violence". The offer is a signal to the All-Party Hurriyat Conference that the government is ready to engage with it in the peace initiative.

But the Prime Minister was silent on whether the government would allow the Hurriyat leaders to visit Pakistan to hold talks with militant leaders across the border.

The Hurriyat scoffed at the ceasefire extension, saying the truce would be of no use unless concrete steps are taken to resolve the dispute.

THE TELEGRAPH

23 FEB 2001

Air Force radars didn't detect Pak intruders

Sishir Gupta
New Delhi, February 22

THE DEFENCE Ministry is caught in a bind over the violation of Indian airspace by two Pakistani Mushaq aircraft in the Chamb sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Army swears by the intrusion, but the Air Force, guardian of Indian airspace, doesn't have any record of it.

Last Monday, two Pakistani single-engine, turbo-prop aircraft, flying below 5,000 feet, intruded across the Line of Control (LoC) over the sensitive Chamb-Jorian Sector.

There were two intrusions. The first took place at 2.05 pm.

the second at 2.20 pm. The planes were picked up by the ground troops during the second intrusion and engaged them with machine guns. The intrusion was repulsed, with the Army claiming that one aircraft was hit.

The local troops reported the air-space violation to the area brigade commander. The information went up the Army channels and reached the headquarters in South Block.

The Army brass asked their Air Force counterparts to verify the incident, for it is the protector of Indian air space under the Indian Air Force Act.

Much to the chagrin of Army

officials, the Air Force replied in the negative. This means that the Indian air defence radars along the LoC did not detect the Pakistani intruders.

Senior IAF officer, contacted by *Hindustan Times*, confirmed that the Air Force did not detect the aircraft, as they were flying at "ultra low-levels".

"The planes must have been flying at 100 feet, as the ground troops picked up the aircraft markings," said an Air Force officer.

It seems that the IAF's base air defence centre in Jammu and Kashmir did not pick up the intrusion. This is the nerve centre for all the aerial surveillance radars along the LoC and the

international border.

The centre has a network of low-level and high-level radars at its disposal and has the capacity to theoretically pick up aerial movement even within Pakistan.

While it is the responsibility of air defence artillery to tackle low-flying (below 5,000 feet) hostile objects, the Air Force has the ultimate control of the airspace.

In normal circumstances, as soon as the intruder is picked up by a radar, the BADC within seconds identifies it as friend or foe.

The Indian response depends on the height at which the intruder is flying. In this case,

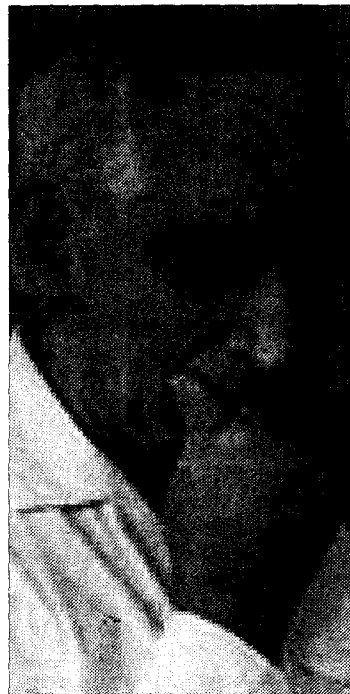
the badc controllers would have asked the air defence artillery guns to bring down the hostile aircraft.

With the Air Force not confirming the ingress, the Army decided to treat the intrusion "locally" and asked the brigade commander to lodge a protest with his Pakistani counterpart. As the matter was treated as a "local intrusion" the Director-General Military Operations perhaps did not raise the matter with his Pakistani counterpart during his routine weekly conversation over the hotline.

However, with Army headquarters confirming the aerial intrusion, India has lodged a protest with Islamabad.

India wants talks with Pak: Jaswant

51-8 2207 Judo Pak



Mr Jaswant Singh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 22. — The external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh in the Rajya Sabha, reiterated India's commitment to resume the composite dialogue with Pakistan, which was put in place at India's initiative.

Mr Singh said there must be an appropriate environment for holding meaningful talks with Pakistan. Pakistan's continued sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India, stepped up following its defeat in Kargil in 1999, has not permitted the creation of such an environment.

The government is of the view that the Simla Agreement and Lahore Declaration remain as the cornerstones of Indo-Pak relations, said Mr Jaswant Singh.

He also mentioned the sympathetic call made by Pakistan's

chief executive Mr Pervez Musharraf to Mr Vajpayee after the Gujarat quake.

Of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, Russia and France have consistently supported India's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded UNSC, said Mr Jaswant Singh.

The minister quoted a US official who had said that India is a serious and strong contender of the UNSC because of its size, role in the world, its economy, its contribution to UN peace-keeping.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary of the UK expressed the same.

Of the ten current non-permanent members in the UNSC, three have indicated their support in favour of India, the minister said.

The minister of state for external affairs Mr Ajit Kumar Panja said the United States has

lifted several sanctions imposed on India after the Pokhran nuclear tests in 1998 though restrictions continue on American support to non-humanitarian lending from international institutions.

Mr Panja said the new US administration was aware of India's position that the sanctions were counter-productive and that they should be lifted.

The new US Secretary of State, Mr Colin Powell, stated during the confirmation hearing before the US Senate Committee on foreign relations that the new administration was engaged in reviewing the sanctions currently in place.

Mr Panja said US President Mr George Bush has expressed a desire to foster a stronger and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries.

On Nepal Mr Panja said ves-

GOVT MAY ALLOW HURRIYAT TEAM TO VISIT PAKISTAN

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 22. — The Hurriyat leaders to visit Pakistan and hold talks with the military regime and militant organisations there following the extension of ceasefire for another three months.

A consensus seems to have emerged to allow three or four Hurriyat leaders to visit Pakistan. It may not come through soon because if they are sent immediately, it would appear as if New Delhi is pushing it in a hurried manner, sources said.

Of the five leaders, selected for the Hurriyat Conference chief for the visit, Syed Ali Shah Geelani (Jamaat-e-Islami) may be dropped from the team.

Mr Geelani, a pro-Pakistan leader, has lately been making controversial statements on the movement being carried out by the rest of the Hurriyat members. A sharp contrast of

views appeared within the APHC recently when Mr Geelani gave a religious colour to the whole issue while others regarded it only as a political one. Mr Geelani is also for independence of Kashmir which is not appreciated by many.

There also seems to be a secret understanding of give-and-take between the Hurriyat and the government. If the Hurriyat drops Mr Geelani from their team, they get a chance to visit Pakistan and win the support of people in Kashmir.

The process for issuing passports to the Hurriyat leaders is expected to start as soon as there is a green signal. Of the five team members, except Mirwaiz Umar Farooq of the Awami Action Committee, none of the others has a passport. Mr Abdul Gani Lone of the People's Conference was issued one for a short period for his son's marriage, but it lapsed recently. Moulvi Abbas Ansari of the Ithad-ul-Mulimeel, Shiekh Abdul Aziz of the People's League and Mr Geelani also don't have passports.

ted interests were responsible for engineering trouble in Nepal and to spoil the relations between two nations.

Mr Panja denied that any files had been missing from the ex-

ternal affairs ministry or that there was any lapse in the security of the ministry.

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THE STATESMAN

Steady traffic on Track-II

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 21. Unlike Track-I, which has remained closed since the February 1999 Lahore busride of the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Track-II diplomacy has proved to be consistent in providing a platform for experts and intellectuals from both the countries to exchange views.

After the Neemrana group that met here earlier this month, it is the now turn of retired military officers from India to come over on a week-long trip for interaction with their Pakistani counterparts.

A group of 21 former Indian military officers headed by Admiral L. Ramdas would be here from February 23. The group would participate in a number of meetings and interactive sessions in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The visit has been organised by the India-Pakistan Soldiers' Initiative for Peace (IPSIP). A group of Pakistan military officers were in India recently on the invitation extended by the Indian chapter of the forum.

The hosts have chalked out a hectic schedule. According to the coordinator of the visit, Brig. (Retd.) Rao Abid Hamid, who is also associated with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan,

rik-I-Istaqlal Chief, Air Marshal (retd.) Asghar Khan.

On February 28 the delegation is to take part in a discussion on 'Impediments in Pakistan-India Relations'. They are also expected to attend a meeting of the Pakistan-India Forum for Peace and Democracy and Pakistan Peace Coalition in Islamabad.

Track-III too

Ms. Tara Bhattacharjee, granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, is another Indian personality currently on a visit to Pakistan. She is associated with non-governmental organisations engaged in promotion of handicrafts and has come here essentially for an interaction with the common people. Her visit could be bracketed in the category of 'Track-III', people-to-people contacts.

Organisers of the Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Development, who had organised a face-to-face with Ms. Bhattacharjee on Tuesday, experienced some anxious moments as a section of the gathering sought to convert it into an official meeting between India and Pakistan to settle the Kashmir dispute.

What must have added to the discomfiture of the organisers is the presence of the Indian High Commissioner here, Mr. Vijay K. Nambiar, on the dais along with the chief guest.

THE HINDU

22 FEB 2001

Bush stresses on Indo-Pak. dialogue

HD-13

By B. Muralidhar Reddy
ISLAMABAD, FEB. 21 The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, in his first official letter to the Pakistan Chief Executive and military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has emphasised the need for dialogue between India and Pakistan for resolution of differences.

The very fact that the Pakistan Foreign Office chose to issue a press statement today highlighting some of the main points made by the U.S. President showed that the military establishment was upbeat over the letter.

The letter handed over to the Chief Executive by the American Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. William B. Milam, was in response to a letter addressed by Gen. Musharraf to Mr. Bush.

There is a perception in Pakistan, though not shared by all, that a Republican Adminis-

tration in Washington would mean that the pronounced pro-India tilt of the U.S., witnessed particularly during the second Clinton tenure, would be a thing of the past.

The statement said Mr. Bush appreciated the long history of cooperation and goodwill between Pakistan and the U.S. and underlined the shared interests of the two countries in a peaceful and stable South Asia.

"He has applauded Pakistan's gesture in sending assistance for earthquake relief to India and expressed pleasure at the direct contact between the Chief Executive and the Indian Prime Minister.

"President Bush has emphasised that dialogue is vital for resolving the differences between the two countries."

On Afghanistan, Mr. Bush expressed the hope that the issues relating to Kabul would be addressed in a positive way. He looked for-

ward to the opportunities ahead for better relations between the U.S. and Pakistan.

The optimism of the Musharraf Government of a turn around in Pakistan-U.S. ties was based on the assumption that Republicans were traditionally more favourable towards Pakistan. Islamabad has had the best of relations with the U.S. with a Republican at the helm of affairs.

Unlike the Democrats, as was evident during the Clinton era, the Republicans would not be 'obsessed' with issues like human rights and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

However, those outside the establishment were not prepared to share the optimism. They felt that the U.S. foreign policy was a continuous process and it made little difference as to who was in charge of the White House.

THE HINDU
THE HINDU

22 FEB 2001

Ceasefire in J&K extended

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, FEB. 21 The Vajpayee Government today decided, as expected, to extend the current ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir, but the formal announcement of the duration, the nature of the extension and other details would be announced by the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in Parliament tomorrow. However, it is believed that the decision is to extend the ceasefire for three months.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security this evening. Besides the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, the National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, the Chief of the Army Staff, General S. Padmanabhan, and various senior officials, associated with security agencies, were present.

After the 80-minute meeting, all that Mr. Advani would say was that the CCS reviewed the situation in the State in "all its aspects." The details of the decision would be first announced in Parliament, he added.

However, it is also learnt that the CCS has decided that notwithstanding the extension of ceasefire, the security forces would be at liberty to carry out "search and seizure" operations, if need be; also, the security forces would be free to conduct targeted attacks against the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed, the two militant outfits that have pointed-



The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, at the all-party meeting on the extension of the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir, in New Delhi on Wednesday. The others in the picture are from left Dr. Manmohan Singh, Ms. Sonia Gandhi (Congress), and Union Ministers Mr. Pramod Mahajan, Mr. L. K. Advani and Mr. George Fernandes. — Photo: V. Sudershan

ly and violently refused to reciprocate the Vajpayee Government's unilateral ceasefire. Also, the security forces would be free to retaliate against any militant group that targets the civilian population.

Endless debate

The options before the Government had been debated in the last few days almost endlessly, and the positions taken by the various members of the CCS was also well known.

Officials had been at pains to point out that it would be wrong to suggest that the Vajpayee Government was divided; different assessments about the pluses and minuses of extension or non-extension of ceasefire did not mean irreconcilable divisions.

The differences have quite a bit to do with the assessment about Pakistan's sincerity in the peace process.

In this context, a major input before the CCS participants has become the steps taken in by the military regime in Islamabad to rein in some of the jihadi groups.

By and large, the initiative for the peace-strategy originated, and has been sustained by the Prime Minister and his senior aides, and to that extent "the ceasefire" remains "Mr. Vajpayee's baby".

Mr. Advani and Mr. Fernandes were sceptical while Mr. Singh was more enthusiastic about the extension, and Mr. Sinha tried to gauge the Prime Minister's mood before taking a position. The Ar-

my had been a vocal advocate of the peace strategy.

'Meaningless exercise'

B. Muralidhar Reddy reports from Islamabad

Pakistan has denounced the extension of the ceasefire beyond February 26 as a 'meaningless exercise aimed at misleading the international community'.

A Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson repeated what the military establishment had been saying ever since the ceasefire was extended for the second time in January 20. The military Government's contention was that 'failure' of New Delhi to respond to its December 2 formulation and the 'continuing of reign of terror and repression' in Kashmir had reduced the ceasefire to a 'farce'.

THE HINDU

22 FEB 2001

22 FEB 2001

Reflections on Pakistan revisited

92-1
2/2

An involuted mindset

I VISITED Pakistan late January last to participate in a conference in which the Islamabad Policy Research Institute and the Delhi Policy Group on Nuclear Risk Reduction participated. Two events occurred during the visit highlighting the contrast between the Indian and Pakistani approaches. India extended the cease-fire for a second time. The apex body of the Pakistan-based terrorist groups rejected it stating that 'Jehad' is the only way to resolve the Kashmir problem.

The Indian delegation had a meeting with the foreign minister of Pakistan, Abdus Sattar, and the foreign secretary, Inamul Haq. It was preceded by an hour-long briefing by the additional secretary in-charge of multilateral affairs of Pakistan's foreign office, Riaz Hussain.

Hussain emphasised that efforts at mutual restraint are rooted in the removal of the basic cause of tension, namely the Kashmir issue. He stressed that nuclear risk reduction cannot be considered in isolation as a separate issue affecting regional security. When the Indian side pointed out that the rise of nuclear confrontation is a more dangerous phenomenon than Pakistan viewing the Kashmir issue as a territorial dispute, Hussain indulged in a colourful simile. He said both India and Pakistan know that the water in the well of mutual peace is dirty and poisoned. Just drawing out the dirty water will not result in the well being cleaned because there is a dead dog in the well. The dead dog is the Kashmir dispute. Unless we take out the dead dog and dispose of it, we cannot hope for fresh water in the well.

The Indian side could have responded to this bizarre simile by pointing out that it is Pakistan which killed the dog and put it in the well, when it invaded Kashmir in 1948. But we did not, because the argument would not have led anywhere. A political point made in this briefing was that Pakistan considers nuclear risk reduction intrinsically linked with its views on Kashmir and thus an affirmation that Pakistan's nu-

clear weaponisation in one dimension is an instrumentality to further its Kashmir policies.

The Indian side presented structured and written papers on three aspects of nuclear risk reduction; one on the political and strategic context in which Indo-Pakistan confidence-building measures have evolved since 1989. The second paper was on possible technical proposals and measures which both sides could adopt to reduce the prospects of nuclear confrontation or accidental nuclear conflict. The third paper was on whether the contradictions between the Indian nuclear doctrine and the Pakistani nuclear doctrine could be reconciled, given the Pakistani doctrine of retaining the

strike may obliterate India's capacity for a second nuclear strike. Alternatively, India's no-first-use approach is a public relations exercise and in a conflict situation what is there to prevent India from indulging in first strike?

The meetings at the other academic institutes were even more revealing. In discussions on developments in Afghanistan and its fallout on the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, Pakistani academics justified Taliban's policies and objectives. The Indian apprehension about Taliban exporting or conniving at cross-border terrorism in J&K and in the Central Asian Republics was rejected with the assertion that Taliban was not involved in such

pan-Islamic movements and Islamic religious resurgence in the world. Indian advocacies that Jehad in the religious sense is different from militant separatist terrorism and violence was polemically rejected.

When these discussions meandered into the ups and downs of Indo-Pakistan relations, the Director of the Institute of Strategic Studies justified the Pakistani intrusion into Kargil in 1999, stating that India should evaluate the intrusion in contextual terms because Pakistani moves in Kargil were justified as a retaliation to India's violation of the Line of Control at Siachen in 1984. An additional point was made that Pakistan would not have withdrawn from Kargil but for the US pressure.

The comparative analysis of the experience in nation-building and building of institutions of state at the foreign service academy was remarkable because the Pakistani participants questioned the credibility of India's democracy and India's secularism citing the contradictions of Indian civil society in terms of treatment of minorities, the caste system, the fragmentation of political parties, the rise of Hindu religious extremism in India etc. In contrast, discussions with Foreign Minister Abdus Sattar and his colleagues were of comparative relief to the Indian delegation. Sattar affirmed Pakistan's desire to restore a dialogue with India.

The overall impression one came away with can be summed up as follows: There is no intense anxiety among the Pakistan elite to restore democracy. There seems to be a widespread belief in these circles that India is getting exhausted in Kashmir and that it will not be able to hold on to Kashmir for long and, therefore, political and militant pressure should be continued on India. While there is an awareness about dangers of nuclear confrontation, there is a parallel feeling that the threat of such confrontation will become an incremental pressure on India on the Kashmir issue.



J.N. DIXIT

The views expressed by the Pakistani academics left one wondering about the vigour of conviction of orthodoxy which influenced their thought processes

option of first strike and the Indian doctrine of no-first-use of its nuclear weapons. The Indian presentations focussed on this specific issue.

The Pakistani delegation, in contrast, did not present any written paper. While the Indian approach was technical and focussed, the Pakistani presentation consisted of broader political perspectives from Pakistan's point of view. It was interesting to note that in these intellectual exchanges the Pakistani side reflected the approach outlined to us in the foreign office briefing. They emphasised with greater vigour that nuclear risk reduction is dependent on and intrinsically linked with Kashmir.

The Pakistan delegation emphasised that India's no-first-use doctrine and its abjuring the option of the first strike have no meaning because a Pakistani first

activities. It was a flat denial. As far as Taliban's extremist domestic policies is concerned, the Pakistani view was that external criticism was misinformed and was based on deliberate misrepresentations. That such views were expressed by Pakistani academics who have had exposure to foreign universities and media, left one wondering about the vigour of conviction of the orthodoxy that influenced their thought processes.

The Pakistani academia at the strategic institute proceeded to argue at great length that the world at large and India in particular is deliberately labelling the intensively spiritual and religious phenomenon of 'Jehad' to malign Pakistan. This argument was further expanded with the assertion that the international community led by the US is deliberate in its opposition to the rise of

INDIAN EXPRESS

21 FEB 2001

PM may defy BJP to extend J&K ceasefire

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 20 FEBRUARY

DESPITE GROWING attacks on civilians by Pakistan-sponsored militant outfits and a perceptible meltdown of goodwill for the peace initiative in the border state, the prime ministerial establishment has almost made up its mind to extend the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) will be preceded by a meeting of the NDA. The exercise is aimed at securing the endorsement of the allies for the government's moves. Sources in the government said the ceasefire statement will highlight that action against militant outfits in

Kashmir will be intensified.

In the event of the Prime Minister extending the ceasefire, he will be conclusively rejecting his party, the BJP's, demand for a relook at the ceasefire initiative. The "strategic thinkers" in the Vajpayee establishment are of the view that the recent happenings in the Valley — spiralling of violence and the heightened unrest against the state administration and the security forces — should not be allowed to distract New Delhi from the peace initiative. According to them, the diplomatic cost far outweighed political cost.

Although these familiar arguments have so far not resulted in any tangible benefits and the Pakistani establishment has made little effort to rein in the jihadi elements, the strategists of the PMO are still hopeful that the ceasefire gamble will pay off.

These voices in the government have been successful in drowning even genuine doubts among the security agencies about the efficacy of the exercise. According to the security agencies, including the Jammu and Kashmir police, the ceasefire has been helping Pakistan to repair its border roads and bunkers and aid the militant elements to get a toehold in various parts of the state.



BACK TO NORMAL: Traders resume business after the five-day curfew was lifted in Srinagar on Tuesday. — AFP

Hurriyat, JKDFP leaders released

Srinagar
20 FEBRUARY

FIVE TOP Hurriyat Conference leaders, detained and placed under house arrest over the weekend, were released late on Monday night, while Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP) chief Shabir Ahmad Shah and his six colleagues, arrested for violating curfew restriction on Saturday, were let off on Friday.

JKLF chairman Mohammad Yaseen Malik, his deputy Javid Ahmad Mir and Ghulam Mohammad Hubby of People's Conference, detained on Sunday, were released from Kothibagh Police Station on Monday night, official sources said.

They said restrictions imposed on the movement of Hurriyat Chairman Abdul Gani Bhat and his predecessor Syed Ali Shah Geelani were also lifted late on Monday night. The two leaders were placed under house arrest on Saturday evening.

All the Hurriyat leaders left for Haigam and Sonawari to express condolences to the family members of those killed in Haigam firing, Hurriyat sources said.

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The Economic Times

21 FEB 2001

Need for a longer ceasefire

July 2001 HD-12 By V. R. Raghavan 2/2

A three-month extension of the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir will achieve India's larger interests better than a monthly dose of scepticism.

THERE IS talk of whether the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir should be extended once again. Some good reasons can be always be advanced for terminating it. There are however stronger reasons and greater benefits to be had from continuing with it. It has been arguably the most original among the many initiatives by the BJP-led Government in New Delhi on Jammu and Kashmir. It is also part of a larger and well-thought-out plan to provide the needed assurance from New Delhi of its commitment to a peace process in the troubled State. Unfortunately, the focus has been allowed to remain on the ceasefire as a product rather than on the process of bringing about a change in the people's outlook in the State. The ceasefire is in the risk of being made into an issue in itself, instead of remaining an instrument to energise the momentum for peace. What is needed now is boldness in building the peace constituency in Jammu and Kashmir.

The two ceasefires from Ramzan have demonstrated new facets of the Jammu and Kashmir situation that had been pushed out of reckoning by the mainly foreign-led militancy. The people's voice and their need had gone out of consideration in the Government's overwhelming preoccupation with defensive and offensive security operations. The people's need for respite from a decade-long security-driven existence had been forgotten. Those who clamour for an end to the ceasefire are the segments in the governing circles whose arbitrary role in security management is circumscribed by the ceasefire. The recent attack on the police control room would have occurred even without a ceasefire. It was a consequence of a failure of the intelligence network of the Government in Srinagar. It was also in large measure due to laxity and carelessness in the security measures which allowed the militants to get into the control room. If the militant attack at the gates of the Srinagar airport could be anticipated and foiled, the one at police control room should have been foreseen. If it could not be anticipated, the security drills and procedures at the control room

should have met the requirements. In the event, the militants were killed, even as the police team in the control room took some casualties. That applies equally to the reprehensible killings of the Sikhs. That is hardly reason to demand that the ceasefire be called off.

The impact of ceasefire needs to be judged in the larger context of the need to create conditions for a wide-ranging involvement of the people of Jammu and Kashmir in the peace process. The process is currently dominated by the postures being adopted by three elements. The first is Dr. Farooq Abdullah's Government which views the ceasefire in the narrow sense of not having alibis for security failures of the kind mentioned above. The ceasefire cannot be allowed to become an alibi for failures of effective governance. The second element is the Hurriyat Conference, which is itself trying to cope with the fallout of the ceasefire. It is under pressure from the people who seek constructive action to bring peace first, rather than a solution to the status of the State. The third element are the Pakistan-based militants who refuse to accept the ceasefire. They find the positive public upsurge consequent to the ceasefire detrimental to their agenda of involving Pakistan in the matter. On the political front, the Hurriyat is unable to decide who amongst its hierarchy should proceed to Pakistan. The recent demand to replace the hardliner, Mr. Geelani, in the Hurriyat establishment with someone else is a consequence of the ceasefire. The burden of demonstrating flexibility in the light of the ceasefire is now being felt by the Hurriyat.

When this writer was in Islamabad in January, the militant organisations there were talked to by Pakistan's Home Minister. He tried to advise them against bearing arms in public and was nearly shouted down. Recently he has gone on record that the Government will act firm-

ly if they continue to carry arms in contravention of the law. This is admittedly a tentative but a first step towards demonstrating a measure of confidence in dealing with the militant organisations which dominate the public scene in Pakistan. It is yet nowhere near what New Delhi has rightly asked the Musharraf Government to do, to prove its credentials for a dialogue on Jammu and Kashmir. Yet, this development is not unconnected with the ceasefire. India's ceasefire is a political initiative to build a peace constituency on Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan's responses have entirely been in military terms. It offered to exercise maximum restraint on the Line of Actual Control and it offered to pull back some forces from it. Pakistan is under pressure to demonstrate the will to take political initiatives on Kashmir. That can only be in its ability to control the militant organisations operating from its soil. As is well known, General Musharraf's ability to come forward with peace initiatives rests largely on the consensus he can build among his Corps Commanders. The ceasefire, and the positive international response to it, has a bearing on that.

The Hurriyat's visit to Pakistan will before long come into some prominence. It would be counter-productive to link the ceasefire to the Hurriyat's actions or needs. The ceasefire is a definitive measure brought into effect by the Government on considerations of its policy needs. It has involved the people in the peace process, for the first time in years. It has forced the Hurriyat, the militants and Pakistan to respond. It has built a consensus on working the Jammu and Kashmir issue by creating a political environment which is free from terrorist violence. There is progress in that intended direction. In fact, more has happened since the ceasefire than in a very long while before it. The Government's ceasefire policy cannot be driven by bomb

blasts or attacks on security forces. Attacks on innocent citizens or on communal lines by the militants increasingly show them up to be against the people's interests and against peace. Militant organisations can do no more than carry out such attacks with or without a ceasefire.

The Government is placing itself under avoidable pressure by extending the ceasefire one month at a time. It comes under avoidable pressure every three weeks on the question of extending it. The extension also gets linked to every militant action in the weeks before the extension, which gives the militants an advantage they do not deserve. The linkage of the ceasefire to Pakistan's or the militants' actions needs to be avoided. It can be best done by demonstrating that ceasefire is a policy instrument on which New Delhi retains exclusive control. International responses to Indian initiatives on Jammu and Kashmir have been positive. They would, however, depend largely in the future on the posture the Bush administration takes in the weeks and months to come. Washington has taken a stand on the killing and counter-killing between Israel and the Palestinians. The outlook on Jammu and Kashmir will also become clear before long. While there is unlikely to be a major change in U.S. policy, Indian actions will play a part in that outcome. These factors should also influence the decision about extending the ceasefire.

The ceasefire is proving a success over a range of developments connected with Jammu and Kashmir. It has brought about a set of responses in domestic and external terms which are to India's advantage. It would, therefore, be useful to invest in the ceasefire on a long term basis. The Government can free itself of the burden of responding to the needs of extending the ceasefire every month. All that is needed is to be bold on a courageous set of actions already taken. India's interests can only be better served by a longer ceasefire. A three-month extension of the ceasefire would achieve those larger interests better than a monthly dose of scepticism.

THE HINDU

21 FEB 2001

9/2/2001
HD-1 2/2

India protests intrusion by Pak. aircraft

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 20. India today protested the intrusion of its airspace by two Pakistani reconnaissance aircraft while the Foreign Office indicated that a formal complaint would soon be lodged at the diplomatic level. "Pakistan's claim is totally baseless as its aircraft strayed across the Line of Control," said a Foreign Office spokesperson. The formal protest could be lodged either by summoning the Pakistani High Commissioner to the Foreign Office here, or by his Indian counterpart in Islamabad, he added.

The Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, is scheduled to make a statement in Parliament on the intrusion of Indian air space in the sensitive Chhamb sector of Jammu and Kashmir. Mr. Fernandes avoided reacting to queries from newsmen after Parliament had adjourned in memory of the CPI leader, Mr. Indrajit Gupta.

The Defence Minister reasoned that he would prefer making a formal statement in Parliament and replying to clarifications in the Rajya Sabha if the need arose.

Meanwhile, Defence Ministry sources said a routine protest was lodged on behalf of the armed forces, by the sector commander of the Chhamb area, with his counterpart in the Pakistan Rangers.

'Plane was not hit'

By Our Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 20. Pakistan today reiterated its claim that there was no intrusion by its aircraft into Indian territory on Monday and refuted New Delhi's charge that the aircraft were forced to return to Pakistan airspace after Indian troops fired at them in the Chhamb sector of Kashmir.

A Foreign Office spokesman reiterated said the two single-engine planes, on a routine training mission, were well within Pakistani territory. "We checked with our radar section and found the aircraft were within Pakistani territory.

The statement of Indian military authorities that one of the aircraft was hit by fire from the Indian ground troops is not correct," he said.

THE HINDU

21 FEB 2001

2 Pak planes violate Indian airspace

HT Correspondent
Jammu, February 19

TWO PAKISTANI military planes today violated Indian airspace in the Chamb sector along the line of control (LoC), provoking Indian ground troops to open fire.

One of the planes, an air observation fixed-wing aircraft 'Mushaq', was reportedly hit and fell in Pakistani territory. However, the Army did not confirm this. There were two intrusions. The first took place at 2.05 pm and the other at 2.20 pm. It was during the second intrusion that the Indian ground troops opened fire, forcing the Pakistani planes to retreat, sources said.

India will lodge a protest with Pakistan over the air space intrusion. "This is a clear violation of

our airspace," the sources said.

Since the origin of the Pakistani planes has been traced to the Muralla base, about eight km from the LoC, Army sources said it appeared to be a deliberate attempt by the Pakistan Army to cause tension along the border.

This is the first known Indian airspace violation by a Pakistani military aircraft in over a year. Indian Air Force jets had shot down a Pakistani Navy reconnaissance aircraft, the Atlantique, in the Kutch sector of Gujarat shortly after the 1999 Kargil conflict. The entire 16-member crew was killed. The Mushaq is a reconnaissance aircraft that is used by the Pakistan Army to direct artillery fire.

Pakistani troops opened fire on Indian positions in the Rajouri sector on Sunday night.

Decision on J&K truce tomorrow

New Delhi, February 19

A CRUCIAL meeting of Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) affairs, which was put off on Sunday at the last minute, is likely to be held on Wednesday to decide whether to extend the cease-fire in Jammu and Kashmir beyond the February 26 deadline, official sources said.

The meeting, which will be chaired by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, will take into account the recent terrorist killings of innocent people in the state while taking a decision on this sensitive issue, sources said.

It is expected to be attended by Home Minister L K Advani, Defence Minister George Fernandes, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha and Brajesh Mishra among others.

(PTI)

20 FEB 2001

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

One may have been hit

Pak planes chased out after LoC violation

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STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 19 — Two Pakistani army planes today crossed the Line of Control in the Chhamb sector of Jammu & Kashmir. They were engaged by Indian troops with ground fire and chased away. One of the planes appeared to have been hit, defence sources here said.

The two Mushaq fixed-wing aircraft (the Army stressed that they were not unmanned aerial vehicles) were spotted by the troops on the Indian side of LoC around 2.15 p.m. They were flying low and the troops engaged them with medium machine guns, forcing them to return across the LoC. Chhamb is about 70 km from Jammu.

The aircraft, apparently hit by the ground fire, may have crashed or force-landed, according to information available here. Search parties had been sent out to check if the plane, or possibly its wreckage, had fallen on the Indian side.

It was, however, more likely that the plane would have crossed the LoC before going down (if indeed it did go down), defence sources said, pointing out that the two planes did turn away towards their side of the LoC after coming under fire.

The Army said it would lodge a protest against the intrusion into Indian air space with its Pakistani counterpart through military channels.

Since the Mushaq is a slow-speed, low-flying, piston-engine aeroplane which can serve as an observation platform, the two aircraft are suspected to have been on a reconnaissance mission.

However, the Mushaqs are also used as basic trainers, and it is possible that they were on a training sortie and strayed across the LoC.

This is the first reported violation of Indian air space by Pakistani military aircraft since the Ramzan ceasefire in Jammu & Kashmir to which Pakistan had responded by asking its troops on the LoC to exercise "maximum restraint."

There has been no other "unusual" air activity in the vicinity of the frontier after this afternoon's incident, the defence sources said.

India and Pakistan have a formal agreement by which they inform each other when their military aircraft operate close to the frontier. There are restrictions on how close to the frontier they can fly in the absence of such prior information. The defence sources said no such information had been conveyed about this afternoon's flights.

A few months after the Kargil conflict, an Atlantique maritime reconnaissance aircraft of the Pakistan navy had been shot down by IAF fighters after it violated Indian air space in the Kutch sector. While India maintained that the Atlantique had been on a "military mission," Pakistan had insisted that it was on a training sortie. Pakistan had, unsuccessfully, sought to secure compensation from India by raising the matter at the International Court of Justice at the Hague.

While defence sources did not deem the incident a "major" one from the military angle, yet another Indo-Pak row could complicate the situation.

THE STATESMAN

20 FEB 2002

HID-1
20/2

Pak. planes violate airspace, repulsed

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 19. India today repulsed an intrusion by two Pakistani aircraft in the Chhamb sector, north-west of Jammu. Two Mushaq aircraft, which double up for Pakistan as trainers and platforms for directing artillery fire, carried out the intrusion. The Indian Army retaliated by firing at the intruders. One of the planes, flying at an estimated height of 300 ft, was apparently hit and a search has been launched to salvage any possible wreckage. The other plane sneaked back into Pakistani air space. A protest has been lodged with Pakistan.

The intrusion might not have been accidental, sources said. The planes first crossed the Munwar Tavi river and then the Marla Head Works on the Chenab river. They are both clearly visible from air. However, the choice of the unarmed Mushaq is intriguing. While the air-base from which Pakistan launched these planes has not been identified, it is

possible that the forward airfield of Chander could have been used. Chander is about 100 km from Jammu in the Shakargarh Bulge. The launch could have also taken place from the Murid air-base which is about 185 km from Jammu.

Charge denied

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 19. Pakistan today described as 'baseless,' allegations made by India that two of its military aircraft that had intruded into the Indian airspace were forced to turn back. A Foreign Office spokesman maintained here that the two single-engine Turbo Mushaq training aircraft were on a routine training mission well within Pakistani territory. "We checked with our radar section and found that the aircraft were within Pakistani territory."

Prospects for talks dim: Page 13

Pakistani barbarism in jihad garb: President

HT Correspondent

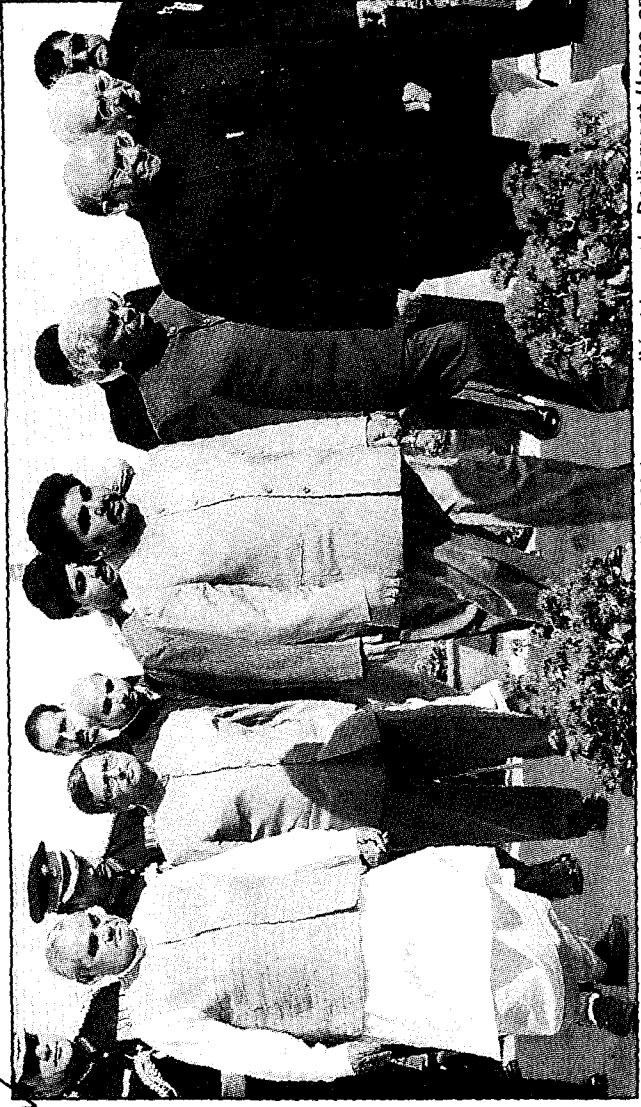
New Delhi, February 19

PRESIDENT K. R. Narayanan's address to Parliament today reflected the government's annoyance with Pakistan for "acts of barbarism in the garb of jihad" despite India's unilateral cease-fire to show its sincere commitment to a peaceful and permanent solution to the Kashmir issue.

"It is a matter of deep distress and concern to all of us that Pakistan has not reciprocated India's sincerity," the President told the members of Parliament at a special sitting to mark the opening day of the Budget Session.

Mr Narayanan said: "There has been no let up in, much less an end to, cross-border terrorism and vicious anti-India propaganda, originating from Pakistani soil. Many innocent lives continue to be lost every day to acts of barbarism by those who cloak them in the garb of jihad."

Stating that Pakistan bears the responsibility for these acts against humanity "which are a travesty of religion," the President said Islamabad's protestations about its



President K. R. Narayanan and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee walking towards Parliament House on the opening day of the Budget Session on Monday. Photo: Prakash Singh

working under trying circumstances and the nation appreciated their determination and sacrifice.

Since militancy in J&K is now increasingly confined to foreign mercenary groups, the scope for democratic activity has widened, Mr Narayanan said. "The people of the State participated enthusiastically in the recent Panchayat elections. I reiterate the government's readiness to have talks with every group in the State that abjures violence."

"Should Pakistan create an atmosphere conducive for meaningful talks, India will be more than ready to resume the dialogue process," the President said, adding that action against terrorist organisations would continue relentlessly. The President described the Prime Minister's Ramzan cease-fire, which is due to end on February 26 unless extended, as a "major peace mission" and a "bold initiative."

Conveying condolences to the families bereaved in Gujarat's quake, the President announced that the government would consider setting up a permanent National Disaster Management Authority, with suitable statutory authorities in the State, after a national committee under the Prime Minister came out with its recommendations.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 FEB 2001

A tal admits ceasefire setback

OUR BUREAU

Feb. 17: A day before the Cabinet Committee on Security meeting to decide on extending the ceasefire in Kashmir, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today acknowledged that the truce had not had its "desired" effect.

"The ceasefire did not have the desired result because terrorist violence did not stop. This was what we had wanted. Instead, some of the recent militant attacks in the Valley are now the cause for real concern," Vajpayee told reporters here.

He indicated that he would not insist on continuation of the ceasefire and left the decision to the Cabinet Committee on Security. "It will now have to be a collective decision," he said.

The Prime Minister, however, defended his decision to declare the truce. "It was a right decision as we had wanted to start the peace process. We had expected terrorist attacks to stop, but that did not happen," Vajpayee said.

He ruled out talks with Pakistan because of its continuing support to militants. "The atmosphere is not conducive to talks. Terrorism and talks do not go together."

Vajpayee's tough-talk coincided

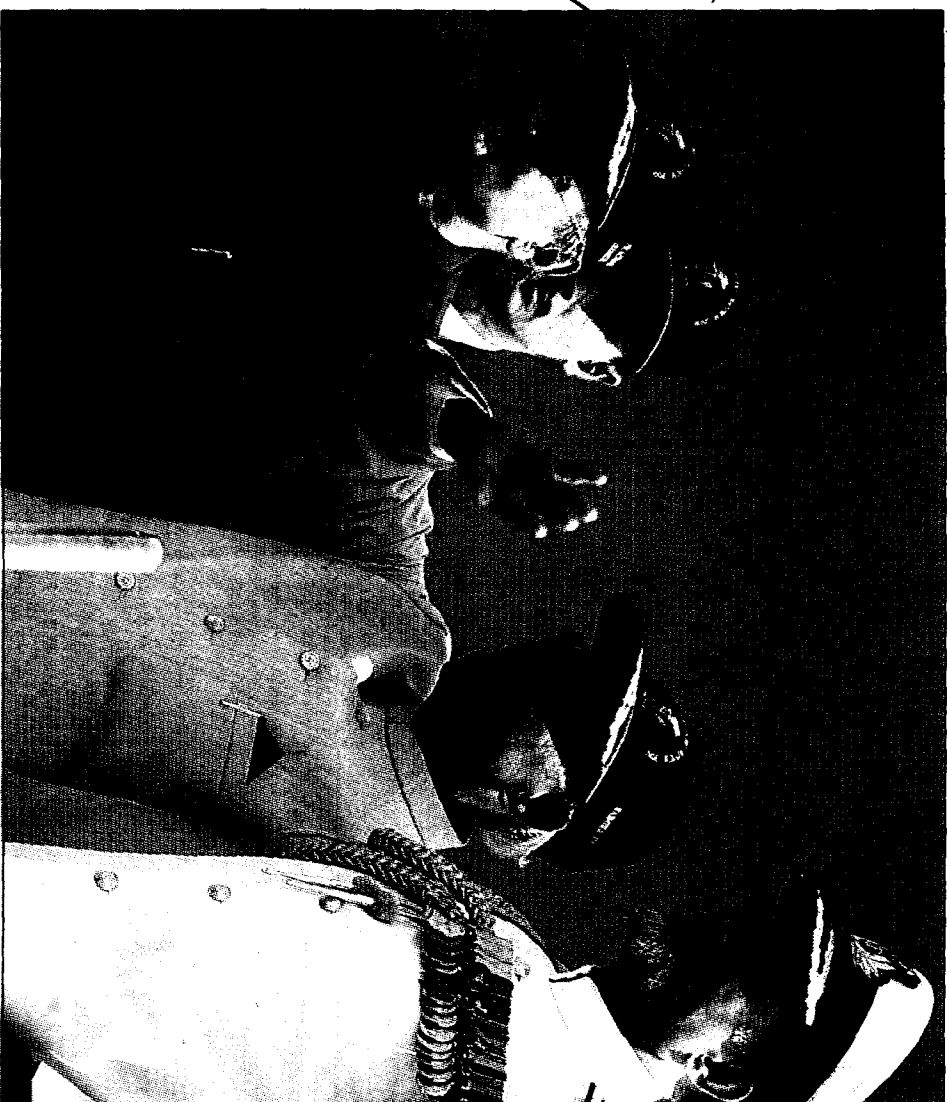
with muscle-flexing from across the border with the Hizbul Mujahideen threatening to target families of Indian troops in retaliation against the deaths of civilians. "We may take the unpleasant step of targeting the families of Indian troops if they do not stop killing civilians in our homeland," Hizbul leader Syed Salahuddin said.

He was reacting to the killing of four persons at Hygam when the army fired on demonstrators protesting against the custodial death of a person. Violence continued to rock the Valley today. (See Page 6)

The NDA sent out mixed signals on the truce extension. While the BJP counselled caution and hinted that it was not in favour of an extension, Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah spoke in favour of renewing the truce. However, he added, the situation in the state should be taken into account.

Pointing to the spate of violence in the Valley, a senior BJP leader asked: "If the ceasefire is extended, will the killings stop? The BJP will be disappointed with its continuance."

The BJP's main worry is that if the ceasefire is reinforced, the US could insist on playing a greater role. A source explained:



AB Vajpayee and KR Narayanan at the International Fleet Review with navy chief Sushil Kumar. (AFP)

"A chance meeting between Vajpayee and Pervez Musharraf may take place around the time the Saarc summit is held. If the ceasefire is extended now, the Bush administration will start pressuring the two countries to hold a dialogue right away."

The Sangh parivar seems worked up about the possibility of direct US intervention after the change of guard in Washington. As a BJP veteran put it, "Those who are in favour of extending the ceasefire feel it will earn diplomatic points. But on the other hand, can we ignore the ground realities of the disadvantages suffered by our security forces in the Valley?"

A section in the BJP fears that if Vajpayee persists with his uni-

lateral peace gestures without Pakistan reciprocating in kind, the party's hawkish stand on "national sovereignty and security" would be diluted.

The BJP's official reaction was one of circumspection. Party vice-president Jana Krishnamurthy advised the Cabinet committee to ask itself whether violence will increase if the ceasefire is not renewed. Conversely, he asked whether India would risk the danger of frittering away the gains if it was not extended.

QUOTE

Terrorism and talks do not go together

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE

Ceasefire may be extended today

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 17. — The need to placate Kashmiris after the recent deaths by security forces' bullets, and the hope of seizing the diplomatic upper hand again, are likely to push the J&K ceasefire beyond 26 February.

The Cabinet Committee on Security meets here tomorrow to decide on the subject, and indications are that the Prime Minister will be able to get colleagues to see things his way.

Mr Vajpayee is likely to tell his home, defence, external affairs and finance ministers that extending the truce will let New Delhi score diplomatic points off Islamabad, convincing the world that no sacrifice is too big for India when the objective is a peaceful solution to the Kashmir dispute.

In Mumbai today, the Prime

Minister pursued just this line of reasoning as he defended the ceasefire. Pakistan, he said, has failed to contain the terrorists and to that extent the ceasefire has not achieved results. Yet, the truce has benefited the people of the valley. "The people are heaving a sigh of relief. It has strengthened the forces of peace."

But he said his statement didn't necessarily mean he favoured extension. It's up to the Cabinet committee to make a decision.

But many Sangh Parivar leaders are against an extension, sniffing in it a snare that could bring international pressure to begin unconditional talks with Pakistan. For, an extension without concrete results could imply that India is satisfied with the situation. World opinion could then pressure the government to drop its no-talks-till-terror-ends stand

and begin a dialogue with Pakistan, a senior BJP leader said.

The RSS feels the Centre should stop experiments in the valley and ask security forces to nab or wipe out terrorists.

However, Mr Vajpayee, who today stressed that "terrorism and dialogue don't go together", might argue before colleagues tomorrow that it's Pakistan which has been forced to bend to world opinion so far. He might cite Gen. Musharraf's recent statements and his interior minister, Mr Haidar's warning to jihadis to stop funding 'holy wars'.

The Prime Minister will have noted the support that came from an unexpected quarter today. Mr Farooq Abdullah told reporters in Jammu that he favoured a ceasefire extension.

■ More reports on page 7

THE STATESMAN

18 FEB 2001

Abdullah for ceasefire extension

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Feb. 17. - Dr Farooq Abdullah today favoured extension in the unilateral ceasefire, but added the internal situation in the state has to be taken into consideration while taking a decision on it.

The Jammu and Kashmir chief minister regretted that the killing of civilians continued during the ceasefire saying, "These have in fact, increased, which is evident from the available statistics".

Dr Abdullah was talking to media persons in the Assembly lobby here this morning after casting his vote in the elections for seven seats to the Legislative Council.

On the ceasefire, he said on the one hand it is being argued by some to extend it and on the other the so-called leaders wanting to talk about peace perpetrate violence. He advised them to prevail upon their supporters to maintain peace and not to disturb it because it only aggravates the problems of the people.

When a correspondent drew the attention of the chief minister to the dubious role of the Hurriyat and JKLF leaders for resorting to violence and talking about peace at the same time, he said they have always been doing so.

He charged them for not being sincere either to themselves or to the people of the state.

THE STATESMAN

18 FEB 2001

Towards a Vajpayee-Musharraf meeting

By C. Raja Mohan

If India wants to move the peace process with Pakistan forward, it makes eminent sense to begin at the top.

GEN. PERVEZ MUSHARRAF has once again expressed his desire to come to India to restart the stalled dialogue between the two nations. In a recent interview to *Newsweek*, an American weekly, the Pakistani Chief Executive said: "I am prepared to go to Delhi for talks if invited by the Indian Government... But I will go only if I have a formal invitation."

Gen. Musharraf's keenness to visit the Indian capital is in sharp contrast to the reserve that the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, was trying to convey to a group of Indian participants in a Track II initiative last week. Mr. Sattar suggested that Pakistan was not going to beg for talks with India. If India does not want to talk with Pakistan, Islamabad can take it in its stride. The open expression of the desire to visit India by Gen. Musharraf just a few days later says something else. The General, buffeted by many competing pressures at home and abroad, may see an opening with India at the highest political level as an important lever to shore up his own uncomfortable position.

Should India engage Gen. Musharraf? If India wants to move the peace process with Pakistan forward, it makes eminent sense to begin at the top. A bottom-up approach starting with senior officials and moving through the Ministerial level to the heads of Government does not offer much hope of progress. At this moment, the need is for some creative diplomacy, and it is a bit much to expect bureaucrats to be innovative. Only a face-to-face meeting between Mr. Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf can kick-start the Indo-Pakistan dialogue.

When should India talk to Gen. Musharraf? The longer the meeting between the two leaders is delayed, the greater are the chances that it will never take place. In both countries, resistance to a new engagement with the other is building up. In Pakistan, there is an influential segment of opinion which argues that India is bleeding from its wounds in Kashmir, and that a little more effort will force it to back down further. There is already a *sotto voce*

campaign against Gen. Musharraf that he is trying to engage India under pressure. There is also some criticism of Gen. Musharraf for allegedly giving up Pakistan's past preference for resolving the issue under the U.N. resolutions.

In India, there are many in the establishment who are suggesting that the Government is giving away its long-standing diplomatic positions on Kashmir and is getting very little in return. Every incident of violence in the valley strengthens those who are sceptical of Pakistan's intentions. The initial extensive domestic political support to Mr. Vajpayee's Ramzan ceasefire initiative is beginning to fray. If New Delhi and Islamabad allow the 'Jehadi' groups, who are opposed to any negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute, to set the agenda, it is only a matter of time before India finds it difficult to further extend the ceasefire. The gains in Kashmir over the recent weeks are fragile and it is entirely possible that the peace process could easily collapse.

What is holding up a possible meeting between Mr. Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf? Mixed signals from Pakistan on Gen. Musharraf's willingness or ability to crack down on the 'Jehadi' groups have become the principal obstacle to an early summit and the launching of a peace process between the two nations. Pakistan's reluctance to immediately and unambiguously condemn the attacks by militants on the Red Fort and the threats against the Indian Prime Minister, have raised questions in India about Gen. Musharraf's intentions and capabilities.

Mr. Vajpayee had hinted in his Musings from Kumarakom that he was prepared to meet Gen. Musharraf, but only under appropriate circumstances. Mr. Vajpayee has demanded "sufficient proof of preparedness" on the part of Pakistan to rein in the militant groups. Note that Mr. Vaj-

payee was not asking Gen. Musharraf to bring down the violence in the Valley to zero. He is only asking Gen. Musharraf to demonstrate that he has the political will and capacity to confront the 'Jehadi' groups head-on. Mr. Vajpayee cannot be expected to begin a dialogue, when the other party is free to engage in violence.

Pakistan's formal response is that violence will come down only when India begins the talks. But there is a sub-text to the Pakistan position with two distinct propositions: on willingness and on capability. First, most Pakistanis say India did not negotiate with Pakistan when things were quiet in Kashmir. And if Pakistan gives up the pressure through the militant groups, India may have little "incentive" to talk on Kashmir. Second, many Pakistanis argue that Gen. Musharraf needs some political cover before he can crack down on the militant groups. And that India needs to do more in Kashmir to give him the space to get the 'Jehadis' to end violence.

The Indo-Pakistan peace process today has been stalled by differences over the nature of the relationship between violence in the Valley and the initiation of talks. Which comes first, an end to terrorism or the talks themselves? The deadlock can only be broken by some clear and credible communication between the two sides over the next few days. This can be done either by a series of formal statements by the two Governments or by opening up channels of communication that can clearly convey the expectations and commitments on both sides.

An early decision by New Delhi to let the Hurriyat leaders go to Pakistan will help remove the misperceptions in Islamabad that India is back-tracking. The latest signals from the Hurriyat have been positive and India has very little to lose by allowing its leaders to engage with the

broad spectrum of opinion in Pakistan. India can publicly and privately convey that it is ready to receive Gen. Musharraf in New Delhi provided he shows the willingness and capacity to take on the militant groups. The onus, India must make it clear, of making the summit happen is on Gen. Musharraf. It will also be useful if India can make explicit what Mr. Vajpayee means by "sufficient proof of preparedness" on the part of Gen. Musharraf to rein in the militants. Pakistan would want to know at what point India would be convinced of Gen. Musharraf's sincerity.

On the Indian side, there is no doubt that it has put the Kashmir dispute at the front and centre in the proposed dialogue with Pakistan. In his musings, Mr. Vajpayee has talked about his commitment to a lasting solution to the dispute and his willingness to go off the beaten track in the effort to find one. A sharper formulation of India's readiness for a sustained and purposeful negotiation on Kashmir and its direct communication to Pakistan should be of considerable value to Gen. Musharraf.

Pakistan too must take steps to boost the peace process. Gen. Musharraf needs to end Pakistan's ambiguity on the Shimla and Lahore agreements. A clear public endorsement of the two accords by Islamabad is essential to gain confidence in New Delhi. Talks with Pakistan will have little credibility in India unless there is a visible effort by Gen. Musharraf to control violence in Kashmir. Unambiguous condemnation of specific incidents of terrorism is necessary on the part of Pakistan. Equally important would be a credible commitment to control a scourge that is threatening not just India but peace and stability in Pakistan itself.

A series of sequential and reciprocal steps by the two sides over the next few days could help build trust and facilitate an early meeting in Delhi between Mr. Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf. Diplomacy must be given a full chance before India decides it is no longer worthwhile to extend the ceasefire when it comes to an end later this month.

THE HINDU

1. 11. 11

Hurriyat reveals Pak tour agenda

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR, Feb. 12. — The Hurriyat Conference today said the delegation to Pakistan would try to turn the unilateral ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir into a two-way traffic and make the peace process "result-oriented" even as alert guards thwarted a *fidayeen* attack on a special operations group (SOG) camp at Safapora, north Kashmir this evening, killing a militant.

This was the third *fidayeen* attack in the Valley in one month but the SOG did not suffer any casualties. Guards started firing as soon as the militants stormed the camp. But the attackers fled.

The Hurriyat today said: "The agenda... is to make the unilateral ceasefire a two-way traffic and facilitate concrete steps to resolve the Kashmir issue once and for all so that people of India, Pakistan and J&K can heave a sigh of relief." This is the first time the group has revealed its agenda for the proposed tour.

Meanwhile, Gen Pervez Musharraf has said that he is ready to go to Delhi for talks if formally invited, a report from Washington says.

"We've taken the initiative to ease tension by pulling out troops from the LoC and ordering our troops to observe restraint. India has responded positively. There are indications that India wants to resume talks. We are ready for talks...but I will go only if I have a formal invitation. We want peace but peace with honour and dignity," he told *Newsweek*.

■ More reports on page 8

THE STATESMAN

13 FEB 2001

9-10 Islamabad's See-Saw 12/2

Blowing hot and cold is an essential ingredient of foreign policy-making. General Musharraf, though not a politician of long-standing, appears to have cottoned on to this strategic approach. In an interview to *Gulf News*, he says he wants to go down in history as the one who finally brought peace to Kashmir. Just the day before, he told a questioner he had nothing further to offer and his very offer to hold talks was proof of his sincerity. The general appears to have decided that the way to win over the world is by repeatedly offering to discuss Kashmir with the Indian prime minister. This is self-delusion of the kind many Pakistani leaders have suffered before. It also indicates that the full implications of Prime Minister Vajpayee's peace process have not been understood by the Pakistani leadership. If so, the Indian leadership needs to spell these out. The Pakistani leadership must understand that offering to discuss Kashmir by itself does not create much credibility because in Lahore the two leaders agreed on a detailed plan to initiate and discuss a range of issues, including Kashmir. At that very time General Musharraf's Northern Light Infantry men were creeping into the Kargil heights. It is incumbent, therefore, that Pakistani leaders (especially the general who carried out the Kargil aggression) convince us that it is worthwhile for India to engage Pakistan in a dialogue. This is not a conditionality for a dialogue, but the creation of an atmosphere of minimum credibility; talks should not be a futile waste of time or worse still a step in deception.

9-10 12/2
Prime Minister Vajpayee's peace process has thrown up a major challenge to the general. With the guns from the Indian security forces falling silent, the world — and the people of Kashmir — is in a position to see the current spate of killings for what they are: Acts of terrorism. Friday night's horrific killings in Jammu reinforce this point. Prime Minister Vajpayee gave an opportunity to General Musharraf when he asked him to dissociate himself with blatant acts of terrorism committed by Lashkar-e-Taiba and other Pakistan-based terrorist organisations. Beyond a very general condemnation of terrorism, the general is yet to come out specifically against such acts of terrorism directed by Pakistan-based organisations against India. President Clinton had suggested a formula of four R's — restraint, respect for Line of Control, reduction of violence and resumption of dialogue. Prime Minister Vajpayee with his unilateral initiative of cessation of combat operations in J&K — and before that India not crossing the Line of Control during the Kargil conflict — has demonstrated that he has done all that is required of him to fulfil the conditions for a dialogue. What is required of the general now is first an assurance that Pakistan would not violate the territorial status quo with violence, and second, condemnation of terroristic violence in the Valley and elsewhere in India. By insisting that his offer of dialogue is proof of his sincerity and avoiding other commitments, General Musharraf is sending out signals that there has been no change in the Pakistani attitude in the post-Kargil period and his offer of talks is only a tactical ploy.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 FEB 2001

Pak-backed ultras kill

9:30
Pak
11/2
5:11
15 in J&K

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Feb. 10. — Pakistan-backed militants killed 15 people in the Budhal area of Rajouri in Jammu and Kashmir last night.

Police said the militants first showered bullets on three houses belonging to the nomadic Bakerwal community in Kot Chatwal. Then they set ablaze the houses. At least 15 people were killed. A police party was sent to the spot this morning.

Meanwhile, curfew continued in Udhampur town for the second day today. The curfew was clamped last evening when a mob went on the rampage after abduction of a girl. Two houses, one restaurant, furniture house and a car was set ablaze by the mob. Around 40 people had been injured in the incident.

10 killed in encounter: Security forces took control of the Batmaloo police control room stormed by militants last evening. Eight policemen and two ultras were killed in the ensuing encounter, adds PTI.

Six policemen were injured in the 13-hour shootout. Four Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Al Umar Mujahideen militants attacked the control room around 7.30 p.m. police said.

A civilian truck driver, caught in the cross-fire, was seriously injured.

Security forces gained control of the high-security control room this morning.

THE STATESMAN

11 FEB 2001

Two men and a hawk



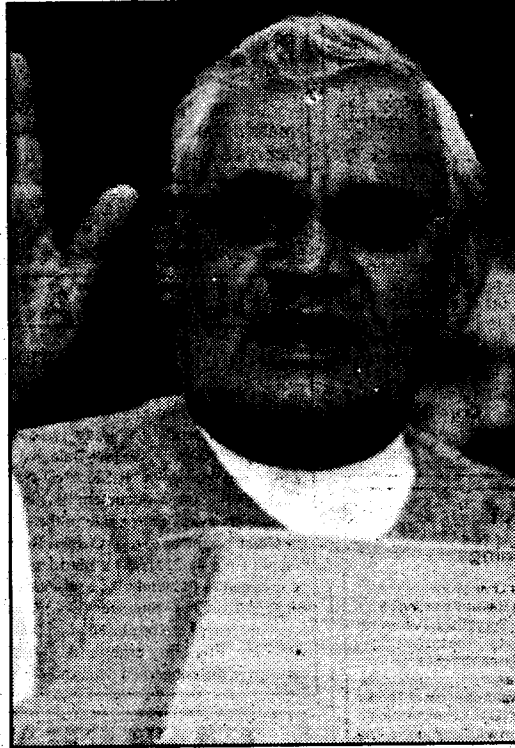
SEEMA MUSTAFA

Time is running out. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has been unable to follow his ceasefire initiative with any concrete measures. Everything regarding Jammu and Kashmir is on hold, be it the visit of the All Parties Hurriyat delegation to Pakistan, talks between Delhi and the Kashmiri groups, dialogue with Pakistan and other related items. Mr Vajpayee has been unable to convince his ministers, members of a party for which Kashmir and Pakistan have always been like a red rag for the bull, that a dialogue is necessary for peace, and peace is imperative for the region in more ways than one.

Mr Vajpayee is finding it difficult to proceed because of two main reasons. One, of course is the Bharatiya Janata Party's own background wherein it has spent decades equating communal hate and strife with the Muslim and the Muslim with Pakistan. It has refused to come out of that primitive mould and even today, when under pressure for non performance, it waves its divisive card with the flourish of a magician who has little else to offer. The BJP and its *parivar* cannot go beyond a point on the issue of Kashmir, and the Prime Minister is now finding that the point is becoming very well defined. Despite efforts, he is finding it very difficult to carry the day with the result that his peace initiative is floundering in the absence of a concrete follow up.

Two, Mr Vajpayee was unable to convince the other constituency of his good intent. True, his principal secretary Brajesh Mishra did extend the reach of the Prime Minister's Office to over and beyond the narrow BJP constituency by using the Track II channels to rope in a wide variety of persons. Former diplomats, military personnel, academics and others not usually seen in the BJP's corridors became hyperactive in preparing the ground for the Prime Minister's initiative. A record number of visits to Pakistan, and vice versa, strengthened the belief in the PMO that a dialogue with General Pervez Musharraf was possible and should be high on the peace agenda. But Mr Vajpayee made one cardinal mistake. He did not take the nation into confidence with the result that suspicions about the final agenda began to dominate even the Track II efforts.

What exactly is the government's intent? Is it buying time? Is it allowing the US to dictate the rules? Is it preparing to give away the Kashmir Valley through the trifurcation formula? Is it using the peace route to actually implement the old RSS agenda? Is this just another ruse to confuse the people and divide the Kashmiri groups like the Hurriyat in the state? Is there an agenda and is it in the interests



KASHMIR OF CONTENTION: 'Gen. Musharraf has said recently that Mr Vajpayee is surrounded by hawks, and has invited him to break free and enter into a dialogue. Sometimes vision is clearer when it is farsighted, but the fact is that Gen. Musharraf too, is surrounded by hawks'



of the country?

There have been no answers to these and many more questions that continue to confound those connected in some way with the Valley. Mr Vajpayee has continued to maintain what he would probably like to describe as a discreet silence, with even the peace brigade not really being given a full and total picture of the government's intent. This is creating a sense of unease, with even the Opposition parties tempering their reactions with a "we hope the government knows what it is doing and there is no hidden agenda."

The result of course is an abysmal lack of movement with the initiative being stuck in the ceasefire groove. It has been unable to move forward with the dissident voices in the

What exactly is the government's intent? Is it buying time? Is it allowing the US to dictate the rules? Is it preparing to give away the Kashmir Valley? Is it using the peace route to actually implement the old RSS agenda? Is it just another ruse to divide the Kashmiri groups like the Hurriyat? There have been no answers to these questions. Mr Vajpayee has continued to maintain a discreet silence, with even the peace brigade not really being given a full and total picture of the government's intent. This is creating a sense of unease, with even the Opposition parties tempering their reactions with a 'we hope the government knows what it is doing and there is no hidden agenda'

Union Cabinet making it clear that there can be no dialogue with Pakistan unless it ends cross-border terrorism. Interesting, as there has been dialogue with Pakistan in worse conditions before and without even a declaration of intent as has been forthcoming from Gen. Musharraf.

Prime Minister Vajpayee and his government are playing with fire. Failure now will return the Valley into the hands of the *jihadis*, throwing the people into a life of strife and discord. Missed opportunities do not come back and Jammu and Kashmir which had seized the olive branch to pull itself out of a decade of militancy and terrorism might not have the courage, will or strength to do so again.

Gen. Musharraf, of course, is stepping up the pressure to talk. There were two options before him as well. One, to give in to the *jihadis* and a section of the Army and continue talking war. The other, of course, to extend an olive branch to India in the hope that bilateral discussions would result in a solution conducive to long term peace in the region. He has opted for the latter and the sheer force of repetition has helped him override considerable scepticism, not just in India but the world, about his actual goals and motives. It does appear that the man behind Kargil has decided in favour of peace, more because of international pressure than his own inclination perhaps. But he also knows that Pakistan cannot move ahead on the path of prosperity with war as the only backdrop, and needs stability and peace for real development and progress.

He has said recently that Mr Vajpayee is surrounded by hawks, and has invited him to break free and enter into a dialogue. Sometimes vision is clearer when it is farsighted, but the fact is that Gen. Musharraf too, is surrounded by hawks. He will have to do some tight manoeuvring to ensure that these discussions, if they ever begin, will have the flexibility to discuss peace per se without Kashmir becoming a straitjacket throttling an effective solution.

Delhi has to determine what it wants. Not what the US or others want, but what is in the national interest. Matters have come to a pass where Kashmir will be a definite item on the agenda of any talks with Pakistan. But what will be the content? Is there a bottom line? If so, what is it? Is this government prepared to batter away the Valley using Pakistan's and the RSS argument that it is Muslim. The rest of India and Kashmiri groups themselves have resisted efforts to give a communal tinge to their struggle, and even now Hurriyat leaders like Abdul Ghani Lone and others are categorical. That the issue is political and not religious. If not, then the claim of Pakistan to the Valley is baseless as is the claim of the RSS and the VHP and the BJP that

Mr Vajpayee sent out a positive signal by announcing a unilateral ceasefire. The extension, despite opposition further fuelled this sentiment: 'Vajpayee is sincere, something can emerge.' The silence and the inability to follow the ceasefire despite opposition is turning the hope into disillusionment. If February 26 comes and goes without any action in place, the disillusionment will turn into anger and resentment. It will give a fillip to the die hards who have maintained from the beginning that this peace initiative will encourage the *jihadis* to thumb their nose at Gen. Musharraf and launch an all out offensive for their miserable ends

Kashmir stands for Muslim appeasement.

A decision was taken to send the APHC delegation to Pakistan to talk to the terrorist groups and others. One presumes it was a considered decision, taking all the pros and cons into account. And obviously for such a delegation to be effective in any way it was imperative that the composition was left to the Hurriyat. So what is this fuss about the inclusion of Ali Shah Geelani all about? His views are well known, and what more can he say in Islamabad that he has not been saying from Srinagar and Delhi? The point is not Geelani's inclusion or otherwise, the point is: does the government actually feel that the Hurriyat visit can help the peace process? If so, the delegation should be allowed to leave as every little input can be valuable in the larger whole.

Conversely, the change of heart also requires an explanation. Obviously the decision was not well thought out, or did not accommodate the hardliners' views in its execution. It is these kind of ill thought out moves that have compounded the Kashmir problem, and now there really is no scope for blunders to be absorbed by the region which is at the end of its tether.

Mr Vajpayee sent out a very positive signal by announcing a unilateral ceasefire. It kindled a ray of hope in Jammu and Kashmir that the Government of India was actually interested in peace. The extension, despite opposition from within the Cabinet, further fuelled this sentiment: Vajpayee is sincere, something can emerge. The silence and the inability to follow the ceasefire with concrete steps is turning the hope into disillusionment. If February 26 comes and goes without any action in place, the disillusionment will turn into anger and resentment. It will give a fillip to the die hards who have maintained from the very beginning that this peace initiative will come to nought, and it will encourage the *jihadis* to thumb their nose at Gen. Musharraf and launch an all out offensive for their miserable ends.

In India, the saffron clad *jihadis* will be encouraged to raise the banner of Hindu *rashtra* using Kashmir violence to consolidate their constituency in Jammu and other parts of the country. The aftermath might be worse than what has preceded it, and instead of emerging as the messiah of peace and stability Prime Minister Vajpayee might find himself writing a very different history.

All is not over yet. Two weeks are still available to the government to move, now at a faster pace, along the path of peace. There has to be serious stock-taking by the two countries who have developed nuclear weapons as part of an ugly arms race which has vitiated the security environment instead of strengthening it.

Despite the claims of well placed advisors to the government that the bomb is an insurance, the fact remains that both India and Pakistan have jeopardised the future of their people by arming themselves with a criminal weapon of destruction without a thought for the consequences.

Talk peace Mr Vajpayee. The price is otherwise too big for your people to pay.

Risk of Indo-Pak conflict unacceptably high: CIA ^{H-13} _{9/2}

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, February 8

THE CENTRAL Intelligence Agency (CIA) has painted a grim picture of situation in the Indian sub-continent, saying it believes that the risk of war between India and Pakistan remains "unacceptably high".

It also talks of "a good prospect of another round of nuclear tests" in the sub-continent, notwithstanding India's repeated and solemn affirmations to the contrary.

CIA director George J. Tenet, in a testimony before the Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence on Wednesday, asserted: "I must report that relations between India and Pakistan remain volatile, making the risk of war between the two nuclear-armed adversaries unacceptably high."

Tenet, who had painted a similar picture last year on nuclear proliferation and missile development issues, said there was no sign of improvement in the potentially

destabilising competition between the two countries. "We still believe there is a good prospect of another round of nuclear tests," he maintained. "Pakistan may respond in kind," he said, while talking about last month's Agni test.

The CIA chief's remarks on South-Asia were part of an omnibus statement, titled: "World Threat 2001: National Security in a Changing World".

As for the military balance in the sub-continent, he said India continued to enjoy advantages over Pakistan in most areas of conventional defence preparedness. "This includes a decisive advantage in fighter aircraft, almost twice as many men under arms, and a much larger economy to support defence expenditures. As a result, Pakistan relies heavily on its nuclear weapons for deterrence."

In Tenet's view, the deep-seated rivalry, frequent artillery exchanges in Kashmir and short flight times for nuclear-capable ballistic missiles and aircraft all

contribute to an unstable nuclear deterrence.

Dwelling on Kashmir, he claimed both sides "seem quite willing to take risks". This, along with their "deep animosity and distrust", could lead to decisions that escalate tensions, Tenet said.

He conceded that the recent telephonic conversation between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Gen. Pervez Musharraf has opened the doors for high-level talks, but added the process was still fragile. "Neither side has yet agreed to direct, unconditional talks. Tension can easily flare up once winter ends or by New Delhi or Islamabad manoeuvring for an edge in the negotiations. Leadership changes in either country also could add to tensions."

The CIA chief also spoke of Pakistan's internal problems, especially the economy, complicating the situation and threatening whatever room Gen. Musharraf might have for manoeuvre.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 9 FEB 2001

The time to talk is just right: Pakistan's envoy

By Seema Guha 11-8

NEW DELHI: Pakistan believes the time for talks is now. The signals from Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf are right, everything that had to be said has already been said, the ice has been broken and it is time for the two leaders to give peace a chance.



A. B. Vajpayee

"The time for pre-conditions, for creating the right climate, is over. Talks are the only way to bring about a conducive atmosphere, not the other way round. There is no point in sitting back and waiting any longer," says Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Pakistan's high commissioner to India adding that "It is time now for the next step forward."

According to Mr Qazi, it is for India to take the next step and talk to Pakistan. Gen Musharraf had already done his bit; in fact, his views on talks have been the same from the day he took over as the chief executive of Pakistan.

Mr Qazi said that Gen Musharraf's Kashmir Day speech on Monday indicated that he is willing to meet Mr Vajpayee halfway in an effort to initiate a dialogue. The General also appreciated Mr Vajpayee's cease fire offer and the decision to extend it. Islamabad, on its part reciprocated by promising to exercise maximum restraint along the Line of Control.

Regarding the general impression in India that New Delhi would be doing Gen Musharraf a favour by talking to him, Mr Qazi said

that India is not in a position to either grant or withdraw legitimacy to the General.

"It is for the people of Pakistan to decide on this," he said and added that "He does not need talks with India to gain kudos from the people of Pakistan."

"Talks are a responsibility that the two governments owe to their respective people," Mr Qazi said. "Talks are an attempt to solve problems without resorting to violence. We owe it not only to our people but to the larger international audience worried about a nuclear flare up in the region."

Mr Qazi said that there were many in Pakistan who thought that talks with India were a waste of time and were not in favour of them but the General had brushed aside their opposition and was keen on resuming negotiations with India.

Initiating the dialogue, he says, is the easy task. "The real challenge is to sustain the talks, not to let them peter out after a first round of stating known positions. It is a complex multi-layered process and needs hard work, sincerity and the stamina to prolong it," Mr Qazi said.

"We cannot be guided by old stereotypes, we need to break the mind set and get to work, acknowledging that our differences are deep rooted and the problems are tough."

Mr Qazi, however, had no answer to the ultimate solutions to the problem of Kashmir, Siachen or Sir Creek. He said it was not for officials to make solutions public. "But a dialogue has its own dynamics", and can provide the momentum to make the situation in Kashmir less provocative and reduce the overall tension in the area.

THE TIMES OF INDIA
- 8 FEB 2001

Musharraf rules
out initiative to
help resume talks

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 7. - General Pervez Musharraf today suggested talks with India to solve the Kashmir problem but ruled out any new initiative to help reach that objective.

"The thaw has taken place. The time to start talking has come," the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan quoted Gen Musharraf as having said. "I've nothing to offer afresh. The ball is in India's court. We have done everything possible... My offer of talks is a sign of sincerity, not... of weakness. India has to respond," he said in Rawalpindi.

He urged India to allow a Hurriyat delegation to visit Pakistan. "We've taken a number of initiatives... Now, India has to send the Hurriyat delegates. I hope action will come."

Gen Musharraf and Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee talked for the first time on Friday. The Pakistan chief executive enquired about the Gujarat quake Pakistan sent three planeloads of relief for the quake victims.

THE STATESMAN

- FEB 8 2004

FEB 7 2004

I have nothing fresh to offer India: Musharraf

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's chief executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, said on Wednesday that Pakistan had nothing afresh to offer India as time had come to begin dialogue for the settlement of Kashmir dispute.

"Time for initiatives is gone. Thaw has taken place. Time to start talking has come. I have nothing to offer afresh. The ball is in India's court. We have done everything possible," he told foreign reporters who visited Pakistan on the occasion of the Kashmir Solidarity Day.

"My offer of talks is a sign of sincerity, not a sign of weakness. India has to respond," he told a questioner. Pakistan, said the CE, did not plan to take any new initiative for opening dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad.

"We have taken a number of initiatives. No new initiatives are planned. Now India has to send the All Parties Hurriyat Conference delegates. I hope action will come."

In reply to a question, he said: "I am against talking of solutions before beginning the dialogue. Go step by step. Start talking. There are a number of parties, a number of solutions." (Agencies)

Indian American is key aide to Hillary Clinton

WASHINGTON: Indian American



Hillary Clinton

Anil Kakani, 30, is to be freshman New York Democratic Senator Hillary Clinton's chief legislative aide on tax, budget and other economic issues on the budget committee on which the former U.S. first lady serves.

Mr Kakani, who has been a senior White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) official for the past three-and-a-half years, begins his new role on February 13.

In an interview with India Abroad News Service, Mr Kakani said he was looking forward "to the historic challenge of working for the first former first lady to be elected a senator and advising her on some of the issues that she cares so passionately about."

Mr Kakani, who has already interviewed several times with Mr Clinton "and spent a good deal of time with her," said, besides the overall tax and budget issues, he would be Mr Clinton's point person on "economic development issues

and some high-tech and telecom issues."

The Silver-Spring, Maryland-born Mr Kakani, who was the senior adviser to OMB director Jacob Lew for the past year, acknowledged it was Lew, who had recommended him strongly to Ms Hillary Clinton as the ideal candidate on the Budget Committee. When Mr Lew first joined the White House, he had worked closely with Ms Hillary Clinton's staff and was one of the key person's doing health-care reform — which initially was Mr Clinton's baby, but ended in controversy when the Republican leadership in Congress summarily rejected it.

"He's been a close ally of the first lady and it was him (Lew) and of course, all the networking I had done during my years at the OMB that helped me get the job," Mr Kakani acknowledged. He said "when things started wrapping up here," with the advent of the new Bush administration, "I had the option of going back into a more career slot at OMB, but I started looking on the Hill, and I thought it would certainly be historic to go work for the first lady who had been elected a Senator." (ANSI)

Musharraf offers to host Atal away from hawks

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Feb. 6: In a clever move aimed at earning diplomatic brownie points and highlighting the latent divisions in the establishment in Delhi, Pakistan's military ruler Pervez Musharraf today said he was ready to invite Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Islamabad for talks as he was the only "moderate" in the Indian government.

"Vajpayee is the only moderate and he is surrounded by hawks. So, if we have to move in any substantial way, it can only be done in a dialogue between him and me," Musharraf said in an interview with the Dubai-based *Gulf News*.

Musharraf was quoted as saying that he was "absolutely willing" to invite Vajpayee, but was cautious to point out that "when one initiates such an act, one has to be very careful that the initiative is accepted".

Officially, India tried to play down Musharraf's latest offer for peace. "We are not aware of any such proposal," foreign ministry spokesman R.S. Jassal said.

The latest overture from the Pakistani military ruler is based on some of the "positive" developments last week, primarily the telephonic conversation he had with Vajpayee on the Gujarat earthquake. More important for him was the knowledge that it was mainly due to Vajpayee's initiative that the bureaucracy in South Block, despite its initial reluctance, finally accepted relief material from Pakistan for the quake victims.

QUOTE

Vajpayee is the only moderate and he is surrounded by hawks

PERVEZ MUSHARRAF

By repeating that he is ready to talk to India "any time, any where", Musharraf hopes to pressure world powers to nudge India towards the negotiations table. That Musharraf's plan is working was proved when the visiting Greek Prime Minister, Konstantinos Simitis, expressed hope that contact between the two sides, established because of the quake, will be sustained for greater engagement in the near future.

"Earthquake diplomacy could help ease tension between India and Pakistan but some compromises are necessary on both sides to find an amicable solution to the Kashmir imbroglio," Simitis said.

A few years ago, Greece had begun intense engagement with Turkey, with which it has differences over the Cyprus dispute, after a quake affected the people of both nations. "Earthquake diplomacy is of great use. It can help ease tension," Simitis said.

■ Another report on Page 8

THE TELEGRAPH

- 7 FEB 2001

Pervez renews support for Kashmiris

Marchers carrying banners, chant victory slogans

Islamabad, February 5

MILITARY RULER General Pervez Musharraf on Monday renewed support for Kashmiris as Pakistan observed a day of solidarity for the 12-year-old Muslim separatist campaign in Kashmir.

A major rally held in Islamabad was led by Culture and Sports Minister S.K. Tressler, with marchers carrying banners and chanting: "Victory is imminent," "Kashmiri martyrs' blood will not go in vain" and "Kashmir will join Pakistan," witnesses said.

The participants including supporters of Kashmiri parties, women and children paraded up the main road opposite the Parliament building.

Police, fire brigades and ambu-

lances accompanied the marchers who also included a visiting three-member pro-Kashmiri Sikh delegation from Canada. Around 1,000 people including women and children in school uniforms gathered at Islamabad's main entry point under the banner of the main fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami party. They formed a human chain in expression of "solidarity with Kashmiri Mujahideen (freedom fighters)."

"The aim is to convey to the Kashmiris that they are not alone in their struggle," Jamaat leaders said. Processions and demonstrations were also organised in other

cities and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir to mark the day, an annual event since 1990.

The day, already declared a holiday, dawned with special prayers in mosques for the success of the "liberation struggle" in Kashmir. Later traffic in key cities came to a standstill for a minute of silence and prayers were offered for the Kashmiri "martyrs," officials said.

Markets and government and private establishments remained shut. Musharraf was due to speak later at Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir at a camp housing

refugees from Kashmir. In a message to mark the occasion, he vowed Pakistan would continue its political, moral and diplomatic support for the Kashmiris until they achieve self-determination."

The people of Pakistan today are observing the Kashmir solidarity day to reaffirm their steadfast and unflinching support for the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiri people for their inalienable right to self-determination," he said.

"India has tried to suppress the Kashmiri people's freedom struggle through the use of brute military force. This effort is doomed to failure because the people of Kashmir are determined to get back their right of self-determination which India has sought to usurp," Musharraf said. (AFP)



THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 6 FEB 2001

Ice broken, it's now Delhi's turn, says Gen. Musharraf

MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan's military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, said on Monday that the ice had been broken with regard to his relations with Prime Minister Vajpayee, but urged New Delhi to take the next step for peace in Kashmir.

He said the nuclear rivals risked returning to "a policy of confrontation" unless New Delhi took the first step for a dialogue over the divided Himalayan territory. "The ice has been broken," General Musharraf had said, after his telephone conversation with Mr Vajpayee on Friday. "We did not talk about Kashmir. We only spoke about the earthquake in India, I sympathised and he thanked me".

Speaking after a 'Kashmir-day' speech here, General Musharraf refused to disclose who made the telephone call. "We decided to speak and we spoke. So it does not matter who made the call," he said.

"There is a momentum towards peace. The more delays there are, that momentum will end and we will go back to the situation of a year ago. We will go back to the policy of confrontation".

In his main speech, marking a day of solidarity with the Kashmiri people, Mr Musharraf called on India to allow leaders of the Hurriyat to visit Pakistan. "India should take a decision on All Party Hurriyat Conference delegation's visit" for consultations. "The delay in this regard will weaken the dialogue process,"

he said. He said there were some "signs and movement forward" from India but "Kashmiris have to continue their struggle for the realisation of their freedom".

Kashmir-day was observed in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). Processions and demonstrations were organised by political parties and Pakistan-based Kashmiri militant groups to mark the day, an annual event since 1990.

A major rally in Islamabad was led by culture and sports minister S.K. Tressler, with marchers carrying banners and chanting: "Victory is imminent", "Kashmiri martyrs' blood will not go in vain" and "Kashmir will join Pakistan," witnesses said.

Participants, including supporters of Kashmiri parties, women and children paraded up the main road opposite the parliament building.

Around 1,000 people including women and children in school uniforms gathered at Islamabad's main entry point under the banner of the main fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami party and formed a human chain. "The aim is to convey to the Kashmiris that they are not alone in their struggle," Jamaat leaders said. The day, already declared a holiday, began with prayers in mosques for the success of the "liberation struggle". Later, traffic in key cities came to a standstill, for a minute of silence and prayers were offered for Kashmiri "martyrs," officials said. (AFP)

Musharraf talks tough

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 4. Barely 48 hours after the feel-good factor generated in India and Pakistan thanks to the brief telephonic conversation between their heads of the state on the Gujarat earthquake, the Pakistan Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today demanded a positive response from India to the recent peace initiatives by his country. Otherwise, it should be prepared to face the consequences.

In a strongly-worded message on the eve of the Kashmir solidarity day, Gen. Musharraf left none in doubt that Pakistan was not satisfied with the Indian moves to resolve the Kashmir conflict, and chose the opportunity to reiterate "full moral, diplomatic and political support" to the people of Kashmir "at all times and under all circumstances" in their fight for "self-determination".

"We call upon India to stop its repression in Kashmir, take a positive decision on the visit of the APHC delegation to Pakistan without further delay and respond positively to our peace initiatives," he said.

February 5 is observed as 'Kashmir Solidarity Day' with great fanfare all over Pakistan and Pak-Occupied Kashmir. It is cus-

tomary for the head of the state and the Chief Executive to give a message of "solidarity" with the people of Kashmir. The Chief Executive will address a rally in Muzaffarabad, capital of PoK, tomorrow morning.

The surprise element in Gen. Musharraf's message is the strong language employed to denounce India as an "occupation force" in Kashmir. Pakistan has hurled the charge umpteen times but to repeat it now, at a juncture when efforts are on from both sides to move towards resumption of the stalled dialogue, is indication that in the perception of the military leadership there is no change in the ground realities.

In a separate message, the Pakistan President, Mr. Rafiq Tarar, spoke on the same lines and said the Kashmir dispute had been the root cause of all tensions in South Asia since 1947. Kashmir was now posing a grave threat to the peace and stability in the region, making South Asia a nuclear flashpoint.

The message to India to get down to the serious business of dialogue to resolve the tangle and not link it to any thing else was delivered earlier at a news conference by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar.

In a clear reference to the insistence of New Delhi that there

could be no dialogue unless Islamabad demonstrated its inclination to rein in militant groups, Mr. Sattar said, "A political route has to be opened. India's insistence that some condition has to be fulfilled in advance will lead to a stalemate."

He argued that Kashmiris were forced to take to armed struggle when India choked all channels of dissent; the militancy factor could be tackled only by opening up the "political route". Gen. Musharraf echoed the same sentiments in his message.

"The Kashmiris are peace-loving. They have been compelled to choose the path of armed struggle only to defend their honour, dignity and fundamental human rights and to protect themselves from the reign of terror let loose against them," the Chief Executive's message said.

He charged India with deploying over seven lakh "occupation forces" in Kashmir to crush the "freedom movement", adding that these forces had the license to kill, torture, rape and destroy with complete impunity. Gen. Musharraf said the dispute was not a territorial one but was about the right of the people to decide their future.

Plea for passports: Page 13

THE HINDU

5 FEB 2001

Controversy over 'who called whom'

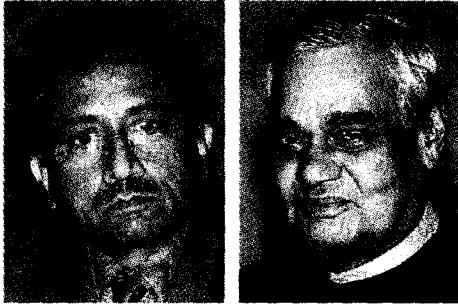
By C. Raja Mohan

ND-1
5/2

NEW DELHI, FEB. 4. Even the expression of just a little goodwill by Pakistan amid the Gujarat disaster has not been without the usual bit of depressing diplomatic posturing. A needless controversy in Pakistan over "who called whom" now hangs over the telephonic conversation last Friday between the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Chief Executive of Pakistan, Gen. Pervez Musharraf.

The decision by Gen. Musharraf to call Mr. Vajpayee was widely appreciated as a positive gesture. But even as the General completed his very brief, but first-ever conversation with the Prime Minister, the word was put out in Pakistan, totally contrary to the facts, that it was Mr. Vajpayee who called the Chief Executive.

Most newspapers in Pakistan reported on Saturday that it was Mr. Vajpayee who called Gen. Musharraf to thank him for the condolences and humanitarian relief sent on behalf of Pakistan. But in India, the spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry had made it absolutely clear on Friday that it was Gen. Musharraf who had called. The respected newspaper in Pakistan, *The Dawn*, had decided to run both the stories on Saturday — one datelined Islamabad that said that Mr. Vajpayee had called and another from its correspondent in the New Delhi that the call actually came from Gen. Musharraf. In its pages on Sunday, *The Dawn* sought to unravel the mystery. Its reconstruction is very instructive. According to the paper, in its first report on Friday the State-run Associated Press of Pakistan said Mr. Vajpayee had called Gen. Musharraf. Later, it ran a second



report quoting Indian agencies to say it was Gen. Musharraf who had rung up Mr. Vajpayee. Finally, the APP came up with a third version that skirted the question, "who called whom". Approached for a clarification, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Pakistan told *The Dawn* that "factually the correct position is that the two sides arranged this call". Still reluctant to concede that it was the General who had initiated the call!

There is no doubt that telephonic conversations, including the timing and the subject, between any two heads of Government are usually pre-arranged. Our inquiries here reveal that New Delhi got a message through unconventional channels from Islamabad that Gen. Musharraf would like to speak to Mr. Vajpayee. And would Mr. Vajpayee take the call?

Mr. Vajpayee signalled his readiness to receive the first-ever call from Gen. Musharraf. It was also agreed that the conversation would be limited to the tragedy in Gujarat. The time was set for around 4.45 p.m. IST, Friday. Mr. Vajpayee went public around noon that he would

be speaking to Gen. Musharraf, and was all set to receive the call at the pre-set time. But the call would not come through.

New Delhi bristled at the new suggestion from Islamabad, in violation of the earlier gentlemen's agreement, that it was Mr. Vajpayee's turn to call. The Indian side pointed out that many heads of State, including the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, who were sending assistance to Gujarat were calling Mr. Vajpayee to offer condolences. And Mr. Vajpayee was not telephoning any foreign leader in relation to the tragedy in Gujarat. Pakistan eventually relented and the call from Gen. Musharraf came in just after 7 p.m.

As *The Dawn* put it editorially today, it did not matter in the end "who called whom". Nevertheless, the reluctance in Pakistan to acknowledge the fact that it was the General who called Mr. Vajpayee may say something about the state of political play in Islamabad.

It appears that Gen. Musharraf is indeed keen to use the tragic moment in Gujarat to open some communication with Mr. Vajpayee. But, obviously, some of his advisers believe they could either muddy the waters with false arguments about protocol or twist facts to suggest India is being forced to climb down from the refusal to engage Gen. Musharraf unless there was an end to cross-border terrorism.

This awful logic was reflected in an editorial on the talk between the two leaders in another newspaper in Pakistan, *The Nation*. Arguing that India is looking for a "face-saving opportunity" to engage Gen. Musharraf, it surmised that the earthquake in Gujarat and Pakistan's assistance "offered a good opening to India".

THE HINDU

5 FEB 2001

Pak. urges passports for Hurriyat team

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 4. Pakistan tonight urged India to issue travel documents to all the seven members of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) to enable them to visit Pakistan.

In a press statement, the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman welcomed the APHC decision to send a delegation in response to Pakistan's invitation to hold discussions to prepare the ground for a tripartite dialogue to resolve the Kashmir conflict "in accordance with the aspirations of the people of the State".

He regretted that India had not yet responded to the APHC Executive Council request and urged the Indian Government to enable the team to visit Pakistan.

During the visit, the Pakistan Government would hold consultations with the Hurriyat leaders on all issues relevant to the "achievement of the right of self-determination" of the Kashmiri people. The team would visit Pak-Occupied Kashmir for talks with the Government there.

There is no mention about the intention of the Hurriyat to talk to the Pakistan-based militant organisations.

The National Security Council

(NSC) reviewed the general security situation in the region with special focus on Kashmir. The Pakistan Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, chaired the meeting. It discussed the Hurriyat visit and expressed the hope that it would lend impetus to a tripartite dialogue process.

Besides the service chiefs, the Ministers of External Affairs, Interior, Finance and Commerce attended the meeting.

Sattar hopeful

In another development, the Pakistan Foreign Affairs Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, expressed the hope that the stalled bilateral dialogue would resume soon.

He referred to the musings penned by the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, and said the views expressed give room to hope for an early resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

Meanwhile, a Government spokesman took serious exception to the reported remarks made by the Union Sports Minister, Ms. Uma Bharti, that Pakistan would be "wiped out of the political map of the globe".

He termed the remarks as 'irresponsible' and urged the world community to take note of the remarks.

Japan's misgivings cleared, says PM

NEW DELHI, FEB. 4. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has said that India's decision against conducting any more nuclear tests and its commitment of not being the first to use atomic weapons has cleared misgivings of Japan that arose after the 1998 Pokhran blasts.

Citing high-level visits including that of the Japanese Premier, Mr. Yoshiro Mori, to India in August last, he said although New Delhi and Tokyo differed on security issues, "there is a better appreciation of our security concerns" by Japan. — PTI

No to Karmapa's Sikkim visit

PALAMPUR (Himachal Pradesh), FEB. 4. Teenage Buddhist monk, Karmapa Ogyen Trinlay Dorjee, who had fled Tibet and was given refugee status in India, has been refused permission to visit the Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim, according to sources at the headquarters of the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama.

The Karmapa has also been denied permission to shift his residence to the Sherabling Monastery near Baijnath in Kangra, the sources said. — PTI

THE HINDU

5 FEB 2001

'Talks with Pak. only when cross-border terrorism stops'

CAIRO, FEB. 4. The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has said talks with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue can begin only when Islamabad stops cross-border terrorism.

"The Government of India as initiator of dialogue remains committed to dialogue. But it is necessary that a conducive atmosphere be created for that," Mr. Singh told a press conference last night at the conclusion of the fourth joint commission talks between India and Egypt.

"We hope that a conducive atmosphere shall be created by Pakistan by not promoting cross-border terrorism," he told the conference, which was also addressed by his Egyptian counterpart, Mr. Amir Moussa.

Mr. Singh said he had discussed the Kashmir issue and efforts India was making to restore normality in the State. "We listened very carefully.

We hope that all such issues will be solved amicably and peacefully," Mr. Moussa said adding that Egypt was keen to strengthen ties with India. "We wish to have the best of relationships based on unique and traditional ties we have had," he added.

The Ministers discussed the situation in Iraq and the Mid-East. Expressing his concern over the negative impact of globalisation on developing countries, the Egyptian Foreign Minister said, "India and Egypt have agreed to discuss the issue with like-minded countries on how to study and cope with the repercussions of globalisation within the frame-

work of dialogue and not confrontation."

He expressed condolences for the victims of the Gujarat earthquake and said Egypt was ready to offer any assistance that India may require.

The two countries also decided to identify new areas of cooperation like Information Technology and the setting-up of a fertiliser plant in Egypt. The Ministers signed a protocol for foreign affairs consultation.

The joint commission identified Information Technology, Biotechnology, renewable energy, remote sensing, satellite technology and nuclear medicine as new areas of cooperation. The next joint commission meeting will be held in Delhi. — PTI

'No n-ties with Israel'

AFP reports:

Mr. Singh today denied there was any form of nuclear cooperation between India and Israel, the Mena news agency reported.

Officials at the Cairo-based Arab league had accused India of developing or seeking to develop nuclear ties with Israel twice since August 1999, but India had denied it both times.

Mr. Singh said India had been developing its own nuclear capabilities since 1956 without the aid of any other country. India backed the principle of land for peace in Arab- Israeli negotiations, he added.

THE HINDU

- 5 FEB 2001

Pakistan hits out after helping out

HTC & Agencies
New Delhi/Islamabad, February 4

TWO DAYS after he telephoned Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to express sympathy for victims of the Gujarat earthquake, Pakistani military ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf today launched a bitter attack on India accusing it of "oppressive" rule in Kashmir and demanded permission to Hurriyat leaders to visit Pakistan.

In a strongly-worded statement on the eve of Kashmir Solidarity Day, he also reiterated Pakistan's "moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris' struggle to achieve the right for self-determination".

Musharraf's remarks signal the end of the brief honeymoon which Indo-Pak relations enjoyed for a week after the quake. But the attack on India is also a reflection of the pressures that Pakistan's CEO is under. The pro-Taliban clergy, Jehadi groups and even the ISI, do not tolerate any blurring of the country's anti-India focus. Extending olive branches in India's

Sharjah series off

THE ASIAN Cricket Foundation has decided to call off the tri-series in Sharjah, scheduled to have been held from February 8 to 11, as the Indian and Pakistani cricket boards have not confirmed their participation yet. The meet was meant to be fund-raiser for the earthquake victims in Gujarat.

Detailed report on Page 17

Team for Kashmir

PRIME MINISTER A B Vajpayee on Sunday deputed a four-member team to visit Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of yesterday's killings of six Sikhs in Mahjoornagar area of Srinagar. The delegation will be led by Chemical and Fertilisers Minister S S Dhindsa of the Akali Dal.

Detailed report on Page 7

direction is fraught with danger for anyone ruling Pakistan.

This is something of a reversal of roles for General Musharraf. When deposed Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz and Atal Behari Vajpayee were planning the Lahore bus yatra, Musharraf and his coterie of generals were planning Kargil: the argument being India and Pakistan were getting too cosy.

For Pakistan's influential hardliners, there was a danger of that happening after the Gujarat earthquake. Sending two relief aircraft and making a phone call seems to

have been enough provocation for the hawks. Musharraf had no choice but to mollify them: "The Kashmir dispute is not a territorial dispute between the two countries. It is about the right of the people of Kashmir to decide their future by themselves," he said.

The statement seems timed to coincide with a shift in focus within Kashmir. There was a brief lull in terrorist activities in the Valley after the earthquake, but Saturday saw the massacre of six Sikhs in Mahjoornagar. From all accounts, it's back to business as usual.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 5 FEB 2001

The Hindustan Times

Thaw in ties HG-10

FIRST, THERE was a plane-load of relief material from Pakistan. Then, a decision in favour of India-Pakistan cricket matches (along with Bangladesh) to raise money for the quake victims. And now the first conversation between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf on the calamity in Gujarat. Even if it has taken India's worst disaster in decades to take the sting out Indo-Pak hostility — even momentarily — it is a development which needs to be welcomed. If Pakistan made the first move, it was the obvious one. When the whole world was rushing in with men and material to help a devastated region, our next door neighbour, which also felt a mild tremor, could hardly remain unmoved. The humanitarian gesture by Pakistan was well received by the Government and the people of India if only because it reaffirmed the basic premise of civilised human behaviour — help for the needy especially in an area of natural disaster.

Like the first step, the second was also an obvious one. No other event in this part of the world has as much potential for raising funds as an India-Pakistan cricket match. Sharjah, too, was an automatic choice because of the huge population of Indians and Pakistanis there who would undoubtedly like to make generous contributions to the relief fund. It was only to be expected that the contest will be a subcontinental affair, with Bangladesh being the other participant. What is noteworthy, however, is that only a few months ago, India had cancelled its proposed tour of Pakistan because of the less than friendly relations between the two countries. But that is history now as the exigencies of a noble cause have ensured that the captains of the two teams will shake hands again.

General Musharraf's phone call to Mr Vajpayee was a natural corollary to the sending of relief material which, as the Prime Minister pointed out, has been "greatly appreciated" by the people of India. In recent months, India has been giving the impression that it is no longer as unwilling to talk to a Pakistani military ruler as when it held the view that a dictator who had usurped power could not take part in a SAARC meeting. The situation is somewhat different now in view of India's unilateral offer of cease-fire in Kashmir and the toning down of hostile Pakistani activity at the Line of Control. In the context of this marginal improvement in ties, the latest contact between the two top leaders, despite its strictly formal nature, should help in sustaining the thaw — provided the *jehadis* do not persist with their murderous offensive.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 FEB 2001

Dalmiya abandons plan before Delhi strikes

Sharjah series sinks

BY LOKENDRA PRATAP SAHI

Calcutta, Feb. 4: Without waiting for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to convey the Indian government's "no" to the fund-raising tri-series in Sharjah, the Asian Cricket Foundation (ACF) has called off the February 8-11 event in Sharjah.

The ACF chairman, Jagmohan Dalmiya, this evening wrote to all three boards — India, Pakistan and Bangladesh — that while he is thankful they agreed to help raise funds for Gujarat's victims, the absence of a written confirmation from India (and Pakistan), till today, meant the tri-series couldn't now take off.

New Delhi is expected to formally reject the Indian board's application tomorrow. A written confirmation, though, was expect-

ed any minute from Pakistan. That alone wouldn't have helped.

Only the Bangladesh board quickly forwarded confirmation but, then, Bangladesh isn't a factor in the larger game being played. Not by the ACF, which operates under the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) umbrella, but some top-bracket Indian politicians.

Though Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was initially keen that the trip go ahead, he backtracked once a most powerful ministerial colleague voiced strong objections.

Among other things, this minister talked about Sharjah's proximity to Dubai, where mafia dons inimical to India have dropped anchor. In other words, "on grounds of national interest," the team ought not to go.

Significantly, the Union home ministry yesterday "ran a check"

on the Indian connection with the ACC and the ACF. This couldn't have pleased Dalmiya, who has been pushed into another controversy even though his initiative should have been welcomed.

In any case, the claim in a New Delhi daily that Dawood Ibrahim and Co. would contribute fifty per cent of the Rs 20 crore "guaranteed" by the Cricketers Benefit Fund Series (CBFS), the hosts, has baffled the ACF and infuriated the CBFS. "We, not the CBFS, reached the figure of Rs 20 crore taking into account the award of telecast and sponsorship rights (by the ACF) and the revenue to be accrued from in-stadia advertising and gate receipts," the city-based Dalmiya told **The Telegraph**.

He added: "In fact, awarding the telecast and sponsorship rights (to Zee) had alone fetched \$ 4 million, or over Rs 18 crore..."

So much for the underworld's Rs 10 crore contribution.

Contacted in Sharjah, CBFS president Qasim Noorani said he was appalled at any suggestion that the underworld had made inroads into the CBFS.

"I firmly deny such a link... Anybody can make an allegation. But, what's the proof?" he countered, speaking exclusively.

Noorani added the CBFS has already instituted a three-member body to probe into the Sharjah-specific allegations which keep flying around. Clive Lloyd is on the commission which has a March 31 deadline.

Meanwhile, tomorrow's selection committee meeting in Mumbai will now be limited to picking India A to play Australia. And, the on-off-on conditioning camp in Chennai will get underway Wednesday.

THE TELEGRAPH

5 FEB 2001

Benazir hails India's 'proactive' role in J&K

WASHINGTON: Former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto has hailed the emerging peace process between India and Pakistan on Kashmir, favouring the Indian government's initiatives in the overall interest of peace and security in the region.



Benazir Bhutto

The exiled leader of the Pakistani People's Party (PPP), who is currently on a visit to the U.S., approvingly referred to the Indian government's "proactive" role in Kashmir after the then U.S. president Bill Clinton's trip to South Asia in March last year.

She shared Washington's view that the Kashmir situation was "very dangerous" and called for urgent steps at crisis management, pending the full and final solution to the dispute.

She referred to India's insistence on treating the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir as a permanent border and Pakistan's disagreement and said both countries, as an interim step, should make borders

soft, allowing free movement across the borders with a view to fostering better understanding between the two people which, in the long run, would help facilitate a permanent settlement.

The PPP leader spoke at length on the "utter failure" of Pakistan's military regime on all fronts, pushing the country into a deep economic and political crisis. It usurped power in October 1999, promising "accountability, economic revival and a new leadership." The military had miserably failed to redeem its pledges, she added.

Ms Bhutto supported her PPP's participation in the all-party movement for revival of democracy in Pakistan. Time was propitious for such a struggle, she said. The Army must return to barracks, leaving the management of national affairs to the people in keeping with the global trend, she said.

According to PPP sources, Ms Bhutto is exerting pressure on the U.S. administration to force Pakistan's military ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf advance the timetable for transition to civilian rule this year. (Agencies)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

5 FEB 2001

Let's carry it forward, says Pakistan ND-8

By B. Muralidhar Reddy ND-8

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 3. The Pakistan Government today underlined the need to build on the first ever direct contact between the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, even as the Pakistan-based militant group, Lashkar-e-Taiba, claimed to have killed nine Indian soldiers in an attack on an Army camp in Kashmir on Friday night.

The Director-General of Inter-Services Public Relations and Press Secretary to the Pakistan Chief Executive, Maj. Gen. Rashid Qureshi, described the telephonic contact between Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Vajpayee on Friday as a "positive development for peace" that needed to be carried forward.

Talking to *The Hindu* on phone, Maj. Gen. Qureshi said for a long time Pakistan has been indicating its "readiness and willingness" to resolve the most critical issues between India and Pakistan by peaceful means.

He said the invitation extended to the executive of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference to visit Pakistan for talks, the observance of maximum restraint on the Line of Control and partial withdrawal of troops from the International Border were all measures intended to lead towards the process of dialogue to resolve all differences between India and Pakistan, including on Kashmir.

Maj. Gen. Qureshi said that "these are all indications of Pakistan's desire to resume the stalled dialogue. By offering relief to those affected in the unfortunate tragedy in Gujarat the Pakistan Government has once again shown that it is keen on restoration of normal ties with India."

He said if Pakistan and India could come together to share the grief in tragedy, they could certainly get down to resolve their differences. "After all it is human suffering in Kashmir too."

The spokesperson said the desire expressed by Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Vajpayee to keep open the channel of communication was a good sign. "It is a good omen for peace and if someone is genuinely

interested in peace and resolution of the main problem, he must build on this opportunity."

Positive step, says Hizb

PTI reports:

In Srinagar, the pro-Pakistan Hizb-ul-Mujahideen today welcomed the telephonic talks between Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Vajpayee and said it was ready to cooperate with every positive step taken by the two countries to resolve the Kashmir issue. Though Kashmir did not figure in yesterday's telephonic talk, it was an important development in the backdrop of "extremely strained relations" between the two countries, particularly in the past two years, top Hizb leader, Mr. Abdul Majid Dar, said here.

The new development had generated fresh expectations that rulers of the two countries had the capacity and wisdom to address the Kashmir issue, he said. "The Hizb-ul-Mujahideen is ready to discharge its responsibilities towards every concrete and positive step taken by India and Pakistan towards resolving the issue," Mr. Dar, chief commander of the outfit, said. "We will not lag behind and will certainly contribute positively to each and every step at resolving the issue."

Praise from Farooq

In New Delhi, the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, too hailed the "breaking the ice" and hoped that militant outfits would follow suit and ensure peace in the State. He said the talks between Mr. Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf should be translated into new dawn of peace so that "people in Kashmir could breathe in peace".

About the proposed visit of the Hurriyat leaders to Pakistan, Dr. Abdullah said "if they want to go they should be allowed, and these people should rope in organisations such as the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Taiba to ensure peace in the region."

The Chief Minister, however, made it clear that the autonomy resolution proposed by his Government would continue to be the demand of his administration. "I am here to ensure that this demand, an actual voice of people of Kashmir, will see the light of the day." //

THE HINDU

4 FEB 2001

J&K in freezer as Musharraf, PM discuss Gujarat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 2. — General Pervez Musharraf called up Mr AB Vajpayee this evening and conveyed his sympathy at the huge loss of life in the earthquake.

But to all appearances, the conversation was confined to Gujarat — Kashmir found no mention.

The diplomatic ice between the two nations was, however, broken. This was the first time the Pakistan chief executive and the Indian Prime Minister had spoken to each other since the military ruler came to power in October 1999.

Earlier today, at a function, the Prime Minister had said: "Gen. Musharraf would possibly talk to me over the phone today. This is also a way out.

"It would be worthwhile if a way is found out of sufferings and contacts are re-established. Sharing of grief always helps in removing bitterness and in bringing people together."

Is there a chance of a possible dialogue? The Prime Minister had replied: "We always favour talks, for which a right atmos-

phere has to be created."

What exactly would he discuss with the military ruler? Mr Vajpayee said: "At this juncture, it will be Gujarat."

The conversation lasted over five minutes, during which the Prime Minister assured the general of India's "continuing desire to build a good neighbourly relationship with Pakistan". He thanked Mr Musharraf for Pakistan's quake assistance and said the people of India appreciated the gesture.

The Prime Minister told reporters that the controversy over (whether India would accept) relief from Pakistan had no basis — it was mere confusion.

There was another confusion in the Pakistan High Commission here today — over whether Mr Vajpayee had called up Gen. Musharraf, or whether it was the other way round. A Pakistani diplomat said the information they had till 5 p.m. from various Indian sources was "Vajpayee called up Musharraf". Mr Vajpayee also received a call from Mr Bill Clinton. Mr Clinton asked for suggestions on how help could be extended more effectively.

CRICKET MEET

CHENNAI, Feb. 2. — The earthquake hasn't only broken the diplomatic ice between India and Pakistan, it will bring them together on the cricket field too. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh will play a triangular series in Sharjah from 8 to 11 February to raise funds for the Gujarat victims. The Centre has okayed the move, the BCCI secretary said. — PTI

THE STATESMAN

3 FEB 2001

Gen. Musharraf's call revives hopes of a thaw in Indo-Pak relations

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: It took an earthquake for Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan to break the silence. Gen Musharraf telephoned the Prime Minister on Friday—the first time the two leaders have spoken since the general seized power in October 1999.

The five-minute call from Pakistan's chief executive was to convey his country's sympathy at the great loss of life and destruction caused by the Gujarat earthquake. The Prime Minister thanked Gen Musharraf for Pakistan's assistance and said, "This gesture was greatly appreciated by the people of India." An external affairs ministry spokesman said the Prime Minister assured Gen



Musharraf of India's continuing desire to build good neighbourly relations with Pakistan. The two leaders spoke in Hindi.

Earlier, on Friday morning, Mr Vajpayee, who indicated he would later be speaking to Gen Musharraf, said, "We'll talk about Gujarat. I have always been in favour of a dialogue. It is important to create the right atmosphere for fruitful talks, and this gesture on Pakistan's part (and our accepting it) creates an opportunity.

"There were some people who had wrong notions about Pakistan's offer to help the earthquake victims. And the media played this up. But we are willing to take help from anyone," Mr Vajpayee said at a function at his residence, adding, "I will be talking to Gen Musharraf later in the day. When people

share sorrows, they are reduced."

Islamabad has already flown in blankets and tents to Ahmedabad. It is for the first time in several decades that Pakistani Air Force planes have flown into India.

The telephone call and the Prime Minister's words have revived hopes of a thaw in India-Pakistan relations, and the possibilities of this leading to something more. It is well-known that Mr Vajpayee is keen on improving relations with Pakistan, but only on the condition that the latter stops sending armed militants across the border. The ceasefire extension in Kashmir has been a good starter, but the continuing violence has dampened spirits.

Former U.S. president Bill Clinton rang up the PM on Friday morning to ask whether he could in any way help the victims of the quake. "I told him that he could ask the many Indians now settled in the U.S. to adopt some of the affected villages," Mr Vajpayee said. "This is just an instance of the spontaneous help and sympathy pouring in from the rest of the world. After all, Mr Clinton does not have anything to do with politics now."

Meanwhile, an Indian official here said not much should be read into Gen. Musharraf's call. "Don't get carried away by a message of sympathy. The general has telephoned, but so have many other world leaders, including U.S. President George Bush and Bill Clinton. The situation on the ground must change if India and Pakistan are to resume composite talks, and as of today, nothing much has happened," he said.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

3 FEB 2001

Quake brings Pakistanis, Indians together

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 2. A week after the Gujarat-earthquake, hundreds of distraught Pakistanis are enduring an agonising wait for visas to visit their loved ones across the border.

Queuing up outside the Indian High Commission here, many do not know whether their friends and relatives are dead or alive. "We have been trying to contact them in Bhuj since the time we heard about the quake and we still have no information," said 50-year-old Abdul Qadir. "We hope the High Commission will give us visas enabling us to go and see for ourselves how they are," he said. Qadir's elder brother, Abdul Razaq, was muttering prayers as he waited patiently in the cold morning air for his turn to apply for a visa.

"At the time of partition, our father decided to come to Karachi while the rest of the family decided to stay back. Our uncles, aunts and cousins are there," Razaq said.

Ahmed Hussain and his wife have brothers and sisters in Ahmedabad whom they had left behind after parti-

tion. "We have been told that we will get a visa for Mumbai only. We will be required to get a special permit to travel to Ahmedabad. This will not be easy because they give only a 15-day visa and it is tough to get an extension," Hussain said.

Bilqees Bano, a middle-aged woman from Karachi, wants to visit Ahmedabad with her husband, two sons and a daughter. "A number of our relatives live near the old hospital in Ahmedabad. We heard that they were ok and there was not much damage to that area. But our anxiety will be put to rest only once we have seen them for ourselves."

An Indian High Commission spokesperson said all such visa requests were being pushed through as fast as possible. "We are aware of the situation and are considering such applications sympathetically and on an urgent basis," he said.

Applicants are required to show invitations from the other side, and usually important occasions such as deaths and marriages are enough. — AFP

THE HINDU

3 FEB 2001

India's Initiative It's Over to Pakistan Now

By V P MALIK

11-10
27
A ceasefire is a political decision but requires detailed, well-analysed, military as well as political inputs. Intelligence serves both factors. In the present situation, it is a tactical move as part of a long-term strategy. The objective is to address the people of Jammu and Kashmir (and India), the law and order situation in the state, the government of Pakistan and the world community that would like to see a reduction of tension between India and Pakistan and a solution to the Kashmir problem.

Everyone wants India and Pakistan to resume a dialogue. Neighbours do not benefit from continuous hostility. India would be agreeable to the dialogue provided Pakistan removes the 'militancy gun' from Jammu and Kashmir. A very reasonable condition. What has Pakistan done after Lahore so far? The initiation of the Kargil war, removal of the political leadership which initiated 'Lahore', hijacking of IC 814, scuttling of talks with the Hizbul Mujahideen, continued attacks on soft targets, Fidayeen attacks on security forces, the Red Fort incident and so on.

We, therefore, do need to ascertain whether Pakistan's chief executive is in control of elements causing and supporting terrorism or not? How sincere is he about a political dialogue, reduction in tension or a solution? Or is all this just a facade to acquire some international and domestic credibility and legitimacy for himself? I believe that two months of ceasefire was not enough to make a visibly sincere and practical effort for this purpose. This window of opportunity which has been created deliberately and carefully for both countries should be utilised properly for the sake of peace.

Let us look at the military considerations. After Kargil, Pakistan-supported terrorist operations started gathering momentum from September 1999. In November that year, the Pakistani military assumed greater control of the jihadi terrorists resulting in intensification of their activities.

There are three dimensions of military operations; counter-infiltration measures along the Line of Control, anti-terrorist operations in the hinterland, and the healing touch. We have always laid greater stress on counter-infiltration measures along the LoC. This involves leaving smaller or no gaps between defences — the density of troops was increased further after Kargil — domination of the LoC to block the movement of jihadi terrorists and creating a strong intelligence

and surveillance network. Patrolling and laying of ambushes in suspected areas is intensified. Fire support to jihadi terrorists by Pakistani troops is responded to in equal measure. Such operations are bound to cause greater attrition on the military and civilians on both sides of the LoC. Although Pakistani troops and terrorists suffered fairly heavy casualties, the fact is that such high intensity operations along the LoC cannot be sustained for long. So after achieving the 'possible' objective, we could afford to bring down the 'temperature' along the border during the winter.

Sustained operations in the hinterland too started showing better results and a dent in the terrorists' morale. The number of terrorists killed rose steadily reaching an all-time high of over 225 terrorists killed in October 2000 alone. But such a level of military activities and pressures is not without any negative impact on the civilians' morale. The public suffers more on

IN BRIEF

- Pakistan stepped up hostilities after Lahore
- India's operations have made a dent in the terrorists' morale
- A unilateral ceasefire without adequate response cannot continue indefinitely

both sides. People in J&K are tired of terrorist-related violence; harassment and inconvenience caused due to security force operations. Recall the positive public response when it was decided to call off offensive operations against the Hizbul Mujahideen in the summer of 2000.

Some Fidayeen attacks notwithstanding, a fair degree of operational ascendancy was achieved by the security forces before Ramzan and the winter closure of trans-LoC movement, north of the Pir Panjal range. Politically and militarily, that was an appropriate time to declare a ceasefire, give relief to the largely innocent public, and to test the waters with Pakistan and the terrorists inside J&K. Winning the hearts and minds of the populace is of prime importance. The prime minister's second initiative last year, therefore, was well-timed. We have gained greater public support and international appreciation for our efforts. It is hoped that the state government has been, and will, exploit fully this opportunity to show and deliver good administra-

tion in meeting the basic needs of its people. The successful completion of the panchayat elections augers well for future.

But a unilateral ceasefire without adequate positive response can neither last long nor should it be permitted to. So far, there is hardly any positive response from Pakistan. Even on the LoC, the firing has reduced but infiltration goes on. On January 21, 2001, the army killed six jihadi terrorists in the Akhnoor sector. If the Pakistani military does not wish to stop, or cannot stop infiltration, is there any point in a dialogue with the present military government? We should be able to gauge its ability or sincerity shortly, before redeploying forces for the summer.

In the past month, there has been a lot of media hype over the Hurriyat, which appears to have more support in Pakistan than in J&K. The Hurriyat represents a small segment of the Kashmiri population. Its own divided house, a consistent confrontationist stance in India and its negative response to our ceasefire is gradually making its proposed trip to Pakistan redundant. I do hope that the Hurriyat leadership realises this.

The people in Pakistan, particularly some ISI officers, are prone to underestimating the strength and resilience of the Indian political system, its economy and its armed forces, and thus taking wrong initiatives/decisions some times. I recall some articles by a former director general of the ISI in March 1999, just before the Kargil war. It happened in 1965 too. Similar perceptions are being bandied about in Pakistan once again. This unnecessary machismo is well known. We should not forget that 'one underestimates the adversary at one's own peril'.

At this time, it is not only the people of Pakistan and India, particularly those of Jammu and Kashmir, who are anxiously watching and waiting for the next move but also the international community. Considering its current political image, charged social environment and the state of the economy, Pakistan's stakes are much higher. Unfortunately, one consistent weakness on its side has been to give greater weightage to tactical moves and forget the strategy, or the larger picture and long-term interests. Let us see what happens this time around.

(The author is a former chief of the army staff)

Pak set to send more material

Mubashir Zaidi

Islamabad, February 1

PAKISTAN WAS ready to send more help, if needed, in the form of medicines and relief goods for the Gujarat earthquake victims, newspapers quoting government officials said today. The last of the three Pakistan air force aircraft carrying relief goods left for Ahmedabad today.

"Once the third consignment reaches Ahmedabad, we will again contact Indian authorities to ask them if they need any further assistance from Pakistan. If India responds positively, the government will discuss with New Delhi what to send there," an official told *The News*.

Pakistan's latest offer came as Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf yesterday chaired a spe-

cial cabinet meeting that expressed deep sorrow at the loss of life and property in the devastating earthquake in India.

An official press release quoted General Musharraf as describing the earthquake as a great human tragedy for India. He extended his sympathies to the people of India "in their hour of grief".

The cabinet observed that Pakistan would not hesitate to send more relief goods to the quake victims if India so desired.

In what was described as a goodwill gesture, Pakistan had sent 600 tents and 7,500 blankets to India.

The Pakistani media expressed happiness that both Pakistan and India had put aside their differences. "In this hour of tragedy, it is most heartening that India and Pakistan have put aside their differences and come together to

help the earthquake victims. Pakistan by offering relief goods and India by accepting the offer, have broken the ice which had marked their frosty relations since the Kargil episode. It is a positive development that they have put politics aside at a time of widespread human suffering when saving lives and providing relief and succour to the distressed multitude should be the first priority of governments and citizens alike," Dawn stated in today's editorial.

The newspaper said it would be another good gesture on the part of Pakistan if Islamabad offered to co-operate with Delhi for any long-term reconstruction programme for quake-ravaged Gujarat.

"The contiguity of Gujarat with Sindh's eastern districts calls for greater co-operation in geological and seismic matters," it said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

2 FEB 2001

Pakistan should accept LoC as the border, says Farooq Abdullah

The Times of India News Service

JAMMU: Chief minister Farooq Abdullah said here on Thursday that the only way to bring peace in Jammu and Kashmir was through the process of talks.



Farooq Abdullah

In his presidential address during the third Amar Kapoor memorial lecture, he, however, added that the state would not be allowed to be bartered away to buy peace with Pakistan. He said: "Nothing is going to Pakistan, and they will have to accept the Line of Control (LoC) as the final border (which he has been advocating as the best solution)."

Farooq said, "The only way is by talking even to our worst enemies," adding: "Those once up-in-arms against India are today ready for talks, and this change of stance should be welcomed."

He said he had supported the

ceasefire, but the militants had not reciprocated and then "I lost hope". He added: "But we have to begin the process of talks and see where it will lead us to."

The CM said even the Hurriyat had seen the "reality on the ground, that the people were sick of militancy". He said the talks process had to be conducted in Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. "Even the aspirations of the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir are not to be ignored," he said.

Farooq said: "Pakistan took advantage of some disgruntled elements in Kashmir to brutalise the situation there, we should also have done the same in PoK. We should have helped the people in PoK, who have no freedom to express themselves as is afforded by India."

In his memorial lecture on the theme, "Kashmir — the way ahead," officer on special duty in the PMO A.S. Dulat, who emphasised that he was speaking in his private capacity, said: "The destiny of India must ultimately lie with the Kashmiris."

THE TIMES OF INDIA

2 FEB 2011

Pakistan pads up for succour series

BY LOKENDRA PRATAPSAHI

Calcutta, Feb. 1: Three days after sending the first plane-load of relief for Gujarat's earthquake victims, the Pakistan government has cleared its cricket team's participation in a fund-raising tri-series for the devastated millions.

Once again cricket seems to be the medium which could help improve Indo-Pak relations which recently hit the ocean floor. It's for India, now, to play ball. The initiative for the tri-series, which has no parallel, scheduled to be held in Sharjah from February 8 to 11, was taken today by the Jagmohan Dalmiya-headed Asian Cricket Foundation (ACF).

Besides Pakistan, the fund-raiser will feature India and Bangladesh. Had Sri Lanka not been busy with commitments in New Zealand, Sharjah would have hosted a unique quadrangular. The four matches (three league plus the final) will have ODI status, as the International Cricket Council's approval is a formality. The needful will quickly be done.

The ACF, which came into being last year, works under the Asian Cricket Council umbrella. That it should have a "humanitarian face" is listed in its charter and the ACF couldn't have chosen a more appropriate project.

This morning's ACF meeting in Lahore is when the initiative took firm shape. Among those present was Lt General Taugir Zia, the Pakistan Cricket Board chief and close lieutenant of General Pervez Musharraf, the country's top gun.

The groundwork, though, was done at last night's dinner for ACF delegates hosted by former Pakistan captain Rameez Raja at his Model Town residence.

AS FOR Bangladesh, nothing gets disrupted. Indeed, the exposure can only be welcomed by a nation desperate for opportunities in the big league.

Meanwhile, contacted in Lahore, Dalmiya said the ACF is hoping to make a significant contribution. "Enough funds must be generated, or else, why have a fund-raiser?" is how he put it.

Only, it's going to be a race against time. To get a title-sponsor: To award TV rights...

Though the issue then was different, the fielding of a joint Indo-Pak team in Colombo, just before the 1996 World Cup, was also a magnificent expression of Asian solidarity.

According to sources, the Bangladesh government has also given its okay and, so, only New Delhi's response is awaited.

Having accepted relief from Pakistan, it's inconceivable that the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government will withhold clearance for the Indian team's participation. In any case, New Delhi's stated objection is to the countries engaging in an exclusive series — the reason for cancelling the Indian team's visit to Pakistan earlier this season.

India and Pakistan, incidentally, haven't played each other since last summer's Asia Cup in Dhaka.

It is understood that Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president A.C. Muthiah has already "informally" sounded out the powers-that-be. A formal application from the BCCI to the government for participation in the tri-series will be routed through the sports ministry tomorrow. Muthiah was about to board a Mumbai-Chennai flight this evening, when Dalmiya called on his cellphone to convey the ACF decision.

Apparently, Bangladesh offered to host the fund-raiser, but the ACF played safe by opting for neutral Sharjah. There was the possibility of the Pakistan government saying "no", a fallout of the row between Islamabad and Dhaka following controversial remarks by a Pakistani diplomat late last year.

The diplomat was recalled, at Dhaka's insistence, but the bad blood generated led to the scrapping of a Pakistan-Bangladesh series, which was to have filled the void caused by India's no-show in Pakistan.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Changes in schedules

▶ FROM PAGE 1 (9-16)

Expectedly, the tri-series will disrupt India's preparations for the upcoming series against Australia. But, then, what has been planned is for a much bigger cause.

Specifically, phase I of the conditioning camp in Chennai (February 6-11) will be shelved and the camp will, instead, be held at one go from February 18-20. The Hero Honda-sponsored Challenger (February 12-15) will be postponed.

Most important, the selectors will meet on February 5 (assuming the government okay's participation) to pick the squad which will leave for Sharjah in the early hours of February 7.

The Pakistan team also gets affected. It was to have left for New Zealand on February 10, from Karachi, but will now depart a few days late. Possibly out of Dubai.

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Way for succour series

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ▶

'Pak offer of relief is a tactical move'

9/11 91-18

9/11
Pak

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's offer of aid to quake-hit India will do nothing to resolve their decades-old rivalry, but analysts here said on Tuesday it could provide a badly needed tactical victory for Islamabad's image abroad.

After sitting on the tarmac for several days, a Pakistan Air Force C-130 aircraft left here on Tuesday morning carrying tents and blankets for earthquake victims in India.

On its way to the quake zone, the aid will cross a border bristling with guns and animosities, the legacy of the neighbours' three wars since their bloody partition in 1947.

The fact that aid from Europe arrived in India before assistance from Pakistan, just a few hours away, is evidence of the diplomatic horse-trading that befuddles every step in bilateral relations.

Its belated departure on Tuesday came after India contradicted claims by Pakistani military ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf that New Delhi had rejected the assistance. "I did offer help but their response was a little unfortunate. They said they have plenty at home. They thanked us," the General said on Monday. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee later said he would

accept aid from "anywhere," including Pakistan.

"The world should realise that Pakistan is not always hostile to India. The relief offer will help the world know that we believe in harmonious and good relations and it is only fair to expect reciprocal gestures from India," Quaid-I-Azam University historian Aslam Syed said here. "It should be taken in itself as a ground-breaking move for improving relations."

The diplomatic stakes are higher than usual amid ongoing peace moves on both sides of the border to resolve the festering Kashmir dispute. India has claimed the moral high-ground and the upper hand in world opinion with a series of

ceasefires in the divided Himalayan state, although it has yet to agree to Pakistan's repeated calls for dialogue.

Retired foreign ministry secretary general Akram Zaki said Islamabad's magnanimity "may help on the diplomatic front, or it may not at all."

"I believe politics will take its own course ... The move may help make a good impact in general and may lead to a softening of the stance somewhat, but I am not very hopeful," Mr Zaki said. (AFP)



Gen. Musharraf



A. B. Vajpayee

INDIAN EXPRESS

31 JAN 2001

Benazir to accept LoC as international boundary

Dubai, January 27

IN A significant turnaround, former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said she was willing to accept the Line of Control (LoC) as international boundary between India and Pakistan, if that is what the Hurriyat Conference, an umbrella body of Kashmiri separatists groups, wants.

However, such a move would trigger off a backlash from armed militants who are waging a 'jihad' (holy war) in Kashmir, the Pakistan People's Party supremo told Dubai-based *Gulf News* in an exclusive interview in London, published today.

"There are some who tell me that the LoC should be made an international boundary and if that is what the all party Hurriyat Conference wants, I may not like it but I will accept it because at the end we have to go with the Kashmiris," she said.

"However, I think there will be a backlash against that because we still have people who are armed, who have been fighting the jihad and there would be a reaction against it," Bhutto said.

She said her party had proposed "soft borders" to enable people travel across without prejudice to the

UN Security Council resolutions and without making the LoC an international boundary, but added that she will go by the Hurriyat decision. "Let us begin with participatory democracy in the Kashmir Valley," she said, adding "we have participatory democracy to a certain degree in POK although it is very much under the control of the centre."

"Let the divided people of Kashmir start meeting each other and that can lead to greater understanding and then that can lead to a solution in due course," Bhutto said.

It is significant that an influential Pakistani leader like Bhutto has veered round to agreeing to the LoC being recognised as international boundary, a view expressed earlier by Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah. Bhutto said she was anxious to return to her country but that had to be part of a political movement. She said she owed it to "this country (Pakistan) to make a bid for Prime Minister a third time around". She said improved ties between PPP and Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League was still possible if the two parties "respect each other rather than seek each other's annihilation". (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

28 JAN 2007

An analysis of the challenge to India's position in Kashmir must focus on the external and internal dimensions of the issue and the complex linkage between the two

UNHOLY WARRIORS

AFANATIC is said to be one who redoubles his effort when he loses sight of his goal. Nothing in recent history has brought so much ignominy to Pakistan as the wanton acts of its *jehadi* fanatics who are waging a war against India in Allah's name. Having been taken by surprise by the Kashmiri people's warm response to Prime Minister Vajpayee's peace overtures and the Indian security forces' steadfast adherence to the ongoing ceasefire in the face of grave provocation, Pakistan's Islamist fundamentalists have redoubled their efforts to strike terror in the hearts and minds of the people of J&K.

Any analysis of the challenge to India's position in Kashmir must focus on the external and the internal dimensions of the issue and the complex linkage between the two. The management of the militancy in J&K is firmly in the hands of Pakistan's ISI-sponsored and controlled fundamentalist Islamist organisations that are employing mercenary fanatics as their tools of terror. The virulence of their campaign of hatred and intolerance has no parallel in the long history of religious bigotry. The moot point is, how much leverage does the ISI still have with its progeny, or is it another case of having produced a Frankenstein's monster?

The Harkat-ul-Mujahideen chief, Maulana Farooq Kashmiri, has been shouting from the rooftops and thundering during Friday prayers that Kashmir can be liberated only through *jehad* and those who believe in dialogue with India are deluding themselves. Hafiz Mohammad Saheed of the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) that masterminded the Red Fort attack, said at an *iftaar* gathering in Islamabad, "Had the Pakistan government preferred *jehad* to talks, there would be no Kashmir problem." He described the ceasefire along the $\text{--}\text{--}\text{--}$ as ridiculous. The terror tactics of Maulana Masood Azhar of Jaish-e-Mohammad continue unabated. In league with the LeT, the Maulana's zealots have vowed to launch

The author is former Senior Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

more *fidayeen* attacks on the security forces and have even threatened the Indian Prime Minister.

General Musharraf himself is under attack from the mullahs who run Pakistan's *jehad* factories and continues to face serious internal threats to his legitimacy. In an unprecedented statement, Qazi Hussain Ahmed, leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami, has

By GURMEET KANWAL

Kashmir, the Pakistan government has over the years conferred a certain legitimacy on their functioning. Musharraf's task made doubly difficult by the Islamist hardliners within the army who are openly sympathetic to the *jehadis'* extremist agendas.

The external-in-

Musharraf is acutely conscious that pursuing a holy war against India is all that is keeping the hardliners from fomenting *jehad* to home



made bold to describe Musharraf as a security risk to Pakistan and called upon other Pakistani Generals to sack him for his soft line on Kashmir. Akram Awan's Tanzeem-ul-Ikhwan is a far-right Islamic group comprising mainly retired Pakistani army officers with its tentacles spreading rapidly in the increasingly Talibanised Pakistan Army. Awan has ordered Musharraf to establish the Shariah system in Pakistan by 7 March 2001 or it will be imposed by force. Akram has also demanded that Musharraf should extend full support to the *jehad* in Kashmir.

Musharraf has no option but to tread warily. He is acutely conscious that pursuing a holy war against India is all that is keeping the fundamentalist hardliners from fomenting *jehad* at home. Thousands of armed, impoverished zealots are being trained in numerous *madrasas* that dot the *moffussil* areas. These *jehad* factories are turning out more recruits than can be absorbed by all the pan-Islamic movements from Bosnia and Chechnya through Afghanistan to Kashmir and Xinjiang. To add to Musharraf's woes, the Taliban, Pakistan's proteges in Afghanistan, have trained over 50,000 foot soldiers of Islam from 55 countries in recent years. Having bankrolled and armed the *jehadi* organisations to recruit holy warriors for Afghanistan and

internal linkage spans the ebb and flow of the relationship between the political and militant organisations in J&K and their handlers, supporters and critics in Pakistan. The All Party Hurriyat Conference is split between its pro-Pakistan, pro-*azadi* and, the relatively fewer, pro-autonomy elements and is unable to agree on even nominating a team to proceed to Pakistan for talks. Its chairman, Abdul Ghani Bhat, has been condemned by Pakistan's Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen for stating that the people of Kashmir cannot afford more sacrifices. The present ceasefire has been unequivocally welcomed by Yaseen Malik of the JKLF, Abdul Ghani Lone, Mirwaiz Omar Farooq and chairman Bhat. The ailing Ali Shah Geelani, who now remains the solitary supporter of a merger with Pakistan, does not support the ceasefire.

The fissures between the India and Pakistan-based groups of Hizbul Mujahideen are also evident. The Hizbul is pro-Pakistan, as is its parent organisation, the Jamaat-e-Islami in Kashmir. Its Muzaffarabad-Islamabad based chief, Syed Salahuddin, wants India to recognise that Pakistan is a party to the Kashmir dispute, to agree to engage in tripartite talks with Pakistan and Kashmiri representatives and to reduce the number of troops deployed in Kashmir to 1989 levels. He said in a

recent interview to The Dawn that the Hurriyat leaders had no mandate for asking the militants to respect the ceasefire. However, despite periodic denials to the contrary, his views are quite obviously not fully reciprocated by Abdul Majid Dar, the Hizbul's field com-

mander in Kashmir. In an interview with The Henry L Stimson Centre, Washington, Dar has expressed his support for a political solution through a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute. He wants free and fair elections in J&K overseen by international observers.

Violent acts of terrorism in J&K and elsewhere in India are a manifestation of Pakistan's declared agenda of annexing Kashmir at any cost and it would be unrealistic to expect the Pakistan government to harm its cause by diluting its support to the *jehadis*. Hence, Pakistan's limited reciprocation of India's peace overtures should be seen for what it is — rhetorical posturing. As was to be expected, Pakistan's gestures are elaborate in style but deficient in substance.

Within India public opinion on the Prime Minister's peace initiative and on allowing a Hurriyat team to proceed to Pakistan for negotiations is divided. However, there is almost complete agreement that, in deference to the Kashmiri people's desire and overwhelming support for peace, the ceasefire should be extended further despite the ruthless incidents of violence perpetrated recently by Pakistan-based terrorist organisations.

No government in Pakistan, military or elected, is likely to commit political *hara-kiri* by giving up its claim on Kashmir. Even the acceptance of the LoC as a permanent border is unlikely to be the least common denominator in Pakistan's approach to the issue of a final settlement.

Then, should India extend an unequal ceasefire that is disadvantageous to its own security forces and allows the predominantly foreign militants to rest, recoup, regroup and refit? The answer is deceptively simple. India must continue to persist with its ceasefire as it is in its national interest to give peace a chance in Kashmir. The verdict in the panchayat elections has wholeheartedly endorsed the ceasefire and the corresponding reduction in violence.

It is only when the people of Kashmir take it upon themselves to root out militancy that it will be finally eliminated. The ceasefire will enhance the realisation that the lives of Kashmiris and their Sufi culture are being ruined by Pakistan's mercenary marauders and strengthen their resolve to compel the *jehadis* to relent.

While Pakistan has escalated the situation on the LoC by reducing the number of daily incidents and claims

of daily incidents and claims

of daily incidents and claims

of daily incidents and claims

Former army chief coming for security conference

Unofficial Pak talks track opens

for 25/11
gndw pak ~

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Jan. 24: Tough talk on both sides of the border greeted the second extension of the unilateral truce in Kashmir but efforts were under way to keep the back-channels unclogged.

The possibility of Track-II diplomacy making headway gathered ground with former Pakistan army chief General Jehangir Karamat's scheduled arrival in the capital tomorrow. Ostensibly, he will be here to participate in the third Asian Security Conference, to be inaugurated by defence minister George Fernandes on January 27.

Karamat, along with security experts from other Asian countries, has also been invited to the Republic Day parade. The seminar hosted by the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses will give participants a chance to discuss key security issues. For India and Pakistan, it is being seen as the precursor to official talks.

Officially, however, both sides stuck to their known stands. Islamabad termed the truce extension an "old ploy" which would be useless without the visit of Hurriyat leaders to Pakistan.

Officials at India's foreign ministry matched Sattar's public posture, wondering whether it would be prudent for Delhi to rush to the talks table.

The foreign office mandarins argued that since it was not yet clear how far Pervez Musharraf was in control in Islamabad, Delhi

should wait a little longer before resuming the dialogue.

Musharraf has maintained an ambiguous stand on the violence and argued that it would end only when Delhi resumes the talks.

Many Indian officials are wary of this position. They argued it showed Musharraf's failure to take a tough line on sections bent on derailing the peace initiative. "Even if we accept that despite his sincerity Musharraf is unable to control these elements, why should we talk to him?" a senior official asked.

He argued that Pakistan is desperate to restart the dialogue with India as it would help end its global isolation. "What do we gain if we start the dialogue and the violence also continues in Kashmir and elsewhere?" he asked.

The Congress today complained that the government took such a crucial decision as extending the ceasefire without consulting the Opposition. The party will meet the Prime Minister and urge him to build a national consensus before embarking on any ambitious policy.

The BJP, however, shrugged off its initial reservations and lined up behind Vajpayee. "I feel that for the first time in 60 days, the Pakistan chief executive has expressed the desire for peace and if, in the course of this one month of ceasefire, word translates into action, it would be a welcome step," BJP vice-president Jana Krishnamurthy said.

THE TELEGRAPH

25 JAN 2001

Nuclear dialogue with Pakistan

By V. R. Raghavan

PKISTAN HAS been consistent in its stand that a dialogue with India should commence at the earliest. This desire for an inter-governmental negotiation has been expressed a number of times by its Chief Executive. In his eagerness for a dialogue with India, General Pervez Musharraf has offered to set aside all conditions and is prepared to commence the dialogue process at any level, place and time. These are bold offers and have created a deservedly favourable response in many circles in and outside India. The Indian Government has responded by indicating its willingness to join the dialogue process. It has demanded that violence being perpetrated by militant groups based in Pakistan be brought down. The possibility of a meaningful dialogue has been explored at different levels through intermediaries and back channels. A dialogue has also been attempted between experts in the nuclear weapons field. The experience has revealed the enormous difficulties involved in translating the intent for a dialogue into the content of its process.

There is no disagreement on the risks inherent in the lack of transparency in the subcontinent on the nuclear arsenals, command and control structures, and doctrines. The two countries had agreed that nuclear ambiguities and risks should be addressed to avoid a nuclear conflict between the two countries. They had unequivocally committed themselves to a dialogue on the nuclear weapons issues through the MOU signed as part of the Lahore Declaration. The nuclear dialogue was therefore perceived by both countries as one which should be begun despite obstacles which were holding up interaction on other issues.

Kargil changed the political condition in Pakistan and the new leadership turned its face on the Lahore Declaration. In his interview to this paper, General Musharraf clearly indicated his disdain for the Lahore spirit by arguing that the Declaration had not laid enough importance on Jammu and Kashmir. He went so far as to say that confidence building measures are mere cosmetic arrangements and implied that they do not help in keeping peace. He has apparently changed his perception in the time that has since elapsed. In a meet-

If a solution is to be had, it can only be through sharing the understanding and logic of nuclear weapons' risks.

ing with a team of the Delhi Policy Group on January 14, Pakistan's suave and skilful Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, averred favourably on the issue. He asserted that all agreements and accords signed by Pakistan with India were operative and affirmed his country's commitment to them. This commitment did not, however, get demonstrated in the nuclear dialogue which commenced the next day in Islamabad. The obstacles to continuing a meaningful dialogue soon became apparent in the exercise.

A nuclear risk reduction dialogue has been attempted since last year between the Delhi Policy Group and the Islamabad Policy Research Institute. The initiative for the dialogue came from the latter. The dialogue was commenced after a mutual understanding that the subject be discussed outside the ambit of the issues and conflicts affecting relations between the two countries. This was necessary to ensure progress by isolating the nuclear related issues from the complexities involved in resolving other issues, especially those concerning Jammu and Kashmir. The first meeting held in New Delhi in August last year adhered to these principles, and proved fruitful in improving understanding and laying the groundwork for continuing the dialogue. There was confidence built on the modalities of the dialogue and the discipline needed to make progress on the subject.

The meeting in Islamabad was structured on specific issues related to nuclear risks and measures to reduce them. The subjects and issues were mutually agreed upon before the teams met in Islamabad. The affirmation of Mr. Abdul Sattar of Pakistan's commitment to the Lahore declaration and the MOU was, therefore, a good start to the dialogue. The MOU had, in fact, stated the need for a dialogue on nuclear issues with considerable emphasis. The Islamabad dialogue from the Indian side was led on the specific issues agreed upon in advance. On the Pakistan side the issues were addressed mainly by senior retired members of the Foreign Service. The Pakistani case was painstakingly

built on the linkages between nuclear weapons and the ongoing conflict in Jammu and Kashmir. It became apparent that the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir issue was being made a condition for moving forward on the nuclear issue. This was also the central Pakistani theme in an open forum discussion before a large audience. On the other hand, there was a sizable segment of participants at both meetings, who felt that combining the nuclear issues with Jammu and Kashmir would derail the dialogue process.

The two contrasting positions notwithstanding, it was possible to find some areas of convergence on nuclear issues. That this convergence could be obtained is indicative of the possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead. It was apparent that progress cannot be made without a determination to seek solutions on the merits of the case. In matters concerning nuclear weapons, merit and logic are not matters to be won from or denied to the other. Nuclear deterrence and the risks inherent in them have a merit and logic of their own. If a solution is to be had it can only be through sharing the understanding and logic of nuclear weapons risks. Adding a conditionality to reducing nuclear risks can therefore only enhance such risks with unpredictable and catastrophic consequences.

It would appear from the meetings in Islamabad that there are two views operating in Pakistan. There is the view that any dialogue with India must be predicated upon obtaining concessions from it on Jammu and Kashmir. It is the view of that major part of the establishment which interprets India's joining a dialogue, as a sign of its compulsions in the face of continuing conflict in the State. This Pakistani view is also connected with a belief now being assiduously built about the meaning and relevance of 'Jehad'. The team from the Delhi Policy Group was given an extensive interpretation of the subject in a presentation at the Institute of Strategic Studies, whose interests would have otherwise been expected to rest elsewhere. The notion of 'Jehad' has also re-

ceived a fillip after General Musharraf chose to place an interpretation on it, in relation to Jammu and Kashmir. This part of the establishment misses an important point by linking 'Jehad', Jammu and Kashmir and nuclear weapons. There has been a view that Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear weapons had much to do with Jammu and Kashmir. In other words, it intends to use nuclear weapons as instruments to influence political outcomes. Apart from the dangerous implications of such beliefs, the idea confirms the many fears on Pakistan's ability to fathom the fears which should otherwise drive its nuclear policies.

The other view in Pakistan is of those who prefer to see a focus on economic growth and global engagement. They are aware of the damage to the polity and international image of Pakistan by the presence of extremist groups operating from its territory. They reflect on the meaning of Pakistan getting recognised as the centre stage of international terrorism. There is understanding in this element of the perilous linkages between the economic stagnation, the Afghanistan connection of arms and narcotics, the fundamentalist roots in the country, and the risks of nuclear brinkmanship. This saner view also prevails in part of the establishment, which to its credit ponders on the possible but difficult ways out of the situation.

In Pakistan, Jammu & Kashmir has been made into an alibi for its many problems. Even its internal challenge of militant extremism is beginning to be viewed as a consequence of Jammu and Kashmir. The insistence on Jehad does not make matters any easier for the Pakistan establishment to better manage the affairs. A dialogue which is sought with India at every level and forum gets embedded in the fixation on Jammu and Kashmir.

Unfortunately the logic of nuclear deterrence is also sought to be distorted by the connecting them to Jammu and Kashmir. Yet the counterparts of the nuclear dialogue in Islamabad were keen on continuing it. It remains to be seen if future efforts at nuclear risk reduction would be free from the polemics of 'Jehad' and Jammu and Kashmir.

Advantage India ^{HT}

HAVING INITIATED a peace process with the unilateral offer of a cease-fire during Ramzan and then extending it for a month, it would have been an instance of 'two steps back' if there was no further extension. But it isn't only the need to sustain the momentum which has made the Centre add another month to the cease-fire period. Such a routine gesture would have had no place in a situation as volatile as in Kashmir. Instead, what evidently persuaded the Vajpayee Government to make its latest move is the realisation that, so far as India is concerned, the pros are at present outweighing the cons in the deadly confrontation between the various sides in the hapless state.

What is perhaps most advantageous for India at the moment is the ease with which it is winning the diplomatic battle because of its peace overtures. Till recently, General Musharraf with his proposals for talks at any time and any place was trying to demonstrate Pakistan's pious intentions for public consumption while egging on the militants from behind. Now his helplessness or inability to control the *jihadis* despite the restraint shown by India has compelled him, even if partly, to stop playing games. Hence, the scaling down of the artillery barrages at the Line of Control and occasional expressions of disquiet by his subordinates about the tarnishing of Pakistan's name by the *jihadis*. In fact, a newspaper report in Pakistan has regretted the equation of *jihad* with terrorism in the minds of the international community. It also pointed out how the militant groups were fostering sectarian violence in Pakistan as well.

While Pakistan's current discomfiture would have been reason enough for the extension of the cease-fire, it has to be noted that several other positive factors also lend support to the Vajpayee Government's decision. One of them is the slight improvement in the overall situation, as is evident from the impressive turnout for the local elections even in supposedly 'disturbed' areas. In addition, the ordinary people of Kashmir must now be more aware than ever before how desperate the militants and the mercenaries are to keep the fires burning, even with the help of LTTE-style suicide squads. At a time when these fenegades are confidently fighting a losing battle and occasionally even embarrassing their mentors across the border, there is every reason for India to persist with the initiative that it had taken at the beginning of the month of Ramzan.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 JAN 2001

India, Pak. clash at Geneva

GENEVA, JAN. 25. India and Pakistan today clashed over the situation in Jammu and Kashmir with New Delhi calling upon Islamabad to demonstrate its commitment to dialogue in a "meaningful manner" and "show more encouraging signs" that it was ready to end cross-border terrorism.

India's Ambassador, Mr. Rakesh Sood, condemned as intemperate the remarks of Pakistan Foreign Secretary, Mr. Inamul Haq, at the ongoing annual session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) here after the latter blamed India for allegedly continuing to avoid a dialogue and seeking to impose "unacceptable preconditions" on the resumption of stalled bilateral talks.

Mr. Sood said terrorism has continued unabated in the State despite the extension of the unilateral ceasefire twice by India and wanted Pakistan to show signs more encouraging than "some de-escalation" of its troops along the Line of Control (LoC). He said India's ceasefire initiatives were an attempt to bring about conditions for a dialogue and that it did not "close the option" of talks with Pakistan.

Mr. Sood sarcastically said trust and confidence could not be built by "engaging in dialogue in winter and committing aggression in spring". — PTI

THE HINDU

25 JAN 2001

'Time to end Indo-Pak hostility'

Mubashir Zaidi
Islamabad, January 23

HT-13

24/1

Lashkar to continue *jehad*



CHIEF EXECUTIVE General Pervez Musharraf has observed that despite many constraints, the situation is moving towards normalisation with regards to relations with India.

He made these remarks while presiding over a two-day meeting of the top military brass, the Corps Commanders, which concluded today. The military ruler went on to say that some breakthrough was

achieved both by India and Pakistan for resuming a dialogue that would lead to hammering out differences peacefully and without opting for military solutions, media reports said.

Gen Musharraf said his military government had informed the Indians that Pakistan was all for peace and that no opportunity should now be missed for normalising the bilateral relations.

The meeting also reviewed the regional security environs, situation along the borders, Line of Control and the working boundary.

The Chief Executive also stated that Pakistan would not be provoked by the latest test-fire of Agni-II by India and exercise restraint by not conducting tests of Shaheen II and Ghauri III missiles. "Islamabad would continue to try to have better relations with Delhi. The international environment is fast becoming in favour of cessation of hostilities between India and Pakistan," he said in the meet, adding that Pakistan was committed to pursue the Lahore Declaration.

The General hoped that New Delhi would facilitate the proposed visit by the Hurriyat team to Pakistan by issuing passports to all the Hurriyat leaders so that some new breakthrough could be achieved to ensure durable peace in the region.

However, he reiterated Pakistan's stance to extend all political and moral support to the people of Indian Kashmir.

HT Correspondent
Islamabad, January 23

LASHKAR-E-TAYYIBA chief Hafiz Muhammad Saeed has said that his organisation would not accept any ceasefire and continue *jehad* to force India to come to terms for a just and amicable solution of the Kashmir issue.

Talking to mediapersons in Lahore last night, Saeed claimed that following suicidal attacks by Mujahideen, the situation in Kashmir has drastically changed and the Kashmiris, whose morale is now high, are raising pro-Pakistan slogans instead of independent Kashmir slogans.

"All these developments took place after the ceasefire. As such there was need to accelerate the *jehad* activities to win popular support for Pakistan," he added.

Hafiz Saeed said that suicide attacks by Lashkar would force India to retreat from Kashmir. "No relief would be given to Indian security forces, which were about to face a crushing defeat. Moreover, the current peace plan is motivated by Dickson Plan of America, according to which, Kashmir will be divided between India and Pakistan while some parts will remain independent and Azad Kashmir (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) will go to Pakistan with minor changes," he claimed.

The Lashkar chief said if the Hurriyat and Pak were bent upon to initiate peace talks, even then the *jehad* would not be suspended to put the Kashmiris at the position of strength on the negotiating table with India. "If *jehad* is suspended, India will not take interest in talks," he observed.

He alleged India wanted to buy time under the pretext of peace process. "It is for this reason that it is using delaying tactics to issue passports to the APHC leaders. How can India, which is reluctant in issuing passports to the APHC leaders, be sincere in starting meaningful talks with Kashmiris," he asked.

Nuclear regulatory authority formed

PAKISTAN'S PRESIDENT Rafiq Tarar on Monday promulgated an ordinance establishing a nuclear regulatory authority for regulation of nuclear safety and radiation protection.

Pakistan nuclear regulatory authority (PNRA) will be the competent authority for regulation of safety of nuclear installations, protection against risks arising from radiation, the extent of civil liability for nuclear damage resulting from any nuclear incident and for matters ancillary there to or connected there with.

PTI, Islamabad

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 JAN 2001

Resume three-way talks: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 23. Pakistan today made a guarded response to another extension of the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir by the Indian Government and called for the resumption of a three-way dialogue.

A terse statement by a Foreign Office spokesman expressed the hope that New Delhi would demonstrate its sincerity by actually implementing the ceasefire on the ground "unlike the past two months", while militant outfits termed it a "farce" and vowed to continue their operations in the State.

The contrast in the military government's reaction to the first (November 19) and second (December 20) announcements from New Delhi and today's extension is too glaring to be missed. Today's reaction was a blunt message to New Delhi to move beyond the "rhetoric", end the alleged repression in the Valley and get down to a serious dialogue.

Accusing India of continuing with its old

ways, the statement urged New Delhi to respond to its December 2 formulation if it was really serious about resolving the conflict and resuming the dialogue.

It urged India to allow the Hurriyat delegation to visit Islamabad without any further delay and pave the way for a tripartite dialogue. "Peace can be established only if the Kashmir problem is settled in conformity with the will of the Kashmiri people", it said.

Hizb, Lashkar reject ceasefire

The Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which have claimed responsibility for a majority of incidents in the ceasefire period, alleged that India's announcement was meant to "mislead" the international community and divert attention from "its failure to suppress the Kashmir movement."

The Hizb spokesman, Mr. Salim Hashmi, said the ceasefire had changed nothing on the ground for the people of Kashmir and the military and para-military forces were continuing their search and seize operations.

If India was sincere in resolving the Kash-

mir issue it should accept the three conditions laid down by his outfit; end 'atrocities' against the people of Kashmir, concede Kashmir as a disputed territory and agree for a tripartite dialogue.

Mr. Hashmi alleged that the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, had given orders to the State police to shoot those opposed to the Indian 'occupation' as there was no space in the jails. "What is the big deal about the ceasefire when you have the head of the State talking on these lines?"

The Lashkar chief, Prof. Hafez Mohammad Saeed, dubbed the ceasefire a "fraud and deception" and said if India was sincere in finding a solution to the conflict, it should recall its forces from the Valley.

"Since Indian atrocities have continued unabated, we declare that we reject the latest Indian offer and will carry on attacks on military targets and personnel. India must quit Kashmir, otherwise it will be exposed to disintegration."

THE HINDU

24 JAN 2001

J&K ceasefire extended by another month

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23. Displaying boldness and self-assurance, India today decided to extend by another month the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir, despite the militant groups' unrelenting resort to violence and terrorism. The rationale for the decision is stated to be the belief that "violence must be ended and peace, which has been welcomed by the people of Jammu and Kashmir, be given every chance."

The primary consideration — and expectation — within the Government is that Pakistan would respond positively and constructively, and would rein in various militant groups. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, said, "it is now the responsibility of Pakistan to see to it that terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir are stopped and there is an end to the killings of innocent people."

The decision to extend the ceasefire was taken at a formal meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security. Besides Mr. Vajpayee, who presided, the meeting was attended by the Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Mr. K. C. Pant, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, the Chief of the Army Staff, Gen. S. Padmanabhan, and other senior officials. The views of Dr. Farooq Abdullah were also inputs in the final decision.

It was a difficult decision for the



A Kashmiri youth being frisked by a security forces personnel in Srinagar on Tuesday. Security has been intensified in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of the Republic Day celebrations. — Reuters

CCS to take, given the recent stepped-up terrorists attacks, which in turn generated a negative political reaction. Though the consensus was in favour of a second extension of the ceasefire (first announced on November 19, and later extended for a month till the Republic Day), there was a difference in perspectives.

One view was that the Government should bluntly state what it expected from Pakistan. However, the final formulation stopped short of positing a linkage. It is believed that Mr. Singh and Mr. Mishra were the principal advocates of the extension, while Mr.

Fernandes, Mr. Advani and Mr. Pant did not press their point of view.

The statement merely noted that "it is regrettable that Pakistan has not recognised the demand of time for peace and continues to promote, encourage and abet cross-border terrorism. This must cease and the activities of organisations such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad must be curbed and controlled by Pakistan."

Later in the evening, the Prime Minister reiterated that India was prepared for talks with Pakistan "as quickly as possible", but he pointed out that "for the success

of the talks a conducive atmosphere has to be first created. There is no use having talks even as violence continues."

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Mr. Singh articulated the Government's judgment that Pakistan's military regime remained fully in control of the militant groups and, therefore, the onus was on Islamabad to control these outfits. "We do not buy Pakistan's argument that it has no control over these groups. They are controlled and directed by Pakistan."

Kashmiris convinced

The argument that tilted the scale in favour of extending the ceasefire was the view that the Prime Minister's peace initiative did make an impact on the State's people, who were reasonably convinced of the Vajpayee government's desire for peace. It was noted, for example, that the militant groups were now targeting civilians and civilian casualties had gone up considerably, and this was bound to make the people in the Kashmir Valley realise the militants' lack of interest in peace. It was also noted that the international community had appreciated India's willingness to give peace a chance, and that the new administration in Washington would get enough time to lend a helping hand.

The calculation now is that the military regime would be constrained to reconsider its "ple tough" stance. The officials are happy with the initial response from the Valley to the Government's decision.

Cong. urges vigilance: Pat

THE HINDU

24 JAN 2001

Pak has misread my Saudi trip: Jaswant

JYOTI MALHOTRA
RIYADH, JAN-22

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh has rejected Pakistan's contention that his maiden visit to Saudi Arabia was a motivated one, emphasising that to do so would "belittle the wisdom of Saudi Arabia and completely misread India's intentions in this regard."

Singh was replying to a Saudi journalist's question about Pakistan's view of the Indian Minister's trip at a public press conference, just before he drove off to the stud farm of Crown Prince Abdullah — who has gifted him an Arabian horse — considered to be a rare gesture on the part of

the most powerful man in Saudi Arabia.

"My visit to Saudi Arabia stands on its own," Singh said, alluding to remarks made by the Pakistani foreign office, adding that "for anyone to conceive that it was directed against a third country is to belittle the wisdom of Saudi Arabia and completely misread India's intention in this regard."

The Foreign Minister's visit has clearly stirred up considerable interest in the region, from Pakistan across the Gulf and the Arab world, especially the manner in which he has been so warmly received by the Saudi leadership.

Aware that the Kashmir issue remains a major issue of



concern here, Singh told a public gathering of the Saudi elite that as the India was "conscious of (its) special responsibility in promoting regional peace and cooperation."

"That is why I reaffirm India's commitment to a composite dialogue process with Pakistan. But

for the dialogue to have any value or meaning, Pakistan must demonstrate its commitment to existing bilateral agreements and effectively end its support for cross-border terrorism," he added.

A number of countries still take their cue from Riyadh's responses, especially since Saudi Arabia continues to be acknowledged as the guardian of the Islamic faith, by virtue of the fact that Islam's holiest sites are located in this country.

Indian officials will be travelling to Kuwait and Abu Dhabi from Riyadh to personally explain India's views on all issues, including Kashmir and a possible dialogue with Pakistan, to the people they meet.

The special relationship between Riyadh and Islamabad through the Cold War and beyond has been a given for both political and religious reasons, but as the centre of terrorism has shifted to the Taliban, in Afghanistan, Riyadh has been taking another look at its patronage of Islamist groups.

Singh refused to answer a direct question on Saudi interest in these groups, which have an impact on Kashmir, taking recourse to the confidentiality terms of his talks with the Saudi leadership.

But he emphasised that India's recent Agni missile test did not indicate an arms or missile race in the region, nor that India's missile programme had any "aggressive content."

Samjhauta gets steam for three years

FROM GAJINDER SINGH

Chandigarh, Jan. 21: India and Pakistan today agreed to extend the Samjhauta Express service for three more years, putting to rest speculation over the future of the only rail link between the neighbours.

The agreement also promised to upgrade service by providing sleeper and economy class accommodation.

Pakistan had wanted the train service to be extended to Amritsar, but the agreement — signed by railway officials of both countries after meetings held over five days in Delhi — did not mention the demand.

The train now terminates at Attari on the Indo-Pakistan border in Punjab.

The decision to run the train to Amritsar has been kept in abeyance for the time being, a senior railway official said on telephone from Delhi. He added, however, that the agreement has prepared the ground for further talks on the subject.

The agreement, which will come into force with immediate effect, was signed by additional member (traffic) of the Railway Board, S.S. Bhandari, and Abdul Qayyum, additional general manager (freight), Pakistan Railways.

Under the revised agreement, the Samjhauta Express will continue to run as a bi-weekly service between the two countries.

India also accepted Pakistan's proposal to permit attaching up to two extra coaches in times of heavy rush.

The long-term Samjhauta agreement seems almost a miracle, given the frosty relationship between the two neighbours.

Started as a symbol of peace between the two countries following the Simla Agreement in 1972, the train has been running regularly since September 1975.

Although the much-publicised Lahore-Delhi bus set into motion famously by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in February 1999 provides the other surface transport link between India and Pakistan, the people of the two countries, particularly those affected by Partition, have a special attachment to the train. Many use the train to visit their relatives across the border.

Initially, the train linked Lahore with Delhi, but in 1995 the service was curtailed to terminate at Amritsar. Then Attari was fixed as the terminal point.

Since 1995, the future of the train has looked uncertain on many occasions due to recurrence of hostilities between the two countries. But except on two occasions — during Operation

THE TELEGRAPH

2-2 JAN 2001

CEASEFIRE REVIEW

5/18 Peace bids need perseverance 2/21

THE bid to storm Srinagar airport and the firing at a public meeting addressed by Farooq Abdullah must be viewed as attempts by militants to achieve what the raid on the Red Fort failed to attain — scuttling the peace moves and pressuring Government into calling off its unilateral cease fire. While it would be pertinent to ask, how long could the Government can afford to turn the Biblical “other cheek,” it would be equally important that it continues to display a determination to adhere to its peace initiative. That the latest outrages quickly followed the Army Chief’s recommendation that the ceasefire be extended beyond 26 January is a point not to be missed.

The Lashkar-e-Toiba and other non-Kashmiri outfits would be overjoyed if Gen Padmanabhan’s suggestion was ignored because in his assessment every horror perpetrated during the ceasefire contributed to their alienation from the general populace. From all accounts the common folk in the state are breathing easier, which is not the atmosphere in which terrorism flourishes.

The reduction in security checks and cordon-and-search missions result in the militants being seen as the prime cause of the hardships the people suffer. The significant fall in artillery and mortar firing across the LoC after Pakistan ordered its troops to show maximum restraint has also brought relief to those living along the frontier — whose plight has never been portrayed as vividly as those in the Valley caught up in the confrontation between militants and security forces. The silence of the big guns has another tactical impact, it deprives the militants of the covering fire under which they seek to infiltrate.

It should also be remembered that even when the security forces were playing a pro-active role they were seldom able to thwart missions undertaken by the *fidayeen* (suicide squads) — as the attack on the Amarnath Yatris would confirm — so rushing into scrapping the cease fire may not make an appreciable change on the ground. The Army Chief has also made it clear that even now the militants did not have the free run of the Valley, and if they were re-grouping so too were the security forces getting a well earned rest. Hopefully the lull would facilitate developing the contacts that would yield actionable intelligence in the days ahead.

There could be even further diplomatic gains if the Government remained steadfast. Pakistan, in effect, did respond to the cease fire by asking its troops on the LoC to restrain themselves, and more recently its Chief Executive deplored the militants’ threat to attack the PMO in New Delhi. Even if only noises, and directed toward the international community, they are the right ones. Withdrawing the cease fire would liberate him of the compulsion to speak in that tone. The same compulsions that made a section of the Hurriyat leadership flay the airport raid as complicating their moves, regardless of their ultimate destination.

It is true that the cease fire cannot remain one-way indefinitely and that the forces might yet have to abandon their policy of Non-Initiation of Combat Action (the terminology Gen Padmanabhan prefers to “cease fire”). In that eventuality, and to return to the “other cheek” syndrome, let it be remembered that the good book places no restrictions on the response to a goodwill gesture that is spurned.

THE STATESMAN

27 JAN 2011

Samjhauta to run for 3 more years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Jan. 21. — India and Pakistan today agreed to extend the Samjhauta Express by three more years providing sleeper and economy class accommodation in the train.

The agreement to this effect was signed after five days of deliberations reviewing the rail communications between the two countries. There was, however, no official word on Pakistan's demand for extension of the train, the only rail link between the two countries, up to Amritsar.

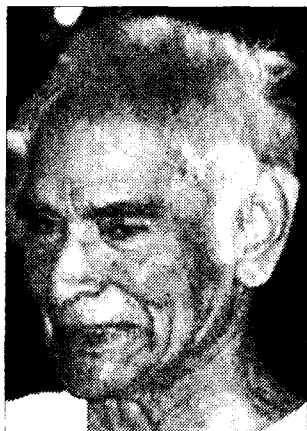
The agreement, which will remain valid for three years, was signed by the additional member (traffic), Railway board of India, Mr SS Bhandari, and additional general manager (freight) of Pakistan Railways, Mr Abdul Qayyum, who were leading the respective delegations.

Under the revised agreement, which will come to force with immediate effect, the Samjhauta Express will continue to run as a bi-weekly service between the two countries, an official press note said.

Indian Railways also accepted Pakistan Railways' proposal to permit attachment of up to two extra coaches in the train to facilitate clearance of heavy rush of passengers by the booking railways, it said.

The two delegations also noted the need for an increase in the present level of

BABA AMTE OFFER



Baba Amte

DUBAI, Jan. 21. — Baba Amte says he is ready to travel to Pakistan on a peace mission provided he is not given security during his visit. "I want my trip to be a 'people-to-people' and 'people-for-peace' effort and if the Pakistani government insists on giving me security, I can't achieve my goal," he said.

Baba Amte asked why India and Pakistan could not come together if the Berlin Wall could be brought down. It is the game of politicians that is keeping the two countries divided. — PTI

interchange of about one freight train per day between the two countries.

It was decided that divisional level teams of both the railways would be deputed to examine

the factors affecting the interchange performance and initiate remedial measures.

The Pakistan delegation have also agreed to accept eight wheeler box wagons of Indian Railways to facilitate interchange of higher tonnage for train between India and Pakistan, the release said.

In his brief address, Mr Bhandari said the "positive and constructive" approach shown by the Pakistani team had resulted in culmination of the agreement.

Lauding the efforts of the Indians, Mr Qayyum said that it was after many years that instead of resorting to temporary measures, both the sides had worked out an agreement which should update all those issues that had been discussed from time to time and facilitate smooth operation of train services between the two countries.

Railway sources added that the existing arrangements of customs check at Attari, the Indian side of the border would continue while the check for goods traffic would be at the respective border check points.

A bilateral agreement for rail communication between the two countries was entered into in 1976. It was extended from time to time till 1991 when, after a review, a fresh agreement was signed. This agreement was reviewed by the two governments in 1994 and 1997.

THE STATESMAN

22 JAN 2001

BJP advises Atal against ceasefire

OUR BUREAU

Jan. 20: Issuing a stern warning to Pakistan and militants in Kashmir for undermining the peace initiative, the BJP today said it was against extending the ceasefire further even as the Centre is set to review its decision on the extension.

BJP president Bangaru Laxman said the militants and their sponsors from across the border have not displayed any intention to reciprocate the Prime Minister's gesture and added that the militants should be "crushed with an iron hand".

While the BJP and Sangh parivar hardliners opposed an extension, defence minister George Fernandes said the country would adopt a "wait and watch" policy to gauge Pakistan's reaction.

"The ceasefire is on till January 26. We shall wait till the 26th to see how Pakistan reacts," Fernandes told reporters in Mumbai today.

But the BJP feels otherwise. The party said though the ceasefire has produced the intended results — such as isolating militants in the Valley besides conveying India's keen interest in maintaining peace — "in the context of continuing violence and the increasingly desperate attempts to sabotage India's initiative, it is time to think hard on the proposal to further extend the ceasefire."

The BJP said those who are unwilling to make "constructive use" of the Prime Minister's gesture should be taught a lesson. "They should be crushed with an iron hand," said Laxman, who is close to Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

He said Vajpayee's decision on

unilateral ceasefire during Ramzan had yielded some "significant" results, but the militants should not be allowed to mistake the initiative as India's weakness.

In a statement from Hyderabad released to the press in Delhi, Laxman said the ceasefire has made the "peaceful intentions of India clear to the world. Its extension by another month, in spite of several incidents of violence aimed at sabotaging the initiative, has demonstrated the firm commitment of India to the process of dialogue in Kashmir."

He said the initiative succeeded in isolating the ISI-backed militant outfits from the people of Kashmir and that it was now clear to the world that violence and militancy in Kashmir are perpetrated as part of Pakistan's proxy war.

Temple warning

The BJP said the Muslim clergy was "over-reacting" to the VHP move and cautioned minority community leaders against issuing "provocative" statements "to create violence".

Senior party leader J.P. Mathur stressed that the VHP did not announce any specific date for the construction of the temple. But if anybody took law into their hands, the law would prevail, he said.

Mathur, however, decried statements of certain Muslim leaders that if the VHP went ahead with the temple construction, there would be a strong backlash from the minority community. "I am sorry that the Muslim leadership is over-reacting and trying to create an atmosphere of violence," the BJP leader said.

THE TELIGRAPH

21 JAN 2001

Will the Hurriyat's Pakistan visit serve any purpose?

No, militants see it as an attempt to dampen the 'jehadi' spirit

Yes, the Mujahideen are only part of the struggle and not the whole struggle



Ayaz Amir

ONLY in the sub-continent is the acknowledgement of common sense taken as a historic concession. The true representatives of the Kashmiri people should have formed part of India-Pakistan diplomacy a long time ago. After all, it is over Kashmir that India and Pakistan have gone to war repeatedly. But it is only now when war-weariness has gripped the principal parties that the existence of the Kashmiri people is being acknowledged.

India is allowing a delegation of the All Party Hurriyat Conference to visit Pakistan and hold talks with various Kashmiri groups on this side of the Line of Control. Pakistan says it is looking forward to the visit.

But this being the sub-continent, some delicate questions of propriety and protocol have been raised. Who should be given a passport? When should the delegation be allowed to travel? And what might this visit portend? Even as India tries on a new pair of gloves, some of these momentous issues remain to be settled.

But what is the war-weariness that led to this belated triumph of common sense? India bleeds in Kashmir. Although it maintains a vast garrison in the state, it has been unable to crush the Kashmiri resistance. True, for more than a year it has squeezed all the propaganda advantage it could from the Kargil affair. But embarrassing Pakistan diplomatically is not the same as defeating the Hizbul Mujahideen or the Lashkar-i-Taiba. As for Pakistan, it is trying to retrieve the diplomatic initiative after the Kargil debacle. It is also counting the costs of *jehad*. Militancy in Kashmir is tying down the Indian army but it is nowhere close to liberating the state. At the same time, the drumbeats of *jehad* give a bad colour to Pakistani diplomacy. This impasse has paved the way for this visit.

But is it likely to achieve anything? The *jehadi* organisations in Pakistan are wary and suspicious. They see in the recent flurry of moves in Kashmir — the cessation of firing along the LoC, relative calm in Siachen, India's unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir and now the Hurriyat visit — as attempts to dampen the spirit of *jehad*. They could also be forgiven for asking what gifts the Hurriyat leadership might be carrying.

To say that *jehad* is leading nowhere and Kashmiris have suffered enough is one thing. But is the Hurriyat leadership in any position to guarantee anything from India's side? India may be willing to talk peace. But on whose

terms? More to the point, is it willing to talk substance?

The choice in Kashmir is not between peace and war. Simply because the kind of peace India wants is acceptable neither to Pakistan nor to the Muslim population of Indian-controlled Kashmir.

Among all the flurry of signals coming from New Delhi, there is not a single one which suggests that India is willing to go beyond atmospherics and get down to the crux of the Kashmir dispute — allowing the people of that state to decide their fate even if it means stepping out of the Indian Union. Then what does this present season of hope signify? What, beyond a few passports and the odd bus journey to Lahore, is India willing to give in return?



Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

AFTER the announcement of a unilateral ceasefire by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, an impression was created that the government of India was going to make some

headway towards a resolution of the Kashmir issue. The All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) in order to feel the pulse of the government, welcomed the ceasefire. It also felt the government alone cannot resolve the Kashmir tangle unless all the parties i.e. Pakistan, the Mujahideen and the people of Kashmir are involved in the

consultation with the government of Pakistan, the Mujahideen and the leadership of Azad Kashmir.

These three elements will provide us a base to start a comprehensive process for the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Undoubtedly, there is a communication gap between the Mujahideen based in Azad Kashmir and the Hurriyat.

Till 1996, we had the Shour-e-Jehad here, a combination of several militant groups. These groups became more discreet after 1996 and could not frequently deliberate on serious matters with the Hurriyat. Our visit is primarily aimed at establishing contacts with the militant leadership.

Those opposing the Hurriyat visit are not understanding the context in which it is being made. Some people are giving the impression that the Hurriyat is going to Pakistan to tell the Mujahideen to surrender or to respond to the ceasefire call. This is completely baseless. The Hurriyat Conference has its own agenda — we would definitely like to push our agenda which is aimed at having a policy of co-ordination with the Mujahideen and Pakistan.

The visit is a significant step — for the first time the people of Kashmir through the APHC would figure in the deliberations. The Kashmiri people have always been ignored by both India and Pakistan when they discuss the Kashmir problem, whether it is the Tashkent or the Simla agreement.

Let me make it clear that the Hurriyat is going on Pakistan's invitation. The fact that Pakistan wants our consultations is an important factor. So the Mujahideen should have no hesitation. The APHC till date has done its best to continue the on-going struggle whether it is at the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the United Nations or the US Senate. We have tried to project the movement in its right perspective.

The Mujahideen is not in a position to dictate terms to the Hurriyat because they or militancy is only part of the struggle and not the whole struggle. We have to build a co-ordination in consensus. The Hurriyat is politically as well as diplomatically active in the Valley. The people of Kashmir are supporting the Mujahideen because they believe they are fighting for their cause. The ultimate aim is the resolution of the Kashmir issue.

Before the proposal for visiting Pakistan, we discussed the matter with the United Jihad Council, an amalgam of five militant outfits in Pakistan. It was after their agreement that we thought of undertaking the visit. We are still in constant touch with them.

(Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, former chairman of the APHC and part of the delegation going to Pakistan, spoke to Saleem Pandit)

IN BLACK AND WHITE



The choice in Kashmir is thus between no-war and no-peace, the kind of situation which existed prior to 1989, prior to the uprising which erupted in the Valley. It is the spirit of resistance in Kashmir which has brought something new to this old equation.

Ideally then, as far as Kashmir is concerned, India would like the past to reassert itself. But would this be acceptable to the legions of those who have sacrificed blood and lives in Kashmir? The Hurriyat leaders will come armed with counsel. But they should not be surprised if they confront scepticism. They must make an impression on long-held Indian attitudes first before they can expect to find willing converts on this side of the fence.

(Ayaz Amir is a columnist with 'The Dawn', Karachi)

process for restoration of peace.

We, the APHC, thought it was our responsibility to answer the call given by the Prime Minister. At the same time, we felt that the ceasefire, temporary or permanent, is no solution to the vexed Kashmir problem. It should be accompanied by a political package which addresses the basic issue. This package should address the Kashmir problem at many dimensions: military, political and diplomatic. To achieve this peace all four elements — the Hurriyat, the Mujahideen, Pakistan and India — should come into common and total agreement. This is not possible unless and until there is a sincere effort towards bridging the differences among them.

So the Hurriyat's visit to Pakistan is essentially aimed at

HD-11
2/11

'India's negative attitude hurting peace initiative'

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gok

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 20. Pakistan today said the opportunity provided by the recent Kashmir peace initiatives appeared 'slipping away,' thanks to the 'visible negative attitude' of the Indian authorities. This, even as the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen claimed responsibility for two blasts in Kashmir which killed 11 soldiers.

At a news conference here, a Foreign Office spokesman accused India of adopting a negative approach when this correspondent sought his reaction to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's statement

at Udipi, Karnataka, on Thursday.

The theme of the conference was confined to the fresh sanctions on the Taliban regime. When a response was sought to Mr. Vajpayee's remarks, a Pakistani scribe butted in to ask whether the Prime Minister was right in making such 'ridiculous statements.'

(Mr. Vajpayee had urged Pakistan to demonstrate its sincerity and commitment to the peace process by condemning the violence unleashed by the Pakistan-based militant organisations.

"The onus for creating a positive atmosphere for bilateral talks rests clearly with Pakistan," he

said). The spokesman said his country favoured resumption of a dialogue and initiation of a peace process to address the Kashmir issue meaningfully.

He hoped that a delegation of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference would visit Pakistan soon. "We have no definite information on their (the leaders') visit or issue of travel documents to facilitate their visit. We hope that the formalities for their travel will be completed soon... India needs to take decisions and demonstrate its sincerity for resolving the Kashmir dispute as per the wishes of the Kashmiris, international community and norms."

THE HINDU

21 JAN 2001

Indo-Pak talks on rail links to go on

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Jan. 18: The talks between Indian and Pakistani railway officials for reviewing agreement between the two countries on rail communications have been extended. According to the officials of the railway ministry, the talks will continue for the third day on Friday and are likely to go on even on Saturday.

Officials disclosed that the talks are being held in a cordial atmosphere. The Pakistani delegation is going to be in the capital till January 21. It was disclosed that all the aspects relat-

ed to rail communication are being held in detail.

The key topics of discussion is the fate of Samjhauta Express, the only rail link between India and Pakistan. If the agreement is not renewed, the train operations would cease by the end of the month.

The agreement signed in 1991 was valid upto July 7, 2000. The officials between the two countries had agreed to extend it upto the January 7 this year and then again upto February 7 next.

According to the officials, the history of mutual interaction and cooperation binds the two

nations to arrive at satisfying answer and engineer enduring solution for the travelling public and trade, which have great expectation from both the railway systems.

The Pakistani delegation is led by Mr Abdul Qayyum, additional general manager (freight) of Pakistan railways, while the Indian side is being led by Mr S.S. Bhandari, additional member (traffic) in the Railway Board.

A bilateral agreement for rail communication between India and Pakistan was entered into by the two governments in 1976 and was extended from time to

time till 1991 when after a review a fresh agreement was signed.

This agreement was reviewed by the two governments in 1994 and 1997.

The running of Samjhauta Express had come under scrutiny as the Indian intelligence agencies suspect that it was being used by "anti-India elements."

Last year, the Pakistani railway authorities had insisted on bringing their coaches up to Amritsar, which the Indian railway authorities said was not possible because of operational difficulties.

THE ASIAN AGE

19 JAN 2001

PM to Pak: Wear your sincerity on your sleeve

Udupi, January 18

IN A tough message to Pakistan, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today asked the leadership there to demonstrate its sincerity and commitment to the dialogue process by checking anti-India militant outfits operating from there, saying the onus of creating a positive atmosphere for bilateral talks rests clearly with Islamabad.

"I urge the leadership of Pakistan to demonstrate its sincerity and commitment to the dialogue process by condemning terrorist violence by Pakistan-based militant groups and effectively checking their anti-India activities. "The onus of creating a positive atmosphere for bilateral talks rests clearly with Pakistan," he said in a statement here, noting that the recent spurt in violence in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India unleashed by Pakistan-based militant organisations "has vitiated the atmosphere for resumption of talks between the two countries".

The Prime Minister's tough-talking comes close on the heels of stepped up violence by groups like the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and three days after the Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan calling on military ruler Pervez Musharraf to formally propose resumption of bilateral composite dialogue.

Vajpayee said India's readiness to have talks with Pakistan at any level, including at the highest level, has been well established. "We have also strongly demonstrated our sincerity to create a conducive atmosphere for talks through specific confidence-building measures such as the unilateral cessation of combat operations in Jammu and Kashmir," he said. However, the Prime Minister said the continuation of

terrorist activities in and outside the State showed that the purpose of India taking these unilateral initiatives was not being fulfilled.

Referring to terrorist attacks on security forces and civilians which have increased, he said "what is distressing is that the leadership of Pakistan continues to do nothing to restrain these terrorists, even as it professes its eagerness to resume talks." He said Pakistan's argument that violence would stop once talks begin

"is strange. It convinces neither India nor the international community". "There cannot be meaningful talks when guns continue to do their own talking," Vajpayee said.

Asked if he would welcome Pervez Musharraf if he wanted to visit India, he shot back: "I don't reply to ifs and buts." He said India took a decision on unilateral ceasefire and it had a "very good effect as far as the people of Jammu and Kashmir are concerned". (PTI)

'Agni won't affect peace process'

GEN PERVEZ Musharraf said on Thursday that India's test-firing of Agni II missile should not hamper the Kashmir peace process while expressing hope for a possible dialogue.

PTI, Islamabad

Driver dies in custody

BILAL AHMAD Mir, the driver of the state forest department jeep used by Lashkar militants in carrying out suicide attack on Srinagar airport on Tuesday, was shot dead on Thursday while "trying to flee from the police custody", police sources said in Srinagar.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

9 JAN 2001

Vajpayee puts onus of creating atmosphere for talks on Pak

19/1
Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 18 JANUARY

PRIME MINISTER A.B. Vajpayee undertook some tough-talking against Islamabad on Thursday, asking its military rulers to demonstrate their sincerity to the dialogue process by "condemning the terrorist violence of Pakistan-based militant groups and effectively checking their anti-India activities."

In a statement issued from Udipi in Karnataka on Thursday, Mr Vajpayee put the onus for creating a conducive atmosphere for resumption of bilateral talks on Pakistan, saying that "the continuation of terrorist activities in and outside the state (Jammu & Kashmir) showed that the purpose of India taking unilateral initiatives was not being fulfilled."

Stating that the recent spurt in violence in Kashmir and elsewhere in the country had "vitiated the atmosphere for resumption of talks between the two countries," the Prime Minister noted: "What is particularly surprising and distressing is the fact that the leadership of Pakistan continues to do nothing to restrain these terrorist organisations, which operate from Pakistan soil, even as it professes its eagerness to resume talks."

The Prime Minister's tough stance comes close

on the heels of Indian high commissioner to Pakistan Vijay Nambiar calling on military ruler Pervez Musharraf in Islamabad, and a week ahead of the review of the government's ceasefire beyond January 26. Mr Vajpayee said India's readiness to hold talks with Pakistan at any level, including the highest level, had been well established.

"We have also strongly demonstrated our sincerity to create a conducive atmosphere for talks through specific confidence-building measures such as a unilateral cessation of combat operations in Jammu & Kashmir," he noted.

However, he regretted that the attacks of Pakistan-based militant outfits such as Lashkar-e-Toiba had increased both in number and gravity. "Pakistan's argument that the violence will stop once talks begin is strange, to say the least.

It convinces neither India nor the international community," he said, adding that "there cannot be meaningful talks for resolving outstanding issues and normalising bilateral relations when the guns of terrorist outfits continue to do their own talking."

He noted that "the militants, who were opposed to the peace process, were alarmed at the prospects of fruitful dialogue between India and Pakistan."

The Economic Times

19 JAN 2001

Ceasefire won't be extended, hints PM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Jan. 18. — A day after India successfully test-fired the Agni-II missile, there were signals from the government that the unilateral ceasefire announced in Kashmir would not be extended.

The Prime Minister seemed to say as much in a statement from Udupi in Karnataka when he said "the continuation of terrorist activities .. shows the purpose of our taking these unilateral initiatives is not being fulfilled".

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee said: "There cannot be meaningful talks for resolving outstanding issues and normalising bilateral relations when the guns of terrorist outfits continue to do their own talking .. the onus of creating a positive atmosphere for bilateral talks rests clearly with Pakistan."

He said the "spurt in terrorist violence" had "vitiating the atmosphere for resumption of talks between India and Pakistan", effectively ruling out the possibility of a dialogue.

Mr Vajpayee met Dr Farooq Abdullah earlier in the day. With barely a week left for the ceasefire to end, the chief minister also indicated reservations about another extension, but promised to abide by the Centre's decision.

"The killing of innocent people has not stopped and infiltration has also been reported during the ceasefire period," Dr Abdullah said. "In fact, these have gone up. I have put forth my views to the Prime Minister and it is for him to decide."

The suspension of combat operations against militants in

the state began on 27 November and was extended till 26 January.

Dr Abdullah, who also met Mr LK Advani and Mr George Fernandes, said: "If Pakistan can reduce tension along the border then it can very well rein in the militant groups created by them. Outfits like Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taibya and Hizbul Mujahideen are under Pakistani control and do not want peace."

Dr Abdullah indicated reservations about the Hurriyat proposal to mediate between India and Pakistan. "What they can do in Pakistan is a mystery. Let them make a beginning and condemn the attacks carried out by militants here."

Mr Advani again ruled out the possibility of tripartite talks involving the Hurriyat, saying "there is no change in the Centre's stand on matters of issuing passports to the APHC leaders".

Meanwhile, in the third major strike in the past five days, the Hizbul today blasted two security force vehicles, killing seven jawans, including a BSF deputy-commandant, and the daughter of an Army Captain, in south Kashmir today. Eleven security personnel were injured in the blasts, adds PTI.

Four BSF personnel, including the deputy-commandant of 34th Battalion, were killed and two jawans critically injured in a landmine blast in Pulwama around 9.30 a.m. Half-an-hour later, militants detonated a landmine near Awantipora, injuring 12 soldiers and the Captain's daughter. They succumbed to injuries in hospital.

■ Photograph on page 8

THE STATESMAN

19 JAN 1991

Indo-Pak talks keep Samjhauta on track

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JAN 18

THE SAMJHAUTA Express will continue to run. This was more or less decided during the first meeting here between the visiting Pakistani railway delegation and officials of the Indian railways today. An agreement to this effect will be signed tomorrow.

"The meeting was very cordial and both sides mutually agreed to most of the things," an official later said. Initially, Pakistani officials — led by Additional General Manager (freight) Abdul Qayyum — wanted a change in the days on which the Samjhauta runs. As the train runs

on Wednesdays and Fridays, Pakistani officials said, passengers face problems on Jumma (Fridays) since the entire day is spent in travelling. However, at the end of the talks, they agreed to continue to run it on the same days. "Changing the days would mean major logistical problems and adjustments. They realised that and agreed to it," the Indian official said. The Pakistani side did not bring up the contentious issue of taking the train up to Amritsar as per the original agreement and not terminate it at Attari as is cur-

rently done.

The Pakistani delegation is here to review the 1991 agreement on rail links between the two countries. They are scheduled to leave for home on January 22. Technology changes and the subject of replacing the older CRT type wagons with safer, faster and better BCX and BCN type was also discussed at the six-hour-long meeting.

"The Pakistani officials agreed to most of the things. Some changes were not found feasible since they are not compatible with

technology available in Pakistan," he said, giving details of the meeting. Earlier, Additional

Member (Traffic) S.S. Bhandari — leading the Indian team — welcomed the Pakistani delegation and noted that since the 1991 agreement, rail systems in both countries had taken impressive strides in areas of modern technology and management.

He expressed the hope that in view of their history of mutual cooperation, the two sides would be able to arrive at mutually satisfying answers to problems they face and engineer enduring solutions for the travelling public and trade, which have great expectations from the two railway systems.

PEACE ON
WHEELS

INDIAN EXPRESS

19 JAN 2001

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2001

TOWARDS TALKS WITH PAKISTAN

A 'COURTESY CALL' of exceptional importance seems to have generated a new wave of expectations on the India-Pakistan diplomatic front. However, there is no real justification for euphoria at this stage over the latest meeting between India's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Vijay Nambiar, and the Chief Executive of Pakistan, Gen. Pervez Musharraf. No diplomatic breakthrough of any magnitude is actually indicated as an immediate result of this meeting, although the Vajpayee administration does appear to have finally crossed a psychological barrier relating to a direct engagement with Pakistan's present military ruler. It is in this limited sense that the latest Indian initiative deserves to be welcomed cautiously. The meeting itself may help both sides explore the limits to the political will of each other in seeking a bilateral re-engagement in the present circumstances. To this extent, it is too early to judge whether a new dynamic has really come into play in the India-Pakistan arena. Although Mr. Nambiar had requested the 'courtesy call' as early as the beginning of last month, it stands to reason that much of what he is reported to have conveyed to Gen. Musharraf will constitute an updated diplomatic message from New Delhi. The specific foreign policy context is New Delhi's assessment of Islamabad's two extraordinary announcements — the observance of "maximum restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir as also the move to withdraw some of Pakistan's troops from a position of forward deployment in that same sector. From New Delhi's standpoint, the current political ambience for assessing Pakistan's mood may have been generated by the recent "musings" of the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Viewed in this perspective, a logical litmus test for identifying new signals, if any, from the Indian side will pertain to Mr. Vajpayee's recent pledge that he "shall not traverse solely on the

beaten track of the past" in dealing with Pakistan. So, a simple question with profound implications is whether Mr. Nambiar has in fact conveyed to Gen. Musharraf any new terms for the resumption of bilateral parleys. Virtually fossilised in the Kargil conflict-related polemics, the proposition about renewing the dialogue can of course be considered afresh in the bilateral 'spirit' of the present moment when the mood is largely determined by the Centre's sustained ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir and a host of related events as well. New Delhi has indicated that it is still looking for evidence to its satisfaction about Gen. Musharraf being willing and able to keep the Pakistan-based 'Kashmiri' militants on leash. While this does not signify a dramatic departure from the "beaten track", New Delhi has certainly offered Islamabad "progressive and constructive" engagement against the evolving subcontinental clamour for peace.

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To be consistent with the Vajpayee administration's stated desire to resume a "composite dialogue", it will be necessary to interpret the notion of progressiveness as being applicable only to the process of re-engagement as distinct from the substance of the parleys. This is so, if only because a "composite dialogue" covers by its very definition all issues including Kashmir insofar as it is a bilateral dispute. Viewed thus, Gen. Musharraf's reassertion of the "core" status of the Kashmir issue can be suitably addressed. If Pakistan says that a dialogue with India over Kashmir and other issues can deprive the militants of the *raison d'etre* for their acts of anti-India violence, New Delhi will do well to evaluate this logic. The defining characteristic of this and other dilemmas before both sides is mutual distrust. This can only be overcome through serious parleys aimed at preventing war, building bilateral confidence and resolving the issues at stake.

THE HINDU

18 JAN 2001

TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVE

But the situation calls for innovation.

ONE can understand why New Delhi has difficulty in accepting the idea of tripartite talks with Pakistan and what can be called the anti-integrationist voice in Kashmir whose most visible political representative is the All Party Hurriyat Conference. The problem is not so much with Pakistan as with the Hurriyat, or rather with acknowledging that anti-integrationism is a legitimate political aspiration and that the problem of militant or jihadi violence in Kashmir is not entirely Pakistan's creation. The other problem from the Indian point of view is that in a tripartite process, the Hurriyat would naturally come across as representing all Kashmiris, including those situated across the Line of Control. This would marginalise the not insubstantial section of Kashmiri opinion, represented by Farooq Abdullah and his National Conference and by and large favourable to India, as well as weighting any tripartite process in favour of the pro-Pakistan line. This is a perfectly legitimate argument since neither the Hurriyat nor its counterparts, whoever they might be, in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, have ever had their opinions, regarding the future of Kashmir, tested in a free and fair ballot. Many of these outfits, such as the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba, do not accept the Hurriyat's authority at all. The Government's reasoning probably is that if the militants are being controlled by sections of the Pakistani establishment and the Hurriyat has no other way of establishing its locus standi with Kashmiri opinion, why should it be elevated to the status of a privileged interlocutor in any peace process.

On the other hand, the responses from Pakistan have been ambivalent. The Pakistani foreign secretary called Vajpayee's New Year speech "admirable", General Musharraf asked for sincerity on India's part, the Pakistani interior secretary calls upon jihadis to cool down. There are rumours about a composite dialogue at the foreign secretary level and even of a "Lahore-type" summit, although Brajesh Mishra strenuously denies that any invitation has been issued. However, there are two difficulties. One, Pakistan clearly wants a recognition of the Hurriyat as *the* spokesman of the Kashmiri people in any dialogue process, whether tripartite or not, two, India continues to consider Pakistan as the source of succour of all militant activity in the valley of Kashmir. How these divergent perceptions are to be reconciled is anybody's guess. On militancy, for instance, it is not clear what degree of control Musharraf is personally able to exercise over outfits like the Lashkar, responsible for the three major post-ceasefire terrorist attacks. Maybe he has no choice but to go along with what is seen by some of the most powerful sections of the establishment as a national endeavour. But then, that is going to determine the kind of cards Pakistan is able to lay on the table. The perspective on Kashmir is still very traditional.

THE STATESMAN

18 JAN 2011

India's views on Hurriyat conveyed to Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 16. Even as the suspense continues over the issue of travel documents to some leaders of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference to enable them travel to Pakistan, the Indian Government has categorically conveyed to the military government here that it does not consider the Hurriyat sole representatives of the Kashmiris.

A clear message on these lines was conveyed by the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. Vijay K. Nambiar, when he called on the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, here yesterday.

The High Commissioner told Gen. Musharraf that while India would continue its direct engagement with all groups in Jammu and Kashmir including the APHC, it did not subscribe to the view

that the Hurriyat alone represented the Kashmiris. Implied in the Indian formulation was the recognition that while the Hurriyat could claim to represent Kashmiris, it could not appropriate the title of being the sole representative body.

Neither Mr. Nambiar nor Gen. Musharraf mentioned the proposed visit of the Hurriyat team

for discussions with the Government and the Pakistan-based militant outfits to pave the way for a "tripartite dialogue".

The APHC's locus standi has become the major bone of contention between New Delhi and Islamabad with the latter reiterating that it considered the APHC the legitimate representative body of the Kashmiris.

THE HINDU

17 JAN 2001

Possibility of clearance to Hurriyat's Pak trip appears bleak

Conglomerate lacks clarity about its mission

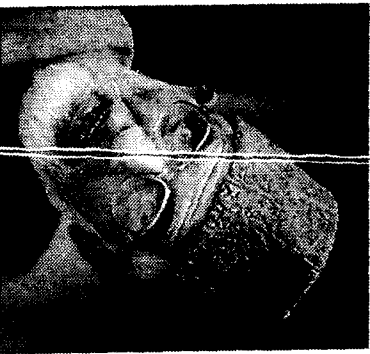
Jay Raina
New Delhi, January 16

THE CENTRE is caught in a bind over the five-member Hurriyat delegation's proposed visit to Pakistan. What has forced the Vajpayee regime into a rethink is the 23-party conglomerate's lack of clarity about its Pak mission.

Going by the discussions at the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) here yesterday, the possibility of an official sanction for the Hurriyat's journey appears bleak. The Government may firm up its decision over the next couple of days following detailed discussions with its Kashmir "think-tank" comprising top level intelligence officers and track-two intermediaries.

Official sources told The Hindustan Times that the Hurriyat leaders have not spelled out the parameters of their peace-mission except for expressing optimism about persuading some Pak-based militant outfits to respond positively to New Delhi's cease-fire initiative.

While delinking extension of the Ramzan cease-fire from the Hurriyat's Pak visit, the



Syed Ali Shah Geelani

Government, sources disclosed, was keen to analyse the implications of the Kashmiri leader's interaction with Pak-backed militant groups. This was considered necessary in the light of the conflicting signals emanating from the Hurriyat camp.

The Centre is understood to have conveyed to the Hurriyat leaders that they were welcome to visit Pakistan in their individual capacities. "But their response till date has been dismal," they remarked. According to sources, the Centre

is wary of allowing Jamat-i-Islami leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani to accompany the Hurriyat delegation. The unexpressed fear is about his ability to hijack the entire mission and reduce it to an anti-India venture.

It is quite likely that Geelani might use the opportunity to propagate the philosophy of Muslim "Umma"—trans-national Islamic brotherhood—instead of pleading for peace in Kashmir. His unabashed admiration for mercenary groups and their violent contribution to the promotion of Pan-Islamic objectives is already well known.

The Centre, apparently, is also reluctant to accord the Hurriyat leaders the role of a third party in the Kashmiri dispute. Keen though to enter into a dialogue with the "people of Kashmir," the Government is loath to the idea of putting "all its eggs in one basket." All formulations including the Hurriyat have a role, depending upon their political formulations at the grassroots," the sources averred.

Another development which has prompted the Government review its Kashmir policy is the spurt in militant attacks on civilians.

Shishir Gupta
New Delhi, January 16

WHEN INDIAN High Commissioner Vijay Nambiar met Pakistan's military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf in Islamabad yesterday, the two countries perhaps took the first step towards an Indo-Pak summit.

Never mind the controversy over the delegation the Hurriyat has announced for talks in Pakistan, the Vajpayee Government's conditional offer for resumption of the composite Indo-Pak dialogue gives currency to a road map doing the rounds in generally well-informed circles here.

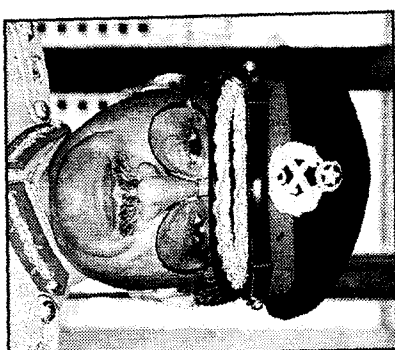
This projected road map to peace, or at least an attempt at preparing ground for it, hinges squarely on a breakthrough on the key question of cross-border terrorism. Pakistan insists that the "core issue" of Kashmir should be discussed first for "improvement in the prevailing environment." India, on its part, argues that Pakistan first rein in jehadi elements such as the Lashkar-e-Tarabha (LeT) and the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HUM) before resumption of the composite dia-

Behind The News



Ayal Bhanit Vajpayee

A foreign secretary-level meeting is perhaps the instrument available to the two sides to get over the logjam on the climate conducive for talks. An engagement of this kind could materialise even before the January 20 inauguration of United Nations sanctions on Taliban and the inauguration of Bush presidency in



General Pervez Musharraf

Washington the same day. From all available indications, the two sides aren't being particularly fussy about the date and the venue of the proposed talks. For the present, however, the second anniversary of Prime Minister Vajpayee's 1999 bus ride to Lahore seems a natural choice for resumption of the stalled dialogue. If such a picture does unfold, it

would have tremendous symbolic significance from Mr Vajpayee's standpoint. After all, it was the Lahore sentiment that was buried in the frozen heights of Kargil by a furious Pak Army establishment.

In fact, the January 21, 1999 Lahore Declaration Mr Vajpayee signed with the since exiled Nawaz Sharif, is at the heart of the Indian gameplan. It recognises the Simla Agreement, the essence of which is bilateralism, as opposed to Islamabad's consistent efforts to settle Kashmir through third party intervention.

Government sources said the foreign secretary-level talks were a near-certainty. And when they come about, they would most certainly take the dialogue process forward through pleasant voices indicative of a thaw in relations between the two nuclear neighbours. The additional CBMs that might emerge from the planned talks include an increase in the frequency of the weekly Delhi-Lahore bus service and possible resumption of cricketer ties. Here, it is pertinent to point out that Gen Pervez Musharraf, during his interaction with Mr Nambiar, expressed disappointment over India's decision to call off its cricket team's Pak tour. Media reports indicate that the General had wanted to personally welcome the Indian cricketers. As per the proposed blueprint, the FS-level dialogue will pave the way for a meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries. Subsequently, the two sides will announce resumption of the composite dialogue by reviving the seven groups they had originally set up to deal with all outstanding issues, including Kashmir, Sateen, Sir Creek and the Tulbul Navigation Project.

The framework for the composite dialogue process was decided in June 1997. The first round of discussions on all the issues on the table were held in Delhi between Nov 5-13 a year later.

This time, a few subject-specific groups will meet in India and the remaining in Pakistan. But in some cases, the venue for talks might not necessarily be the national capitals of the two countries. During the Foreign Ministers' meeting, notes are likely to be exchanged on the prospects of an Indo-Pak Summit somewhere down the year.

India, Pak. officials review 1991 rail agreement

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 17 The two-day talks between officials of the Indian and Pakistani Railways to review the 1991 Rail Communication Agreement began here today. The agreement expired in July last and the Samjhauta Express has since been running on ad-hoc extension.

In the absence of a fresh agreement, both the Governments have been unable to introduce new services, including for goods traffic, on the Delhi-Amritsar-Atari-Lahore route.

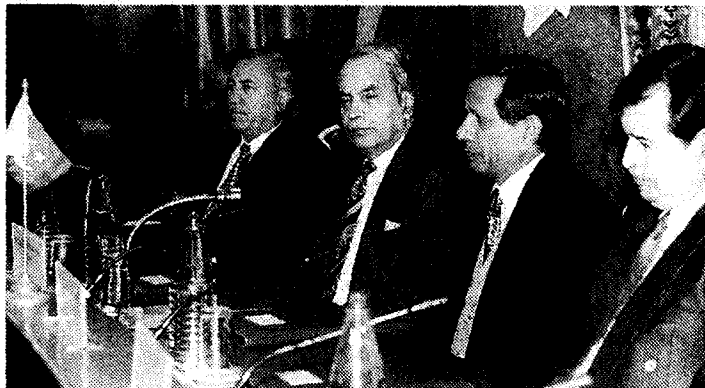
The talks are part of exploratory exchanges being held, taking into account technological improvements made in rolling stock and track design.

A bilateral agreement for rail communication between India and Pakistan was first signed in 1976. It was extended from time to time till 1991, when a fresh agreement was signed.

This accord was reviewed by the two Governments in 1994 and 1997. The 1991 agreement was valid till July 7, 2000. The two railways agreed to extend it to January 7, 2001, and then again to February 7.

According to an official release, the Railway Board Additional Member (Traffic) and head of the Indian delegation, Mr. S. S. Bhandari, said the intervening period since the 1991 agreement, had seen both the systems make impressive strides in the areas of modern technology and management.

"Our deliberations will, there-



The railway officials of India (top) and Pakistan during an official meeting to review the 1991 agreement on rail communication between the two countries at the Rail Bhavan, in New Delhi, on Wednesday — PTI

fore, need to keep in mind these changes as well as the challenges faced by rail transport from other modes while framing our services to the passenger and trade."

The Indian delegation includes Mr. Shri Prakash, Executive Director (Traffic), Mr. V. K. Manglik, E. D. (Mechanical Engineering) and Mr. R. Sivadasan, E. D. (Accounts).

The Pakistani team is headed by Mr. Abdul Qayum, Additional General Manager (Freight), Pakistan Railways.

It comprises Mr. Aurangazib Khan, Additional G.M. (Passenger), Mr. Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, Chief Traffic Manager (Freight), Mr. Asad Saeed, Chief Mechanical Engineer (Carriage) and Mohd. Saleem Bhatti (Financial Advisor).

THE HINDU

18 JAN 2001

Dialogue on our terms: Advani

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 17. Indicating a hardening of stance in the internal debate over the nature and direction of the "peace process" in Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, has made it clear that the "dialogue", if any, will be conducted on "our" terms and according to "our" agenda. Mr. Advani has also said that not only will there be no tripartite talks on Kashmir, the Hurriyat leaders cannot even expect to dictate terms of their visit to Pakistan.

In an interview to the RSS weekly, *Panchajanya*, (to be published later this week), the Minister firmly rejected any suggestion that the Vajpayee Government was conducting the peace offensive from a position of weakness. "We are clear that we would talk

(Reports from Srinagar indicate that the hardliners within the APHC have been constrained to suggest that the Hurriyat cannot hope to dictate terms to New Delhi. Meanwhile, the hardliner, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, in the capital for medical treatment, reportedly met the Pakistani High Commissioner today.)

In remarks probably meant for the Sangh Parivar constituency, Mr. Advani argued that "peace" could be said to prevail only when the Kashmiri Pandits were able to return to the Valley.

Mr. Advani also spoke about Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence. Though he hinted that the ISI was able to find considerable support because of the politics of appeasement, he was careful to assert that there was no linkage between one's patriotism and religion. He patted himself on the

back for making the country aware of the ISI menace, so much so that even the West Bengal Chief Minister was willing to talk about the possibility of the *madrasas* being misused.

Visit any time: Bhat

PTI reports from Srinagar:

The APHC chairman, Mr. Abdul Ghani Bhat, today asserted that the visit would take place "any time despite hurdles and impediments". "Right now, cancellation of the proposed visit of the Hurriyat team to Pakistan is not under discussion and it will take off any time," he said.

On Mr. Advani's statement that only "eligible" APHC members would get passports, Mr. Bhat said, "if they don't issue passports I have nothing to say," adding "if they do, all of us will have to say many things".

THE HINDU

18 JAN 2001

Indian envoy meets Musharraf, calls for 'composite dialogue'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 15. For the first time since the Kargil hostilities in May/June 1999, India today formally conveyed its desire to Pakistan for early resumption of a "composite dialogue", but not without pointing out the sore points that continued to be a matter of concern. The conditional offer for a "progressive and constructive" engagement was made by the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. Vijay Nambiar, during a meeting with the Pakistan Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, here. The meeting was no more than a mere reiteration of the known positions by both sides albeit with a difference. What they had told each other through "third parties" was conveyed face to face.

From the Indian side there was an appreciation of Pakistan's recent initiatives in addressing some of its concerns but at the same time it was made known that much more needed to be done.

Gen. Musharraf, on his part, stuck to the theme of Kashmir being the "core issue" of tension and said resumption of dialogue was the best way to deal with the militant groups. A terse three-para statement by the Foreign Office summed up Islamabad's position. The operative para said: "During the meeting, the Chief Executive stressed the need for early resumption of the dialogue process for resolution of the Kashmir dispute. The commencement of the dialogue would bring about improvement in the prevailing environment". The "courtesy call", a request for which was made by Mr. Nambiar on December 2, lasted for almost an hour today, giving

ing enough proof of its importance. The Foreign Secretary, Mr. Inamul Haq, was present.

Response to Pak. initiative

India's desire for good-neighbourly relations with Pakistan could be construed as a response to the latter's December 2 statement promising to observe "maximum restraint" on the Line of Control and expressing a desire for resumption of the stalled dialogue. Mr. Haq had called the Indian High Commissioner to his office on December 2 and formally handed over a copy of the press statement articulating the Government's position on dialogue with India.

The substance of Mr. Nambiar's presentation today was no different

from the statements of senior Ministers in the Vajpayee Government in the last few weeks and the new year musings of the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The High Commissioner said India looked forward to early resumption of the dialogue process and if Pakistan was prepared to address New Delhi's concerns, it would contribute to the process.

'Rein in militant groups'

India wants Pakistan to create an appropriate environment for talks by reaffirming faith in bilateral agreements particularly the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration; reaffirm prevention of violation of the LoC with a stern

message to infiltrators and rein in militant outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. Referring to the claims and threats made by outfits such as the Lashkar to target the office of the Prime Minister, Mr. Nambiar told the General that in absence of steps to counter such outfits by Islamabad, an impression had gained ground that they enjoyed official patronage.

Gen. Musharraf, reiterating the commitment to implement all bilateral agreements, made it a point to include the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir. The process of resumption of dialogue should not be linked to cessation of violence by militant outfits, he said.

An important step forward

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, JAN. 15. The meeting between the Chief Executive of Pakistan, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad, Mr. Vijay Nambiar, takes the peace process in the Subcontinent an important step forward—from an indirect to a direct communication between the two countries. The meeting marks the first of the "exploratory steps" that the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in late December told Parliament that India would initiate with Pakistan in order to resume the dialogue between the two nations that had been stalled since the Kargil confrontation in the summer of 1999.

The reiteration of the formal positions by the two foreign offic-

es on the "terms of engagement" does in no way reduce the political significance of the meeting between the Indian envoy and Gen. Musharraf. Foreign offices necessarily have to insure against failure of further movement.

A spokesman of the Foreign Office reaffirmed India's demand that the dialogue can only resume when Pakistan creates a "conducive atmosphere" by ending "cross-border terrorism." Islamabad, on the other hand, says that only resumption of the dialogue will facilitate an end to the violence in Kashmir.

In the next few days, the focus of Indo-Pak diplomacy will be on how the process could be moved further down the road. India will be looking for what Mr. Vajpayee in his new year musings at Kum-

arakom called "sufficient proof of preparedness" on the part of Gen. Musharraf to "create a conducive atmosphere." India appears to have dangled the carrot of inviting Gen. Musharraf to New Delhi if he can show he is capable and willing to rein in the jihadi groups. If Gen. Musharraf cannot deliver, there will be little political incentive for New Delhi to engage him.

The question is how keen is Gen. Musharraf to come to Delhi. India has hinted that it is ready to host him, if he can control the violence. It has also offered substantive negotiations to resolve the Kashmir dispute. Or would the General insist on additional steps from India on "de-escalation" of the situation in Kashmir valley, so that he has enough political cover?

THE HINDU

16 JAN 2001

Hurriyat to wait, Bhat talks tough

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JAN 14

HURRIYAT Conference chairman Abdul Gani Bhat on Sunday indicated that he was inclined to wait for issuance of passports to members of its team for visit to Pakistan and did some tough talking to tide over bickering over announcement of the delegation saying the decision was binding on all the members.

"The Hurriyat Conference takes decision collectively and whatever be the issue, the decision is binding on all," Bhat told newsmen over phone from Srinagar.

However, Bhat said "we do not deny a member his right to frame his opinion in regard to a particular matter. But what is important that the decision of Hurriyat Conference is carried out."

When asked about the comments made by fire-brand Jamaat

leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani that his representative at the executive meeting had voiced objection to announcement of team before the Centre issued passports, the Hurriyat chairman said "When I said Hurriyat Conference takes decision collectively, it means a matter is solved either by consensus or voting."

The Hurriyat chairman felt that

the trip to Pakistan might take place later than January 15, but the date did not matter the most.

"The Hurriyat Conference is not in for dates and days but is pushing forward with a direction to achieve a breakthrough. It does not matter when the passports are issued, what counts is whether we are able to contribute our mite in resolving the dispute (Kashmir)," Bhat said.

The Hurriyat chairman made it clear that the delegation would go

as soon as the Centre issued passports to the delegates.

Asked about the future course of action in case passports were not issued to all the five members of the delegation named by it, Bhat said "well, the executive committee will take up the issue at a formal meeting and decide. We move and take decisions collectively."

Bhat hastened to add "but then remember, I never loose heart. I still trust that the Government will issue passports to all in order to ensure that the peace process is not derailed on one pretext or the other."

The Hurriyat chairman said the executive committee would meet again and discuss the forthcoming visit to Pakistan after the Centre issued travel documents to all the five.

Asked about the possibility of issuance of passport to Geelani es-

pecially in the wake of comments made by Union Home Minister L K Advani, Bhat said "I think there are sane elements around in Delhi and Islamabad and if you like in Srinagar too, who have chosen to set out on a journey to sanity, goodwill and understanding."

About the reported possibility of direct talks between India and Pakistan and whether this would marginalise the Hurriyat role, Bhat said "No, I do not agree and we will not succumb to any pressure."

When his attention was drawn towards the remarks made by some Kashmiri Pundit groups against non-inclusion of any member from that community, the Hurriyat chairman said "Kashmiri Pundits know and I know too that if and when the delegation goes, miracles cannot happen in a day. We only need to understand that the ice needs to be broken for which a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INDIAN EXPRESS

15 JAN 2001

Jaswant Singh does not rule out Pakistan visit

BERLIN: External affairs minister Jaswant Singh has not ruled out a visit by him to Pakistan during this year, but said that could only be possible if Islamabad halted its support to cross-border terrorism and ended hostile propaganda against India.

"Nothing can be ruled out," Mr Singh said in an interview to German newspaper Der Tagesspiegel ahead of his three-day visit to Germany beginning January 17 when asked whether he envisaged visiting Pakistan in 2001.

Referring to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's bus ride to Lahore in February 1999, he asked if anybody could have imagined that Mr Vajpayee would "cross the border with Pakistan and travel by bus to Lahore".

He, however, made it clear that resumption of the stalled dialogue between India and Pakistan can be possible only if Islamabad halted its support to cross-border terrorism and ended its "hostile propaganda" against India.

"One cannot conduct external re-

lations with the assistance of instruments of terrorism," Mr Singh said, alluding to Pakistan, while also making it clear that giving up such methods alone could not constitute a "formal condition" for talks.

"It is simply not possible to enter into engagement when certain basic rules of behaviour are not respected," he said.

Mr Singh is coming here mainly for inauguration of the new chancery of the Indian embassy on January 18. German vice-chancellor and foreign minister Joschka Fischer will be present at the unveiling of the red sandstone building in the posh and lush green Tiergarten area.

Asserting that India was committed to a peaceful solution to all its differences with Pakistan on the basis of the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration, Mr Singh said, "The Lahore process is a symbol, which expresses that the historical burdens have to be solved in a particular way."

"It was always India that sought dialogue with Pakistan. But despite



Gen. Musharraf



Jaswant Singh

its endeavours, Islamabad continued with its compulsive hostile attitude towards New Delhi," Mr Singh said.

To a question, he said India could not "risk the unity and cohesion of the whole country by giving more autonomy to Kashmir." He, however, hastened to add that this did not mean that India was "seeking a dilution of the constitutional rights of Kashmir".

He referred to the remarks by home minister L.K. Advani that Indian initiatives like the unilateral cease-fire in Kashmir depicted a continuation of the peace process in the border state and said, "India does not have any territorial claims

and Kashmir is part of an integral dialogue which includes every level of relationship."

Asked whether India and Pakistan could become one nation emulating German reunification, Mr Singh said though it might not be able to do away with national borders, there was the ability to make them irrelevant.

On other issues, he said a strengthened partnership between India and the U.S. was "natural" and that it was an important factor in the development towards a world of peace, stability and democracy.

On India's national security strategy, Mr Singh said New Delhi holds to a minimal nuclear deterrent to secure its credibility. "India will maintain a minimal nuclear deterrent, which guarantees the certainty of survival of its assets," he said.

He said India does not believe the power of a nation to be based on the positions of weapons. "Nevertheless, it would be naive on India's part to assume that unequal

and distorted power structures present no danger to peace and security," he said.

"India does not have any intention at all of letting itself become involved in an arms race with any state," Mr Singh said, adding that India would also maintain a civilian command and control system with the necessary safeguards for every possible risk scenario.

He said India was also prepared to engage in the multilateral negotiations of the disarmament conference for non-discriminatory and verifiable treaty, which forbids the production of fissionable materials for the production of nuclear weapons.

Mr Singh said India remained committed to the aim of comprehensive nuclear disarmament and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

"But, India will resolutely oppose every attempt to sanction and immortalise an unequal and discriminatory regime like the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT)." (PTI)

Pak visit: Hurriyat chief wants passports for all

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JAN 3

CAUGHT between a cleft stick over the choice of a Hurriyat Conference team to visit Pakistan, its chairman Abdul Gani Bhat on Wednesday said the Centre should give passports to all the seven executive members of the amalgam to make the dream of peace initiatives between India and Pakistan a reality.

"We trust the Government will issue passports in favour of all the seven members of the executive council with a view to helping the process to move forward in the right direction," Bhat told newsmen over phone from Srinagar.

With consensus elusive on the composition of the team, Bhat has been authorised to nominate the team to hold talks with militant leadership and other Pakistani officials.

Insiders say Bhat will have to do a tight rope walking as it would be difficult for him to choose a team in the wake of statements by pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen

asking them to include fire brand Jamaat-e-Islamia leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani in the team travelling to Pakistan.

Bhat would be waiting for a "goodwill gesture" from Geelani like the one from Abdul Gani Lone, who on January 1 said he would opt out of the team if it was required for consensus.

When it was pointed out to Hurriyat chairman that Geelani and another senior Hurriyat leader Shiekh Abdul Aziz had not applied either in writing or verbally for passport, Bhat said "probably it should be taken in the larger interest as a request for the issuance of the passports" to them too.

However, the Centre, which is understood to have given clearance for issuance of travel documents to Bhat, Lone, Shia leader Maulvi Abbas Ansari and providing new travel document to JKLF leader Yaseen Malik (who applied in September last year), has not given a go ahead for passports to Geelani and Aziz.

Informed sources said that since these two had not applied for the same, a decision could not be taken.

The Hurriyat Chairman is, however, of the opinion that the peace initiative needs to be pushed forward in the right perspective in order to achieve a breakthrough.

"All of us in Delhi, Islamabad as well as Srinagar and Muzza-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Pak troops fire on Indian positions

■ JAMMU: AFTER a month-long lull, Pakistani troops on Wednesday fired heavily on Indian positions along the International Border in Kathua area in Jammu region, forcing Border Security Force personnel to return the fire.

BSF sources said the exchange of fire lasted 10 to 15 minutes, adding that there was no loss of life or damage to property on the Indian side. They said BSF jawans retaliated after Pakistani rangers fired indiscriminately on Indian positions.

INDIAN EXPRESS

4 JAN 2001

Consensus eludes Hurriyat, Bhat to decide on team for Pakistan

The Times of India News Service
SRINAGAR: The Hurriyat Conference on Tuesday failed to reach a consensus on constituting its team for the proposed January 15 visit to Pakistan and authorised chairman Abdul Ghani Bhat to select one.

After a six-hour meeting of the Hurriyat executive council, a spokesperson told journalists that since the government had not yet released travel documents to most of the Hurriyat leaders, the chairman had been authorised to select the delegation so that he could nominate its members in the event of an emergency.

The meeting at Hurriyat headquarters was held under tight security in view of the December 17 clashes between pro-Pakistan and pro-Independence supporters of the Hurriyat during a similar meeting held at the same venue.

The spokesperson said that the coming panchayat elections in Jammu and Kashmir were also discussed. The APHC has asked the people to boycott the exercise as it was felt that the polls were being

held to sabotage the restoration of peace in Kashmir. "On the one hand, there is talk of creating a conducive atmosphere to resolve the Kashmir issue, on the other, un-democratic panchayat elections are being imposed on the people," the statement said.

It said the Hurriyat would ascertain whether the Centre was "involved" in the holding of panchayat elections in the state.

Agencies add from Islamabad: Militants battling Indian soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir issued a warning on Tuesday that their secessionist war would continue despite the peace talks which were planned for later this month.

"We won't cut back on our attacks against the Indian army nor will we allow New Delhi to use meaningless talk as a delaying tactic," Farooq Kashmiri, chief of the militant group Harakat-ul-Mujahideen said. "Our struggle will continue until Kashmir is liberated."

Saleem Hashmi, a spokesman for Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, one of the largest Kashmiri militant groups, said he wanted more information

about the nature of the talks to be held in Pakistan.

"We don't oppose talks. But we want that all the three parties involved in the dispute be included," said Mr Hashmi. "The Mujahideen are united and their struggle will continue."

Pro-Pakistan militant outfit Al-badr has also warned that it will step up militant operations in Kashmir and reject the offer of talks with India, media reports said on Tuesday.

A statement quoting Bakht Zamin, a leader of Al-badr, which is in favour of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, rejected any proposal for talks with India and said the issue of Kashmir could be solved only through a jihad, the Pakistan daily *The News* said. "We have set up targets for 2001, we will step up our operations," Mr Zamin said.

Al-badr is an outfit supported by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and has been generally used to create a rift within Kashmiri militant outfits. Recently, Al-badr was used to engineer divisions within the Hizbul Mujahideen.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

3 JAN 2001

Indo-Pak Talks

Don't Make a Villain of Musharraf

By MANSOOR IJAZ

THERE are two contradictory perceptions in India about Pakistani military men and their obsession with Kashmir: they can't be trusted to maintain peace, but only they can deliver it and ensure its longevity. Prime Minister Vajpayee has shown admirable political courage in choosing non-violence as a tool of conflict resolution in Kashmir. Now he must find it in himself to talk to Gen Musharraf in the same spirit he acknowledged Pakistan's historical permanence during his 1999 Lahore bus trip.

Like him or not, Musharraf has cobbled together an emerging vision among Pakistan's military-intelligence elite that engagement with India through a policy of 'pragmatic flexibility' is critical to Pakistan's long-term security and stability. His decisions may seem haphazard at times, but he's a tactician who has successfully balanced the contradictory interests represented by Islamic zealotry, feudal politics and black-market economics. During the past year, he has removed dangerous hawks in his inner circle and promoted like-minded generals. And now, by exiling Nawaz Sharif, he has ensured the Sharif family's ill-gotten wealth cannot be used as bribe money for Pakistan's Islamic fundamentalists.

Nevertheless, Indian suspicions remain. In the interests of furthering the embryonic peace process in Kashmir, a process in which I have been centrally engaged for the past 15 months, I am today providing certain information that will hopefully shed light on the circumstances surrounding India's deepest wound vis-a-vis Musharraf: the extent and nature of his personal role in Kargil.

The common perception is that he dreamed the idea up, pressed Sharif to accept it, ran the operation and finally get rid of Sharif when, at the behest of President Clinton, Nawaz made the army eat a piece of American humble pie on July 4, 1999. Not one of these perceptions is accurate. While it is the army's job to draft war-game scenarios, Sharif personally approved the operation and was in touch with ground commanders once it started. His betrayal of Lahore was born of a misguided notion that one day he could exchange Kargil for Siachen. While Musharraf was nominally in charge, senior generals with ISI backgrounds orchestrated and ran the most sensitive aspects of the opera-

tion.

In a June 28, 1999 classified briefing I wrote for President Clinton six days prior to Sharif's July 4 gambit, I said that a serious rupture had emerged between the army chief and the PM, and that by hosting Sharif in Washington, he was effectively sealing the civilian government's fate. I told him strong evidence existed that the ISI director, Lt Gen Ziauddin, connived inappropriately in monitoring Musharraf's activities for Nawaz, both inside Pakistan and abroad. I specifically cited Sharif's insistence that Ziauddin accompany the army chief to Beijing at the height of the crisis, the same trip during which Musharraf's alleged telephone conversation with Lt-Gen Mohd. Aziz, was 'intercepted'.

The president agreed to see Sharif. He did so not just because of Pentagon's concerns that a nuclear showdown loomed or

Musharraf. The Pakistani army, after all, is still the only institution which can make a just peace stick. The question is how to arrange a summit within the constraints imposed on the Pakistani regime by Islamic fanatics who now see Musharraf as a security threat and on an Indian government whose mandate to make peace could easily evaporate with a few more well-timed episodes like the Lashkar-e-Taiba attack on the Red Fort. Bomb blasts in three Pakistani cities last week show similar vulnerabilities to extremist agendas there. Vajpayee needs to talk to Pakistan and soon.

The pressures within for Musharraf's ouster are growing and are in part a function of his attempt to moderate Pakistan's rigid stance on Kashmir. He has done much already to turn down the temperature in the Valley. To do more, or to do anything that betrays the public trust or army confidence is to invite trouble from the thousands of Islamic fanatics camped 100 miles away.

The Red Fort attack is ominous as it possibly represents the initial stages of a broader strategy to take the Kashmiri Jihad into the Indian heartland to sabotage any Musharraf-Vajpayee peace deal before it is made. Suicide attacks in Bangalore at an IT nerve centre would be a devastating blow to foreign investor confidence and to India's emerging economic engine.

Finally, the Vajpayee government has to buttress the goodwill it has engendered with Hurriyat leaders through its unilateral ceasefire by permanently reducing the numbers of troops in the Valley. Freeing the Kashmiri mind of its torture chamber is the only way to begin earning the trust of the Kashmiri people back and crafting a just, durable peace.

In the final analysis, taking Musharraf at his word that he is a willing partner for peace and showing the Kashmiris that India is prepared to effect permanent changes in the Valley's living dynamics are the only mechanisms that can ensure our collective efforts for reconciliation are not reversed. We may never have this chance again.

The author, an American of Pakistani origin, is chairman of Crescent Investment Management in New York. He is a member of the US Council on Foreign Relations.

IN BRIEF

- Kargil was approved by Nawaz Sharif; it is unfair to hold Musharraf alone responsible for it or to refuse a dialogue with him
- Musharraf is under pressure from Islamic fanatics who will do anything to frustrate talks
- Vajpayee must trust Musharraf and start talks, while at the same time buttressing the goodwill he has generated in Kashmir

because of mounting Indian political pressure but because by then he was well aware of Sharif's role in approving the military operation. A senior Pakistani cabinet official confided in me on July 5, 1999 that during the Clinton-Nawaz meeting, US officials made it clear to the Pakistani delegation that they were certain of Sharif's intrinsic involvement in the 'go' decision on Kargil. It is because of this that Clinton asked Sharif to call off his unwise gambit.

To blame Kargil entirely on Musharraf when the compulsions of an elected despot were the real culprit strains credulity and cannot serve as the basis for deciding whether or not to start a dialogue with Islamabad now. The question is not whether Vajpayee can trust

THE TIMES OF INDIA

3 JAN 2001

ISI behind Nepal riots: Fernandes

PTI, AFP & DPA

NEW DELHI/KATHMANDU, Jan. 1. — Mr George Fernandes has blamed Pakistan's ISI for the recent anti-India riots in Nepal and said the agency was also working on defaming Indian Army in Kashmir.

India has described the situation in Nepal as "relatively normal with no incidents of violence", while a general strike called by nine Left parties paralysed life today in Kathmandu.

Schools, colleges and business were closed and the streets were deserted. Yesterday, two people were killed when police fired at a rampaging demonstration in Rajbiraj in southern Nepal.

Mr Fernandes yesterday told soldiers in Kargil and Dras that the ISI had launched a "malicious campaign" against the Army, saying it was against the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir. "Even while extending the ceasefire up to 26 January, the Prime Minister had consulted all, including the chief of the Army staff," the

defence minister said.

The ISI, as "part of its plot against New Delhi", had put anti-Nepal remarks in Hrithik Roshan's mouth, leading to large scale anti-Indian riots in Nepal, Mr Fernandes said.

About Pakistan's claim of withdrawal of troops from the LoC, he said the step was not not enough. "Taking in view the long borders, re-deployment of one division cannot be termed adequate."

About the controversy that Pakistan has captured Point 5353 in Mushkoh valley, he said that during his latest visit he stood on the peak and got himself photographed. "This should end the controversy once for all."

He said that Islamabad should create a conducive atmosphere for meaningful talks with New Delhi by reining in the ISI and eliminating cross-border terrorism.

In Nepal, the government today said the first day of the two-day strike called by the Left parties passed off peacefully. The parties were demanding the resignation of

the Prime Minister, Mr GP Koirala, and his deputy, Mr Ram Chandra Paudel, for "failing" to maintain law and order, curb corruption and inflation.

"A taxi was attacked with a homemade bomb in Kathmandu but no one was seriously injured and a normal situation prevailed," a government spokesman said.

Yesterday in Rajbiraj, police fired at a protest demonstration organised by pro-India Nepal Sadbhavana Party, killing two persons.

The NSP had called a strike yesterday in several southern Nepal districts to protest against the "attacks, vandalism, and arson against Nepalese citizens of the Terai community" last week in Kathmandu.

BJP stand: Meanwhile, the BJP has distanced itself from the comments made by its leader Mr KR Malkani that India should have accepted the "accession offer" reportedly made by Nepalese King Tribhuvan in early 1950s.

The BJP chief, Mr Bangaru Laxman, described Mr Malkani's views as unfortunate.

THE STATESMAN

- 2 JAN 2001

'PANCHAYAT POLLS A MOVE TO SABOTAGE PEACE'

Hurriyat undecided about team

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JAN. 2. The All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) executive today authorised its chairperson to constitute the delegation scheduled to visit Pakistan on January 15. The forum also described the ensuing elections to the panchayats as a move to sabotage peace process.

After a marathon six-hour meeting of the executive chaired by Prof. Abdul Gani Bhat, the

Hurriyat spokesperson, Sheikh Abdur Rasheed, told reporters that the issue of constituting the delegation was discussed. Since the Government had not lifted restrictions on the travel of all the seven executive members, it was unanimously decided to authorise the chairperson to select the members of the team as and when needed, he said. At the end of the day, the Hurriyat remained undecided about its team.

The meeting was attended by

all other six executive members — Syed Ali Shah Geelani (Jamaat-e-Islami), Mr. Abdul Gani Lone (People's Conference), Mohammad Yaseen Malik (JKLF), Mirwaiz Umar Farooq (Awami Action Committee), Moulvi Abbas Ansari (Ittehadul Muslimeen) and Sheikh Abdul Aziz (People's League). The Hurriyat in its last executive meeting had decided to send a delegation to Pakistan to interact with the militant leadership there and the Pakistan Gov-

ernment to take the peace process ahead.

However, a senior Hurriyat leader, Mr. Abdul Gani Lone, on Monday said he would not be part of the delegation. Mr. Lone, who was recently in Pakistan, also had a dig at pan-Islamic militant organisations: "If somebody wanted to unfurl their flag on the Red Fort or the White House, Kashmir should not be used as a platform for that." It was a reference to outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba.

No to panchayat polls

The Hurriyat spokesperson said the panchayat elections, slated to begin from January 15 in Kupwara district, were also discussed. "It was felt that the proposed process of election was aimed at sabotaging the peace process in the State," he said.

Significantly, the Hurriyat said: "Only time will tell to what extent the Centre is involved in it," which was a clear reference to the Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, who initiated the exercise of panchayat polls on his own.

The Hurriyat asked people to boycott these elections as has been done in the past. Today's meeting was held at the APHC headquarters in Rajbagh where a clash had taken place between pro-independence and pro-Pakistan supporters on Dec. 17.



The Hurriyat chairperson, Prof. Abdul Gani Bhat, flanked by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq (left) and Mohammad Yaseen Malik, talking to the press shortly before the crucial meeting of the APHC executive in Srinagar on Tuesday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

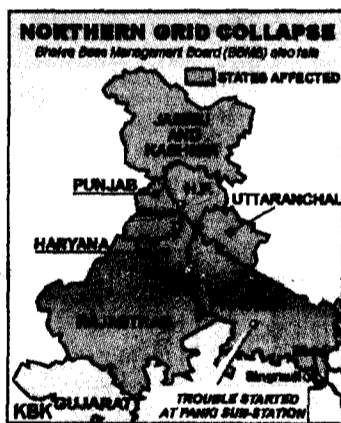
North India powerless for 12 hours

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 2. The entire North India went without power for almost 12 hours from 4-45 a.m. on Tuesday. It was only at 4 p.m. on Tuesday that the supply was resumed in a phased manner. The magnitude of the collapse of the northern grid — covering Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan — was such that the Central Government instituted an inquiry to find the cause of the failure and also fix responsibility. The inquiry committee has been given one week to file its report.

The Union Minister for Power, Mr. Suresh Prabhu, and other top officials of the electricity utilities cited technical reasons as the cause for the collapse. However, Mr. Prabhu did not rule out sabotage: "I don't want to prejudice the issue."

The collapse was triggered at the Panki (near Kanpur) sub-station in Uttar Pradesh where a fault occurred at about 3-10 a.m. Immediately, a number of lines such as the Panki-Muradnagar, Obra-Panki went out of operation. This breakdown, along with the closure of one unit of the Rihand-Dadri high-voltage direct current line, because of failure of converter transformers, created a very critical situation due to overloading of the transmission sys-



tem. Soon, all transmission lines carrying power from the major power plants in eastern Uttar Pradesh to the western part of the regional grid tripped at 4-45 a.m. The cascading effect led to the collapse of the entire northern grid with a loss of about 15,500 MW of generation.

Standby too fails

Mr. Prabhu disclosed that the stand-by system also failed, not once but repeatedly. Since a collapsed system has to be recharged with start-up power, electricity was drawn from the eastern and the western grids, but the Bhakra hydro-electric project failed at the same time. Thus, the stand-by system too went out of operation.

It was only around noon that the Singrauli and Rihand units of

the NTPC were synchronised to the grid and generation of about 2,500 MW was achieved by 4 p.m. The national capital, too, was plunged in darkness, including the VIP areas for some time. Then the two gas turbines of the Delhi Vidyut Board started supplying power to the New Delhi area which is where the President, the Prime Minister and all other important personalities and officials reside.

Mr. Prabhu admitted that when there was a power failure of the magnitude that took place today, there was bound to be large-scale disruption in daily activity and economic loss. "But I cannot quantify it."

The Minister said the inquiry committee, headed by the Chairman of the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), Mr. R.N. Srivastava, will look into the cause of the collapse of the grid, identify ways and means of restoring the system immediately in such a situation and also suggest measures to avoid a repeat. The Minister promised punitive action.

Mr. Prabhu agreed that apart from technical problems, there was a tendency on the part of States to overdraw from the grid which leads to a collapse. "Grid discipline is very important. You have to avoid greed to have the grid functioning properly."

Heavy losses: Page 15

'A secular, inclusive, integrative agenda'

In the second part of his article from Kumarakom, the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, outlines his vision for narrowing "the wide gulf between India's indisputable potential and her actual performance."

Expressing concern over the growing trend of intolerance, he says, "India belongs equally to all her citizens and communities, not more to some and less to others." The people of India do not give their mandate to any party or coalition that does not follow "a secular, inclusive, integrative agenda."

Mr. Vajpayee characterises the talk of India being sold out to foreign companies as a "ludicrous prophecy" and asserts that reforms will strengthen the economy. Neither industry nor agriculture can ignore the new competitive environment that has created challenges, opportunities and also obligations. The Government will take steps to protect the national interest against unfair trade and investment practices but "it is high time all sections of industry, agriculture and the services sector realised that, increasingly, these issues are being governed by a multilateral framework to which India is a signatory".

Part II of article on Page 13

Rift in Hurriyat, Lone not to visit Pakistan

India wants a responsive Pak for talks

SR-1
2/1/2001
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR, Jan. 1. — Mr Abdul Ghani Lone won't be part of a Hurriyat team which will visit Pakistan on 15 January. Mr Lone said this today, a day before the crucial Hurriyat executive council meeting.

Mr Lone lashed out at the hardliners in the Kashmiri outfits' umbrella group for initiating an unfounded "campaign" against him.

Tomorrow's Hurriyat meeting is likely to discuss the composition of the delegation to Pakistan. Another senior leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, had said the delegates would be chosen through a consensus.

"I will not visit Pakistan as a member of Hurriyat delegation to hold negotiations with militant leadership in Islamabad," Mr Lone told a working committee meeting of J&K Peoples' Conference, which he heads.

His decision was voluntary, and not taken under pressure.

On the Centre's talks offer to the Hurriyat, Mr Lone said no talks had been held between the two as yet. The Centre doesn't seem serious about talks. The world has recognised the Kashmir dispute and the Centre can't ignore it for long.

Mr Lone, a moderate, claimed that some people are spreading rumours that "we have been sold." He was referring to slogans such as "*saudebazi nahin chalegi*" (no deal will be allowed) raised by pro-Pakistan outfits in Hurriyat outside its headquarters on 17 December.

Terming those people "contractors of religion", Mr Lone said they "are bent upon burying the Hurriyat's political approach on the pretext of threat to Islam in and outside J&K."

(Some people talk about hoisting flags on the Red Fort and the White House. Why

hoist flags on the Red Fort and the White House through the road of Kashmir," Mr Lone asked. "By the time they succeed or fail in their experiment, there would be total destruction in Kashmir," UNI quoted him as having said.

Peace "will be a bigger jihad" at this crucial moment, he said. "I'm being vilified... They were after me even during the election campaign (Mr Lone had contested elections and was a minister in the J&K Congress government) and were levelling baseless allegations on my religious beliefs."

How was his recent visit to Pakistan? Mr Lone said he had ignored all criticism against him before and during his visit. "I've controlled my sentiments... and at times, buried... (my prestige) in the interest of the movement."

■ Another report on page 8

SR-1
2/1
NEW DELHI, Jan. 1. — Carrying forward the peace initiative in J&K the Prime Minister has said India is ready to resume talks with Pakistan at the highest level if Islamabad is sincere in creating a conducive atmosphere. Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, however, said the government would soon initiate talks with various representative groups.

"India is ... ready to seek a lasting solution to the Kashmir problem... we are prepared to resume talks with Pakistan at any level, including the highest level, provided Islamabad gives sufficient proof of its preparedness to create a conducive atmosphere for a meaningful dialogue," he said.

He felt sad to say Pakistan "is not doing enough to reign in terrorist organisations based on its soil that are continuing their killing spree, targetting both innocent civilians and our security personnel in Kashmir and other parts of India." — PTI

THE STATESMAN

2 JAN 2001

Nepal riots part of ISI's game plan against India, says George

NEW DELHI: Defence minister George Fernandes said on Sunday that Pakistan-based Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was behind the riots in Nepal and the deliberate design to defame the Indian Army in Kashmir. He



G. Fernandes

also noted that ISI activities targeting India were on the increase lately and the latest acts were part of a new dimension of its campaign against India.

Pointing out that in the last few days a 'malicious campaign' was being carried out saying the army was against the ceasefire declared by the government in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr Fernandes said. This, and the manner in which some allegations were levelled against film actor Hrithik Roshan leading to large-scale destruction of property belonging to Indians in Nepal, were 'part of plot against New Delhi', the defence minister said.

Mr Fernandes was addressing troops in snowy outposts in Kargil and Dras areas of Jammu and

Kashmir on Sunday. He said the Prime Minister's ceasefire initiative was launched after due consultations and advice from all quarters, including the top brass of the army.

"Even while extending the ceasefire upto January 26, the prime minister had consulted the chief of the army staff," Mr Fernandes said. He said while the firing had reduced all along the Line of Control following New Delhi's ceasefire initiative, "the activities by ISI against India instead of declining, have increased lately."

Mr Fernandes said the anti-India feeling among the Nepalese was spread in a calculated manner. The minister called upon the media not to fall prey to the "calculated propaganda of the ISI" saying that the sole aim of this canard was to damage India's interests and its progress.

"At a time when we are passing through a critical phase, the media should create a climate of confidence amongst the people instead of weakening it," the minister said.

About Pakistan's claim of withdrawal of troops from the LoC, Mr Fernandes contended that the step was not enough and that Islamabad should reciprocate by reining in ISI

activities, controlling mercenary militant groups and eliminating cross-border terrorism.

He said, according to a United Nations report, Pakistan had re-deployed a division of its troops from the border. "Taking in view the long border, re-deployment of one division cannot be termed adequate," Mr Fernandes said.

Referring to the controversy over rumours that Point 5353 in Mushkoh Valley near Dras had been captured by Pakistan, Mr Fernandes said, during his latest visit, he had stood on the peak and got himself photographed. "This should end the controversy about this peak once for all," he said.

Greeting the jawans on the New Year, the defence minister said more stress would be laid on continuation of the modernisation drive in the armed forces as well as self-reliance.

He said New Delhi was determined to follow the path of peace and progress and in this connection was open to dialogue with its neighbours including Pakistan. "But Islamabad should first create a conducive atmosphere for meaningful dialogue," Mr Fernandes said. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

2 JAN 2001

India's charge baseless, says Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

9/12/01 Pak
ISLAMABAD, JAN. 1. Pakistan today dubbed as "baseless" the charge made by the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, that it was behind the threats made by a militant organisation to attack his office, and said it unequivocally condemns terrorism and threats of terrorist attacks.

A statement issued by Pakistan Government said that "we regret that the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Vajpayee, has accused Pakistan of 'involvement' in the alleged threat of attacking his office. The accusation is baseless." "The Government of Pakistan holds Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in high esteem and wishes him good health and a long life."

Pakistan's statement could be seen as an attempt to distance itself from the statement of the militant organisation and send out a signal to the Indian Government that it was not doing anything to derail the recent initiatives for peace.

Significantly, even as Pakistan chose to give the benefit of doubt to the Lashkar-e-Taiba, by using the term "the alleged threat", the Pakistan-based militant outfit denied having held out any threat to target the office of the Indian Prime Minister.

The Lashkar spokesperson, Mr. Yahya Mujaheed, told *The Hindu* that "the media has distorted our statement. We have never said we would target the office of Mr. Vajpayee. No doubt, we hold Mr. Vajpayee responsible for

the atrocities by the Indian forces in Kashmir but we have made such a statement."

Exchange nuclear notes

In another development, as part of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), Pakistan and India today exchanged information on their respective nuclear installations and facilities through diplomatic channels.

The exchange of information took place under Article II of the Pakistan-India Agreement on Prohibition of Attack against each other's nuclear installations and facilities. Under this article, both the countries are required to exchange information on nuclear installations and facilities on the first working day of every year.

THE HINDU

2 JAN 2001

Pak behind Sikh killings: NYT

■ Daily says villagers convinced but forced to be ambivalent for fear of reprisal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW YORK, JAN 1

PEOPLE of Chittisinghpura village in Jammu and Kashmir, where 35 Sikhs were massacred in March this year, are convinced that the attack was part of a conspiracy by Pakistani intelligence agencies, but are forced to adopt a tactical ambivalence for fear of another attack, according to a report published in the *New York Times* today.

The massacre, which had taken place on the eve of US President Bill Clinton's visit to India, had grabbed world-wide headlines. "Our people have been killed by a conspiracy of the intelligence agencies of Pakistan," an elderly Sikh from the village was quoted as saying.

But no fingers are being pointed at these agencies following the counsel of some of India's leading Sikhs, the report said, adding: "They (Sikh leaders) believe that if their people were to stay in the Kashmir Valley, good relations had to be maintained with the surrounding Muslim majority which (while exhausted by the endless violence) was largely sympathetic to the

militants."
"One month before the massacre," the elderly Sikh said, "there were militants who spent time in our village. They were from Pakistan. They made friends with us. And this is how we were thanked — with a barbaric act."

There were militants from Pakistan who spent time in our village. They made friends with us. And this is how we were thanked. With a barbaric act

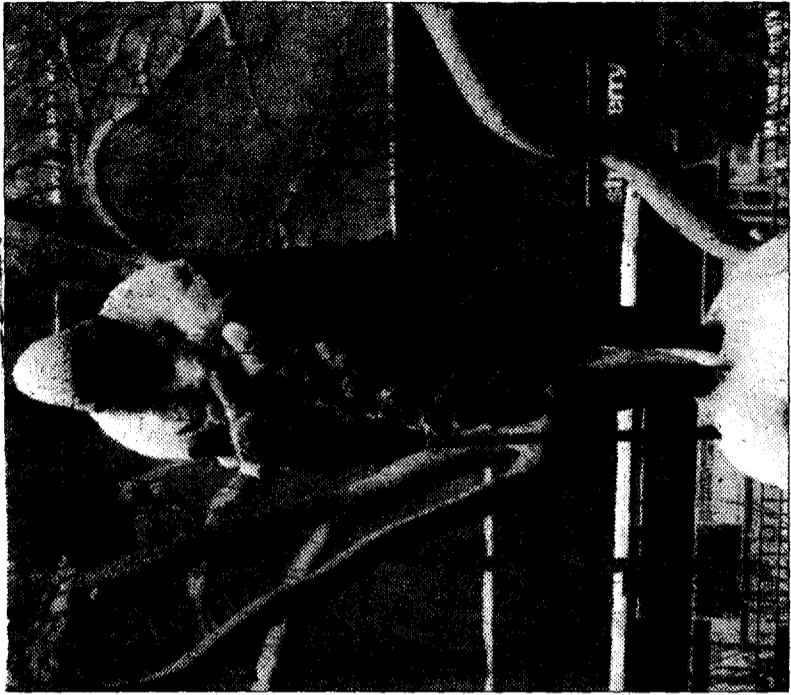
The report said while such stop-overs were hardly uncommon, these guerrillas were exceptional in their casualness. "They had even strung their rifles on trees once and watched a game of cricket," the villager said. Now, most villagers feel that they were only scouting the village as a suitable target.

A few widows said they had recognised the

voices of the men at their doors who led their husbands to their death. "The marauders seemed to know where people lived and had even called out some names," the villagers told the *New York Times* correspondent.

The report said the Sikh leaders considered unwavering neutrality as clearly preferable to what New Delhi was proposing. The Government had proposed arming the villagers to form Village Defence Committees. The article said the villagers considered this neutrality as a matter of survival as there were fears of a second raid. People who gave their versions of the massacre didn't want to be named until the conversation changed to the matter of compensation.

Donors, public and private, had given US\$ 20,000 to each family which lost men in the massacre but villagers said everyone had suffered and so every family should be compensated. They also mentioned that the killings would have never occurred if Clinton had not visited India, and therefore, Americans had a bigger responsibility towards mitigating their sufferings.



Statue of Mahatma Gandhi under snow blanket in New York on Saturday - P77

INDIAN EXPRESS

2 JAN 2001

Hizbul insists on all seven Hurriyat leaders going to Pak

ISLAMABAD: Pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen militant outfit has insisted that if all the seven executive council members of the Hurriyat Conference did not travel to Pakistan for talks it will be an "exercise in futility".

"If some are allowed and some are barred from travelling to Pakistan, it will create doubts about the Hurriyat. Rather, it can create an impression that the alliance is divided into moderate and extremist people," Hizb supreme commander Syed Salahuddin said in an interview to *Dawn* newspaper.

He said the Hurriyat Conference leaders "must show farsightedness and diplomatic efficiency to rend the impression that New Delhi and not they themselves are constituting their delegation for Pakistan."

Salahuddin's remarks came in the wake of reports that the travelling documents to Syed Ali Shah Geelani, a hardliner in the alliance, were not being issued by New Delhi. "I will advise the leaders to avoid the visit to Pakistan unless all of them are allowed to travel. And if all of them get permission, then they should first sit together and evolve an agenda in consensus with each other for the tour," Salahuddin said.

Salahuddin said Pakistan was behind the Kashmiris and had

been extending all-out political, moral and diplomatic support to them all along the past 53 years. "But the thing that needs to be settled with New Delhi is how sincere and serious it is in resolving the festering issue," he said, adding, "if the Hurriyat does not get any assurance from the Indian government before hand, then their journey will prove an exercise in futility."

The Hizb commander said the Hurriyat leaders "cannot suggest" to the militants to respect the ceasefire "because it does not have any mandate for that".

"The ceasefire is worthless unless India makes a categorical declaration that Kashmir is a disputed territory and it is ready to resolve it through meaningful tripartite talks," he said, adding, "till that happens, the operations of the militants would continue. Rather we would intensify and stretch them."

Meanwhile, in Srinagar, senior Hurriyat leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Sunday said the Centre should issue permits to all the seven executive council members of the conglomerate and leave composition of the team to Hurriyat. "It is our headache who will go and who will not go," Mirwaiz told a foreign radio network, adding, "nobody has a right to decide on our behalf." (PTI)

Enron may lower power tariff

MUMBAI: Global power major Enron, whose 2,184 mw project at Dabhol in Maharashtra has run into rough weather for its exorbitant tariff structure, has indicated lowering of power charges in the wake of a crash in naphtha prices in the international market.

Dabhol Power Company (DPC), a subsidiary of Enron, in a communication to the Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) on Thursday said there was a possibility of scaling down its power tariff as naphtha prices had crashed from \$304 to \$170 per tonne internationally, state energy minister Padmasinh Patil said on Sunday.

"This reduction in the naphtha prices will be passed on to DPC's tariff and hence the total charges can be lesser than perceived earlier," DPC sources said.

A high-powered committee, proposed to be set up by the state government to gauge the impact of DPC's power purchase agreement (PPA) on the state, would also take into account the above mentioned fact, Mr Patil said.

The sources said the company had been buying naphtha at a rate of \$310 per tonne from international supplier Glencore till it was forced to break the contract, as per the ministry of petroleum and natural gas's directive to purchase the fuel from the state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC). (PTI)

RISE IN OIL PRICES WILL AFFECT TOURISM

THE TIMES OF INDIA

1 JAN 2001

Pak agencies behind massacre: Villagers

New York, December 31

9:20 PM HT-14
PEOPLE OF Chittisinghpura village in Jammu and Kashmir, scene of massacre of 35 Sikhs in March this year, are convinced that the attack was part of a conspiracy by Pakistani intelligence agencies, but are forced to adopt a tactical ambivalence for fear of another attack, a report published in *The New York Times* said today.

The massacre, which had taken place on the eve of US President Bill Clinton's visit to India, had grabbed world-wide headlines.

"Our people have been killed by a conspiracy of the intelligence agencies of Pakistan," an elderly Sikh of the village was quoted in the report as saying.

LeT militant admits to killings

A PAKISTANI militant, arrested in connection with the March massacre of 35 Sikhs in Chittisinghpura in Kashmir, has admitted to his being a member of the attackers' team and his affiliation to the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, a media report said in New York.

PTI, New York

But no fingers are being pointed at these agencies following the counsel of some of India's leading Sikhs, it said, adding: "They (Sikh leaders) believe that if their people were to stay in the Kashmir valley, good relations had to be maintained with the surrounding Muslims

majority of which (while exhausted by the endless violence) were largely sympathetic to the militants."

"One month before the massacre," the elderly Sikh said: "There were militants who spent time in our village. They were from Pakistan. They made friends with us. And this is how we were thanked with a barbaric act." The report said while such stop-overs were hardly uncommon, these guerrillas were exceptional in their casualness. "They had even strung their rifles on trees once and watched a game of cricket," the villager said. Now most villagers feel that they were only scouting the village as a suitable target. A few widows said they had recognised the voices of the men at their doors who led their husbands to their deaths. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

1 JAN 2001

PM links Pakistan to Lashkar death threat

UNI & PTI

KUMARAKOM, Dec. 31. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee today said Islamabad was involved in the threat to his life from Lashkar-e-Taiyaba.

"I'm not afraid of being attacked or murdered... I'm ready to lay down my life for the nation," the Prime Minister said, reacting to the threat by the terrorist outfit.

"They have threatened to attack the PMO. What does that mean? ... This outfit is getting all help from the government and administration of Pakistan. Therefore, Pakistan is involved in this threat."

In a 45-minute speech at a BJP state delegates meeting at Kumarakom, where he's on a holiday, Mr Vajpayee said Lashkar that had issued the threat was based in Pakistan.

Though India had resolved to maintain peace and good relations with its neighbours, it couldn't be cowed down, he said. "We won't be taken un-

HIZB WARNS OF INTENSIFIED ATTACKS

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 31. — Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin today threatened to intensify militant strikes unless India declared Kashmir a disputed territory and agreed to tripartite talks, a possibility that Mr LK Advani rejected yesterday. Mr Salahuddin dismissed the ceasefire as a precondition for talks and criticised Hurriyat leader Mr Abdul Ghani Lone for urging militants to respond to the truce positively. Mr Salahuddin told *The Dawn*: "We believe the Hurriyat can't suggest (this)... it hasn't the mandate." — PTI

■ Leave Pak team line-up to us: Hurriyat, page 6

awares. The whole country is united on this issue."

He had taken the Lahore bus trip as part of the peace process with Pakistan, Mr Vajpayee said. But what followed instead was the Kargil conflict.

"But this time we are more cautious," he said. India has always wanted peace. "We never believed in attacking anyone. Many a time we were attacked, but repulsed these attempts." India was still ready for talks with Pakistan but Islamabad must stop aiding terrorists first.

On the anti-India agitations in Nepal, he said Delhi always wanted good ties with its neighbours and had succeeded on this count, except in Pakistan's case. He blamed the violence in Nepal on "some elements", who wanted to destroy the age-old ties between the two countries. "But they have not succeeded."

Rumours are being spread that India would "eat up" small countries, he said. The truth is that India has never created problems for its neighbours.

'Pak role in J&K': Pakistan's

engagement in Kashmir may have become necessary for the survival of military ruler General Pervez Musharraf, the *New York Times* said today.

"Pakistan has thousands of armed, impoverished zealots who are long on righteousness and short on respect for the government. Pursuing the holy war against India may be all that diverts them from fomenting *jihad* at home," an article said. "Pakistan finds the militancy a ... way to torment India in Kashmir... However, ... the guerrilla campaign has also become part and parcel of Pakistan's own precariousness."

Threat to Qureshi

Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen today threatened Hashim Qureshi that "it would take him to task for treason and surrender before Indian authorities", UNI adds from Srinagar.

Delhi High Court today extended Qureshi's stay in Tihar jail till Tuesday.

THE STATESMAN

THE STATESMAN
THE STATESMAN

1 JAN 2001