

Benazir lauds India's initiatives

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By C. Raja Mohan *gndr pakista*

NEW DELHI, NOV. 25. Gingerly tip-toeing across the political minefield of Indo-Pakistan relations, the visiting former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, today suggested that a democratic Pakistan might be better placed to talk peace with India, and emphasised the importance of an early restoration of civilian rule in Pakistan.

In her wide-ranging consultations with the top layer of the Indian leadership, Ms. Bhutto welcomed India's recent peace initiatives towards Pakistan and hoped the military Government in Islamabad would respond positively.

Ms. Bhutto, who arrived here from her political exile in Dubai, called on the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, this evening. In what was described as a "courtesy call," she emphasised her strong desire for peace between India and Pakistan. Her talks with Mr. Vajpayee were described as "cordial" and lasted about 40 minutes.

Coming out of the meeting with Mr. Vajpayee, Ms. Bhutto pointed to the many "missed opportunities in the past" for the normalisation of Indo-Pak. relations. She was not blaming just the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, but also the previous leaders of Pakistan, including herself, "for not seizing the opportunities for peace with India."

Earlier in the day, she had extensive talks with the Union Home Minister Mr. L. K. Advani, and the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi. The Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, also called on Ms. Bhutto.

The politically sensitive sojourn



The Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, with the former Pakistan Prime Minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, at his residence in New Delhi on Sunday. — PTI

by the former Pakistan Premier had been under consideration for nearly a year but had to be deferred due to sensitivities on both sides. New Delhi had to consider how its serenading of Ms. Bhutto would be read in Islamabad.

While engaging the leading political opponent of Gen. Musharraf, the Government today kept the official interaction with Ms. Bhutto at a low profile. In his talks with her, Mr. Advani reiterated the Indian commitment to improve relations with Pakistan and the disappointment at Gen. Musharraf's negative attitude.

Ms. Bhutto too had to weigh the risks of travelling to India before she returned to Pakistan. She is naturally conscious of the need to

walk the fine political line on sensitive issues relating to the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, Indo-Pak. relations, and her opposition to military rule in Pakistan. While stressing that Kashmir is a "major issue," Ms. Bhutto took the high ground to emphasise the importance of peace between India and Pakistan. As she seeks to end the military rule in Pakistan, Ms. Bhutto is positioning herself as a genuine peacemaker in the eyes of the international community as well as the people of India and Pakistan.

Even as she welcomed the prospect of talks between Mr. Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf at the SAARC summit in Kathmandu in

early January, Ms. Bhutto was apparently not trying to hide her belief that she is a more credible Pakistani interlocutor for India.

Her visit to India comes amid a challenge to Ms. Bhutto who ruled Pakistan during 1988-90 and 1993-96. As Gen. Musharraf consolidates his position after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S., she is trying to claw her way back into Pakistani politics.

Ms. Bhutto needs all the international political support she can get in preventing Gen. Musharraf from blocking her participation in the elections, scheduled for late next year. Her visit to Delhi could be seen as a step in that political campaign. She would obviously be quite happy to gain New Delhi's support in getting the international community to impress upon Gen. Musharraf the need for an early and credible restoration of democracy in Pakistan.

Ms. Bhutto hopes her talks here will set a precedent for greater people-to-people contact between the two countries at a time when bilateral ties are at a low ebb.

There was a special personal tone in the meeting between Ms. Bhutto and Ms. Gandhi. Ms. Bhutto recalled her association with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and the peace talks between her father, Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and Mrs. Indira Gandhi at Simla in 1972. Ms. Gandhi and Ms. Bhutto agreed that the Shimla Agreement "must form the bedrock of Indo-Pak. relations." Ms. Bhutto will speak here tomorrow on women's empowerment and address a press conference. On Tuesday, she travels to the shrine of Kwaja Moinuddin Chisti in Ajmer, Rajasthan, and flies back to Dubai on Thursday.

See also Page 15

Jawahar Park

Atal snub to Pervez 'split' comment

9200 Park
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HT Correspondent
New Delhi, November 27

HC-2

PRIME MINISTER Atal Bihari Vajpayee today said the country is "fully united" on the Kashmir issue and it will never allow another Partition. The comment came a day after Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf spoke of a split in the Indian polity over Kashmir.

"The country is fully united on the Kashmir issue. The country will never accept another Partition," he said, winding up the two-day discussion in the Rajya Sabha on the international situation arising out of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the US.

The Prime Minister's hour-long, extempore speech in Hindi had shades of the orator in him, a quality missing from his speeches for some time now.

Vajpayee urged the Opposition not to use Kashmir as a political tool. He said differences would always exist, but one must give in to attempts to create confusion among the masses.

Musharraf may have his own problems, but India will always try to improve its ties with Pakistan. But he made it clear that if Pakistan should not be under the illusion that Indo-Pak relations would improve only if India would give away Kashmir. For, this condition would never be fulfilled. The MPs greeted the PM's statement with a thumping of desks.

Vajpayee said he told former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto yesterday that the country would never accept another Partition. Vajpayee said India has always been endeavouring for closer ties with Pakistan in cultural and economic fields.

He said India's plea that Pakistan-sponsored terrorism should at least stop during Ramzan did not receive a positive reply from Islamabad.

Vajpayee spoke of a greater role for India in the establishment of a broad-based democratic Government in Afghanistan and joint international efforts to ensure that

I NEEDN'T WEAR A BURKHA: VAJPAYEE

"LET ME remain a man and I need not wear a *burkha* as I have nothing to hide," Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said in Rajya Sabha amid peals of laughter.

Referring to Congress member Eduardo Faleiro's remark that he was wearing *burkha* to avoid a meeting with Pakistan President Musharraf during his recent New York trip, Vajpayee said it was not required. If such a meeting was not in the interest of the nation or was against the country's policy, he would not undertake it, Vajpayee said. **PTI, New Delhi**

there was no division of the war-ravaged nation.

He said India's relations with Washington were on equal terms. Rejecting Opposition criticism for his letter to the US President George W Bush soon after the terrorist attack on J & K Assembly, Vajpayee said he had mentioned that Pakistan must understand that there was a limit to India's patience.

How could the Opposition allege that the Prime Minister of a country with hundred crore population could approach the US, or for that matter any country, with folded hands, he wanted to know.

"Such allegations cause pain... They put question marks on our patriotism that we are compromising our country's self-respect," Vajpayee said.

He said that the terrorist attacks on World Trade Center and the J&K Assembly could not be justified in any way and warned against those seeking to link terrorism with religion.

Vajpayee said terrorists were cowards as they talk of revolution but kill children.

There were loud protests from the Left benches when the PM said: "Nobody should support terrorism specially the friends from the Left."

"Mr PM don't distort facts," interjected CPM member Nilotpal Basu.

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28 NOV 2001

G-8 INFORMED OF NEW DELHI VIEWPOINT

India ready for talks if Pak. takes credible steps

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By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, DEC. 29. For the first time in recent weeks, India today said it was ready for talks with Pakistan provided Islamabad took "credible and visible steps" to curb terrorism directed against it from its soil.

This was conveyed to the Ambassadors of leading G-8 industrialised countries by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra. According to the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Mr. Mishra told the envoys of these countries, which include the U.S., Russia, France, Germany, Britain and Japan, that India would neither pull back its forces nor reverse the recent diplomatic measures it had taken against Pakistan unless Islamabad took concrete steps to counter terrorism.

India, he said, "will maintain heightened vigilance on the Line of Control and the International Border as also keep in place the other measures which had been taken in the last few days." Mr. Mishra, the spokesperson said, had called in the Ambassadors to convey India's response to the statement the Foreign Ministers of

this grouping adopted in Moscow on Friday.

Mr. Mishra said India was ready to directly and peacefully discuss its differences with Pakistan on all issues, including Jammu and Kashmir. India is of the view that differences have to be discussed through direct talks under the "letter and spirit" of the Shimla agreement. Besides, India wanted the talks to be part of a "composite dialogue" process anchored by the "Lahore declaration". The declaration spells out eight topics for discussion, including Jammu and Kashmir on which India and Pakistan hold divergent views.

Mr. Mishra, however, emphasised that Pakistan must first take "credible, firm and substantive and visible actions" against terrorist groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India from its soil. In an obvious reference to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and the Northern Areas, Mr. Mishra stressed that Pakistan must also take action against terrorists operating from "territories it controls today".

Analysts here say Mr. Mishra has expressed these views in response to the two-track international diplomacy that has

followed the December 13 attack on Parliament. First, international diplomatic pressure on Pakistan to curb Kashmiri terrorists, especially those belonging to the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, has progressively mounted after this incident. In fact, the G-8 Ministers strongly urged Pakistan to take action against terrorist groups, "particularly those targeting India, to arrest, to bring to justice and severely punish their leaders and to curtail their financing." Not surprisingly, Mr. Mishra not only expressed appreciation of the G-8 stance, but said that its approach to terrorism was synonymous with that of India. In fact, it dovetailed with the demarche India had delivered to Pakistan after the attack on Parliament.

Second, while urging Pakistan to curb terrorism, the international community has simultaneously mounted considerable pressure on India to defuse rising military tensions with Islamabad.

'Talks not now'

Notwithstanding the exhortations for a dialogue from the international community, India today indicated that a resumption of talks was not imminent. In response to a question on the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf's willingness to hold talks with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, on the margins of the Kathmandu SAARC summit next month, officials sources said that such a prospect was not "promising". Sources reiterated that talks with Pakistan could resume only after Pakistan acted "resolutely and meaningfully" against terrorists. They also clarified that, as of now, a dialogue between the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, at Kathmandu was not on the cards.

In a related development, the spokesperson said that India had received a *note verbale* from Pakistan for allowing Gen. Musharraf to transit through Indian airspace to attend the SAARC summit. India had agreed to the request in principle, the sources said, and was now awaiting further flight details.

'List not sent'

The spokesperson denied that India had sent to Pakistan a list of 34 criminals for extradition. An official request for the handing over of the hijackers of the IA plane from Kathmandu in December 1999 had been made earlier, she added.

Musharraf reviews situation: Page 8

Bush speaks to PM, Musharraf

NEW DELHI, DEC. 29. Amid growing Indo-Pak tensions, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, and the French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac, tonight spoke to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and discussed the latest situation in the wake of mutual diplomatic sanctions slapped by New Delhi and Islamabad.

A report from Islamabad said Mr. Bush called up the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and discussed the prevailing situation.

The French President was briefed by Mr. Vajpayee on measures taken by India, which included reduction of diplomatic missions and stopping of overflight facilities to Pakistani aircraft.

Mr. Bush and Mr. Chirac are understood to have urged restraint on the part of India and Pakistan. — PTI

Pak. not to seek meeting

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 29. Pakistan today said it would respond positively to any indication from the Indian Government for a meeting between the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, on the sidelines of the SAARC Summit, but would not make a request for it.

Addressing a news conference here, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, said Pakistan would not like to give an opportunity to New Delhi to reject a request for meeting. However, Pakistan would respond positively to any indications of a desire for a meeting from the Indian side.

Mr. Sattar said Pakistan was willing to discuss all differences with India, including its latest demand for action against the accused in the December 13 attack on Parliament, but it cannot expect Pakistan to take action against the accused without proof. "We have been asking India to give us the evidence, but, unfortunately, New Delhi wants its accusations be accepted as facts".

In response to a question on the action taken by the Government against militant groups, Mr. Sattar said that Pakistan had acted against them in response to the U.N. Security Council resolutions adopted after September 11. The resolutions call for action against groups and individuals with terrorist links.

He, however, evaded a direct reply to a question if Pakistan was prepared to declare the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), prime suspects in the December 13 Parliament attack. Answering questions about the arrests of JeM lead-

ers and cadres, he said his information was that so far 50 people, believed to be of the JeM, have been arrested.

Pakistan's Urdu daily, *Ausaf* quoting the JeM sources said 94 people, including four brothers of the JeM leader, Masood Azhar, had been arrested from the Bahawalpur headquarters in Punjab and taken to undisclosed location. Azhar is already under house arrest.

Asked if Pakistan would ask the U.S.-led coalition forces to vacate their troops from the three Pakistan airbases in view of the build-up for a war on the Indian front, Mr. Sattar said the Pakistan Government would make a decision in this regard as and when it was necessary.

Ban on Indian TV channels

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 29. Pakistan today directed all cable TV operators in the country to stop relaying all Indian satellite TV channels and the Star group of satellite channels.

An official statement said the step was taken on the ground that Indian networks were indulging in a "propaganda against the security of Pakistan". It alleged that the Indian channels were propagating "injurious material" against the security of Pakistan and their relay by cable TV operators was in violation of the conditions of the licence issued by the Pakistan Television Authority to them.

'Ban on PTV not now': Page 8



Pakistani Rangers open the joint border gate at Wagah for the last Lahore-Delhi bus to pass through on Saturday. — AP (Report on Page 9)

It is up to world community to pressure Pak.: Vajpayee

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 29. While reaffirming the country's resolve to use all the means and resources at its command to root out Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today put the onus on the world community to make Pakistan give up its policy of cross-border terrorism. "No means will be spared, although we shall do our utmost to avoid war with Pakistan," he observed.

The Prime Minister was addressing an emergency meeting of the BJP national executive. He had the difficult task of signalling to his own partymen that they needed to keep control over the rhetoric; and, at the same time, he also did not want to dilute his Government's post-December 13 seriousness. Mr. Vajpayee formulated: "We do not want war, but a war in the form of cross-border terrorism has already been thrust on India."

Taking note of the world community's indifference to the proxy war being waged against India for nearly two decades, Mr. Vajpayee said diplomatic efforts would be further intensified in the days to come to secure a concrete dimension to the understanding and support extended by the international community in the country's struggle against terrorism. He said success in Afghanistan was principally due to unprecedented global unity against terrorism.

"India urged the international community to show similar resolve in the struggle against terrorism aimed at India, since the genesis of terrorism, fuelled by religious extremism in Afghanistan and in our country, is one and the same," he said.

At the same time, the Prime Minister clarified that India "will not come under any external pressure to dilute our struggle against terrorism. This is our firm resolve." He appealed to his compatriots to be prepared to face any eventuality with unity, courage and supreme confidence in the justness of the country's struggle.

He managed to set the tone for the day's deliberations. Notwith-

standing the hawkish sentiments from a number of BJP functionaries, the executive ended up endorsing the Government's studied and gradual approach.

Mr. Vajpayee also took care to keep the divisive note out of his remarks. He went out of his way to "thank the Opposition parties for the support they have extended to the Government at this hour of crisis". And, he also urged that special care should be taken "to ensure that no divisive issues are raised by anybody at this juncture. It is our prime duty to see to it that communal peace and harmony remains undisturbed throughout the country".

See also Page 8

All-party meet today

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 29. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has convened a meeting of leaders of major political parties, including some NDA allies, here tomorrow to discuss the developing situation in the context of present India-Pakistan relations.

This is the first time that the Government is holding such a meeting after taking a series of steps against Islamabad.

The Vajpayee Government took diplomatic measures in the wake of the response of the Musharraf administration to New Delhi's demand for action against the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed, held responsible for the December 13 attack on Parliament House.

The Congress had extended support to any "well considered step" by the Government in dealing with terrorism after the December 13 incident, and had also welcomed the diplomatic measures.

The Congress appeared unperturbed over the Government not consulting it before taking major decisions on the diplomatic front.

Book terrorists, Chirac tells Pervez

New Delhi, December 30

FRANCE, IRAN and Libya have urged Pakistan to crack down on terrorist outfits following the December 13 attack on Parliament even as India conveyed to them that it was exercising "maximum possible restraint."

French President Jacques Chirac, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and Bhutan's king Jigme Singhe Wangchuk spoke to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on telephone in the last two days conveying that they viewed the terrorist strike on Parliament as "an attack on India's democracy."

"They (the leaders) all agreed that firm action should be taken by Pakistan against terrorist groups operating from its soil and promoting cross-border ter-

VAJPAYEE, MUSHARRAF TO STAY IN SAME HOTEL

PRIME MINISTER Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf will stay in the same hotel during the three-day Saarc summit in Kathmandu from January 4. However, a formal meeting between the two appears unlikely. Vajpayee will stay at the Princep wing of the Soaltee Crown Plaza, while the Musharraf will stay in an adjacent wing. Security has been beefed up in and around the summit venue, the Saarc Secretariat, the Tribhawan International Airport and places included in the itinerary of the visiting dignitaries. In contrast to the war of words between New Delhi and Islamabad, Nepal still hopes that the summit will help reduce animosity between the India and Pakistan.

PTI, Kathmandu

rorism in India," an external affairs ministry spokesperson told reporters here today.

Asserting that India was exercising "maximum possible restraint," Vajpayee told them that his Government was proceeding with "calibrated diplomatic measures" against Pakistan. But he made it clear that New Delhi

was determined to deal "firmly and resolutely" with terrorism.

"We have suffered long enough to curb the activities of terrorist organisations. Pakistan's friends should apply more pressure on Pakistan and on President Musharraf to publicly take a firm and unequivocal stand against cross-border terrorism," Vajpayee

said adding, "Pakistan should thereafter match its words with action."

Chirac had called Vajpayee last night and discussed the status of Indo-Pak ties. The spokesperson said that while all these countries were concerned about tensions in the sub-continent and were anxious about the prospects of military confrontation, "all of them recognise the basic correctness of India's position."

"They understand the mood of anger in the country and recognise that it is the country's democratic processes that are propelling action in this regard," she said. The French President was briefed by Vajpayee on measures taken by India which included reduction of diplomatic missions and stopping over flight facilities to Pakistani aircraft.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

31 DEC 2001

Pak. has taken no concrete step so far: Advani

NEW DELHI, DEC. 30. Describing Islamabad's steps against terrorist outfits as 'a joke', the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, today said Pakistan could even now give a "firm assurance" to the world community and India that it would stop aiding and abetting terrorism to prevent New Delhi from taking any measure at the non-diplomatic level.

"So far steps have been taken at the diplomatic level only, and even such strong measures have not been taken in the past. Any step at the non-diplomatic level can be taken only if our neighbour continues to support terrorism," he told 'Hum Hazir Hain' programme on Doordarshan's national channel.

"Our real fight is not with Pakistan but with terrorism and those who support it." Terrorism had crossed the 'Lakshman Rekha' with the December 13 Parliament attack. "No sovereign nation which is conscious of its right to security can sit silent. It has to think as to what steps need to be taken to check this menace."

Referring to Islamabad's response to India's

demands for taking action against the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, the Home Minister said "to our demands for freezing of their assets or arresting their leaders, there is till now no sign of anything concrete. Their response to our demands is ... a joke."

"We are not going to be taken in by this kind of deceptive cosmetics, but must make terrorism our prime target." "While terrorism is dangerous, the most dangerous is the state which sponsors terrorism, arms and finances terrorist groups. Therefore, Taliban and Pakistani regime are most dangerous," Mr. Advani said, adding "if Islamabad stops aiding and abetting them, we can handle them. But there is no sign of that so far".

Referring to India's long years of suffering on account of terrorism, Mr. Advani said in reply to questions "the war is on, if not declared but definitely covert".

"We have to decide now as to what our re-

sponse should be — whether we are going to respond as we have been doing so far or are we going to change our response to meet the new situation." Mr. Advani said while the people's feelings had to be taken into account in a democracy, several other factors such as the response of the armed forces and the inputs received from Intelligence agencies had to be taken into account to decide on the Government's response. — PTI

Decision on POTO criticised

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 30. The Communist Party of India (ML) has condemned the Cabinet decision to re-promulgate the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO) and the "BJP's war frenzy".

In a statement here today, Mr. Swadesh Bhat-tacharya, CPI(ML) politburo member, said the BJP-led Government had decided to re-promulgate the ordinance, despite adverse opinion.

THE HINDU

31 DEC 2001

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Sattar seeks 'actionable evidence'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 30. The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, asserted today that Islamabad has taken "substantive and expeditious" measures against the Pakistan-based extremist groups and awaited "actionable evidence" from India to proceed against the detained militants.

Mr. Sattar's comments came at the end of an all-party meet convened by Gen. Musharraf to take stock of the latest situation in the wake of tension on the Indo-Pakistan border. Leaders from all par-

ties, barring the Jamaat-e-Islami, participated.

Addressing mediapersons, Mr. Sattar said that in the last few days action had been initiated against extremist groups and accounts and assets of five groups frozen. "At the moment we are hearing accusations from across the border. We want actionable evidence so that we can begin the judicial process. We are ready to move but you cannot proceed without any evidence". On his coming visit to Kathmandu, he said, "we hope that the presence of the Indian colleagues would provide an oppor-

tunity for talks subject to the willingness of the other side".

On the tension at the border, he said "our anxieties are mounting not only by the day but by the hour as we receive information about the movement of the Indian forces on the border".

The Minister said that the most worrying signal for Pakistan was that India started moving its forces from the peacetime locations not only from the west but also from the east for military action which could be extremely dangerous. "The rate at which India prepared for war sent a worrying signal

which prompted the world leaders like the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, to speak to Gen. Musharraf and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee".

On the chances of resumption of talks between India and Pakistan, Mr. Sattar said the world leaders were not only pressing for restraint but also for a dialogue between the two countries. "As far as Pakistan is concerned, we are ready for a dialogue, but we cannot talk only to ourselves. The other party has to be persuaded to negotiate with a view to halt and reverse the process of build-up".

THE HINDU

1999-12-30

Opposition backs Govt. on diplomatic offensive

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, DEC. 30. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today managed to mobilise the Opposition leaders behind his "let-us-first-exhaust-the-diplomatic-options" strategy against Pakistan. Almost all the major Opposition parties at the all-party meeting were keen to be seen as cautiously siding with the Government in its efforts to cope with the terrorist threat in the post-December 13 scenario.

Barring very minor notes of reservation, the Opposition appeared to be satisfied with the Government's explanations and briefs on the developments so far. While they impressed upon the Government to give maximum scope to diplomatic measures, they also cautioned against loose talk from the ministerial quarters.

The Prime Minister took care to set the mood of unity by asking the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, to stay away; the Opposition parties have so far not "recognised" Mr. Fernandes's return to the Cabinet.

The Opposition's endorsement today of the "diplomacy-first" strategy should enable Mr. Vajpayee to rebuff the hawks within the Sangh Parivar and his Cabinet as well as to bring a value-addition to the Government's interaction with the international community. In fact, the Government appeared receptive to the suggestion that senior leaders from the Opposition should lead delegations to various capitals to explain India's stand.

Among those who attended the meeting included the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, Dr. Manmohan Singh (Cong.), Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet (CPI-M), Mr. A.B. Bardhan (CPI), Ms. Mamata Banerjee (Trinamool Congress), Mr. P.H. Pandian (AIADMK), Mr. P.A. Sangma (NCP), Mr. Ramgopal Yadav (Samajwadi Party), Mr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh (BJD), and Mr. Sushil Indora (INLD). The Govern-



The Congress president, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, at the all-party meeting in New Delhi on Sunday. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

ment was represented by the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, and the National Security Adviser, Mr. Bra-

jesh Mishra. The thrust of the discussion was summed up by Dr. Manmohan Singh who told reporters that "we are fully in support of the measures that the Government is taking to deal with the current situation." However, the Opposition leaders were in-

formed by Mr. Jaswant Singh that the country's military build-up was in response to Pakistan's initiatives and was purely in the nature of a defensive deployment.

According to Mr. Mahajan, the Opposition leaders appreciated the Government's efforts so far and lauded the diplomatic strategy for the future outlined by Mr. Jaswant Singh. The Opposition wanted the Government to step up the diplomatic offensive to impress upon the international community the need to urge Pakistan to give up using terrorism as a tool of state policy.

Mr. Surjeet, however, did warn against relying too much on the U.S., which, according to him, remained tilted in favour of Pakistan. He also objected to Mr. Vajpayee's Ministers talking uninhibitedly about the possibility of a war.

The only contrary note was stuck by Mr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh who urged the Government not to politicise the fight against terrorism. He questioned the impression being given that "the BJP alone was keen on fighting terrorists".

'Pak. response a joke': Page 11

PM invites Sonia to lead team

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 30. The Trinamool Congress leader, Ms. Mamata Banerjee's random suggestion that the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, be invited to attend the SAARC summit along with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, was readily agreed to by the Government at the all-party meeting here today. The idea was also supported by Mr. A.B. Bardhan of the CPI.

Though it was pointed out that SAARC conventions did not permit this, the Government said it would only be too happy if Ms. Gandhi agreed to lead a delegation to some important country.

The offer was made by none other than Mr. Vajpayee himself. Taking the cue from Ms. Banerjee, he said the Government would be happy if Ms. Gandhi and other Opposition leaders agreed to lead one of the delegations. He even asked the leaders to permit their MPs to take part in the delegations the Government proposed to send abroad.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, said he had broached the idea to the Congress leader, Dr. Manmohan Singh, and had requested him to lead one of the delegations. The Opposition leaders agreed with the suggestion, though it is not certain if Ms. Gandhi will be able to spare time since the Assembly elections to four crucial States have been announced. She is not only the main campaigner for her party, but also has to oversee the ticket distribution process.

Jaswant, Sattar may meet in Kathmandu

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, DEC. 30. While talks between the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, are virtually ruled out, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, is likely to meet his Pakistan counterpart, Mr. Abdul Sattar, on the sidelines of the coming SAARC summit at Kathmandu.

Official sources said here the Government was "factoring in" the suggestions in favour of a Foreign Ministers' meeting at Kathmandu by leaders outside the ruling coalition invited today for consultations by Mr. Vajpayee. However, a final decision is yet to be announced.

The Government, in considering a meeting between Mr. Singh and Mr. Sattar, was also responding to the international diplomatic re-

sponse to the Indian demand for putting an end to Pakistan-based cross-border terrorism.

Sources here said the international response to the December 13 attack was being played out on two planes. First, global pressure on Pakistan to curb Kashmir-centric terrorists had been mounting. Telephonic conversation between the Prime Minister and leading world leaders, including the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, the French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac, and the Iranian President, Mr. Mohammad Khatami, over the last week reveal an increasing understanding of the Indian response to the incident.

It is being clearly realised that the country's firmness in dealing with Pakistan is being propelled by the groundswell of public indignation here. Being a democracy, the Government hardly has any option, but to air these sentiments. Sources said India in these conversations insisted that Pakistan should publicly adopt a "firm and unequivocal" position against cross-border terrorism. This, it feels, should be followed by meaningful action on the ground.

While pressure on Pakistan to curb terrorism is substantial, India is also being asked by world leaders to defuse military tensions on the border and revive talks with Islamabad.

PM, Musharraf to stay in same hotel: Page 11

Officials avoid interaction

KATHMANDU, DEC. 30. The Foreign Secretary, Ms. Chokila Iyer, and her Pakistani counterpart, Mr. Inamul Haq, avoided interaction, making evident the chill in Indo-Pak. relations, at the first session of the standing committee meeting of Foreign Secretaries of SAARC nations here today.

However, the Nepalese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mr. Pushkar Raj Bahadur, told newsmen after the first day's deliberations that the mood between the delegates of India and Pakistan "was good".

Asked specifically whether the two Foreign Secretaries met separately, he replied in the negative, but expressed the hope that they may get a chance to interact in the coming two days as "both are good friends".

At the meeting, Ms. Iyer was seated away from Mr. Haq and both of them refrained from any discussion other than SAARC issues.

The 27th session of the standing committee started five hours behind schedule as Ms. Iyer could not reach here on Saturday because her flight was cancelled due to heavy fog. She arrived this afternoon and rushed to the conference venue.

The SAARC secretary-general, Mr. Nihal Rodrigo, presented the report about the activities of the seven member-countries. The committee adopted a provisional agenda, which included an action plan for poverty alleviation, expansion of South Asian free trade agreement, issues related to the WTO and several other programmes. — UNI

India creating hurdles: Musharraf

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 30. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, tonight accused India of creating hurdles in the path of his Government in tackling extremism in the country by deploying troops on the borders. Under tremendous international pressure, particularly the U.S., Gen. Musharraf gave sufficient indications that his Government was moving against the militant elements.

In an informal chat with correspondents after presiding over an all-party conference here, he said that he would like to eradicate terrorism from Pakistan.

Asked whether he planned a crackdown on the militant organisations he said, "This is what I am into for the last two or three months and consulting different sections of the society to take stock of the internal situation. I want to eradicate militancy, extremism and intolerance from the Pakistani society. I would like to eradicate all terrorism from the soil of Pakistan". He said "we are already following a course of action to bring harmony, peace and tolerance to our society. The tension created by India on our borders is creating obstacles and is slowing down the process that I wanted to follow".

He said there were domestic issues and sensitivities

and they get heightened because of the tensions on the eastern borders. The purpose of consulting politicians was to take them into confidence about the actions planned by his regime.

On the present situation, he said, "We are hoping for the best and are prepared for the worst. We are assessing the situation and judging the movements. I hope the military movement does not lead to war".

On a dialogue with India, he said, "if the Prime Minister does not want the dialogue, I am not at all keen on it. I am for dialogue and I keep on saying this and India keeps on rejecting which gives me a feeling that I am begging with India". He said, "I have always been saying that I do not mind the dialogue. But this should be acceptable to the other side. If they accept it we do not reject at all". On mediation by a third party, he said "we would like anybody to play a useful role in defusing the tension".

He claimed complete support from all political parties in his efforts to defuse the tensions as well as to prepare for war. He said "there was total consensus of views and I have the support of all political parties".

Referring to the tensions on the borders, he said, "there is tension on the eastern border. There is a degree of anxiety and we are taking all counter measures".

Benazir's cooperation sought

By Our Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 30. In the first formal and direct contact with the former Prime Minister and chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Ms. Benazir Bhutto, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today sought her cooperation in meeting the situation arising out of the heightened tension between India and Pakistan.

Gen. Musharraf invited her to attend an all-party meet called here to discuss the situation arising out of tension on the border.

The ice between PPP and the military regime was broken when

the Consul-General of Pakistan in Dubai, Mr. Amanullah Larik, called on Ms. Bhutto in the morning and delivered a message from the Government. It was not clear if a similar initiative has been taken to contact the former Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, who is in exile in Saudi Arabia.

The message from Gen. Musharraf to Ms. Bhutto contained an invitation to the PPP to "participate in the gathering of political leaders on December 30 in the national interest". After she got the message, she nominated Mr. Makhdoom Amin Fahim, the vice-chair of the PPP, to attend the meeting. How-

ever, as there was no flight available he was unable to be attend. Appreciating the initiative of Gen. Musharraf, Ms. Bhutto informed the Consul-General that national reconciliation was important for internal stability of the country.

The reluctance of Gen. Musharraf to engage top leaders of the two mainstream political parties, the PPP, and Mr. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League, has been one of the main grouses of Ms. Bhutto.

Two days ago, the PPP issued a statement that the best way to avert a war with India was to transfer power to a civilian set-up and hold general elections at the earliest.



THE LAST TRAIN TO PAKISTAN: An emotional farewell to passengers as Samjhauta Express leaves New Delhi on Sunday. — Photo: V. V. Krishnan

PRICE WAR

ROCK BOTTOM

Roll the Dice

SPECIAL PRICE

Pakistan orders blackout of Indian TV channels

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan government on Saturday directed all cable TV operators in the country to stop relaying broadcasts of all Indian satellite TV channels, including Star TV network, on the grounds that they indulged in propagating "injurious material against the security of Pakistan".

An official press release issued here on Saturday said that Indian channels were propagating injurious material against the security of Pakistan, and their relay by cable TV operators was in violation of the conditions of the licence issued by the Pakistan Television Authority to them.

"PTA has directed all cable TV operators to stop relaying all Indian and Star satellite channels over their network forthwith," the release said. (PTI)

HOME HEROES

THE TIMES OF INDIA

30 DEC 2001

No plan to ban PTV now: Sushma

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 29. The Government has decided to continue monitoring the Pakistan Television (PTV) amid reports that Pakistan today decided to ban all Indian satellite channels.

While Pakistan's decision came late in the afternoon, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry maintained that no decision had been taken till evening on whether or not to reciprocate with a similar ban on PTV.

The Union Information and Broadcasting Minister, Ms. Sushma Swaraj, talking to media persons earlier in the day, said the Government did not plan to ban PTV as of now. "We are monitoring the channel, but no decision has been taken as yet."

Given the fact that a ban on PTV would have "diplomatic ramifications", the Minister said a decision to this effect would be taken in consultation with the External Affairs Ministry. Further, since the Cabinet Committee on Security is meeting on a regular basis these days, inputs would be taken from all members in this regard.

According to Ms. Swaraj, there is a committee of senior officials from her Ministry and the Ministries of External Affairs, Defence and Home which looks into such matters. "We are getting constant feedback and will take a decision accordingly." As for reports of a ban on PTV in Meerut, the Minister said the cable television networks rules allowed local authorities to ban a channel if they considered the situation warranted such action.

FTII disinvestment

PTI reports:

Ms. Swaraj ruled out plans for disinvestment of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII). She said there was no such plan when asked about reports that her Ministry had sought a comprehensive financial valuation of the Pune-based institute in what might be an attempt to disinvest in it.

Asked about the December 31 deadline set by the Prime Minister to implement the recommendations of the Expenditure Reforms Commission, headed by Mr. K.P. Geethakrishnan, which has suggested drastic downsizing of her Ministry including its several wings, Ms. Swaraj said she had given her Ministry's response to the Finance Ministry and had held talks with the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha.

THE HINDU

30 DEC 2001

Bush calls Vajpayee, Musharraf

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, Dec. 29. — President George W Bush and the French President, Mr Jacques Chirac, tonight spoke to Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee. They discussed the latest situation in the subcontinent.

Earlier, Mr Bush held a 20-minute telephone conversation with General Pervez Musharraf.

The French President was briefed by Mr Vajpayee on measures taken by India, including reduction of diplomatic mission staff and stopping overflight facilities to Pakistani aircraft.

Both leaders are understood to have urged restraint on the part of India and Pakistan.

Late yesterday, the US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, spoke to the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes amid reports that Washington was considering despatching an envoy to the region to try and cool tensions between the neighbours.

Putin's stand: The Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, has called for urgent action against Pakistan-based terrorist groups.

The call came during a telephonic conversation between Mr Putin and the French President today, the Kremlin press service said.

India today granted passage for President Musharraf's flight to the Saarc summit in Kathmandu but rejected suggestion for a summit with Mr Vajpayee in the Himalayan kingdom.

War ruled out: Gen Musharraf, has virtually ruled out the possibility of a war with India, though skirmishes on the Line of Control were possible.

■ See BUSH: page 7

THE STATESMAN

30 DEC 2001

(Continued from page 1)

BUSH:

According to a report in The Dawn, he said: "I can safely say that 95 per cent chances of a war do not exist... But there are just five per cent such chances and that too in the shape of some skirmishes on the LoC."

Gen Musharraf, however, said Pakistan would take action if India tried any "misadventures" along the LoC or the International Border.

Islamabad for talks: "Pakistan is ready to have talks anytime and anywhere depending on the mutual decision of the two leaders," the Pakistani foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, said at a foreign ministry press conference.

Earlier in the day, India virtually ignored Mr Bush's suggestion asking it to take note of arrest of terrorists by Pakistan saying it will make an "independent assessment" of such claims.

"We have seen media reports in Pakistan and the Western press. There is no official statement from the Pakistani government to the effect that they have made these arrests. We have to make our independent assessment," an MEA spokesperson told reporters.

TV channel ban: India's reaction to the banning of Indian TV channels by Pakistan will not be a "knee-jerk" one, I&B ministry

officials said today. "The situation will be viewed in its totality and the home, external affairs and other ministries will be consulted before a final decision is taken," the officials said.

This is in response to Pakistan banning all Indian channels, including Star TV channels, today.

India has banned a planned visit to Pakistan by an Indian peace group which was due to meet President Musharraf, rights activists alleged. The four-member mission led by Admiral (retd) Ram Das was scheduled to have arrived in Lahore today and was to see Gen Musharraf tomorrow.

Dhaka's appeal: Bangladesh today urged both India and Pakistan to make efforts to diffuse the tension.

30 DEC 2001

THE STATESMAN

Vajpayee keeps war option open

No giving in to pressure, asserts PM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Dec. 29. — The Prime Minister today sounded more hawkish than anyone in the BJP on the Pakistan issue. India would not succumb to any pressure while deciding on its priorities, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee said at the BJP's national executive meeting. "The last option of war, if needed, will be exercised."

Sources said Mr Vajpayee referred to a telephone conversation with the Libyan President, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, during which the latter suggested that India and Pakistan should not fight with each other. The Libyan leader spoke about the possibility of the two countries becoming one once again as the division was part of the British legacy. Even people like Col Gaddafi whom "I don't know much" are suggesting this, Mr Vajpayee said, referring to world leaders asking India not to declare a war on Pakistan. "This is our firm resolve that India won't come under any external pressure to dilute our struggle against terrorism," he said.

The Prime Minister said the government's chief objective is to crush cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the country and India is determined to attain the goal. "No means will be spared, although we'll do our utmost to avoid a war with Pakistan," Mr Vajpayee asserted.

He said the government would step up diplomatic efforts to secure international support and understanding of India's cause. "At the same time," he stressed, "I would like one and all to know that, if necessary, India shall fight this battle on its own."

Regarding General Pervez Musharraf's statements on Kashmir, Mr Vajpayee said the general had hinted that he had joined the international coalition against the Taliban with the sole purpose of getting Kashmir. "We accept the challenge."

He urged all parties to launch an awareness campaign to apprise people of the developing situation.

The Prime Minister's harsh words came as a surprise to many in the party, who expected that he would soften his stand on the issue.

Mr LK Advani urged the party executive to leave things to the government with the confidence that it would take decisions in the country's best interest.

Anticipating that party hardliners might urge the government to take tough action, the BJP today broke convention and allowed Mr Vajpayee to address the meeting in the beginning. Traditionally, the Prime

Minister has been giving valedictory speeches. He spoke after Mr Jana Krishnamurthy's presidential address.

The Prime Minister also called upon the executive committee and the people "to take special care to ensure that no divisive issues are raised by anybody at this juncture."

"It's our prime duty to see to it that communal peace and harmony remains undisturbed."

Many BJP leaders concluded that this was a message to the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. Mr Vajpayee was definitely referring to the VHP's 12 March deadline for the government to hand over the area around the makeshift temple to the Ramjanambhoomi Nyas for the construction of the proposed temple, a senior BJP leader said.

The Prime Minister's call is likely to give an excuse to the VHP to extend the deadline. The party officially gave a convoluted answer. The BJP spokesperson, Mr Sunil Shastri, said the party was for a solution through negotiation or court.

Mr Vajpayee's speech at today's meeting didn't give the hardliners any scope to question him further. This was also evident in the political resolution, which backed the party in all its efforts.

All-party meeting

NEW DELHI, Dec. 29. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee has convened an all-party meeting tomorrow to discuss the current situation in view of the diplomatic offensive against Pakistan.

The leaders will be briefed about actions being taken by the government, their fallout on Pakistan's policies and the subsequent shaping up of international opinion on the issue. Mr LK Advani, Mr Jagdeep Singh, Mr Yashwantrao Chavan, and Mr Digvijay Singh will attend the meeting. Mr George Fernandes won't be present because he is currently at forward posts in the Western command.

— SNS

THE STATESMAN

30 DEC 2001

End of road for Delhi-Lahore bus

28 30/12 Indo-Pak 51-7
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Dec. 29. — It was the end of two years of bus diplomacy between India and Pakistan as the last bus from Lahore quietly returned to the Capital tonight, though late by more than four hours.

Anxious relatives, waiting outside the Ambedkar bus terminal heaved a sigh of relief at the sight of the fortunate few, who had managed to get on the bus in its last journey back home. As the Swarna Jayanti bus, carrying 31 Indians and four Pakistanis, came to a halt, passengers expressed mixed feelings. Some were relieved for the safe journey while others mourned the termination of the service.

"I feel wonderful that I've returned home safely," Wah-eeda Khan, professor at Jamia Milia Islamia University said, hoping that the service would be resumed in future.

The checking process at the immigration counter at the Wagah border caused the

delay, said Sher Singh, the bus driver.

Unlike other transborder communication links between India and Pakistan, the Sada-e-Sarhad (as the service was formally called) proved to be an exception for not being dogged by controversies. The bus survived the Kargil conflict within three months of its introduction, a military coup in Pakistan, and went on to become the most profitable service of the Delhi Transport Corporation, generating around Rs 30,00,000 by 2000.

Iqbal, who had a tearful reunion with his wife Shaheen, a Pakistani national, said: "Though she went on a one month-visa to visit her relatives, I asked her to return early considering the present circumstances."

The end of Sada-e-Sarhad was as dramatic as its introduction when Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee took the initiative of resuming a stalled Indo-Pak dialogue by going to Lahore in a bus on 19 February 1999.

THE STATESMAN

30 DEC 2001

AD-8

Indian build-up dangerous: Sattar

Indo Pak

By B. Muralidhar Reddy 25/12

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 29. The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, today characterised the military build-up by India as 'disturbing and dangerous'.

Addressing a news conference here, he accused Indian leaders of engaging in "shrill and threatening rhetoric" and said Pakistan cannot ignore the mounting threat of war. "Our armed forces have taken necessary precautions".

Mr. Sattar lamented that India was not prepared to provide evidence on charges of involvement of Pakistan-based groups in the December 13 Parliament attack and demanding that its accusations be accepted as facts. He referred to the diplomatic sanctions announced by India and said these would cause hardship to the public in both the countries.

"More disturbing and dangerous are the military moves and preparations for war by India in the last 10 days. Army and Air Force formations have been moved from peacetime locations to operational areas close to the Line

of Control in Jammu and Kashmir and border with Pakistan", he alleged.

While Pakistan cannot ignore Indian moves, Mr. Sattar said it continues to act with restraint and responsibility. "We did not initiate any measure to aggravate tension. We have refrained from alarming or inflammatory statements and sought to keep open channels of communication".

Pakistan would raise the issue of rising border tension in the United Nations Security Council, if necessary, he said.

Answering a question, he said Pakistan was in contact with the United Nations, the Organisation of Islamic Conference and other friendly countries to help defuse the tension. Islamabad had received encouraging signals from world leaders and bodies, he said and maintained that they have all been stressing the need for restraint.

He said Pakistan had been constrained to take defensive measures because India had moved its forces to the border. Mr. Sattar claimed that Pakistan was left with no alternative but to respond with minimum defensive

measures and would pull back if India withdrew its forces to peacetime locations.

In the last four days the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, had received telephone calls from President Muhammad Khatami of Iran, President Jacques Chirac of France and, President Muammar Gadhafi of Libya. The U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, had made telephonic contact with President Musharraf late Friday evening.

Mr. Sattar said the Foreign Ministers of Canada, Germany, Iran, Oman, Qatar and the United Kingdom had conveyed their anxiety. The OIC, G-8 and the European Union have spoken to both sides. The world leaders showed concern over the rising tension in the region, and expressed support for efforts to de-escalate the situation, he said.

Mr. Sattar claimed that they appreciated the sense of responsibility and restraint demonstrated by Pakistan. In his talks, Gen. Musharraf elaborated the steps taken by the Pakistan Government to exercise maximum restraint.

THE HINDU

30 DEC 2001

Firing relents, migration continues

KAVITA SURI
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Dec. 29. — The exchange of fire along the Line of Control and International Border in Jammu have come down, but migration from border villages continues unabated.

More than 7,000 families have reportedly left their homes to escape the Pakistani shelling and firing. The exodus is on at Londi, Babiva and Sherpur villages in Kathua district, Jammu.

The villagers have been put up at various government buildings and are being provided with free rations, state officials said. Volunteers are helping the government in providing relief to the migrants.

The most affected area is Samba sector on the International Border where three jawans were shot dead by Pakistani troops last Sunday. This is for the first time since the 1971 war that the sector has been witnessing migration of such a huge scale. Officials fear the situation along the IB may soon become very alarming.

The acting chief minister, Mr Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Shah, asked Pakistan to desist from arms build-up on borders, saying any misadventure would cost Islamabad heavily.

Addressing prominent citizens, district officials and a large



Jawans, on their way to forward sectors, assemble outside Jalandar station on Saturday. — AP/PTI

number of people in the border towns of Poonch and Rajouri on Thursday, Mr Shah expressed hope that there wouldn't be any war but asked people to be prepared for any eventuality. The administration, he said, had been placed on high alert.

He urged people in the border villages not to get panicky because the armed forces were prepared meet any challenge.

He assured them that if shelling from across the border continued, people would be moved to safer places, as had been done in Samba and a few other sectors. Steps will be taken to boost security in the border areas.

Five Pak soldiers killed: In retaliation to unprovoked heavy mortar shelling and firing by Pakistani troops on the Line of Control on Friday, Indian troops killed at least five Pakistani soldiers and destroyed six Pakistani bunkers in Mendhar sector of Poonch. Confirming the retaliatory action, a defence spokesman based at Nagrota Corps of Indian Army said it was in response to the unprovoked heavy mortar and artillery fire in various defence and civilian locations.

13 hurt in grenade attack

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Dec. 29. — At least 13 persons were injured, two of them seriously, when a suspected militant lobbed a powerful grenade at a police patrol party here this evening.

Police said an unidentified man threw a Chinese grenade at 7.25 p.m. at the police team outside the State Bank of India building in the crowded Hari market area near Raghunath Bazar.

The person then fled under the cover of heavy fog and darkness, police said.

Most of the injured were tourists and pilgrims, who had come to pray at the Raghunath temple complex nearby. The victims have been admitted to a hospital.

Police have cordoned off the area and launched a search operation for the culprit.

Meanwhile, a red alert has been sounded in the entire Jammu city following Intelligence inputs that militants would try to target vital installations during Republic Day.

BJP lowers pitch

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HT-1

30/12

INDO-PAK REALITY CHECK



Lashkar leader Hafez Saeed



Jaish chief Masood Azhar



Jaish rally in Multan



A terror training camp in Pakistan

Demand:

Arrest of all leaders of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and Jaish-e-Mohammad.

Action taken:

Jaish chief Masood Azhar has been arrested but his whereabouts are unclear. There are also reports that four of his brothers have been taken into custody. US President George Bush has said that Musharraf has ordered the arrest of 50 leading members of the two militant groups.

Demand:

Closure of not only the offices of the groups but also the training camps that they run.

Action taken:

The military regime hasn't shut down any of the camps, though there are reports of the Lashkar unilaterally closing down its office in Muridke. But Hafez Saeed, Lashkar's founder, continues to head the parent body.

Demand:

Handing over of the militant leaders to India to face trial.

Action taken:

Pakistan continues to maintain that it will act only if there is evidence that these groups are involved in "undesirable activities."

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, December 29

THE BJP will focus on internal security rather than its old demand for hot pursuit of terrorists into Pakistan — an increasingly imprudent option in view of the US-led operations in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan.

Home Minister LK Advani told the conclave that fighting terrorism was the Government's single-most important goal, but added that it was easy to talk tough. One must also understand its implications. Though the people of India were outraged by the December 13 attack and favoured strong action, they needed to prepare themselves to accept the arrival of body bags in case of a military strike.

He reminded party leaders that the US had to abandon Vietnam because of the high loss of American lives and its impact on public opinion.

The BJP, therefore, would do well to first prepare the people and not have a repeat of a Kandahar-like mood, Advani said. Families and relatives of hijacked Indian Airlines passengers had

BUSH PHONES PERVEZ, ATAL

PRESIDENT BUSH called up Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Pervez Musharraf on Saturday evening and expressed concern over the border tension and troops build-up. In his conversation with Musharraf, Bush praised the general's efforts to defuse the tension and assured him continued US support, PTV said.

Agencies

forced the Government's hand to release dreaded terrorists in exchange for their freedom

At the end of the party's closed-door National Executive meeting, the BJP adopted a political resolution, which was curiously silent on the question of hot pursuit.

All it said was, "If the Government of Pakistan does not put an end to acts of terrorism from the soil of Pakistan, the Government of India should take all such steps that are necessary."

The resolution focused instead on urging the Government to do everything to improve internal security. It wanted all ISI units active within India to be rooted out and pointed out that there were tens of thousands of Pakistanis staying in India even after the expiry of their visas. Many of them were ISI agents. All overstaying Pakistanis should be immediately asked to leave the country, it said.

As directed by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the BJP decided to launch a *jan jagran* (mass awareness) campaign to project "internal security" as a major plank for the Assembly polls in UP, Uttaranchal and Punjab.

Since Vajpayee said he did not want any divisive issue raised, the rank and file would be told to not talk about the Ram temple and other controversial issues.

Asked if the party had given up the demand for hot pursuit, BJP spokesperson Sunil Shastri said, "The Government is saying all options are open." He refused to elaborate.

However, the BJP document was clear on one aspect: its disappointment with the US for not putting enough pressure on Pakistan to rein in terrorists operating from its soil.

Musharraf snubs Delhi overflight offer

AN EXPRESSION of neighbourly concern by New Delhi was rebuffed with a steely no-thank-you from Islamabad on Friday when India offered General Pervez Musharraf the privilege of flying over its territory to the Kathmandu Summit. In a cold response, the Pakistan Government said: "The President would travel through a circuitous route."

Thursday's announcement by India to ban Pakistani flights over Indian airspace from January 1 led to the speculation that Musharraf would pull out of the summit since he would now have to take a long-haul flight over Central Asia and China. India offered to make an exception for him and his delegation, but within two hours of the offer, the seething neighbour came back with the polite rebuff.

But there was an amicable settlement to another aspect of the back-to-back sanctions. Since implementing the 48-hour notice given by both countries to each other's diplomatic Missions to send home half their staff was proving difficult to implement, the order was modified to mean "providing lists" of those selected for extrication in 48 hours. They can now leave before January 5.

HTC, New Delhi

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 DEC 2001

25 DEC 2001

Jaideep Mazumdar
Kolkata, December 28

INTELLIGENCE AGENTS last week stumbled on evidence linking Pakistani High Commission officials in New Delhi to covert activities in the North-east.

The evidence follows the arrest of two suspected ISI operatives in Dhubri district of Assam last week and might have been one of the reasons behind the decision of Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to slash the staff strength at the Pakistani mission.

The documentary evidence was recovered from the arrested duo, Shaugat Cheema and

Shamsher Hussain. According to intelligence sources, the two had the phone numbers of the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi (4676004 and 4678467) and the extension number of three of their "contacts"—Altaf Hussain, Naseer Mahmood and Inamul Haque—in the visa, media and research sections of the mission.

Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh on Thursday said that many of the Pakistani High Com-

mission staff were engaged in covert activities against India and have been asked to leave. It is not known if the three High Commission officials, whose names were found in the diaries of the two arrested, have been identified and asked to leave by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The diaries also listed phone numbers of ISI officers in Pakistan, including key officers such as that of the deputy director-general I (external) and oper-

atives of the ISI's sections—Joint Intelligence North (JIN), the Joint Intelligence Miscellaneous (JIM) and the powerful Joint Intelligence X (JIX). All these divisions operate in Kashmir and North-east as well as Bangladesh.

"We have cross-checked all the numbers," sources said. "The two were arrested from a place near Dhubri. We had been keeping a watch on some activists of the Jamaat and that led us to

these two. It was obvious that they were not from this State or from Bangladesh."

It is learnt that the two are sticking to their claim that they are Jamaat members from Bangladesh and had sneaked into India to plan a majlis of clergy-men sometime in February. "We are not buying this," the source said. "They have to be ISI operatives and we are grilling them."

"We suspect they are not junior-level operatives of the ISI

since they also had on them the telephone numbers and contacts of some very senior officers of the Pakistani Army headquarters at Rawalpindi as well as the V Corps at Karachi, the X Corps at Rawalpindi and the XI Corps at Peshawar. A crucial clue was the number of the former Corps Commander of the XI Corps, Lt Gen Ehsanul Haque. Haque is now the ISI director-general.

They also had the number of Lt Gen Mahmood Ahmad, the for-

mer ISI chief, as well as some of Ahmad's associates."

Of far greater importance are some documents and letters recovered from a house adjacent to a mosque the two had put up at. "These documents provide clinching evidence, if any more is required, of the ISI's links with the Uffia, the Bodo militants and the NSCN (I-M). The ISI has a gameplan for the North-east, especially the areas bordering Bangladesh," the source said.

"We cannot disclose everything at this stage since we are following the leads. But we have collected enough evidence to justify the 'rogue state' tag on Pakistan."

Pak mission officials linked to N-E rebels

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 DEC 2001

G-8 STATEMENT / PARLIAMENT ATTACK CONDEMNED

Pak. told to nab terrorists

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, DEC. 28. The G-8 Foreign Ministers today strongly condemned the December 13 attack on the Indian Parliament and called on Pakistan to crack down on terrorist outfits operating from its soil.

Stepping up diplomatic efforts to drum up support for India's stance, Russia has got the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Eight countries to adopt a joint statement which urged Pakistan "to arrest, try and severely punish" the terrorist leaders.

Even as they took note of Pakistan's condemnation of the December 13 attack, the G-8 Ministers called on Islamabad "to take further steps against terrorist groups acting from its territory and targeting, among others, India, and to arrest, put on trial and severely punish their leaders, as well as to cut off their financing." "We are firmly convinced that terrorism can have no justification," the statement said. "We strongly condemn terrorism in all its manifestations, including the attack on the Indian Parliament building."

The Ministers voiced "serious concern" over the buildup of tension between India and Pakistan and voiced the hope that the two countries "avoid escalation, resume political dialogue in the spirit of the

Lahore Declaration and join their efforts in combating the global threat of terrorism."

The G-8 also "welcomed statements by the Indian Prime Minister to the effect that a diplomatic solution to the problem was under way" and said they "encourage this approach." "The events of December 13 should not lead to a deterioration of relations between India and Pakistan," the statement said. The Russian Foreign Ministry described the statement as a "weighty contribution to the cause of preventing a further escalation of tension in Indo-Pakistan relations" and as a "manifestation of solidarity of the leading world states in the uncompromising and no-double-standards fight against terrorism in all its manifestations."

A day earlier Moscow reiterated its "strong condemnation of the attack on the Indian Parliament building and stated that its organisers must be brought to justice and severely punished."

In a telephone conversation on Wednesday, the Foreign Ministers of India and Russia, Mr. Jaswant Singh and Mr. Igor Ivanov, agreed that terrorism had emerged as one of the most dangerous challenges and there could be no double standards in combating it, the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

THE HINDU

29 DEC 2001

Pak. has no intention of acting against Lashkar, Jaish

9 m^o p^m By B. Muralidhar Reddy HD-1 29/11

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 28. Pakistan today made it clear that it had no intention of proceeding against the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad — accused by India as the main culprits behind the December 13 attack on Parliament — despite the decision of the United States to declare them as terrorist.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson, Mr. Aziz Khan, and the Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Qureshi, asserted that India had not provided a "shred of evidence" of the involvement of the two outfits and Islamabad would not act against them without evidence.

On whether Pakistan would follow the example of the U.S. and ban LeT and JeM, Mr. Khan said the U.S. ban was applicable within that country and had nothing to do with the December 13 attack. Pakistan would take action against the outfits only if there was evidence of any undesirable activities by them.

"The United States action is applicable within the territory of the U.S. As far as Pakistan is concerned, every group and organisation is under scrutiny and under watch. If we find any evidence against any individual or group or organisation indulging in any undesirable activities, action against will be taken".

Maj. Gen. Qureshi also discounted reports that the U.S. had forwarded evidence of the involvement of the two groups in the December 13 attack. "No evidence at all has been provided from anyone or group. I do not think there is any relationship between the action taken against these two groups by the U.S. and what happened at the Indian Parliament", he said.

Asked about the complaint of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, that Pakistan had not taken any action against the outfits, Mr. Khan said, "Pakistan, from day one, has asked India to provide evidence to support the charges. Hurling charges is not enough".

Pakistan promised to take action based on the evidence. "Where is the evidence," he said, adding that

it was not fair to declare someone as accused and ask him to prove his innocence.

On the action being taken against JeM, Maj. Gen. Qureshi said action was taken for the group's involvement in sectarian strife in Pakistan. "It has nothing to do with Indian allegations".

About 20 Jaish activists including the outfit's leader, Maulana Masood Azhar had been arrested. Five Kalashnikov rifles, two pistols and two rifles were recovered from them. "Frankly I am not aware of actions being taken against Azhar. He is under preventive detention", he said. Action against the group was taken on the information that they had unauthorised weapons, Maj. Gen. Qureshi added.

To a query, Mr. Khan said the U.S. was engaged diplomatically, both with Pakistan and India, to defuse tension.

Gen. Qureshi said several world leaders were in touch with Gen. Musharraf, and claimed that there was total understanding of Pakistan's point of view and its stated position.

On the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani's reported allegation that the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi was engaged in espionage, Mr. Khan said Pakistan rejected all such charges. Pakistan adhered to the Geneva Convention of Diplomatic Relations and was mindful of its diplomatic responsibilities.

Gen. Qureshi said by deploying troops as well as surface-to-surface missiles, the Indian Government was painting itself into a corner from where it would be difficult for it to "back off". Pakistan was continuing maximum restraint but the Musharraf Government would ensure that Pakistan retained its capability for reciprocal action depending on what the Indian armed forces or Government did.

Stating that Pakistan had deployed only such forces that ensured its defence, he said any excess deployment was seen as a threat by the other side. The military concentration and deployment seemed to be a desire on the part of the Indian Government to attain the capability of offensive action.

THE HINDU

29 DEC 2001

Musharraf to be allowed over-flight facility

By Atul Aneja 29/12

NEW DELHI, DEC. 28. India will allow the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to make a transit across Indian airspace to attend next month's SAARC summit in Kathmandu as an exception to the denial of over-flight rights for Pakistani planes.

To a question, the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said Gen. Musharraf would be granted permission to overfly India to attend the SAARC summit.

The spokesperson clarified that families of the Pakistan High Commission personnel would be given a week's time to return home. The decision was consistent with the announcement by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh.

At a press conference on Thurs-

day, Mr. Singh had said that the Pakistan High Commission, in conformity with the decision of the Cabinet Committee on Security, would be given 48 hours to cut its staff strength by half.

The High Commission, during these 48 hours, is expected to "identify" the personnel it chooses to repatriate, the spokesperson said. She, however, declined to clarify whether those departing for Pakistan would travel by a special flight or by road across the Wagah border.

India's decision to downsize the Pakistan High Commission is part of a series of diplomatic steps meant to urge Islamabad to take meaningful action against the perpetrators of the December 13 attack on Parliament.

There was a flurry of diplomatic activity today, resulting from the visible downturn in Indo-Pak-

ties. The U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Colin Powell, spoke to Mr. Singh. Official sources described the 15-minute talk as "very good and positive". The U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Robert Blackwill, also met Mr. Singh.

The German Foreign Minister, Mr. Joschka Fischer, spoke to Mr. Singh and expressed concern about the slide in Indo-Pak relations. Mr. Singh reiterated India's concerns and the lack of meaningful action by Pakistan against the terrorist groups involved in the attack on Parliament.

In Moscow, the group of eight industrialised countries hoped that India and Pakistan would avoid any step that would undermine the fight against international terrorism. In a joint declaration, the G-8 hoped the two countries would "join their efforts in the fight against the

global terrorist threat". The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), in its deliberations in Riyadh, also urged both New Delhi and Islamabad to exercise restraint.

Advani warns Pak.

Amplifying India's stance, the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, said New Delhi was committed to winning the war against terrorism and was not dependent on the support of any external power.

"We want to win this on our own. If the world supports us, it is good. If not, we will not bother."

Mr. Advani made these observations at the raising day function of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). India, he said, was taking the attack on Parliament "very seriously" and has "formally" warned Pakistan to "take steps to end terrorism".

Musharraf ready to meet Vajpayee

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 28. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today said he would be willing to meet the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, during the SAARC summit in Nepal next week.

"I don't mind meeting him (Mr. Vajpayee). But as I said once before, you can't clap with one hand. And if there is a willingness from the other side, then there is a willingness from my side," the General told reporters.

Pakistan "stands for peace" and will never initiate a war. "We are passing through a difficult stage. There is tension on the border," he told a dinner at the presidential palace.

"Pakistan stands for peace, we do not want war. We will never initiate a war unless it is thrust and initiated on us. We do not want war because we understand all the hazards that could follow," he said.

Gen. Musharraf said he was aware of India's demands and understood what Pakistan had to do to defuse the tensions. "We understand our responsibilities. We are to crack down and we do understand that". He welcomed intervention from the United States in trying to defuse the brewing crisis between the two neighbours.

"They are showing a lot of concern and I know they are involved; certainly they are already involved and they are trying to reduce the tension and we appreciate that."

Pakistan will not shift troops from the Afghan border to reinforce its frontier with India. "Whatever we are doing on that Afghan border will continue to be

done. There will be no thinning out... No change to that situation," he said. — AFP

SAARC plans 'intact'

B. Muralidhar Reddy reports:

Gen. Musharraf will lead his country's delegation for the eleventh summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, to be held in Kathmandu, from January 4 to 6.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, told presspersons today at the regular briefing that Gen. Musharraf's travel plans were "intact," despite India's decision to close its airspace to Pakistani flights.

It is, however, not yet clear if Islamabad will avail itself of New Delhi's offer to let Gen. Musharraf fly over the Indian airspace to reach Kathmandu. The other alternative for the General is to take a longer route via China.

Mr. Khan said that the Pakistan Foreign Secretary, Mr. Inam-ul-Haq, had left for Kathmandu and the Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, would leave in the next couple of days.

On whether Pakistan expected the summit to defuse the tensions between India and Pakistan, Mr. Khan said any meeting of Heads of State could play a role and Islamabad would like de-escalation of tensions.

The SAARC summit will be preceded by meetings of the Programming Committee (December 28-29, 2001), the Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries (December 30-January 1, 2002) and the Council of Ministers (January 2-3, 2002).

'We will pay back in the same coin'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 28. Giving up its cautious and conciliatory approach adopted so far, Pakistan today asserted that it "would pay back India in the same coin if it continues to adopt aggressive postures".

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, told a news conference here that from now on, Pakistan would take retaliatory action against any measure taken by India.

Mr. Khan said India's decision to ban flights affected India more than Pakistan. The Indian ban affected only 12 Pakistan flights in contrast to 111 Indian flights.

Similarly, the proposed economic sanctions by New Delhi would not affect Pakistan much as there was little direct trade between the two countries.

"It is regretted that India is not exercising sagacity to resolve the situation through negotiations and it is out to take more such steps which might further create tension," Pakistan's Secretary of Information and Media Development, Mr. Anwar Mahmood said.

Last bus to Lahore tears families apart

FROM RASHEED KIDWAI

New Delhi, Dec. 28: It was a different last journey, though tears were shed and hugs exchanged. Different, because Delhi police and Intelligence Bureau sleuths oversaw the parting when the Delhi-Lahore bus left Ambedkar Stadium at 6.30 in the morning on its last journey, at least for some time.

Each passenger had a story to tell and all of the stories had an element of tragedy. All 33 passengers on board the Sada-e-Sarhad (call of the border) were leaving India in a hurry to meet the December 31 deadline when train and bus services between the two countries will be snapped.

One was leaving an ailing aunt behind, another going away before a wedding for which she had especially come from Pakistan and still another leaving the last rites of a beloved family member midway.

But the emotional bonding across the Indo-Pak border remained despite the diplomatic offensive launched by the political establishments.

None of the passengers and their relatives exchanged customary pleasantries — "will meet again", "call up soon" or "write a letter". Only tears flowed and, once in a while, "Khuda hafiz" (may you be in God's protection) could be heard.

The bus for Lahore left on a cold, foggy morning with 33 Pakistani nationals, two drivers and security officials. A Delhi police escort jeep drove up to Burari, after which Haryana police took over to see off the half-empty bus till it touched Punjab. The journey marked an abrupt end to a symbol of Indo-Pak friendship.

At Ambedkar stadium today, nobody was talking about Pakistan's nefarious designs or the terrorist bid to blow up Parliament. There was no discussion

on India's right to retaliate or cripple the Pakistani economy.

Twenty-year-old Irfan Ahmed was leaving an ailing aunt in Meerut. "I may not get to see her again," he said, barely holding back his tears. Ahmed had a visa valid till January 15.

Shakila had to pull herself out of her sister's wedding, scheduled for tonight, to get into the bus. "It was a difficult decision but there was no other way I could have made it back to my country." Shakila was married to a cousin in Pakistan in 1981.

There were first-timers like Shazia, a student from Sindh, who came to see her relatives. "It is a wonderful country, full of nice people. I am sure things are going to be normal. *Inshallah*," she said.

Sitting next to her, Farid said: "Amit" (May God let it happen).

For the cash-starved Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), the bus-loss may be irreparable.

The Delhi-Lahore bus was extremely popular as passengers from both sides were happy to spend Rs 900 for a comfortable 12-hour journey compared to the Rs 7,000 air-fare or the cumbersome train journey with an eight-hour halt at Attari.

DTC officials said they have written to the foreign ministry requesting it to organise two special trips on January 8 and 15 to help the return of those stranded in remote areas.

"How do you expect someone in Munger district to rush back to Delhi and take the bus today? I am sure there are many cases on both sides where passengers would like to come back. I am sure the respective governments will fulfil a humanitarian request," a DTC official said.

Like the bus service, the train link too will be snapped. The Samjhauta Express, a legacy of the Simla Agreement, will make its last trip on Sunday.



A father consoles his daughter before she boards the bus to Lahore. (PTI)

29/12
J. L. Bak

Decisive war against terror: Advani

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 28. — Mr LK Advani today said Pakistan-sponsored terrorists had crossed the "Laxmanrekha" by attacking Parliament House. The war against terrorism waged by India would thus be decisive irrespective of whether the international community joined it or not.

"We are taking this incident very seriously. What we have not done earlier, we are doing now. We formally warn Pakistan to take steps to end terrorism," the home minister said. The government's direction to Pakistan to reduce its staff in the high commission here was a "signal" to Islamabad and a "practical step" because many people in the mission were spying and as part of the ISI were also helping terrorism here.

Mr Advani justified the diplomatic offensive launched by India against Pakistan, including denying its planes overflight rights and scaling down of mission staff. Such steps become "necessary when the other nation continues to engage in inimical acts," he said.

India did not aim at destroying any nation by waging war but wanted to "assert that we have resolved to end terrorism. This time the fight will not be against any country but to achieve a decisive win over terrorism," he said. The world would see which countries support India in this. "We want to win this on our own. If the world supports us, it is good. If not, we will not bother," he added.

Mr Advani said questions were being asked whether there would be a war. "The question should be asked when the war would end. For the last 15 years, Pakistan is continuing with a different kind of war, proxy war, after being defeated repeatedly in open wars with India." He warned Pakistan against continuing to support terrorism and ridiculed it for "dumping the Taliban for its own safety". India was ready to have friendly relations with Pakistan if it desisted from supporting terrorism.

He said India had been trying to create awareness about the dangers of terrorism but it happened only after the WTC strikes. "Their illusion that terrorism will not affect them ended on 11 September" and the USA went out to give a call to eliminate terrorism from the world, Mr Advani said.

Musharraf offers talks, deploys troops

Agencies

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 28. — General Pervez Musharraf today declared that he was willing to meet Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee at the Saarc summit in Nepal next week and hoped for a similar approach from New Delhi.

Gen Musharraf said, "I don't mind meeting with him (Vajpayee) but you can't clap with one hand," and added "he must show willingness on his side and there will be willingness on our side".

The Pakistani President said his country would never initiate a war. "Pakistan stands for peace, we do not want war," he told the media after a dinner at the presidential palace.

"We will never initiate a war unless it is thrust...upon us. We understand all the hazards that will follow," he said.

Asked whether he was prepared to act against extremist pro-Kashmiri groups, the General said, "We understand our responsibility. We know what we have to do".

Earlier in the day, President Musharraf had said that Pakistan's armed forces "are deployed everywhere" to meet any challenge and give a matching response to any aggressive move.

The General's statement came after his foreign ministry spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, told the BBC, "We would like them (India) to withdraw their forces to peacetime locations so that we can also withdraw our forces to peacetime locations".

India today offered to allow General Musharraf's special aircraft to use Indian airspace to reach Kathmandu for the Saarc summit beginning 4 January, if Islamabad makes a request in this regard, said a ministry of external

affairs spokesperson here today.

However, despite India's offer, General Musharraf's aircraft will fly to Kathmandu for the Saarc summit by taking a circuitous route, said Islamabad. "The President and the delegation will travel through a different route," the Pak foreign office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan.

Reports also indicated today that Islamabad was considering levying a war surcharge and a ban on heavy non-defence imports.

The Pakistani daily, *The News*, today gave details of Gen

Osama in Pak?

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 28. — The Pakistani foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, said today he couldn't rule out the possibility of Osama being in Pakistan. Significantly, Afghanistan's defence minister, Mohammad Fahim, said today that Bin Laden was probably in Peshawar.

— Reuters

Osama war-weary: page 6

Musharraf's meeting with the clerics yesterday. Gen Musharraf is reported to have devoted more time about his efforts to give a moderate image to Islam and to contain the activities of sectarian and extremist organisations.

The daily added that the government was seriously considering imposition of war surcharge in view of the heavy military build up along the border. The tax would be levied only if the present tension escalates into a war, it said. Officials said the surcharge, at the minimum, would be five per cent. A proposal to amend the War Book to this effect is expected, but not for January and February 2002.

The Pakistani foreign ministry spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan also reiterated today that there would be no ban on the LeT and JeM till they are "found to be indulging in undesirable activities in the country" America's ban on LeT and JeM is applicable within the USA, he added.

Pakistan also turned down a proposal to import diesel from India besides putting on hold a proposed re-classification of the tradable items' list. This has been done in view of Delhi's tough posturing towards Islamabad.

SFI

No pull-back till Pak acts against terrorists: Delhi

SFI

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Statesman News Service and Agencies

NEW DELHI, Dec. 28. — There is an attitudinal change in Indian diplomacy this time that is striking. The body language of its officials and their tone and tenor indicate clearly that the government is sure that it's on a firm ground. And they are concentrating on the attack on Parliament, the "core of India's sovereignty" as the base on which to build their case.

Senior officials said they would wait for Pakistan to take concrete action on demands made in the demarche of 14 December and would not agree to increasing demands to pull back troops and hold talks.

Mr Jaswant Singh, said yesterday that there was increasing recognition in the international community that Pakistan must act against the terrorist groups. "The faster it acts, the better it is for all of us," he said. Officials said, Pakistan needed to act and understand "the enormity of the act" perpetrated, and calls for restraint needed to be directed at Pakistan.

The USA, Mr Singh said, recognised that Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammad are getting direct support from Pakistan, which is why they had been placed on the list of foreign terrorist organisations. Mr Singh said, he had clearly told the US secretary of state, General Colin Powell, that "There cannot be good terrorism and bad terrorism". Talks at this stage were out of the question, he spelt out.

(President George W Bush said today the USA was "working actively" to bring calm to India and Pakistan and to convince both sides to ease escalating tensions. He was speaking to reporters at Crawford, Texas).

According to reliable sources, government is contemplating "possibility of formally ending, in course of time, that hand over to India" two militants, JeM chief



On the move: Army jawans patrol the border area in the Rajouri sector on Friday. — PTI

Maulana Masood Azhar and former LeT chief, Hafiz Mohammad Syed. There is also serious thought being given to adding the name of the Pak-based underworld don, Dawood Ibrahim, in the list, saying his strikes have been in coordination with the ISI. Such demands, according to sources, could help the government retain the tempo of diplomatic offence and put Islamabad under further pressure.

(The Jaish-e-Mohammad (Al-Furqan) chief, Masood Azhar, has been shifted to an undisclosed place. The Dawn, said today quoting police sources).

The government is still keeping open the option of withdrawing

the most favoured nation status to Pakistan. Even though the MFN weapon was actively discussed during the last two days' meetings of the Cabinet Committee on security there are doubts in certain quarters whether it would be in India's interest at this juncture.

Even as India and Pakistan set in motion the process to identify the staff of their missions for repatriation, the two countries allowed time to High Commissions personnel and members of their family to leave by 5 January on humanitarian considerations.

A spokesperson of the ministry of external affairs said the seven-day period was granted with an

"intention not to create any inconvenience to them."

Senior diplomats of the Pakistan High Commission were finalising the list of diplomats and officials who have to leave India. The list has to be submitted to the MEA by tomorrow evening.

The Group of Eight called upon both nations to defuse tension. In their joint statement, the G-7 and Russia demanded Islamabad "arrest, try and severely punish leaders of terrorist groups and stop their financing". The Russian-sponsored demarche said: "We hope that both countries will avoid escalation, will resume political dialogue and join efforts in the fight against the global

terrorist threat".

The four Central Asian nations, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Kazakhstan, have condemned the 13 December attack on Parliament and expressed concern over the growing tension in India-Pakistan relations.

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference has urged India and Pakistan to show restraint and seek a diplomatic solution to their differences.

The OIC secretary general, Mr Abdelwahed Belkeziz, voiced "deep concern" over the tension and said: "Resorting to arms and to the use of force will never resolve the problems, but would further aggravate hostility".

Indo-Pak diplomatic war intensifies



Passions running high: The symbolism of the ceremony at Wagah has acquired a new meaning after the diplomatic row between India and Pakistan intensified on Thursday. — AP/PTI

Statesman News Service and Agencies

NEW DELHI/ISLAMABAD, Dec. 27. — India and Pakistan today set off tit-for-tat diplomatic offensives.

New Delhi announced that the strength of the high commissions of the two countries would be cut by half in 48 hours beginning from 6 a.m. tomorrow, the Pakistani mission staff in Delhi couldn't move beyond the city's municipal limits and that not all Pakistani planes would be allowed to fly over India from 1 January 2002. The decisions have been communicated to the Pakistani deputy high commissioner.

In retaliation, Islamabad said it too would scale down by half the staff strength of the Indian mission (110) and bar Indian planes from flying across its airspace. Indian diplomatic staff and their families in Islamabad wouldn't be allowed to travel beyond the city.

The foreign ministry spokesman, Mr Aziz Ahmed Khan, said India's decisions was "very disappointing" because they came "at a time when there is a necessity for bringing down the tension..."

Officials in Delhi indicated that Pakistan had been surprised by the Centre's reaction after the attack on Parliament. It didn't anticipate the extent of outrage over the attack that had struck "at the core of our sovereignty."

The foreign minister called the steps "minimal measures" that were required to make Pakistan recognise the "enormity of the situation..." New Delhi

wanted the Musharraf government to take credible action, failing which "the government remains ready to take such further measures as are considered necessary," Mr Jaswant Singh said after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee of Security. The CCS is likely to meet again on Saturday.

Action, reaction

FOLLOWING are the steps announced by India as part of its diplomatic offensive against Pakistan for not doing enough to stop cross-border terrorism:

■ The strength of the respective High Commissions in the two countries will be reduced by 50 per cent. This would be implemented within 48 hours.

■ Movement of officials of Pakistan High Commission and their families would be confined to municipal limits of Delhi.

■ All over flight facilities available to Pakistan or Pakistan Airlines to over fly Indian airspace will cease from 1st January 2002.

Pakistan retaliated to the Indian diplomatic offensive by announcing similar measures.

India is also planning to lobby the international community by sending members of Parliament to major world capitals. The aim is to convince the world of the legitimacy of India's position. The proposal is in the final stages of consideration by the Prime Minister.

Mr Singh accused Islamabad of duping the world by "fictitious incidents" and by taking "half-measures and non-measures" against the terrorist groups.

Pakistan's failure to act against the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammed was "doubly regrettable," he said. "Terrorism can simply not be justified, on any grounds, or under any name. It must be eradicated fully."

New Delhi, still making a distinction between the Pakistani state and terrorist outfits it nurtures, wants to see credible action taken against terrorism, though a deadline hasn't been indicated.

And though it won't disrupt the Saarc summit, it's clear the Centre wants to keep the pressure on till tangible results begin to show. "We have adequate channels of communication. We will know when they're serious in their intent to act against terrorists," an official said.

Mr Singh, however, ruled out a meeting between Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf on the sidelines of the summit. Will the Prime Minister shake hands with the general? Mr Singh said: "We haven't withdrawn civilities between the two countries."

On the US secretary of state, Gen Colin Powell's telephonic talks with New Delhi and Islamabad, he said Gen Powell had the right to advocate a meeting but "we may not accept that advocacy."

Toning down the rhetoric, Pakistan today ruled out a nuclear conflict with its neighbour despite the build-up of troops. The defence spokesman, Maj-Gen Rashid Qureshi, said Pakistan and India

were responsible states and there was no way any one could "realistically" think of a nuclear war between the two.

He denied reports that the Indian Air Force has violated the Pakistani airspace a few times during the past two days.

On Mr George Fernandes's statement that Indian deployment would be complete in two-three days, Maj-Gen Qureshi said: "We're well aware of Indian army's deployment. We'll take appropriate defensive action."

Meanwhile, an alliance of Pakistan's hardline religious parties has accused the government of taking the country towards "secularism" by acting against fundamentalist groups. The Afghanistan and Pakistan Defence Council will demonstrate against the government's move tomorrow.

Reacting to the measures and counter-measures, the USA expressed the hope that the nuclear neighbours wouldn't go in for a confrontation.

A state department official said that both sides had acted within their rights, but should carefully examine the implications. "Each country has the sovereign right to take diplomatic steps it believes necessary to preserve its security. We expect both are giving careful consideration to how most effectively to resolve the situation that confronts them."

Editorial: Loose talk, page 4
Emphasis on diplomacy: George, page 2
UN freezes Pak group's assets, page 6

India strikes a tough posture

CL Manoj and Nilova Roy Chowdhury in New Delhi

Dec. 28. — The Pakistani army must ensure that infiltration of terrorists into Indian territory stops. That is the "bottom-line", sources said, for Islamabad, and New Delhi has communicated its demand to Washington, as the latter continues its tightrope walk over Kashmir-related terrorism as well as urging "restraint".

Till the Pakistani armed forces stop aiding militant movements, India will not consider the diplomatic offensive to have been successful and will keep "other options" open. Sources said that India has conveyed to the USA

that, despite some positive signs, it considers the present level of sanctions against Pakistan-based terrorists as "unsatisfactory".

In the demarche that was given to the Pakistan High Commissioner on 14 December, India had demanded that the activities of the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed be stopped in Pakistan, that their leadership, well known to Pakistani authorities, be taken into custody, the organisations' financial assets and access to financial assets be stopped/curbed and the activities of terrorists against India be stopped.

Officially, the MEA today welcomed the USA declaring Lashkar and Jaish as foreign terrorist organisations. But it also

said Pakistani response so far is "unsatisfactory", not enough "to drive a stake through the heart of terrorism".

The stake is in the hands of the Pakistani generals. India feels that the infiltration of terrorists across the LoC is possible only because of logistic and other support from Pakistani border army units. If the latter withdraw their "active patronage", sources said, infiltration will be "much more difficult".

It will also be the surest sign, the Indian establishment feels, of Pakistan acting against terrorist outfits. This because, as New Delhi sees it, the Pakistan-based terrorist movement has had strong "functional and ideological" links with the Pakistani army. Severing

that link, sources said, will "be a radical policy and orientation change".

It's radical change that New Delhi wants, however, and it wants Washington to know that. The USA has been busy talking to both India and Pakistan since 13 December. General Colin Powell, sources said, is "in constant touch with Islamabad and New Delhi".

According to diplomatic sources, Pakistan did not anticipate that India would react with the "level of seriousness" with which it has. The Pakistan Parliament does not hold the kind of sanctity that democracy here holds, and they accuse India of over-reacting to the 13 December attacks.

LeT to continue Kashmir jihad

MUZAFFARABAD, Dec. 27. — The Pakistan-based Islamic militant group, Lashkar-e-Taiyaba today breathed defiance after being placed on the US list of terrorist organisations, saying it would pursue its "holy war" to free Indian-ruled Kashmir.

The U.S. secretary of state Mr Colin Powell yesterday announced he had put two Pakistan-based Kashmiri militant groups on the terrorist list, boosting Indian arguments that Pakistani president General Pervez Musharraf should shut them down. "The US decision will make no difference; we don't need an American certificate to carry out our jihad," said an LeT spokesman in PoK. — Reuters

Delhi's difficulty: PoK camps

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 27. — India's major area of concern has always been the terrorist training and assembly camps across the Line of Control and the International Border. Of the 170-odd camps, perhaps 60-70 are still functioning, though the others were closed down after 11 September. As a result, strikes at the camps, many of which are deep inside Pakistan or PoK, if contemplated, could be more difficult.

After his press conference today, the external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, was asked if Pakistan had closed down the training camps for terrorists. He answered in the negative.

Senior military officers said some were closed down but others are still operative. If air strikes have to be made, even in a symbolic manner, targeting them may be more difficult. If nothing else, there are fewer targets, many of which are less accessible.

Many of the camps close to the border (particularly the assembly camps) were cleared after the 11 September attack. Those undergoing training were told to disperse and live in the nearby towns and villages.

The camps were closed down and the signboards outside them were taken down.

At that time, there were fears that American troops would attack the camps. Or they would be targeted by cruise missiles.

The price of striking a camp is high — it may involve the Air Force or missiles. Striking camps deeper inside Pakistan, if that was ever an option, is a more risky one. Also, a camp is often close to a civilian settlement and a strike could lead to civilian casualties and a Pakistani propaganda success. But the camps do exist.

They are sending terrorists into J&K. If they've to be hit, good Intelligence and accuracy will be necessary as will satellite images of the camps which are available.

The foreign minister confirmed that the director-general of military operations, Lieutenant-General JS Chahal, is speaking on the hotline with his Pakistani counterpart every Tuesday as previously agreed upon.

Experts feel India may abrogate the water treaty

Rezaul H. Laskar
NEW DELHI 27 DECEMBER

THE POSSIBLE abrogation by India of a water-sharing agreement with Pakistan, the only bilateral agreement that has remained unaffected by decades of tension, is being viewed here as an indication of New Delhi's frustration at Islamabad's support for terrorism.

The Indus Waters Treaty — signed in Karachi in 1960 by the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the then Pakistan President, Field Marshal Mohammed Ayub Khan — was brokered by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to facilitate the "most complete and satisfactory utilisation of the waters of the Indus system of rivers." Abrogation of the treaty is among several harsh diplomatic measures that India is reportedly considering to increase pressure on Pakistan to act against terror groups operating from its soil.

"The move is the frustrated expression of the thought process of a nation worried about how to persuade Pakistan, its closest neighbour, not to indulge in such activities," former foreign secretary S.K. Singh, who has also served as high commissioner to Pakistan in the eighties, told IANS. "We sent our Prime Minister to Pakistan for peace talks, we held our horses during the Kargil border conflict and we invited Musharraf to India as an honoured guest," he said. "But nothing has worked." Ties between India and Pakistan have dipped following the December 13 attack on the Indian Parliament that New Delhi has blamed on two Pakistan-based terror groups.

Following US pressure, Pakistan said on Wednesday it will act against the two groups, Lashker-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, but India said the steps taken by Islamabad to curb terrorism were inadequate.

"We are frustrated and we don't know what else to do," said Mr Singh. The IBRD, known as the World Bank, intervened to settle a dispute between India and Pakistan on sharing the waters of the Indus basin, which feed canals and storage facilities over an area of more than 26 million hectares.

The treaty allocated waters of eastern rivers to India, while those of western rivers were allocated largely to Pakistan. The eastern rivers include the Sutlej, Beas and Ravi, while the western rivers comprise Indus, Jhelum and Chenab. The agreement, not to restrict the flow of waters, was often held up by Western powers as an example of successful cooperation between India and Pakistan in the face of tension, especially as a commission set up by the two sides to adjudicate disputes survived two wars. Experts, however, said the option of using harsh diplomatic measures such as abrogating the Indus Waters Treaty may be better than the military option. It is far better to use non-military options to make our disappointment clear and get the other side to respond," said G. Parthasarathy.

— IANS

Border tension may clip wings of pigeon trade

Satinder Bains
AMRITSAR 27 DECEMBER

DOVES AND pigeons, enduring symbols of peace and lucrative items of trade in these parts, continue to flap about over the heads of soldiers guarding the increasingly tense India-Pakistan border. But, with the hostility between the neighbouring nations showing no sign of letting up and the military build-up on the border continuing, traders in these birds living along the frontier are beginning to sell their stock in distress.

Pigeon trade is a passion with scores of people living on either side of the border running through Punjab. For many, it is a source of livelihood. Pakistani birds are in high demand among Indians who wager on pigeon races, with bets at times running up to Rs 50,000.

April-May is the season for pigeon races in Pakistan while August-September is when contests

the bird peak in India.

Villagers involved in the trade negotiate the price through written messages exchanged via the birds. "Birds carry the letters, quoting rates for particular pigeons from one side of the border to other side and a deal is struck if mutually accepted," said one trader.

But the war clouds hovering over the region threaten to bring the trade to a stop for now. Pargat

Singh, a pigeon trader, said since the armies on either side started moving in with heavy artillery, people had begun to sell their bird stocks in distress. Traders fear that pigeon enthusiasts will stay away from the tense border. Besides, people leaving the border villages could scarcely afford to take the birds along.

"The whole village is shifting and it is difficult to keep them with us," Singh said. Many villagers are completely dependent on this trade, said Sadha Singh, the former headman of Daoke village. Daoke, Gandiwind, Naushehra Dhalla, Bhaini and Bharopal have a considerable number of pigeon traders who cater to the needs of punters from urban centres like Ludhiana and Jalandhar where demand for trained Pakistani birds runs high.

Kiishan Khatri, who owns about 40 pigeons including some from Pakistan, said at times pigeons from across the border fetch thousands of rupees. The price is higher in case the bird's feathers bear a Pakistani trader's stamp.

Another trader, Nishan, pointed to a bird called Shah Sara, who he said had flown in from Pakistan. He said when he caught Shah Sara, the bird bore a Pakistani trader's stamp in Urdu. But the stamp has faded with time.

Amrik Singh of Gandiwind village said he had once caught a Pakistani pigeon wearing gold anklets. Such indulgence towards the birds, he said, is common among heavy betters.

While Amrik Singh has decided not to part with his precious birds in haste, he conceded that others in the business had been selling their stock at throwaway prices.

— IANS



AT GUNPOINT

The Economic Times

NOT SATISFIED WITH ISLAMABAD ACTION

India bans over-flights, cuts mission staff

2270 - PAK
HD 1 28712

By Atul Aneja and Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, DEC. 27. India today stepped up its diplomatic offensive against Pakistan by reducing the strength of the respective High Commissions by 50 per cent, banning all over-flight facilities to Pakistan and restricting the movement of the residual officials of the Pakistani mission to the municipal limits of the national capital.

The measures were taken after the Cabinet Committee on Security established that Islamabad's action against the two militant outfits, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba — accused of engineering the December 13 attack on Parliament — was inadequate. "This is not acceptable. Terrorism can simply not be justified on any grounds or under any name. It must be eradicated fully," the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, said at a news conference here.

Describing the situation along the borders as "tense," he said India

was, however, prepared to deal with any eventuality.

Mr. Singh said the High Commissions of both the countries would reduce their sanctioned strength of 110 to 55 within 48 hours. The cessation of all over-flight facilities to Pakistan and the Pakistan Airlines would begin from January 1. "These are once again minimal measures that are being taken. We hope even now that the Government of Pakistan will understand the gravity of the situation and take urgent measures to curb the activities of terrorist groups."

India took exception especially to the reported "arrest" of the Jaish chief, Maulana Masood Azhar — it was the brother of the Maulana who had been briefly detained and released. "It is difficult to understand how a military regime was unable to identify a wanted terrorist. And now information about Maulana Azhar is not available," Mr. Singh observed.

New Delhi was also disappointed with the action taken against

the Lashkar. "It is doubly regrettable that attempts to dupe the international community with cosmetic half-measures, non-measures or even fictitious incidents are still being made," the Minister said.

Responding to a question, Mr. Singh ruled out talks with Pakistan at this juncture and said India's sentiments in this regard had been conveyed to the United States. A dialogue was "not practical and not possible." India was conveying this viewpoint to other nations. A plan for a diplomatic offensive, involving the Members of Parliament, was also in its final stages. The Government would be shortly sending groups of MPs to different capitals of the world.

Mr. Singh's address to the media followed nearly two hours of deliberations by the CCS which first met in the War Room in the Ministry of Defence and later in South Block. Mr. Singh declined to go into the briefing given by military officers. It is understood that the briefing was followed by assessments by the chief of Intel-

ligence Bureau, Mr. K. P. Singh, and the chief, Research and Analysis Wing, Mr. Vikram Sood.

At the CCS meeting, the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, and the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, apparently advocated the banning of Pakistan flights over Indian airspace. And Mr. Singh favoured the reduction in the High Commissions' strength. Mr. Singh refused to speculate on the steps India planned to take in future. Nor did he spell out a time-frame within

Pak. hits back

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 27. In less than an hour after India announced second set of diplomatic measures against Pakistan in protest against the latter's alleged inaction against those responsible for the December 13 attack on Parliament, Islamabad announced reciprocal measures.

Pakistan's decision to respond to the actions of New Delhi in a similar fashion indicates that it has given up its stance of restraint and hit back.

An official statement from the Pakistan Foreign Office tonight said, "while regretting the escalatory measures announced by India, the Government of Pakistan has been constrained to take reciprocal action in equal measure. Consequently the following decisions have been conveyed to the Indian High Commission in Islamabad: The personnel strength of the Indian High Commission should be reduced by 50 per cent; officials of the Indian High Commission must at all times remain within the municipal limits of Islamabad; and as of January 1, Indian aircraft will not be allowed to fly over Pakistani territory."

which New Delhi wanted Islamabad to take concrete steps against organisations fomenting terrorism in India. While the withdrawal of the most favoured nation status (MFN) to Pakistan was unlikely, Mr. Singh declined to say whether India was re-thinking its position on the Indus Waters Treaty.

On his conversation with the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, Mr. Singh said India had conveyed that Pakistan could not have two approaches to terrorism — one for its western border with Afghanistan and another for India.

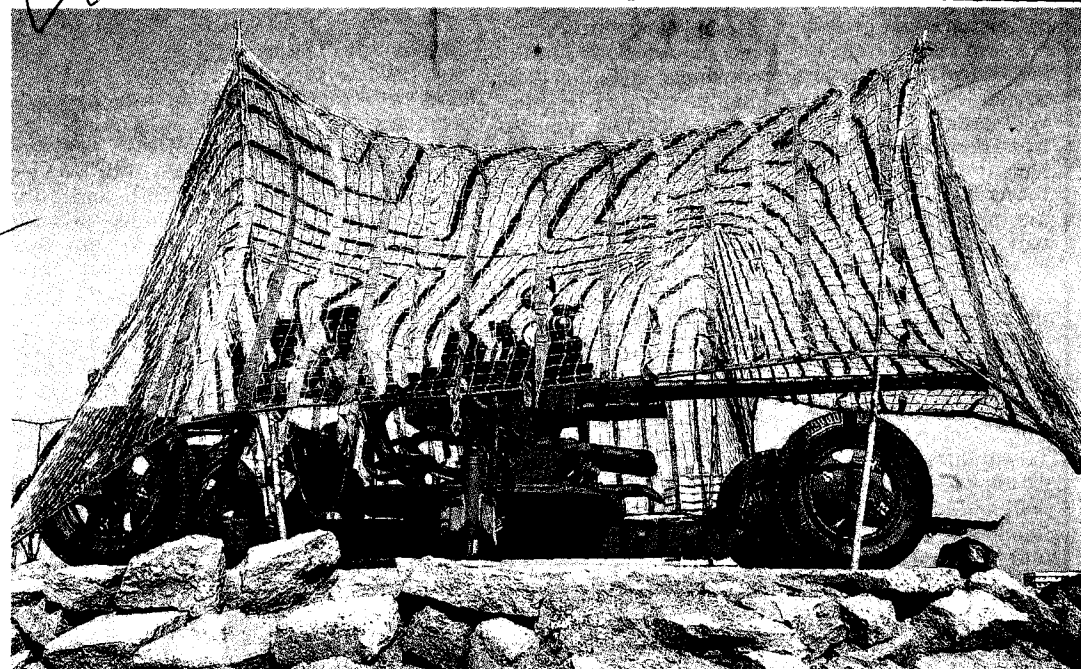
PTI reports:

Mr. Singh directed his Ministry to ensure that necessary arrangements were made to fly out the 55 Pakistani staffers and their families to Islamabad within the stipulated time. The deadline of 48 hours to reduce the staff strength begins at 6.00 a.m tomorrow.

Pakistan informed

India formally conveyed to Pakistan the decisions taken by the CCS. The Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs in-charge of Pakistan, Mr. Arun Kumar Singh, conveyed the decisions to the Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan, Mr. Jalil Abbas Jeelani, official sources said.

See also Page 11



Pakistani soldiers manning an anti-aircraft gun at Karachi port on Thursday.— AP

Pak. rules out nuclear war

By Our Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 27. Pakistan today ruled out the possibility of a nuclear conflict with India despite the escalating tension and denied the latter's charge that it had moved its missiles closer to the border.

The Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, and the Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Ahmed Khan, emphasised at a briefing that the build-up on the border was defensive in nature.

Maj. Gen. Quereshi said Pakistan and India were responsible states and there was no way anyone could "realistically" think of a nuclear war between the two. Expressing surprise about people "jumping to conclusions" about such a war, he argued that "these (nuclear weapons) are deterrence and not meant to be more than that".

Both spokespersons asserted that Pakistan's forces were prepared to meet any eventuality on the border and that the Government was alive to the movement of troops by India.

Maj. Gen. Quereshi denied claims made by a reporter that Indian planes had violated Pakistan's airspace a few times in the past two days. "I do not know where you get it from. Pakistan's armed forces will be aware of all intrusions. I do not think that any such thing happened."

On the reported statement of the Indian Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, that the troop deployment would be completed in two to three days, Maj. Gen. Quereshi said, "We are well aware of the Indian Army's deployment. We will take appropriate defensive action." He claimed that while exercising maximum restraint, Pa-

kistan had taken all defensive measures to meet any situation. "We hope better sense will prevail and the situation is not escalated. India knows we have the capacity to retaliate in all conceivable ways."

On India's charge that Pakistan had moved missiles closer to the border, he said it was incorrect. "It is another Indian lie. Pakistan has not moved missiles towards the borders. India continues to tell lies in order to justify its own build-up. They (India) have moved all their formations to the border. We know it. We are monitoring that and as minimum defensive measures, we will just move minimum troops if we have to."

He said Pakistan "is not engaging in any propaganda and is just telling the truth. It is India which has done this after September 11, when they found to their frustration that the whole world has formed the coalition — including Pakistan — against terrorism, against what happened in New York and Washington."

India was frustrated, as it was not being asked to assist the coalition and so it had started making things up that had no basis, he claimed. "They hijacked their own aircraft and blamed Pakistan for it. They arranged strange happenings in India and blamed Pakistan and its intelligence agencies for that. So they are the ones engaging in propaganda."

He alleged that India refused to recognise reality and what was being said was an effort to convince the world that "all ills occur in India only because of Pakistan". From the beginning, Pakistan had been saying that if there was any proof of the involvement of any person or organisation in the attack on the Indian Parliament, then India should present it.

Mr. Khan was emphatic that the "struggle in Kashmir is indigenous" and it would continue till the Kashmiris realised their right for self-determination as promised in the U.N. resolutions.

Talks offer renewed

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 27. Pakistan today renewed its offer of talks between the President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, during the SAARC summit in Kathmandu early next month.

"We have no hesitation. We have maintained that the ball is in India's court. We have always stood for dialogue and meetings and we have said that anytime, any place and anywhere at any level. It is for India to respond to our moves. We have done enough on our part," the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, said at a press briefing.

He maintained that dialogue was necessary to resolve all differences, and added that unlike India, Pakistan had not withdrawn its High Commissioner from New Delhi.

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Sanctions slapped on Pak

Islamabad responds with tit-for-tat curbs

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, December 27

INDIA TONIGHT kept up the heat on Pakistan by slapping sanctions on Islamabad, including denial of its air space to Pakistan International Airlines and unilaterally deciding to reduce by half the staff strength of its own mission in Islamabad and that of Pakistan in New Delhi.

Islamabad lost no time in taking similar measures, which means that Air-India and Indian Airlines will no longer be able to overfly Pakistan.

"Relations with Pakistan at the moment are tense," conceded External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh while briefing reporters on the decisions taken by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS). The CCS formalised the punitive steps after being briefed by the Army top brass on the situation along the LoC and the International border.

Jaswant justified the latest measures saying that Islamabad was attempting to dupe the international community with "cosmetic half-measures, non-measures or even fictitious incidents" involving the terrorist outfits.

The Foreign Minister disclosed that the 110-strong missions maintained by both countries in each other's capitals would be pruned by half. But it was the right of either side to decide as to who should stay and who should leave: the principle applying as much to the Pakistani High Commissioner, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, with whom New Delhi has stopped dealing after withdrawing its

DELHI CRACKS THE WHIP

■ Staff strength slashed by half in High Commissions in both the countries

■ Pakistani flights banned over Indian airspace from January 1

■ Staff and families of the Pakistani Mission cannot move beyond municipal limits of Delhi

own envoy, Vijay Nambiar, on December 21.

The suspension of overflying facilities to PIA and Pakistan-registered aircraft would come into force on January 1 — the same day the Samjhauta Express and the Delhi-Lahore bus would stop plying. Half the Pakistan High Commission staff would have to leave within 48 hours.

At the same time, the movement of the residual staff in the Pakistani mission would be restricted to within the municipal limits of Delhi. Obviously, this restriction has been necessitated by the recent busting of espionage rings operated by the Mission's employees. On the question whether this step alone would ensure the ejection of ISI-operatives, especially when the decision as to who should leave has been left to Islamabad, Jaswant Singh said, "We are not innocent of such trickery."

Without speculating on the possibility of scrapping existing treaties and withdrawal of the MFN status to Pakistan under WTO, Singh let it be known that India would not hesitate from taking "further measures" if it was necessary. The minister also said that to put forward India's case before the international community, delegations of MPs would be sent to various parts of the world next month.

Jaswant sounded peeved over the brazen deception carried out by the Pakistani regime in booking terrorist outfits and their leaders. "They were given advance notice of the decision to freeze their accounts which helped them withdraw their money from banks. They also changed their names and claimed to move base to PoK."

PAK RENEWS TALKS OFFER

WITH ACTION under way against two Islamic fundamentalist groups involved in the attack on India's Parliament, Pakistan on Thursday renewed its offer of talks between President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Saarc in Kathmandu next month. A Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman said the ball now was in India's court. "We have no hesitation. We have always stood for dialogue and meetings. It is for India to respond. We have done enough on our part."



Defence Minister George Fernandes inspects a forward base of the Indian Army in Siachen on Wednesday.

AFP PHOTO

Musharraf fights backyard bushfire

Mubashir Zaidi & S Rajagopalan
Islamabad/Washington, Dec 27

IT WAS time today for the tough-talking Pervez Musharraf to eat some of his words. Under mounting US pressure and aware of India's determination to match rhetoric with rhetoric, force with force, Pakistan today ruled out a nuclear war with its big neighbour in the east.

With a concerned Colin Powell breathing down his neck and a grim George Fernandes willing to give diplomacy only one last chance, the General spent much of his day fighting the bushfire in his own backyard, convincing religious parties in the country that

his latest policy change on Kashmir would not dilute his Government's support for the 'Kashmiri freedom struggle'.

"I vow that political and diplomatic support to Kashmiris for their right of self-determination will continue," the General told representatives of Pakistan's religious parties at a meeting in his office.

The change of tack was induced by the US decision to blacklist the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, though Foreign Office spokesman Aziz Khan struggled today to downplay its importance and the arrest of Jaish chief Maulana Masood Azhar, saying Azhar had

been arrested under local law for making provocative speeches against the Government.

He evaded all questions on the Government's reaction to the US ban on Lashkar and Jaish. Military spokesman Major General Rashid Qureshi feigned ignorance of the US decision, while Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said in a TV interview last night that the country's Constitution did not permit formation and functioning of any militant organisation. As if this was a fact unknown to the Government. Nobody mentioned that it was Big Brother Colin Powell dictating the terms.

The US Secretary of State had extensive telephone talks yester-

day with General Musharraf and Jaswant Singh.

What also heightened US concern and prompted the Musharraf policy rethink was Defence Minister George Fernandes's reported statement that Indian missiles were "in position."

Today, Fernandes mixed caution with courage.

On a three-day whistle-stop tour of the snow-bound Siachen glaciers, Kargil, Drass and some forward areas in the western sector, he said force deployment would be completed in two to three days but added that India would once more await "positive results" from diplomacy. Not comforting words for the General.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

28 DEC 2001

Cops link Samjhauta Express to spy ring

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 27

DELHI Police claim to have busted a spy network run through the Samjhauta Express. They arrested one person in this connection yesterday and found documents relating to troop movements on him.

The arrest of Samaiyuddin of Muzaffarnagar, UP, comes barely a few days after the detention of Pakistan High Commission staffer Mohammad Sharif Khan and the arrest of Parliament House employee Ajay Kumar for espionage.

Police arrested Samaiyuddin from a Daryaganj PCO while he was speaking to one Iqbal Malik at an undisclosed destina-

tion in Pakistan. They are now looking for another person, Shaukat, who is believed to have passed on sensitive documents to Samaiyuddin. During interrogation, he said he was financed by Malik who had instructed him to collect the documents. Samaiyuddin was produced in the court today and remanded to seven days police custody.

Based on an intelligence tip, Special Cell sleuths led by ACP L.N. Rao and Inspector Raman Lamba caught Samaiyuddin while he was making the call from a PCO in Mahavir Vatika, Daryaganj. Apart from the documents, police recovered a cellphone and Rs 1.17 lakh from him. He has been booked under the Official Secrets Act and charged for criminal conspiracy. The alleged spy was living in a rented room arranged in

September, near Jagat Cinema. *Sub PM*
Samaiyuddin's interrogation revealed that he was involved in petty smuggling through the Samjhauta Express and had visited Pakistan 11 times since 1989. But during his last visit to Lahore in August 2001, he came across Malik, who is also from Muzaffarnagar, UP. Police claim that Malik had fled to Pakistan in 1991 and became an ISI operative.

Iqbal Malik had earlier been arrested in a gun-running racket in a case lodged in Lodhi Colony police station. He had been arrested along with a Swiss and Iranian national, while he had come in a bus from Pakistan. Police found 361 pistols hidden in the vehicle's fuel cavity.

Samaiyuddin's questioning also revealed that his brother-in-law, Tasleem, who went



Samaiyuddin being produced in court. Express photo by Anil Sharma

to Pakistan was working for the ISI, police said. Another relative of Samaiyuddin, Mohammad Idris, is lodged in Jaipur jail in connection with an espionage case in 1999. Police had recovered maps of the Jodhpur airbase from him, police said.

Delhi Police have in the past seized contraband from passengers of the Samjhauta Express. In 1999, they arrested Kamran Gohar who had fake currency worth Rs 12 lakh. Subsequently, one Abdul Rashid was arrested while he was carrying toys with explosives in them. Police claim that all of them were working for the ISI.

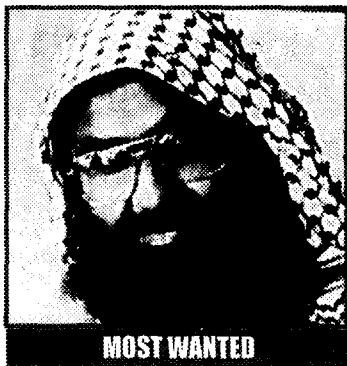
INDIAN EXPRESS

28 DEC 2001

India asks Pak to hand over Masood

Our Mumbai Bureau
MUMBAI 27 DECEMBER

IN ITS all out effort to step up pressure on Pakistan, India today asked its neighbour to extradite mafia don Dawood Ibrahim and terrorist leader Masood Azhar if it's "serious" about its drive against terrorism. Launching a strong attack on Pakistan, the Union minister Mr Pramod Mahajan accused it for "not doing anything" to restraint terrorists. "Pakistan is pretending to be serious on terrorism. But we will not believe in its claims unless it hands Dawood Ibrahim and Masood Azhar over to India," said Mr Mahajan. It's not clear if the demand has been made



at the diplomatic level.

He was addressing the rally organised by the Baharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) to whip up youth support for India's "war

against terrorism". BJYM has planned a series of rallies in various states from January 1, 2002. Mr Mahajan said: "We don't want war but if it's thrust on us we will see that it will be the final war against Pakistan." Reacting to the criticism against the Prime Minister, Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee, for not responding "quickly" to the situation, Mr Mahajan assured the gathering that "we are working with a specific plan in mind. Have faith, a befitting reply will be given to those responsible for the attack. The government is moving step by step on a chalked out path with a clear picture of the roadmap ahead in its mind", he said.

India has embarked on a "decisive fight" to stamp out Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and was treading on a well thought-out plan in response to the December 13 attack on Parliament, he said. "We are in no hurry and cautiously working on a well-planned strategy. How long the fight will last will depend on the evolving situation", Mr Mahajan added. Later talking to media-persons he refused to elaborate on the plan.

According to him India has given ample proof of Pakistan's involvement to the world community and has every right to respond on the lines of the US, which attacked Taliban's militia regime following the September 11 terrorist strikes.

The Economic Times

28 DEC 2001

AN IMPORTANT STEP IN GLOBAL CAMPAIGN: POWELL

U.S. brands Lashkar, Jaish terrorist organisations

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, DEC. 26. In a bid to further pressure Pakistan and placate India, the United States has formally designated the Pakistan-based militant outfits, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad, as "Foreign Terrorist Organisations."

Washington's "ban" on the two outfits should be seen in the backdrop of escalating tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad, and the increasing fear that the rhetoric might get out of hand.

"The vicious attacks that took place on September 11 made it clear that the United States must use every tool at its disposal to

combat terrorism. Today, I am taking another important step in our campaign to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. I am designating two groups, the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, as Foreign Terrorist Organisations under U.S. law," the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, said in a statement.

"These groups which claim to be supporting the people of Kashmir have conducted numerous terrorist attacks in India and Pakistan. As the recent horrific attacks against the Indian Parliament and the Srinagar State Assembly so clearly show, the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad and their ilk, seek to

assault democracy, undermine peace and stability in South Asia and destroy relations between India and Pakistan," the statement said.

By formally designating the Lashkar and the Jaish as terrorist organisations, the U.S. has finally complied with a long-standing Indian demand that the two outfits be classified in a fitting manner.

Gen. Powell said in his statement that by designating the Lashkar and the Jaish as FTOs, the administration was implementing the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act. This Act makes it illegal for persons in the U.S., or those in the jurisdiction of the

U.S., to provide material support to these two groups.

Further, by law, the assets of the designated FTOs are blocked and the U.S. will now deny visas to the representatives of the LeT and the JeM. "I made this decision in consultation with the Attorney-General and the Secretary

'Time to set our house in order'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 26. Pakistan tonight, for the first time, openly denounced the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad for "operating from its soil" with political objectives.

Participating in a programme on Pakistan Television, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, said the time had come for Islamabad to set its own house in order. "Our domestic situation needs to be attended. Any organisation claiming to be a militant force is illegal. There is a specific law in Pakistan that bans a private organisation from proclaiming to be a militant force".

Mr. Sattar's observations came minutes after the U.S. declared the LeT and the JeM terrorist.

of the Treasury after an exhaustive review of these groups' violent activities. The United States looks forward to working with the Governments of both India and Pakistan to shut these groups down," Gen. Powell said.

India harbouring sinister designs: Sattar

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 26. The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, tonight accused India of harbouring a "sinister design" against Islamabad and warned that any escalation of tension by New Delhi could lead to a dangerous confrontation. The need of the hour was to freeze the position and dialogue should be initiated to resolve all differences. "We are ready for talks without any condition, but the issue of Kashmir will have to be resolved in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations."

In an interview to Pakistan Television (PTV), Mr. Sattar said the

"unprecedented" mobilisation of forces on the border by India had left Pakistan with little option but to conclude that New Delhi was attempting to intimidate Islamabad to achieve certain "political objectives."

Mr. Sattar said the mobilisation of Army, Air Force and Naval forces by India were matched by "political rhetoric pouring out" from the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The Minister said he was reminded of the 1986 scenario when India launched "Operation Brasstacks." That time Pakistan had advance information about the military exercises, but this

time there was no justification for the military build-up.

Pakistan was convinced that India was trying to take advantage of the prevailing international environment in the post September 11 scenario and had brought it to the notice of the United Nations and friendly countries, including the United States and United Kingdom. Mr. Sattar said that in the last few days he had had three conversations with the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, over the situation on the border facing India and the latter had expressed concern over the situation and stressed on the need for de-escalation.

New Delhi for concrete steps from Pak.

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, DEC. 26. India is willing to give every opportunity to the diplomatic effort by the international community to help resolve the current tension with Pakistan, but is also getting ready to face the extreme eventuality of a military confrontation with its nuclear neighbour, well-placed sources here said.

India had no desire to rush into a war with Pakistan. "But if diplomacy were to fail, such an outcome is not unlikely," the sources said. "We must be fully prepared for escalation and a large-scale military confrontation with Pakistan."

As the international community steps up pressure on Pakistan to act decisively against terrorist groups operating on its soil, India is making no assumption that Islamabad will heed the sensible advice. But the sources insisted that "diplomacy will be allowed every chance to work itself out".

India has said the actions by Pakistan are

"unsatisfactory so far". The Government would look for concrete results on the ground, not just statements from the military leadership in Islamabad, the sources said.

Asked if India's benchmarks for a crack-down on terrorism were well-understood in Islamabad, they said the military leaders were fully aware of what was needed to be done to satisfy India and the international community. The benchmarks relate to clamping down on the activities of terrorist groups, arresting their leaders and squeezing their finances. Closing down the activities of terrorist groups, it is being pointed out, would involve an end to recruitment of volunteers, dismantling training camps and taking steps on the border along with the Indian Army to stop infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir.

Half-steps or disingenuous moves, such as changing the names of organisations involved in fomenting terror from across the Line of Control, "will not be acceptable", the sources emphasised. "What is needed is unambigu-

ous denial of land, material and training for terrorist groups operating on their side."

Gen. Pervez Musharraf was "in a position to deliver" on these demands. But the question is whether he would like to give up the option of the proxy war that Islamabad has pursued for more than a decade against India, they added.

Pointing to Gen. Musharraf's reversal of policy on Afghanistan and the Taliban after September 11, the sources said that the terrorists enjoyed little public support in Pakistan and could easily be controlled. The question was "one of political will and not lack of control" over these groups that have enjoyed state support for long.

The sources also said that Pakistan was fully aware that if Gen. Musharraf moved decisively against terrorist groups, a full-fledged peace process between the two nations could begin fairly soon. But at this moment, no one here is betting on wisdom prevailing over adventurism in Pakistan any time soon.

THE HINDU

27 DEC 2001

INDO-PAK. CRISIS / U.S. WORRIED ABOUT CONSEQUENCES

Diplomatic efforts to continue

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, DEC. 27. Senior officials of the Bush administration are expected to continue the quiet but high-profile diplomacy with their counterparts in India and Pakistan to defuse tensions in the sub-continent.

Washington is convinced that a military showdown will have disastrous consequences for both countries, given the range of forces assembled.

Moreover, from its point of view, the United States is worried that its campaign against the Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden — seen to be in the last stages — would suffer a setback or at worst be complicated if matters spin out of control.

In the event of a military confrontation between India and Pakistan, Washington sees the prospect of Islamabad withdrawing hundreds of its troops who are now keeping a watch on fleeing Al-Qaeda fighters from Afghanistan.

The Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, has urged "restraint" in his calls to the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and India's External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh. Gen. Powell, according to a spokesman of the State Department, spoke twice each

with Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Singh on Wednesday. The Secretary of State impressed on the two to settle the differences through dialogue.

"It is critically important that there be a lessening of tensions between India and Pakistan. That's what we are encouraging. Any conflict between them can have no good result for either country," the deputy spokesman, Mr. Phillip Reeker, said.

The administration has said very little about the reports of deployment of troops and missiles even as it goes about studying these. "No comment" has been the refrain at Foggy Bottom.

It was not merely telephone diplomacy at work on Wednesday. With minimal fanfare, the Secretary of State did something New Delhi has been urging administrations here — both Republican and Democratic — to do for quite some time: ban terror outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad which are directly involved in terrorism against India and also those outfits which are supported and directed by Islamabad.

The Bush administration formally designated the two groups as 'Foreign Terrorist Organisations'.

The outfits will now come under a number of stringent bans, including on the financial and travel fronts. On the one hand, the designation of the LeT and the JeM puts the spotlight on Pakistan in the sense that attention will now be on the non-cosmetic moves that Islamabad would have to make.

This, because the administration has reasons to believe that the LeT has links with the Al-Qaeda and that Osama may have been a source of financial support.

At the same time, Washington will expect New Delhi to see its moves in a positive light.

With Pakistan now a key ally in the fight against global terrorism, the Bush administration would seem to have gone to the extent it can vis-a-vis the LeT and the JeM.

The U.S., from the very beginning of its campaign against the Al-Qaeda and Osama, has been openly talking about the kind of pressure Gen. Musharraf faced internally and externally, especially the former, and is therefore not inclined to rock the boat any more than it can. "Musharraf has proved he is a capable and reliable coalition partner in the face of domestic opposition," the State Department has maintained.

WAR OR PEACE: Diplomacy, not military action, will succeed against terrorism

Sow seeds of construction

BY PRAFUL BIDWAI

Indus-8 28/12

THE UNITED States' inclusion of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and Jaish-e-Mohammed in the 'terrorist organisations' list will be widely welcomed, as will Pakistan's positive response to the move — even if that comes out of opportunism, compulsion or coercion, rather than sincere acknowledgement of the gravity of the December 13 attack on Parliament House. But it would be illusory to think that these developments will dispel the war clouds over India and Pakistan which are now locked in a fearsome eyeball-to-eyeball military confrontation. The present enormous build-up along the border is far greater than the preparations that preceded and attended the Kargil war.

What makes the build-up much nastier is not just the deployment of a panoply of weapons, including nuclear-capable missiles, but the mood of bellicose intransigence prevalent among many of India's policy-makers, and their obsession with purely military options with which to combat terrorism. Three ironies are in evidence here. Not long ago, our generals (and Pakistan's) would take pride in the fact that India-Pakistan wars, while brutal, were 'gentlemanly', short and 'clean'. Typically, they did not target too many civilian installations or population centres.

Today, the generals are counselling restraint but many diplomats are baying for nasty, 'decisive', 'final-solution' military operations to eradicate 'cross-border terrorism' once and for all. Some measures proposed, like abrogating the Indus Waters Treaty, could cause irreversible but horrific damage. This role-reversal signifies a terrible coarsening of our public discourse, now contaminated by jingoism and bloody-mindedness.

Second, the government has still not collected or released clinching evidence of the Jaish-e-Mohammed's, leave alone LeT's, involvement in December 13. Even if one believes dubious witnesses like Mohammed Afzal, the evidence still doesn't measure up to a legally tenable indictment. But New Delhi has expanded its charter of demands. It wants Pakistan to act against all known terrorist organisations active in different guises. Evidently, the agenda has got padded up.

And third, most of our political parties, including the Congress, have left to the Vajpayee government's determination the vital issues of how, and with what means, to fight terrorism and protect the national interest. This is not a government they trust, nor one whose security and foreign policies they are comfortable with. They think its leading party is sectarian and communal.

As the Tehelka and the coffin scams show, the government cannot be assumed to act responsibly or impartially even in defence matters. Abdicating the duty to oppose the government



THE FLOWERS NEED WATERING: Pervez Musharraf and Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Agra

constructively is bad enough. Failure to hold its feet to the fire on life-and-death issues like war and peace is simply impermissible in a democracy.

There is every reason why the government should be made to desist from military strikes against Pakistan, and from punitive diplomatic measures that could wreck the possibility of contact and dialogue, and make war likelier. The available military options all appear *ineffectual* and carry inordinately high risks. Most of the once-tom-tommed 158 terrorist 'training-camps' have probably disappeared or shifted deep inside Pakistan.

There is little reliable intelligence on their location. They are beyond artillery range and cannot be hit by high-altitude air strikes. Low-altitude strikes entail high casualties. Even 'hot pursuit' — itself legally dubious on land, as distinct from the sea — risks big losses. As do 'pro-active' but 'limited' strikes.

There is no such thing as 'limited war' in the India-Pakistan case any longer. Pakistan is not the Gaza Strip. Strategically, it is relatively evenly matched with India. In today's circumstances, it will surely retaliate. Musharraf, already on the backfoot and under flak from his Right for having 'lost' Afghanistan, has no other choice. There can be assurance that an action-reaction spiral will not escalate into a major, protracted, ruinous war, even a nuclear conflagration.

A major war will almost certainly destroy Pakistan's economy and set India's back by many years — exacerbating in both countries conditions favouring extreme social discontent, disorder, sectarian strife and terrorism.

Only a reckless, strategically illiterate super-optimist will rule out a possible India-Pakistan nuclear breakout. The two

have poorly safeguarded arsenals lacking in command-and-control systems. They are disaster-prone and have poor safety cultures. Missile flight-time between their cities is three to eight minutes.

The US and the Soviet Union came close to nuclear war hundreds of times despite investing nearly \$ 1 trillion in command-and-control. Subcontinental deterrence is at best ramshackle, if not *Rambharose*. No wonder a clear majority of our former generals and admirals, who have commented on the issue, prefer non-military options and negotiations.

This makes eminent sense: There must be a taut, logical, causal connection between action and result (countering terrorism). This cannot be achieved through coercive (gunboat or missile) diplomacy, which breeds resentment and hostility and thus can only encourage, not deter, terrorism. Therefore, it is futile to cite the US and Israeli examples. These are not instances, certainly not yet, of a *successful* fight against terrorism. As argued earlier in these columns, the US was morally, politically and legally wrong to wage war on Afghanistan.

The diplomatic measures that India is taking against Pakistan are extreme and won't encourage responsible, reasonable conduct on Islamabad's part. Cancelling bus and rail services does not hurt Musharraf. It hurts the poor traveller, the small trader, the coolie with relatives across the border. These must be reversed. Downgrading diplomatic missions or stopping overflights bears little proportion or casual connection to what India wants to achieve.

The threat to abrogate the Indus Treaty and starve Pakistan of water is obnoxiously misconceived. The treaty is one of the few successes in a long story of

failures. India could become a candidate for stiff sanctions if as an upstream state it chokes off the flow of water and ruins Pakistan's agriculture. Once abrogated, the treaty will be hard to put together.

In the final analysis, what's crucial in any 'anti-terrorist' strategy or measure is proportion, discrimination, balance and efficacy. One essential difference between a freedom-fighter and terrorist is that the latter kills indiscriminately, equating combatants with non-combatants, and mixing up means and ends. India can easily cross this thin dividing line — as Pakistan has long done in Kashmir. India must desist.

Everyone in South Block knows that Musharraf, even the ISI, would have to be insane to instigate the December 13 assault through the very extremists he is now, at last, fighting. The terrorist-extremists brand Musharraf a 'traitor' and 'failure', and probably killed his interior minister's brother in revenge. This, of course, is no reason why Musharraf should treat Masood Azhar and Hafeez Saeed leniently. But it is also no reason why Musharraf should be pushed to the wall — and towards a military confrontation.

It is not easy to bring terrorists to book in societies riven by social strife, numerous discontents, widespread corruption, and poor law and order. How many terrorists has India successfully brought to trial? What is needed is a sustained programme which involves policy changes, military revamping, the ISI's restructuring, as well as a clampdown on known terrorists. India should cooperate with Musharraf on this, rather than depend on US or European Union *demarchés*.

There is a multilateral forum too, however flawed — the Security Council. This has passed a resolution that asks all States to act against terrorists, on pain of sanctions. India must invoke Resolution 1373 to ask Pakistan to take verifiable anti-terrorist action.

An additional reason why India must return to peaceful diplomacy — and reconciliation with Pakistan — is Kashmir. The Taliban's defeat and discrediting of many forms of militancy has created an unprecedented political opening in Kashmir. Some of India's sharpest critics may today be willing to contest elections. But that means saying no to war. The BJP alone has a stake in war, which is related to its aggressive, belligerent, communal nationalism. Its anti-Pakistan tilt has been particularly evidence since September 11.

The widespread conjecture that the BJP wants war to avert a total rout in Uttar Pradesh stands confirmed after a December 20 meeting at Vajpayee's residence. Nothing could be more disgustingly cynical than such Machiavellian calculation to exploit the current climate against terrorism. As citizens, we must all reject it with the contempt it deserves.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

28 DEC 2001

Pak. 'cosmetic steps' a mockery: Jaswant Singh

By Atul Aneja and Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, DEC. 26. India today dismissed the "cosmetic" steps by Pakistan against organisations suspected of masterminding the December 13 terrorist attack on Parliament, but refrained from mounting more diplomatic pressure on Islamabad.

Addressing the media after a 75-minute meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, said steps such as the "cosmetic seizure of assets make a mockery of the gravity of the situation," referring to Pakistan's decision to block the finances of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which, along with the Jaish-e-Mohammad, is the prime suspect behind the attack. Mr. Singh also rejected the Lashkar decision, apparently taken under Pakistani pressure, to relocate its offices to Jammu and Kashmir.

While the CCS had discussed all security-related aspects of the at-

tack, it would meet again tomorrow as the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, was not present today. Mr. Fernandes was stranded in Ladakh due to bad weather, Mr. Singh said.

The Government sources here, however, say the CCS' decision to convene again is significant. It is an indication that the Government does not wish to rush into exhausting all its options to achieve its objectives.

On the positioning of Pakistani missiles close to the border, Mr. Singh said India was fully aware of Islamabad's preparations.

India, on its part, had catered to all the contingencies and would respond adequately to the changing military posture across the border. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, would attend the SAARC summit early next month, he said.

Army Day parade cancelled

In a related development, the Government decided to cancel

the annual Army Day parade as the Army was inclined to deploy all available personnel and equipment for operational requirements rather than get tied down in ceremonials.

The decision was taken after three days of deliberations. As many as 5000 personnel participate in the parade every year on January 15.

Since the same formations also take part in the Republic Day parade, the logical conclusion is that January 26 will witness a truncated turnout if tensions along the western border persist.

The Defence Ministry officials were tight-lipped about plans for the Republic Day but said a skeletal formation would not be a problem.

However, celebrations such as tributes at the Amar Jawan Jyoti in India Gate and the evening reception hosted by the Chief of Army Staff for dignitaries on January 15 are on.

INDIA

27 DEC 2001

Turning on the heat

How to respond to Pakistan sponsored terror

Despite Musharraf's labelling the Indian recall of Vijay Nambiar, its envoy in Pakistan, as "arrogant", India's turning on the heat is beginning to yield results. Pakistan has frozen the assets of the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba, its chief Hafiz Muhammed Sayeed has resigned, Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar has been detained. The change of tone can be attributed to Western pressure — the US would want to head off a military confrontation at this point of time, and along with the UK has issued a demarche to Pakistan that it must ban the LeT and the Jaish. The moves, of course, are largely symbolic — the LeT has let it be known that its money is held in the name of individuals rather than the organisation, they have had plenty of notice to rearrange their affairs and their locations. But Musharraf has refrained from even symbolic moves in the past — these moves will now force *jehadi* groups to adopt a lower profile and maintain a degree of distance from the official establishment which includes the ISI. The assassination of the brother of Pakistani interior minister Moinuddin Haider, a day after he called fundamentalist agitators "illiterate mullahs", is a warning to the Pakistani establishment, which suggests they should take them on not in India's interests but their own.

The point, however, is whether it will do so; Musharraf is already weak after his "betrayal" of the Taliban and the pan-Islamists are his principal tools in Kashmir, a cause dear to the Pakistani establishment which it will take much more pressure to wean them away from. The current stalemate, therefore, is likely to continue with Indo-Pak relations in deep freeze for quite some time yet. Since India hardly benefits from a situation where it makes unilateral moves such as granting Most Favoured Nation status, people-to-people contacts or the Lahore bus ride, which are reciprocated by nurturing terror groups mounting outrages like the December 13 attack on Parliament or the October 1 assault on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, it stands little to lose by signaling to Pakistan it's no longer business as usual.

Now that a certain momentum has been generated by India's actions which include recalling its envoy and cutting other links, it needs to ratchet up the pressure by a series of carefully calibrated steps, initially economic and diplomatic with the military as the last option. It could start by reducing the size of the Pakistani diplomatic mission in India whose principal bad habit appears to be espionage, as the arrest of Ajay Kumar, a Parliament clerk selling confidential documents to a Pakistani mission operative, indicates. From there we could move on to withdrawing Pakistan's MFN status, shutting Indian airspace to Pakistani airliners which would light a little fuse under the PIA's aviation oil bills, walk out of the Indus water-sharing treaty on the ground that Pakistan is equally indifferent to the Simla and Lahore accords. If what the US did to Afghanistan under the Taliban seems a risky parallel to some, because there is less military disparity between India and Pakistan, apart from the nuclear factor, we could at least begin by doing to Pakistan what the US does to Cuba — there is much to be said for using India's position as a larger market as a means of leverage. We could, for instance, refuse to do business with companies, which invest in Pakistan. Osama bin Laden was right about one thing: the world does not back a lame horse. Only if India clearly labels Pakistan as a state which exports terror and treats it as such, can we expect the rest of the world to follow suit. And Pakistan's economy is in a parlous state — this is the place to hit.

THE STATESMAN

27 DEC 2001

'Pak. opposed to war with India'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 26. In an apparent bid to defuse the escalating tension on the Indo-Pakistan border, thanks to the military build-up and the firing on both sides, Pakistan today said it was "strongly opposed" to war with India.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Ahmed Khan, said here that Islamabad was for resolving all disputes, including Kashmir, through peaceful means, and for a dialogue anytime, at any level and place.

"We have exercised restraint from the very beginning. We have said that we want all differences to be resolved through negotiations. We are opposed to war. Despite provocation, we have not taken any action that might escalate tensions."

On the Indian demand for action against the militant outfits — Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad — accused of involvement in the December 13 attack on Parliament, Mr. Khan said if New Delhi provided evidence on the involvement of any individual or organisation based in Pakistan, the Musharraf Government would act.

Pakistan had always denounced terrorism and had condemned the attack on Parliament. "We cooperated with the international coalition in its operation against terrorism. We also told India that if it provided proof against individuals or organisations, we would take action against them," Mr. Khan said and maintained that there had been no troop build-up by Pakistan on the border. "We have taken only precautionary measures in reply to India's provocative approach."

Observers here believe that the decision to proceed against the Jaish chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, had more to do with the pressure from the United States, and domestic considerations, rather than with the Indian demand for action against the militant outfits. Mr. Hamid Mir, editor, *Ausaf*, said the Musharraf Government would not have detained the maulana again on Tuesday but for the adverse publicity generated by his release on Sunday. Islamabad, in any case, had been hinting at the possibility

30 JeM men held

BAHAWALPUR, DEC. 26. Thirty militants of the Jaish-e-Mohammed were arrested today at their offices. Its founder, Maulana Masood Azhar, who was taken into custody on Tuesday in the eastern Punjab province, is being held at an undisclosed location. "Azhar is in the custody of security agencies," the Pakistan Government spokesman, Gen. Rashid Qureshi, said. Police are stationed outside the Jaish offices. — AP

of moving against the Jaish for its alleged involvement in incidents of sectarian violence. And, Maulana Azhar, a hardliner among the 'jehadi' groups in Pakistan, had been writing extremely critical articles against the Musharraf Government in Jaish publications in the recent weeks.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan High Commissioner in London, Mr. Abdul Qadir Jaffer, speaking to the BBC, said relations between India and Pakistan were at the lowest ebb. Despite Pakistan freezing Lashkar's assets, India was not satisfied, he said.

THE HINDU

Kashmir catches Benazir on wrong side of border

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Nov. 26: Benazir Bhutto's attempt to relaunch her political career stumbled on a crucial point today after the former Pakistan Prime Minister described "Azad Kashmir" as Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

For the uninitiated, it may be just semantics. But for any Pakistan-watcher, it is a faux pas.

Successive regimes in Pakistan have described this part of the troubled state under their control as "Azad Kashmir". It is India which describes it as "Pakistan-occupied Kashmir" and Benazir, who is hoping to return to her country soon and fight the elections, slipped on an issue which strengthens India's point of view.

Though she is on a private visit, Benazir's interactions with the Indian leadership and the media are being closely watched by the military rulers in Islamabad.

The leader-in-exile, who is projecting herself as the messiah of peace and voice of moderation, has been stressing that a military dictatorship should not be foisted on Pakistan by outsiders only for geo-strategic reasons. Her comments are aimed both at the Pervez Musharraf regime and the West, which has now turned out to be the military ruler's best backers. So her Kashmir slip becomes all the more significant as it could be used to question her credibility.

Benazir attended a crowded news conference at Taj Mahal Hotel after addressing a CII-sponsored seminar on "Social development and women's empowerment". Dressed in a flaming red jacket and her trademark white dupatta covering her head partially, the leader of the Pakistan People's Party walked into the news conference flanked by Sanjiv Goenka and Tarun Das — two senior-most CII functionaries.

After a brief opening statement that stressed on democracy and the need to break the "invisi-



Former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto at a press conference in New Delhi. (AFP)

ble Berlin wall" between India and Pakistan, Benazir faced the media. She spoke about the origin of the Taliban, the price she had to pay in Pakistan for her democratic values and, of course, Kashmir and India-Pakistan relations.

Benazir evaded a question on whether the Line of Control (LoC) could be converted into an international border, saying: "Our recollections and perceptions differ on the issue." The hint was clear: she was not going to endorse what Indian leaders often claimed had been agreed to by her father, Zul-

fiqar Ali Bhutto, during the Simla Agreement of 1972 — a document which she feels should be the guiding principle in normalising bilateral relations.

However, she said if the two sides could not resolve their dispute, they should develop a mechanism for "conflict management". She cited the mechanism set in place by India and China to settle their border dispute and said it was an ideal model.

Benazir referred to the UN resolution on Kashmir, saying the right of self-determination of the

Kashmiris should be kept in mind while solving the dispute. But she made it clear that as this was one of the most contentious issues where the "gap was the widest" in perceptions of the two sides, attempts should be made to resolve issues like trade and people-to-people contact as differences on these issues were not as wide.

The former Prime Minister lauded Indians for choosing democracy and said it was high time that in Pakistan, too, the intelligentsia came out strongly in favour of democracy.

THE TELEGRAPH

27 NOV 2007

(Continued from page 1)

KASHMIR:

dictatorship next door, which has refused consular access to the Indian media wishing to cover the events in Afghanistan, but also against the 'global alliance', by showing up a side of Pakistani politics they have chosen to ignore - democratic aspirations.

The kind of high-profile access the former Pakistani PM has packed into her visit, her first in a decade, would be the envy of many a ruling head of government. She has been meeting every luminary possible in New Delhi, from a 30-minute one-on-one with Mr AB Vajpayee, high tea with Mrs Sonia Gandhi, lunch with Mr LK Advani, and a pre-lunch meet with Mr Brajesh Mishra. She is scheduled to meet Mr Jaswant Singh before she leaves the country on Wednesday.

The words she has used have been music to the establishment's ears, largely vindicating the positions India has taken on various issues, primarily the need for 'conflict management', as she called it. The need to take small steps ahead, including improving trade relations and allowing more border checkpoints, as part of a composite relationship, and let the "differences of perception" on J&K stay on the back burner.

This is something India has maintained all along. The bilateral dialogue should not be limited to

only J&K, but "we owe it to our people to improve relations." And she concurred with the

confidence-building measures suggested by India, all the while taking gentle digs at the illegitimacy of the military dictatorship in Pakistan. Today she welcomed India's initiative to restart the dialogue process with Pakistan, saying her Pakistan People's Party wanted both nations to continue to engage in this process.

"I am glad that India has included Kashmir in the agenda. There is a gulf between our countries on the issue. But we (the PPP) have a vision for the new century," Mrs Bhutto told a press conference. She tried to take credit for maintaining bilateral relations during her tenure in the spirit of the Shimla Agreement.

"I had ensured that no outsider would interfere in the Kashmir affair. For example, the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba which has links with the Al-Qaida, that is largely not Kashmiri, were kept out." "There were no hot pursuits, no border violations and no Kargil-type of a move during my tenure. The number of cross-border firings between our troops was also minimal," she said. And yes, she hoped India would use its 'good offices' to inform the USA of the need to restore democracy to Pakistan, and not use the current Afghan crisis to legitimise the tenure of the military dictatorship.

THE STATESMAN

27 NOV 2002

Indian polity split over Kashmir: Musharraf

27/11 5:11
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & PTI

ISLAMABAD/ NEW DELHI, Nov. 26. — President Pervez Musharraf said tonight there was “a split” in the Indian polity over Kashmir and asked India to modify its stand over the issue to reach a negotiated settlement.

Referring to Indian leaders' view that Kashmir is at the core of Indian nationhood, General Pervez said: “It is an extremist view. Indian leaders have to modify their stand. Kashmir is recognised as a dispute by the USA and all over world.”

Gen. Musharraf did not lose the opportunity to warn that if India indulged in adventurism, “we will teach them a lesson.”

In an interview to Pakistan

■ Editorial: Opportunities widen! page 6

Television, Gen Musharraf tonight described as “terrorist act” the killing of civilians in bomb blasts in J&K and asked Pakistani extremists not to get involved in foreign countries.

The Pakistan defence spokesman, Maj Gen Rashid Qureshi, today said Islamabad would seek help from its allies if need arose to deal with the alleged state terrorism in Kashmir and violations of the Line of Control.

Benazir visit: For the Indian government, however, Mrs Benazir Bhutto's ‘private’ visit has been a distinct chance to score brownie points. Not merely against the military

■ See KASHMIR: page 8

THE STATESMAN

2 / NOV 2001

OPPORTUNITIES WIDEN!

Benazir testing waters with a visit

THE discovery of over 10,000 foreigners mostly Pakistanis but including Arabs and Chechens, fighting alongside the Taliban has had an unsettling effect on the already complicated situation in Afghanistan. The American Defence Secretary's blunt statement that he could not be expected to agree to let these mercenaries go only to continue their activities some place else had Musharraf scurrying to London, in military uniform, to see Jack Straw, the British Foreign Secretary to plead for help. Now comes news that Pakistani aircraft have been airlifting about 2,000 of their troops out of Afghanistan to the sanctuary for terrorists, called Pakistan. How did this come about and how come Rumsfeld allowed what he had just said he could not be expected to do. It goes without saying that Pakistani planes could not have landed in Afghanistan without American approval. One explanation that fits the facts, as we know them, is that Rumsfeld and the Americans have extracted an undertaking from Musharraf that the party is over and he cannot play the terrorist game in Kashmir or anywhere else any longer, Islam or no Islam and that he must close down the training camps and stop providing sanctuary, training, and funding for terrorists. Of course if America can force Musharraf to isolate his talibanised officers and remove them from command posts, use his airfields at will, get him to control opposition on the streets of his cities, all at a cost of two billion dollars, they could force him to behave in future if they choose. After all what choice does he have? Musharraf has placed himself at America's mercy for a mess of pottage and the status of a client state does not leave much room for manoeuvre.

America can extract any promise it wants from Musharraf; it is another matter altogether to make him keep his word. The retired ranking army officers returning from a spurious spell of duty in Afghanistan and in disgrace will become sullen and resentful as soon as they have overcome their relief at being alive. Reports speak of their bringing with them huge quantities of drugs; these should keep them in the comfort to which they have been accustomed in the common mud-bath of fundamentalism. America should go into this hurriedly agreed airlift and its repercussions in some detail. The drugs, for one thing, are bound to land up in the most attractive market for them, the United States. These restless souls will then seek fresh fields and pastures new for their talents, which Rumsfeld wanted bottled up. Who uncorked the bottle; who conned Bush into saying yes to Blair simply because, counsel for Musharraf is his best friend. Was Rumsfeld overruled? And how will much larger quantities of drugs on American streets play with Congress and American public opinion.

Benazir Bhutto is visiting. She has met Vajpayee and she has not come to test whether winter has set in, in Delhi! She is an accomplished performer; much more skilled than the singly focussed Musharraf. She damned Musharraf with faint praise — pointing out that whatever he does, he lacks a popular mandate. She is no pushover and without encouraging her too much and raising her expectations, it should be possible to do business with her. It will be worth keeping in touch with her much more than with Musharraf; she obviously feels that with the fiasco of trying to ride both the American and Taliban horses at the same time and coming a cropper, Musharraf is on the decline and she has a chance. Whether we have a chance with her depends on the skills we display.

THE STATESMAN

27 NOV 2001

Other issues too are important: Benazir

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, NOV. 26. The visiting Pakistani leader, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, today sharply distanced herself from Islamabad's approach to peace talks with India while holding on to her nation's basic position on the Kashmir dispute.

Addressing a crowded press conference here, Ms. Bhutto displayed all the skills inherited from her charismatic father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in finessing the impossible political contradictions of Indo-Pak relations.

Walking on the egg-shells of the Indo-Pak dispute over Jammu and Kashmir without breaking them, Ms. Bhutto struck just the right tone that could endear her to India without alienating the people of Pakistan.

Highlighting the themes of peace and democracy in the subcontinent, Ms. Bhutto said India and the U.S. as the world's largest and most powerful democracies had "a role in facilitating" the return of civilian rule in Pakistan.

Proclaiming her desire to bring down "the invisible Berlin Wall between our countries", she underlined the huge divergence be-



tween her and the President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, on peace talks with India. Unlike Gen. Musharraf, who wants the bilateral talks to focus only on Kashmir, Ms. Bhutto today said "other issues should not be ignored".

She suggested that the Sino-Indian relations "could be a political model" for the Indo-Pak relations. China and India, despite a difficult dispute over the boundary, had normal bilateral relations.

In another important departure from Pakistan's official position on Kashmir, Ms. Bhutto said, "We should focus on conflict management if we cannot find a solution" to the Kashmir dispute.

In an implied criticism of Gen. Musharraf's Kashmir policy, she declared that she had "not allowed" the "indigenous political movement" in Kashmir to be hijacked by the likes of Lashkar-e-Taiba.

In distancing herself from Pakistan's current negotiating strategy on Kashmir and pointing to a more viable path to peace in the subcontinent, Ms. Bhutto was by no means giving up Pakistan's basic position on Kashmir.

Stressing the "very strong case" that Pakistan has on Kashmir, Ms. Bhutto referred to her party's support to the "right to self-determination" for the Kashmiri people and the U.N. resolutions.

She also differed with the Indian view that there was an undeclared understanding between her father and Indira Gandhi in 1972 to convert the Line of Control as the border between India and Pakistan in Kashmir.

The burden of her argument is

that it is possible for India and Pakistan to move forward while trying to "reconcile the differences" over Kashmir. "We do not have to necessarily emphasise the end of the process between India and Pakistan, but look at the beginning of one," she added.

Facing sceptical questions on her current flexibility on the Indo-Pak relations and her none-too-impressive track record of managing them, Ms. Bhutto was as candid as a political leader could get. She pointed to the attempts in her first term (1988-90) where she sought to improve relations with India and her "regret at having missed the opportunity" in the second during 1993-96. She expressed the hope that the people of Pakistan would "give her a third term" to work for a normalisation of Indo-Pak relations.

But her immediate objective is returning to Pakistan without the fear of political and judicial harassment from the military regime. The sympathy and moral support she got from the Indian leadership, Ms. Bhutto hopes, would boost her international campaign for the restoration of civilian rule in Pakistan.

THE HINDU

21 NOV 2004

More, General, more

How seriously can we take Musharraf's crackdown?

AS political forecasters announce the possibility of war clouds, some in the Pakistani establishment would like to point to an already visible silver lining. Maulana Masood Azhar, fomentor of Deobandi demonstrations on Pakistani streets and plotter of suicide strikes on citadels of Indian democracy, has been detained by Pakistani police. The chief of the Lashkar-e-Toiba, which along with Azhar's Jaish-e-Mohammad is involved in most of the terrorist strikes in Jammu and Kashmir of late, has been forced to resign; Islamabad has also frozen the LeT's assets. And President Pervez Musharraf himself on Tuesday held forth on the deleterious effects of rampant Islamic fundamentalism for Pakistan's progress. Sitting as he does atop a society being torn apart by Islamist groups — groups that spilled out on to the streets after he committed Pakistan to aiding the American war effort in Afghanistan — Musharraf's cheerleaders would no doubt point to all this as a grand conciliatory effort.

Unfortunately, it would be naive to view actions taken by the Musharraf regime against terrorist groups post-December 13 as anything more than an eyewash. It is not just the doubtful efficacy of the arrest — while a studied silence is maintained over New Delhi's request that Azhar be handed over — it is Musharraf's inability to convey sincerity that is disturbing. In the absence of any expression of resolve to chasten terrorist groups towards caution, indeed to even gesture a rethink on its military's active support to cross-border terrorism, Islamabad's latest round of "crackdowns" can only be viewed cynically. The action against

Azhar and the Lashkar can only be viewed as a convenient juxtaposition. A chirpy signal to the international community that a flurry of demarches have been heeded, while rounding up a few firebrands like Masood Azhar who have included the Musharraf regime in their long list of hate objects. In not one of Islamabad's reactions to December 13 can be read even the faintest of clues that it is striving to stem the export of cross-border terrorism. The Lashkar, in a dexterous dance that underlines the challenges posed by modern-day terrorism, has changed its name. It has replaced its chief with a footsoldier from Poonch, and declared that it will concentrate its activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Musharraf's speech on Mohammad Ali Jinnah's birth anniversary too involved far too many kind-hearted leaps of the imagination to warrant any optimism that Pakistan's jihadi diaspora would be reined in. What a pity. He spoke of the poor image Pakistan is acquiring, of how it is being identified with illiteracy, obscurantism and militancy. If he had only stayed with the thought, if he had only taken it to its logical conclusion and assessed the untenable toll terrorism is taking on Pakistan, a glimmer of hope could have been sighted. Apprehensive citizens both sides of the border are watching their armies pile up troops and weaponry. Yet it could take just one decent gesture from the military junta in Pakistan to cool tempers, to pull back from the brink. But it must be more substantive than yet another short stint in detention for Azhar. And it had better be fast.

INDIAN EXPRESS

2001 06 21

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2001

WORKING FOR PEACE

THE SHRILL AND threatening campaign spear-headed by the Vajpayee administration which suggests an outbreak of war with Pakistan must end. Otherwise India cannot hope to win the real battle against the terrorist organisations which Pakistan has so far been hospitable to. With Pakistan's President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, now beginning a crackdown against the two terrorist groups that India has blamed for the recent attack on its parliamentary democracy, New Delhi must pursue its enlightened interest and allow him the political and diplomatic space and time to try and succeed. From India's standpoint, it is indeed a welcome sign in these new circumstances that Gen. Musharraf has urged his compatriots to act in accordance with Jinnah's vision of religious tolerance as a salient attribute of Pakistan's statehood. This certainly is an index of Gen. Musharraf's political impulse to wean Pakistan away from the "jehadi" agenda of the terrorists. In his latest speech to the people of Pakistan, he has asked them to adhere to "true Islam". Seen in the totality of this context, too much must not be read into Gen. Musharraf's latest reminder about Jinnah's exhortation to India to shed its "superiority complex". Moreover, neither India nor Pakistan can afford the reckless luxury of allowing emotions to get the better of sage counsel. It is not an arithmetical question of India's superiority in conventional firepower which in any case should be seen only in the sobering context of the transparent nuclear deterrence that New Delhi and Islamabad possess. What really is at stake is the long-term future of over one billion people. A forward-looking approach is the only imaginative and sensitive way of protecting the future of the ordinary people of both India and Pakistan.

At one level, Gen. Musharraf may have harped on how essential it was for him to see some solid "evidence" implicating the Lashkar-

e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad in the aborted yet brutal attack on India's Parliament House before he could seek to disable them. Yet, the reality is that he has begun to move against these groups either on his own volition or in the additional context of suggestions from the U.S., his ally. In a sense, Gen. Musharraf's U.S. connection as regards the war against the Taliban-Osama axis has not been without a strategic cost to Pakistan itself. In fact, an elite section of Pakistan's military forces is now reported to be patrolling its border with Afghanistan so as to advance the cause of the U.S.-led anti-Osama 'campaign'. Of utter disingenuity, therefore, is the spectacle of some Indian military strategists indicating that New Delhi is making the most of this Pakistani predicament. While New Delhi makes no secret of its own desire to lean heavily on the U.S. to pressure Pakistan, the planners and apologists of the Vajpayee administration appear oblivious to the incongruity of suggesting that India exploit the apparent mismatch between its own military preparedness and that of Pakistan at this dangerous juncture. *Jwd - PAK*

By every reckoning, the political-diplomatic or the military-economic parameters, it is in India's self-interest to explore ways of resolving the present crisis without allowing an adventurist outlook or even a siege mentality to dictate the policy options needed to counter the terrorist threat from outside. As a first step, the Vajpayee administration must fully jettison its historical baggage of backward-looking perceptions about Pakistan, its genesis and evolution. Only then can New Delhi capture the clarity and creativity required to address the real issue, terrorism. The sooner the Vajpayee administration recognises that neither Islamabad nor New Delhi can realistically force a decisive military victory at this time, the better it will be for India's future that must not be trifled with.

THE HINDU

27 DEC 2001

13 Pak troops die as border battle rages

HT Correspondent
Jammu, December 25

INDIAN GUNS boomed with awesome ferocity on the western frontier, killing at least 13 Pakistani soldiers today and destroying 18 of their bunkers in the Samba and Hira Nagar sectors along the International Border. The State Government put itself on a high alert.

The near-wartime escalation forced people living on the borders to flee their homes. The administration had already shifted villagers from Chak Fakira, Glar and Suchetpur Kullian to safer places in the Samba sector. Two more villages — Mangoo Chak and Dullian in the Hira Nagar belt — were cleared today and their 1,000 odd residents taken to Londi, a place close to the Jammu-Pathankote highway. All this while, Indian and Pakistani troops shelled each other's positions, with the intensity of exchange described as unprecedented on the International border. Over the past 24 hours, Pakistan also deployed its medium-range ballistic missiles along the LoC.

Defence sources told *Hindustan Times* that at least 13 Pakistani soldiers had been killed and many more wounded in the bunkers "destroyed by our boys". "Our troops were targeting Pakistani positions from where they were firing at us," a source said.

There was no civilian population on the Pakistani side of the border. Pakistan had evacuated all its villages along the border about a fortnight before it started moving its troops and war equipment to its eastern frontiers. The Indians moved in only in response to the Pakistani build-up.

Tension ran high last night, when Pakistan opened a new front and began shelling Indian outposts and civilian areas in the Gallard area of Jammu's Samba sub-sector. Three Indian jawans were wounded in Pakistani mortar fire in the Poonch sector.

Three other Indian soldiers, two of them identified as Ghanyanyasham and Romesh Kumar of the JAK rifles, were killed in the past 24 hours and two villagers, Surinder Kumar and Rano Devi, were critically wounded in Pakistani shelling, official sources said.

The Pakistanis also targeted an Army-BSF joint patrol, killing two jawans and leaving a woman critically wounded in the Suchetgarh area of the Jammu-Poonch sector.

Sources said a woman had been killed and five others were injured in Pakistani mortar firing in the same sector late last night. The woman was hospitalised.

Three BSF jawans were killed

and three critically wounded when Pakistani Rangers ambushed a BSF Patrol in the Gallard area of Jammu's Samba sector on Sunday.

At Gallard, two houses were destroyed, and the village was left completely deserted by yesterday's Pakistani shelling.

Villagers from Jasuchak, Assempur, Kandriadn and Fatwal in the Ramgarh sub-sector along the International Border had been shifted to safety, sources said.

People had migrated from Suchetgarh, Abdullian, Sai, Fateh Chak, Sikri, Unjal, Kotri-an, Sorhi Gallard, Chak Faquira and Benglard areas along the International Border yesterday, the sources said.

Some of the evacuees were given temporary shelter in school buildings at Samba.

The administration said nearly 3,200 people had moved or had been taken to safety till this morning.

"The migration is unabated from various areas along the International Border and if the situation persists, the entire belt will be evacuated," a source said.

Chief Secretary Ashok Jaitly today ordered all field officers to be in their headquarters and provide assistance to people displaced by the Pakistani firing.

'OSAMA DIED OF LUNG DISEASE IN EARLY DECEMBER'

OSAMA BIN Laden died of a lung disease in the Tora Bora mountains earlier this month, a Pakistani daily reported on Tuesday quoting an unnamed Taliban commander. The commander, who claimed to have attended the Saudi exile's low-key funeral, said Osama had succumbed to the disease in the absence of medical attention, *The Pakistan Observer* reported. Asked whether he could point out the exact burial location, the Taliban commander said: "I am sure that like other places in Tora Bora that particular place too must have vanished," referring to the impact of the US bombing. Bin Laden's burial was attended by his close aides including his most trusted bodyguards, family members and some "Taliban friends". As the body was lowered into the grave, his bodyguards fired in the air as a mark of respect. "The coalition troops are engaged in a mad hunt but they will never be able to fulfil their goal of getting Osama alive or dead," the report quoted the commander as saying. He said bin Laden expressed no remorse before his death for choosing the path of terrorism. The Saudi dissident was proud that he succeeded in his mission to create awareness among Muslims against "hegemonistic designs" against Islam. PTI

26 DEC 2001

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

9/12
PK

'Pak. compelling India to look at alternative means'

HD-11
26/12

By Our Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI, DEC. 25. Unless Pakistan does something concrete to render terrorist outfits "ineffective," it would be compelling India to "reconsider" the situation and look at "alternative" means, the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Vijay K. Nambiar, who returned here this evening, said.

On Pakistan's decision to freeze the assets of the militant outfit, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Mr. Nambiar said the move did not have the credibility India wanted. In a reference to how some organisations, such as the Markaz-ud-Dawal-Ishard, parent body of the Lashkar, had changed their names, he said, "mere changing of names won't do."

Mr. Nambiar returned following the Government's decision on Friday to recall the envoy from Pakistan. The decision, Mr. Nambiar said, was meant to signal the "seriousness" of the situation to Pakistan. "And if Pakistan does not respond to the move with adequate seriousness, we will have to reconsider the present situation and look at alternative means."

Islamabad's seriousness in cracking down on the terrorist groups would be judged on the basis of whether the steps taken by it matched India's requirements. "We believe that specific steps should be taken against these organisations. If these groups continue to function by just changing their names, no purpose would be served."

On the repeated demands by Pakistan to furnish evidence of its involvement in the December 13 attack on Parliament, Mr. Nambiar said they had been adequately addressed through what had come out in the media. "We have also shared the evidence with other countries. I don't know what more we can do in this regard."

On the general reaction to the military build-up along the International Border and the Line of Control, Mr. Nambiar said there was "public apprehension" in Pakistan over this development, but the Pakistani press was not advocating any military conflict.

PTI reports:

Before leaving Pakistan, Mr. Nambiar called on the Pakistan Foreign Secretary, Mr. Inamul Haq, to bid goodbye. Mr. Haq accompanied him to the airport to see him off.

Mr. Nambiar was also seen off at the airport by Indian diplomats and their families. Mr. Nambiar's wife, Ms. Malini Nambiar, is expected to leave in the coming days.

THE HINDU
26 DEC 2001

INDIA CLOSELY MONITORING TROOP MOVEMENT

Pakistan moves missiles closer to border

By Atul Aneja and Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, DEC. 25. Pakistan has moved forward its Hatf-1 and Hatf-2 missiles as part of its military build-up along the Indo-Pak border. Government sources said the exact field locations of these missiles was yet to be determined. However, it is clear that Pakistan, as of now, is not planning to mount nuclear warheads on them.

The Hatf-1 missile has an estimated range of 60 to 100 km while the Hatf-2 has a reach of around 280 km if tipped with a 500 kg warhead. The range can be extended to 450 km if a 300 kg warhead is used.

By moving the missiles, Pakistan appears to be discouraging India from carrying out a forward thrust, analysts here said. Pakistan also had the option of deploying the Chinese M-11 missiles as well as Nodong series, of North Korean origin, if such a need arises.

Sources pointed out that the Pakistani build-up had been hampered by the Afghan war. The Peshawar-based 11 Corps is "locked up" along the Afghan border to nab Al-Qaeda activists fleeing Afghanistan. The United States, which is playing the lead role in the Afghan campaign, is keen that the 11 Corps patrols the turbulent Afghan-Pakistan border.

Unless the 11 Corps is "freed", Pakistan will find it difficult to deploy its Army Reserve South (ARS), one of its key strike Corps,

that will be critical for any India-centric operations. The ARS, in order to move towards the Indian border, will necessarily need back-up from the 11 Corps to face an Indian tank assault that will certainly follow.

In the absence of back-up, the ARS is now deployed along the west bank of the Indus, away from India's border. From this position, it does not threaten India.

Indian defence planners are, therefore, closely monitoring the movement of both the 11 Corps as well as the ARS. If the ARS has to attack India, it will have to cross the Indus. The location from

Putin, Vajpayee discuss crisis : Page 11

LoT giving 'struggle' Kashmir colour: Page 12

where it crosses is crucial as it will give away Pakistan's intentions — if it wants to attack the Rann of Kutch area or Rajasthan or Punjab.

If Pakistan wants to attack the Rann, it is likely to cross the Indus in the south, which is closer to Gujarat. On the contrary, it will cross the Indus more to the north if it chooses Rajasthan or Punjab. India will unleash its war plans depending on this movement.

At present, Pakistan's 70,000-strong Army Reserve North (ARN), which is larger than the ARS, has been deployed along the corridor between the Jhelum and the Chenab, two key tributaries of

the Indus. It is now facing the Akhnoor-Chhamb sector, north of Jammu.

Previous wars with Pakistan have exposed the vulnerability of this sector. However, India, unlike in the previous occasions, may have already taken counter-measures by moving its strike elements closer to this area.

PTI reports:

Two additional divisions of Pakistani troops had been reportedly deployed in areas opposite the Kargil-Siachen sector, as also snow and high-altitude warfare commandos of the Gilgit Scouts and the Northern Light Infantry in areas opposite Thang, Turtuk, Chorbatla and Drass.

'Charge baseless'

The Army tonight rejected Pakistan's charge that Indian troops were escalating tension along the Line of Control (LoC), saying Islamabad was waging a propaganda war against India.

The Army authorities, in a statement in Jammu, said, "We reject as totally baseless the Pakistan charge that our forces are raising tension along the LoC." On Monday, Pakistan blamed the Indian Army for raising tensions along the LoC in the Jammu-Poonch sector.

13 Pak. soldiers killed

JAMMU, DEC. 25. Thirteen Pakistani soldiers were killed today and 18 of their bunkers destroyed in retaliatory strikes by Indian troops

along the Line of Control in Jammu-Poonch sector, defence sources said here. The situation along the International Border and LoC was tense, they said.

For the fourth consecutive day, the Pakistani troops shelled Indian positions in Noushera, Laam, Bhawani, Bhimbergali, Balakote, Krishnagati, Gambhir, Poonch and Mendhar, forcing India to retaliate.

A truck and 11 houses were damaged and an ex-serviceman was critically wounded on the Indian side. The houses went up in flames in village Gallard along the IB, and a woman was injured in the shelling. The Indian troops retaliated effectively with heavy mortar shelling.

Kerni in Poonch sector witnessed intense exchange of fire and a petrol depot was blown up on the other side of the border.

2 jawans killed

Pakistani troops continued firing along the IB and targeted a party of the Border Security Force and the Army — patrolling the zero line in Suchetgarh village in the R.S. Pura area of the Jammu sector — last night, killing two jawans and critically injuring a woman. This is the second incident along the IB in which the Pakistani troops have ambushed Indian security forces in the last few days. Three BSF jawans were killed and three critically wounded in indiscriminate firing during an ambush at Gallard area of Samba belt in Jammu sector on Sunday. — PTI

THE HINDU

26 DEC 2001

LoC, stock and barrel: Indo-Pak tension rises

War being thrust on India by Islamabad, says PM

Times News Network & Agencies
NEW DELHI: Tension between India and Pakistan mounted on Tuesday with Pakistan deploying medium-range ballistic missile batteries along the Line of Control (LoC) and moving the 21 Strike Corps closer to the border, even as two BSF jawans were killed and a woman seriously injured in Pak shelling on the border.

Thirteen Pakistani soldiers were killed and 18 of their bunkers destroyed in retaliatory strikes by Indian troops along the LoC in the Jammu-Poonch sector. For the fourth consecutive day on Tuesday, Pakistani soldiers shelled Indian positions in Noushera, Laam, Bhawani, Kerni, Bhimbergali, Balakote, Krishnagati, Gambhir, Poonch and Mendhar, forcing India to retaliate.

This also provoked Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to accuse Pakistan of imposing war on the country. "We do not want war but it is being thrust on us. We will have to face it," Mr Vajpayee told

a Bharatiya Janta Yuva Morcha (BJYM) rally at his residence on his 78th birthday. "This time the fight should be such that it should be the last on the issue of terrorism," he said.

Mr Vajpayee's use of strong language almost undid the temperate note home minister L.K. Advani had struck earlier in the morning when he said that the "government and people of India do not want war" and if world opinion rallied around India, Pakistan could be forced to stop using "terrorism as an instrument of state policy".

Conscious that the government's strategy of bringing international pressure to bear on Pakistan was already paying dividends, defence officials said that the "precautionary" deployment

of troops and weapons near the border should not be taken to mean that war was imminent.

On being asked whether the Indian and Pakistani directors general of military operations were in touch on the hotline, a defence official said, "As per practice, the two DGMOs normally talk every Tuesday. But because of Id and Christmas, they have not talked of late. The hotline is very much there and will be used if the need arises."

Mr Vajpayee said his govern-

ment, Mr Vajpayee said, "Their concern is natural." Mr Vajpayee disclosed that he had called Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday night and discussed the evolving situation in the region.

Indian high commissioner Vijay K. Nambiar, who returned here on Tuesday following his recall from Pakistan, said, "New Delhi will have to look for alternate means if Islamabad does not demonstrate seriousness in taking action against terrorists operating from

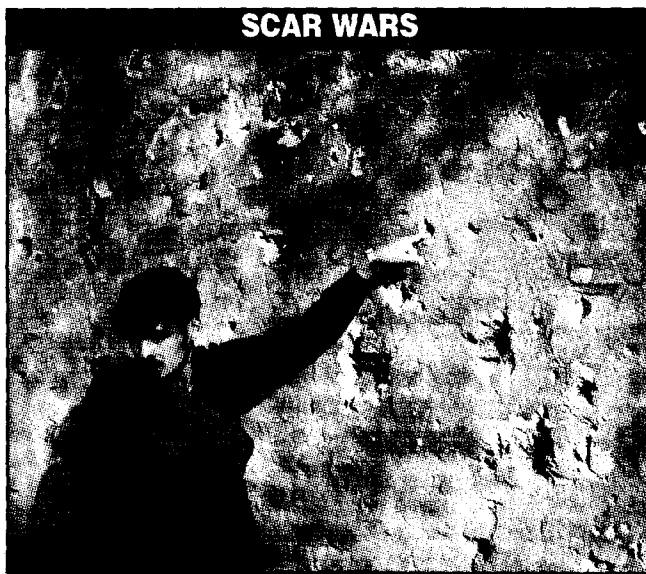
its soil in J&K." Expressing dissatisfaction with the steps taken by the Musharraf government against terrorist organisations, he said they "need to go beyond".

During the day, Pakistani troops continued to target Indian posts and patrols across the border with mortar shelling. Two Indian jawans were killed and a woman seriously injured in the Pakistani firing in the Suchetgarh area in the Jammu-Poonch sector. This incident comes close after Pakistani troops on Sunday

fired upon a BSF party in the Samba sector, killing three jawans and injuring three others. Reports also spoke of casualties as Pakistani troops continued firing along the LoC in the Rajouri and Poonch sectors.

The heavy exchange of firing between the two sides has led to the migration of thousands of people from the villages along the border with Pakistan. Reports said more than 3,000 people had already fled from different villages in the Samba and R S Pura areas of the Jammu sector alone.

Keeping in view the mobilisation of troops across the country, defence sources said the annual January 15 Army Day Parade would, in all probability, be cancelled this time.



SCAR WARS
A villager points to the marks on a wall caused by Pakistani shelling in Glar village, 52 km south-west of Jammu, on Tuesday.

ment had taken diplomatic steps in the wake of the December 13 terror attack on parliament, and "we have other weapons in our quiver. Taking into consideration the time-frame and the results, we are moving ahead step by step".

Accusing Pakistan of not discharging its responsibility, he said no progress had been made with regard to India's demands for severe action against the culprits behind the strike on parliament. Instead, Pakistan was harping on a joint inquiry into the incident, Mr Vajpayee said. "How can we have a joint inquiry with the accused who are in the dock?"

Pointing out that many countries were concerned about the possibility of a war between India and Pakistan and its fallout in the

THE TIMES OF INDIA

26 DEC 2001

Jaish-e-Mohammad chief detained for making provocative speeches

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 25. The Pakistan Government tonight announced the detention of the Jaish-e-Mohammad chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, on charges of making provocative speeches and disturbing the law and order situation.

An official announcement said Maulana Azhar was taken into custody by the Punjab Government. Earlier, he was banned from entering the North-West



Masood Azhar

Mohammad (JeM), the two Pakistan-based militant outfits ac-

Frontier Province (NWFP).

The detention is significant as the Bush administration had asked the Musharraf regime to crack-down on the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-

cused of involvement in the December 13 attack on Parliament.

Maulana Azhar's arrest a day after the return of Gen. Musharraf from his five-day trip to China, and India's decision to recall its High Commissioner, Mr. Vijay K. Nambiar, was an indication that the Pakistan Government was concerned about the developments and would like to be

seen as responding to the situation.

Maulana Azhar was detained on Sunday for a few hours and he was supposed to have been advised to "keep a low profile" and cut down his militant rhetoric.

Maulana Azhar founded JeM in early 2000 after the Government of India in exchange for the freedom of the hijacked airline passengers in December 1999, released him. He is known for his oratory skills and is believed to have built up a formidable organisation in the JeM.

The Pakistan Government had prevented him from visiting specific provinces following complaints that his organisation was engaged in promoting sectarian disharmony within Pakistan.

Mr. Hamid Mir, Editor, *Ausaf*, which published the report about the brief detention of Maulana Azhar on Sunday, said after he was released the Maulana had claimed that he had been asked by the authorities to go "slow" on his activities.

Meanwhile, a senior Western diplomat here said: "The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, cannot be seen as acting on the specific demands of the Indian Government. The containment of the jihadi forces would have to be a gradual process and any harsh measures could endanger the very stability of his regime."

'India must shed superiority complex'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 25. Asserting that the armed forces of Pakistan are fully prepared to meet any challenge, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf has said that relations between India and Pakistan can improve only if India is prepared to shed its "superiority complex".

Addressing a gathering in Karachi to mark the 125th birth anniversary of the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Pakistan President said the country was confronted with an external and internal challenge. He assured the nation that its armed forces were ready to meet any eventuality.

These were the first comments by Gen. Musharraf on Indo-Pakistan relations since New Delhi decided to recall the High Commissioner to Islamabad and there has been a marked escalation of tension on the border. Gen. Musharraf, who was away on a five-day official visit to China, returned late on Saturday.

Given the rising tensions on the Indo-Pakistan front, Gen. Musharraf's speech was low-key and measured. He refrained from commenting on the statements from New Delhi in the past few days and

instead chose to target Islamic fundamentalists, politicians, bureaucrats and influential sections within Pakistan.

Even his comment on the need for India to shed its superiority complex was essentially a repeat of the observation Jinnah made in 1948 in response to a question on the prospects of improved relations between India and Pakistan. "I would like to repeat to India even now what Quaid-e-Azam (Revolutionary Leader) had said," Gen. Musharraf said.

He dismissed the statements of "self-serving politicians" criticising the armed forces and maintained that they had no idea of the unity of the armed forces. "Let me assure the nation we (armed forces) would measure up to the expectations of Quaid".

Gen. Musharraf came down heavily on the Islamic fundamentalists in the country and said their attitude and activities had brought a bad name to Pakistan. "We have come to be identified in the world with illiteracy, obscurantism and militancy. It is those who are supposed to be custodians of Islam who have undermined the women."

THE HINDU

26 DEC 2001

Prithvi missiles moved near border in Punjab

Vishal Thapar
New Delhi, December 25

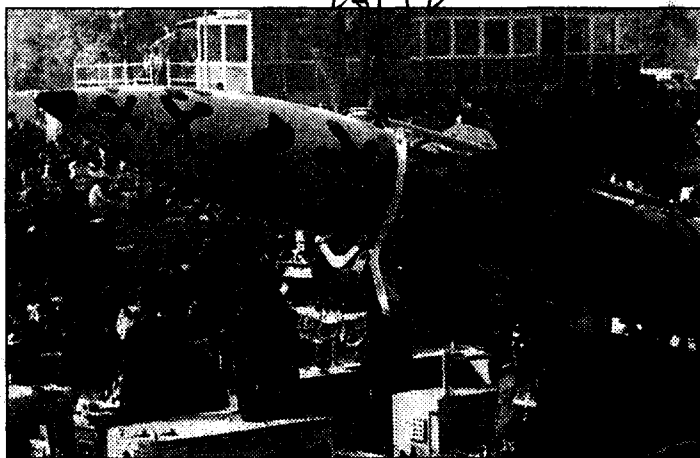
COMPETITIVE MILITARY posturing between India and Pakistan has assumed more belligerent proportions, with both sides mobilising ballistic missile groups.

Close on the heels of Pakistani media reports about "activation" of missiles directed at India from its Kharian base, reliable sources indicated that the Indian Army has moved its Prithvi Short Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM) batteries to strategic locations closer to the India-Pakistan border along Punjab.

The 150 km range Prithvi missile is handled by the 333 Missile Group, which is headquartered at Secunderabad. "Movement (of the missile group) is taking place," confirmed a senior official of the Ministry of Defence. While declining to "talk specifics", he reiterated that "India is in a state of high alert".

The source hastened to clarify that the Prithvi missile batteries had been "moved" but not "deployed".

India has based the Missile Group far away from the Indo-Pak border at Secunderabad as a confidence building measure. Because of its short range, any movement of this tactical battlefield missile, and that of its counterparts possessed by Pakistan, close to the border is a destabilising factor.



File picture of a Prithvi missile at the Republic Day parade.

The deployment of this missile in Punjab effectively brings the Pakistani heartland - notably Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Faisalabad within striking range. The Prithvi is generally equipped with conventional warheads but is also capable of mounting a nuclear warhead. Hence, distance of SRBMs from the border is also considered a nuclear risk reduction measure (NRRM).

The Prithvi is a single stage, liquid fuel, road mobile and inertially-guided missile. The 333 Missile Group is reportedly equipped with 15 launchers and about 75 missiles. Its weakness, however, is that it takes several hours to refuel the liquid propulsion missile before firing. The

implications in terms of tactical response time are obvious. It's also the only Indian ballistic missile which is operational.

By contrast, Pakistan's operational missiles include the 300 km range Hatf II (Chinese M-11), the 600 km range Hatf III (Chinese M-9), the 750 km Shaheen I (Hatf-IV), the 1150-1500 km Ghauri I/ II (Hatf-V) and the 2500 km Shaheen II, giving it superiority in missile-based weapon delivery systems. But for the Ghauris, all are solid-fuelled propelled, requiring very little time to be fired.

While India does have the demonstrated technology for 1500 km (Agni I) and 2,500 km (Agni II) missiles, the only one it does have ready in its arsenal is the short-range Prithvi.

25 December 2001

It is absurd!

Bush wants India to allow joint probe with Pakistan

The Caveat — *Not Wishful Thinking!* — published only last Sunday had warned President Bush that if he does not restrain Musharraf over terrorist activities, funded, trained and launched from Pakistan controlled territory and if he does not take seriously the prospect of Musharraf's friends in crime, Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar and numbers of Al Quaida fighters escaping into Pakistan, because of a wholly misplaced sense of gratitude to the Pakistani dictator, there will be more attacks on America. In less than twenty-four hours it has happened. An American Airlines aircraft on a scheduled flight from Paris to Miami narrowly escapes being blown apart by a suicide bomber who looks nothing like the Richard Reid on his false passport and should have alerted Paris immigration authorities. He tries to ignite explosives hidden in his shoes but is frustrated by an alert airhostess, helped by passengers. He is currently under FBI investigation. Given President Bush's penchant for the wrong word, it seems that his reference to Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiyaba as *stateless sponsors of terrorism* is a clumsy attempt at mitigation of Pakistan's culpability because the two organisations also operate from Kashmir and in Musharraf's view adopted by Bush in friendship, it is disputed territory. He should check with Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the UN, an organisation America uses when convenient. The consequences of an airliner blowing up in mid-air over the Atlantic can be imagined and we stand in tribute to the airhostess and passengers who frustrated the attempt. However the point being made is different. On the trend of reasoning displaced, if the next attack on America is from Pakistan or Pakistan occupied Kashmir, would Bush be describing it as a *freedom struggle* against the rest of the world! Not logical, but not much that falls from the US President's lips these days is distinguished by either logic or the art of argument.

Musharraf, at the end of his visit to China is alarmed that skeletons may be tumbling out of his closet. He does not wait to get home. He gets on Chinese television. Suddenly he is almost certain that Osama died in an American air raid on the Tora Bora caves; he must reason that if Osama can be declared dead the hunt for him will cease. And the pressure of the ISI on him will lessen. He therefore has a fall back position. *If* he is not dead, *if* he is in Pakistan, *if* they can find him, *if* they can arrest him, then they will hand him over to the Americans. Bush may be happy with these assurances, as he is happy with any nonsense fed to him by Musharraf; but using the language of understatement, there are too many *ifs* in the proposition. The proper response is to ask Musharraf where he got this notion of Osama's death, why at this particular time when there is more than suspicion that both fugitives are hiding in Pakistan, courtesy the ISI who must maintain their links with Taliban because without the returns from the lucrative drug trade, it may come about that very soon they would not know where their next meal was coming from!

Bush also keeps urging India to allow a joint investigation with Pakistan of the attack on Parliament. Even Britain is satisfied but Bush has another agenda and it is dangerous. Did he allow a joint investigation with Osama or Omar or Al Quaida of the 11 September attack? Why not? Because it would be absurd to let the prime suspect get into the investigation and he was right. The answer to Bush's urging is the same; it is absurd! Look into the mirror, Mr President!

THE STATESMAN

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Indo-Pak. crisis at a delicate moment

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, DEC. 24. Pakistan's moves this week against the terrorist groups operating on its soil are likely to decisively shape the evolution of the current crisis between the two subcontinental rivals.

The international community which has made specific demands on Pakistan at the end of last week will closely watch in the coming days the response from General Pervez Musharraf.

Last Friday, the American and British envoys had called on Pakistan to act decisively against the militant groups. While no details are available, the Anglo-American demarches delivered to the Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, are believed to be quite clear cut.

If Gen. Musharraf takes the opportunity presented by the attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13 to cleanse his nation of the sources of terrorism, relations between India and Pakistan can take a distinctively positive turn.

Such steps will help Pakistan rid its social fabric of extremist groups, facilitating its transformation into a genuinely moderate Islamic State and letting it prosper in cooper-

ation with its neighbours.

However, if the Pakistan President fudges the issue, India will have to consider additional moves against Pakistan, including further downgrading of diplomatic relations, the cancellation of over flight rights, and scaling down of economic relations.

If the Pakistani response remains negative, India will have to examine non-diplomatic options. India is in no position to assume today that America will be able to persuade Gen. Musharraf to change Pakistan's ways on Kashmir.

And to maintain the credibility of its implicit threat to use force, India has to press ahead with its mobilisation of military forces. If and when the diplomatic effort is seen as reaching a dead-end, India will have no choice but turn to the military option.

India is also taking into account the possibility that Gen. Musharraf might initiate some cosmetic measures against these groups without really doing anything to break their back.

It is also possible that he will try and hedge an offer to move against terrorist groups with a number of conditions or seek quid pro quos from New Delhi.

Such moves, he might hope, will ease the

pressure from the United States to do something and put the ball back in the Indian court without changing anything on the ground.

India would want to know if the American demands on Pakistan are simply "pro-forma" or linked seriously to the objective of destroying terrorist groups operating in Pakistan, whose track record was so well-known.

For India, which has sought strong action from Pakistan against terrorist groups, the results from Gen. Musharraf's moves must be transparent and be able to convince India of a fundamental change of attitude in Islamabad.

One theme which has run through American statements with some consistency since the attacks on Indian Parliament is that groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad are working to undermine Gen. Musharraf in Pakistan as well as destabilise Indo-Pak. relations.

That approach in Washington gives considerable benefit of doubt to Gen. Musharraf by suggesting he is as much a victim of terrorism as India is.

But, New Delhi is in no position to cut so much slack for Gen. Musharraf, unless he moves vigorously against terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

THE HINDU

25 DEC 2001

IAF, Navy on forward deployment

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 24. — Even as India continued to deploy armed forces in forward positions today, the strong diplomatic pressure on Pakistan seemed to be getting reflected, at least outwardly, in some Pakistani actions. While tanks and heavy artillery kept moving towards the borders, an Indian Air Force official said the Force is on the APM-2, or the second stage of Adopt Precautionary Measure guidelines. This means that normal civilian training isn't cancelled but the 24-hour alert has begun.

India today also asked Pakistan to withdraw within seven days its Delhi high commission staffer, Mohammad Sharif Khan, caught red-handed while collecting sensitive national security documents from a Parliament official here on Saturday. He has been engaging in activities incompatible with his legitimate sphere of duties, said a ministry spokesperson. Pakistan, however,

rejected India's charge. "The Government of Pakistan categorically rejects the Indian charge against Muhammad Sharif Khan of his involvement in procuring sensitive documents relating to defence, atomic energy, nuclear research, ship design and security of Parliament," a Foreign Office statement said here.

Throughout the day, the IAF has been shifting a major part of its squadrons of warplanes to operational bases and the Navy was deploying fast-moving small warships in Okha in Gujarat.

The IAF squadrons were moved to the operational bases in the last two or three days. The important bases include Srinagar in J&K, Adampur in Punjab, Jodhpur and Uttarlai in Rajasthan and Naliya in Gujarat.

These areas fall under the Western and South Western Air Command. Some squadrons are stationed through the year. However, this time they are in position in far greater numbers.

Besides, they are close to capacity, with perhaps 80 per cent

of their planes and personnel in place.

The APM-3 is the critical stage. Training ceases at this stage and could show the IAF to be ready for strikes. At this stage, a squadron is as close to 100 per cent efficiency as possible. This hasn't happened yet.

The present movement of planes has been described as a precautionary measure and as a warning to Pakistan.

The naval forward deployment has meant the movement of small but punchy warships like the corvettes and the missile boats, to Okha, the northernmost port and also reasonably close to Karachi, the main Pakistani naval position.

From Okha, Indian ships can keep a close watch on Pakistan naval activity and also pose a threat, if necessary. The naval missile boat attack on Karachi is well known.

Similar positions were taken by Indian ships during the Kargil War, when a part of the Eastern naval fleet in Vishakhapatnam was moved to Mumbai.

22 Pakistani soldiers killed

United News of India

JAMMU, Dec. 24. — Twenty-two Pakistani soldiers were killed and at least 21 bunkers destroyed when Indian troops opened retaliatory fire on Pakistani frontier positions in the Karmara and Keri areas across the LoC in Poonch district today.

Meanwhile, the J&K police has busted an Al-Qaida network by arresting Raja Qamar Ayub, a Pakistani national, who was also the chief of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen in the state.

Security forces also shot dead three LeT ultras at Afzalabad, Poonch, today. The slain militants were Pakistani nationals. One of them was suspected to be behind the killing of the Rajouri district and sessions judge, Vijay Kumar Phool, and two of his SPOs.

THE STATESMAN

25 11 2001

THE BIG STORY

1998 LAHORE

Saw the high point in Indo-Pak relations during Vajpayee's time in office



1999 KARGIL

Saw the first hot war between the two nations since 1971. Triggered global fears of a nuclear clash



PRESSURE GAME

India's tough words are a message to Washington: Make Musharraf take action against Lashkar and Jaish



2001 AGRA

There was hype and hope at the Summit, but Musharraf proved too difficult a customer

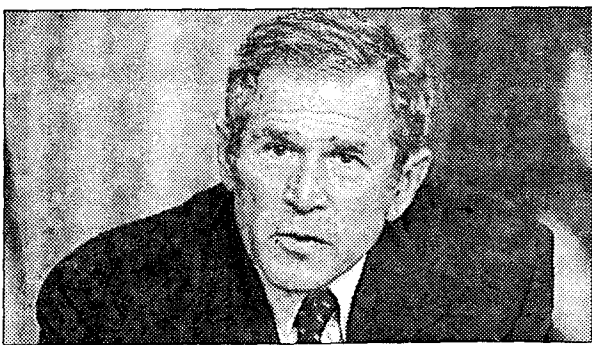
DIPLOMATIC DILEMMAS



ATL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Facing a popular demand for a response to December 13, would prefer not to go for high-risk military ventures. Is talking tough to pressure West to get Musharraf to crack down. US wants him to present a better case against Lashkar and Jaish for the world community.



PERVEZ MUSHARRAF: Is facing US pressure to shutdown Lashkar and Jaish within Pakistan. But after Afghan debacle and falling popularity at home, it's unclear if he has the clout to force militants to shutter their offices. Also knows the US needs him so long as Osama bin Laden is still at large.



GEORGE W. BUSH: Has to balance a fear of a South Asian war, a need to not push Musharraf too hard when the hunt for Osama is still on, and a recognition Lashkar and Jaish have shown themselves to be a threat to global stability. Wants India to help put pressure on Musharraf through legal means.

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri
New Delhi

LAST WEEKEND, US Secretary of State Colin Powell visited a number of television studios to record his face before the camera. Most of the questions were predictably about finding Osama bin Laden, with a few odds and ends about Yasser Arafat and Ariel Sharon. But in the back of his mind, say sources in Washington, was a series of reports coming out of the subcontinent, largely from Islamabad, that India was working itself into a lather about the December 13 terrorist attack on Parliament. The evidence was pouring in that the attack was by Lashkar e Tayyaba and Jaish e Mohammad. And that meant Pakistan was involved, passively or otherwise.

During the last few minutes of an MSNBC Meet the Press session and a Newshour session, Powell was asked by the anchors about the situation in South Asia. India was clearly the aggrieved party. In any case, the White House had already sent word that the word "restraint" should not be thrown in India's face.

But with war worries on his mind, Powell decided to play the balancing act. He affirmed India's "right to self-defence". Then he seemed to contradict that by adding the rider that the every-one had to be "careful" that implementing such a right did not lead to "a situation that could spiral out of control." He told Newshour's anchor, Jim Lehrer, "We could not wish to see this escalate to a direct exchange between the two nations going after each other."

The following Monday evening he was on the telephone with Indian Foreign Minister, Jaswant Singh. Singh reportedly gave him a flea in his ear for preaching the equivalent of restraint and for making the absurd suggestion India and Pakistan jointly investigate the December 13 attack.

New Delhi also complained that the US seemed to have little to say about Islamabad and what is should be doing about Lashkar and Jaish, two terrorist organizations whose offices functioned in broad daylight in Pakistan.

By Tuesday the State Department spokesperson, Richard Boucher, was insisting "our basic view has not changed". However, he began adding a few lines that all countries have an obligation to work against terrorism within their own borders and "we look to the Pakistani government to work against extremist groups that operate out of Pakistan."

net and entire Parliament hostage. But that's only because everyone prefers to keep the daggers largely rhetorical -- for now. This is because of a simple fact: No player in the present drama is strong enough to force its will on the others. So the three main governments involved all use words, threats, even praise, to persuade others to follow a path of action.

The government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee is in the cooker because the Indian vox populi is demanding a pound of flesh from Pakistan for December 13th. And it is even more strident in Uttar Pradesh, which is due to go to the polls soon. New Delhi would prefer not to extract its pound through ordinance. Whatever India's hawks may say, the truth is the country lacks the mix of satellites, airborne early warning aircraft, precision guided weapons and other gizmos to carry out the kind of surgical strike they advocate. Any Indian military response would be crude -- low-flying fighter-bombers or commando raids. It would also run a high risk of stacking up plenty of Indian bodybags.

And that doesn't even take into count the nuclear environment. A punitive attack would do enormous damage to New Delhi's painstaking efforts to show itself as a responsible nuclear power. India would therefore prefer Pakistan do penance. Namely, as it has asked, by shutting down Lashkar and Jaish's money-raising and training network and putting their leaders in the dock.

This would be no mean accomplishment. Lashkar is seen by Indian official circles as a direct product of the ISI and Pakistan's most effective weapon in keeping alive the Kashmir insurgency. Jaish, a break off faction of Harkat al Mujahideen, is infamous in India because of its masterminding of the IC 814 hijack.

However, India has never had any means to persuade Pakistan to do anything about either group. After December 13, India's strategy has been to combine war threats and legal diplomacy to persuade Washington to apply the pressure on its behalf.

The US finds itself in a policy cul-de-sac. There is little doubt it feels the December 13 attack was beyond the pale. Not only would it have distracted from its own campaign against Al Qaeda, if the attack on Parliament had succeeded it would have been more likely to trigger a full-scale South Asian war than even the Kargil incursion.

But Washington needs Pakistan more than ever. New Delhi and Washington believe that Osama bin Laden's most likely hiding place are the Pakistani tribal agencies along the Afghan border. Nabbing him will require Islamabad's full cooperation. And the US has found few sovereign leaders as amenable to their

demands as General Pervez Musharraf. American officials now monitor passengers in Pakistani airports, work side-by-side with Pakistani customs officials and are helping put together a register of the country's madrassas. Most recently was an understanding that US troops would have the right to hot pursuit into Pakistani territory.

But Musharraf is domestically weak. The collapse of the Taliban was a major debacle. The economic rewards promised during the Afghan campaign have yet to materialize. The Pakistani President now rarely ventures beyond his home or office for fear of his life. A recent BBC poll showed that only nine per cent of Pakistanis shared his unconditional support for the US war against terror. Scouting his vulnerability, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif are trying to regain a political foothold in the country.

Musharraf cannot even claim to have won too many hearts in Washington. Following September 11, the Pentagon and US intelligence have become Pakistan's most implacable critics. The ISI's reluctant cooperation in the Afghan campaign and revelations about its nuclear cooperation with Al Qaeda have made Washington increasingly war. And the feeling is mutual. The same BBC poll showed that only seven per cent of Pakistani felt the US was a country that should be looked up to.

But the assessment of most Western governments is that to get the general to close the tap on

Lashkar will be even more difficult than getting him to dump the Taliban. And when he turned Pakistan's Afghan policy on its head, Musharraf was in a much stronger position than he is today. Washington has tried to make the going easier for him. It has been unstinting in its praise for the cooperation that have been given. George W. Bush's recent statement saying Lashkar is seeking to "undermine" Musharraf was evidence the US sees him as blameless for the events of December 11th. This view is even shared by many Indian analysts.

The point is that it is irrelevant as to what the general knows. The attack took place, he's in charge, so he's the one who has to take action against Lashkar and Jaish. Given all this, Musharraf is less than reluctant to accede to India's demands. In a country where half the population still looks fondly on the Taliban, according to recent polls, Lashkar is seen as the epitome of fundamentalist Islam. It combines suicide bombers against an army of oppressors with a network of schools and charitable hospitals.

The strategy that Washington has adopted in persuading Musharraf is a replay, though more mild, than what it did to get him to support the war against the Taliban. This is to close off all options for him which then allows him to go to his corps commanders and the Pakistani establishment and genuinely say, "I have no alternative." The general used this argument, according to reports in the Pakistani press, to

get support for his Afghan switch. This then is the big subcontinental question. The pressure the West can apply on Musharraf is considerably less than what they could apply after September 11. No one will believe Bush will take out Pakistan's nuclear facilities for fear of voters in Uttar Pradesh. On the other hand, the decision to take on Lashkar will be much more difficult for Musharraf domestically than abandoning Mullah Omar and his fanatical band. Can the general be the great shifter a second time, and this time go a direct attack on Pakistan's support for the Kashmir insurgency?

Part of the reason for asking for more evidence, by both Washington and Islamabad, is designed to tighten the screws on Musharraf but also to make any action against Lashkar more palatable to Pakistan's ruling circles. If it seems he is acting in response to a UN or even Western sanctioned demand Musharraf might just survive. If he seems to be succumbing to an Indian demarche, he probably choose to refuse to act.

Washington has slowly but surely moving towards endorsing India's position on the issue. Though Bush garbled his sentences during his speech on Friday, the fact sheet prepared by the State Department to go with his presentation is quite clear in describing Lashkar as Pakistan-based. Bush also sends a message that Lashkar is a threat to both Pakistan and India and by describing it as "stateless" he

gives Musharraf a kind of pre-emptive amnesty.

The White House's most recent statements indicate Bush has at last given Musharraf orders to march against Lashkar. The White House spokesman said that the Pakistani leader had said "he would move against those involved in the attacks. President Bush has every confidence in President Musharraf's capacity to act against the terrorists. The President calls on him to take action against the Lashkar al Tayyaba, the Jaish e Mohammad and other terrorist organizations, their leaders and their finances."

No one should think that Lashkar or Jaish are finished. The general is likely to take a lot of symbolic action. A name change or two, the arrest of a few leaders and the closing down of the terrorist groups' more obvious offices -- like Lashkar's complex in Muridke, near Lahore -- is what India should expect.

But the groups' will find life much harder in the long term. Musharraf will also have found a major incentive to bring both organizations under tighter control or at least rein in those specifically responsible for the mad, mad world ideas like December 13th. Bush on Friday specifically said Lashkar "is a terrorist organization that presents a global threat." This could mean it now squarely falls in the category of terrorist groups with "global reach" and therefore a target of the US's war on terror.

What the Pak press is saying

IT IS NOT yet clear why India wants to act like the United States in responding to the attack on its parliament. Every one knows that there can be no comparison between an all powerful US attacking a destitute Afghanistan and India marching into Pakistan. Yet India has unnecessarily pushed up tensions recently, the latest moves coming yesterday when New Delhi recalled its High Commissioner from Pakistan and will terminate the bus and Sanjotta train service between the two countries from January 1, 2002. This almost blackmailed the White House into issuing the strongly worded condemnation of the attack by President George Bush on Wednesday when he froze the assets of Lashkar Tayyaba and another Pakistani NGO.

The present move, therefore, might be designed to get the major powers to be more receptive of India's strident charges

against Pakistan than their counselling both countries to exercise restraint. The initial response of the newly made friend United States specially, far from strengthening India's position, was meant to reduce the tension in the region. The Indians were unhappy with the observation of the White House spokesman that the attack on the parliament was not sufficient reason for the two countries to take action against each other, or Secretary Colin Powell asking New Delhi to provide evidence to Pakistan. But then New Delhi almost blackmailed the White House into issuing the strongly worded condemnation of the attack by President George Bush on Wednesday when he froze the assets of Lashkar Tayyaba and another Pakistani NGO.

Editorial, Jung, December 22

INDIA'S SURPRISING move to recall its High Commissioner from Islamabad, and to snap the Lahore-Delhi bus and train services is a quantum jump, apparently designed to browbeat Pakistan into acceding to its demands for the banning of two Pakistan-based jihadi outfits, represents the greatest threat to peace in South Asia since Indian sabre-rattling during Kargil. This step has come, according to the Indian Foreign Office spokeswoman, because Pakistan has not acceded to Indian demands, conveniently overlooking the fact that Pakistan's demand for evidence against a legal organisation situated on its territory, and against its own citizens, is not just reasonable, but mandatory. Is India building up towards imposing a conflict on Pakistan? Though common prudence would lead to the conclusion that there is no adequate

reason for war at this stage, it appears the war hysteria in India is building up to a frenzy, fuelled by a government egging on the populace rather than trying to rein them in.

Mr Vajpayee had been advising his Parliamentary colleagues to weigh the violent course of action against Pakistan they are vociferously advocating, so this latest development is odd indeed. The impression given by Secretary Powell, that some sort of cooling down had been achieved by his quiet diplomacy, has apparently turned out to be false. It appears that India is placing both Pakistan and the USA in the spot by this reckless escalation of tension. Not only has it mobilised its forces on the borders, it is now making the sort of diplomatic moves that would normally precede a war.

Editorial, The Nation, December 22

KASHMIRI TO HEAD NEW GENERAL COUNCIL

Lashkar chief quits as Pak. freezes assets

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 24. Pakistan today took a small step towards defusing the crisis arising out of the Indian decision to recall its High Commissioner by freezing the accounts and assets of the militant outfit, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and the Umma Tamir Nau (UMT), an NGO run by Pakistan's retired nuclear scientists.

Meanwhile, the parent body of the LeT, the Markaz-ud-Dawawal-Ishard (MDI), has assumed a new name.

Significantly, the LeT chief, Prof. Hafeez Muhammad Saeed, has stepped down and appointed a Kashmiri face, Maulana Abdul Wahid Kashmiri, as the new head of the militant outfit. However the LeT would continue to function as an organ of the MDI under a new name, with Prof. Saeed as the chief.

The decision of the Pakistan Government and the MDI are clearly seen as a response to U.S. pressure and the Indian action in the past few days, but diplomatic sources were sceptical if it would substantially change the ground situation.

"What is the big deal in change of name? We want to see the cul-

prits behind the December 13 attack on Parliament caught and punished. Mere cosmetic change, like change in name, would not help in bridging the gulf," a senior diplomat in the Indian High Commission said.

Implied in the statement was the suggestion that New Delhi would not be satisfied with the steps taken by the Musharraf Government and there is little chance of New Delhi reconsidering its decision to recall the High Commissioner, Mr. Vijay K. Nambiar. He is all set to leave for New Delhi this week.

While there is no surprise element in Islamabad's decision to order freezing of accounts and assets of the UMT, its action does indicate that the Musharraf Government is partly attempting to respond to the demands raised by New Delhi in its December 14 verbal demarche to the Pakistan High Commissioner, Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi.

Change of name

In announcing the decision to change the nomenclature of Markaz to Jamaat-ud-Daawa Pakistan (JDP), Prof. Saeed did concede that his organisation took the extraordinary decision to ensure

that India does not increase 'problems' for Pakistan.

Addressing a news conference in Lahore, he said that henceforth the activities of the LeT would be confined to Kashmir and that the outfit had shifted its offices to Kashmir last month itself.

Asked which part of Kashmir he was referring to, Prof. Saeed said the Lashkar did not make a distinction between "Kashmir" nor did it recognise the LoC. He also announced a 13-member new General Council of LeT, all from Kashmir on both the sides, under the command of Maulana Abdul Wahid Kashmiri.

Prof. Saeed said the parent organisation of the LeT would continue its activities of "preaching, organising and reforming" work inside Pakistan. He maintained that help for Kashmiri "freedom fighters and refugees" would continue and public programmes would be organised to counter "Indian propaganda against jihad".

Asked about the possibility of his outfit being declared a terrorist organisation by the U.S., Prof. Saeed said that "we do not care. We do not want any peace certificate from the U.S. We have writ-

ten a detailed letter to U.S. State Department explaining that we had never targeted civilians and only attacked the Indian troops and military installations".

He said India was not capable of attacking Pakistan and even if it did, it would be possible only with the U.S. support. "If India attacked it will risk losing Kashmir altogether", he said.

Musharraf promises action

Amit Baruah reports from Singapore:

The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, said that he would take action against the terrorist groups involved in the attack on Parliament in New Delhi on December 13 if there was evidence.

Winding up his visit to China, Gen. Musharraf said, "if we find evidence, we would like to move against them. We are already taking measures to move against all groups who are involved in any form of terrorism anywhere in the world."

The Pakistan President made the comments in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou on the final day of his first trip.

More reports on Pages 11 & 12

Pakistan asked to withdraw staffer

By Atul Aneja and Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, DEC. 24. Hardening its diplomatic stance, New Delhi today asked Islamabad to withdraw its staffer — accused of espionage — within a week, and reinforced its demand for further action against the Pakistan-based militant outfits, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad. India has held the outfits responsible for the December 13 attack on Parliament.

The decision seeking the exit of the Pakistani official, Mohammad Sharif Khan, was conveyed to the Pakistani Deputy High Commissioner, Mr. Jalil Abbas Jilani, by Mr. Arun Singh, Joint Secretary, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, in the Ministry of External Affairs.

New Delhi reiterated that contrary to Islamabad's portrayal of the incident, Mr. Khan was neither manhandled nor tortured by police. In fact, he was handed over to the Pakistani High Commission last evening itself.

India also reacted strongly to the observation by the Deputy Director-General in the Chinese Foreign Office that Kashmir was the "core issue" between India and Pakistan. The official had made the remark during the recent visit of the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to Beijing.

The spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs said India rejected the suggestion that Jammu and Kashmir fell in any "such category." On the contrary, India saw Jammu and Kashmir as the "core of Indian nationhood" and had publicly stated its position be-

fore the United Nations General Assembly.

The central issue in the Indo-Pak. equation was cross-border terrorism and Islamabad should act on New Delhi's "fully justified and legitimate call" for action against the Lashkar and the Jaish. The international community was of the view that global terrorism could not be justified anywhere, "for whatever reasons."

Indian charge 'absurd'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 24. Pakistan today rejected the charge made by the Indian Government that the staffer in the Pakistan Mission in New Delhi, Mr. Mohammad Sharif Khan, was caught red-handed while receiving sensitive documents from an employee in the Parliament House.

"These absurd Indian allegations represent yet another desperate attempt to implicate Pakistan in the December 13 terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament," a statement issued by the Pakistan Foreign Office said. Terming the allegation against its staffer as "baseless and concocted", it reiterated its demand for a thorough investigation into the incident. The Pakistan Mission member was accused of being involved in procuring sensitive documents relating to defence, atomic energy, nuclear research, ship design and security of Indian Parliament.

Updating the media on the diplomatic interaction between India and the United States, the spokesperson said the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, had spoken to the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, over telephone for the third time in a week, on Sunday.

Analysts have pointed out that the U.S. is keen on defusing Indo-Pak. tensions by encouraging both the sides to scale down their troop build-up along their borders.

Pak. tanks pulled back

Intelligence reports suggest that Pakistan has pulled back some of the tanks of its Strike Corps by 20-25 km. But Army officials are not attaching much importance to the move. They point out that tanks have the mobility to reach their original positions within 45 minutes to an hour. "What is noteworthy is that they have not gone back to the barracks. Besides, the infantry units of the Strike Corps are still in the forward positions." Reports also suggest that Pakistan is moving its air assets to forward locations. As a "precautionary measure," the Army's Western Command is understood to be mobilising all the four battalions of the Territorial Army (TA) to help in ancillary operations, if necessary. Sources said this was the first time since the 1971 war that the entire TA assets of a command were being mobilised — the Kargil War saw the mobilisation of only one battalion. The TA units are expected to function as road-opening parties.

PM spoke to Sonia: Page 11

THE HINDU

7 3 010 200

Battling terror: Blueprint ready

Step 1: Diplomatic pressure on Pakistan. Step 2: Economic sanctions. Step 3: Military action

Vir Sanghvi
New Delhi, December 24

THE GOVERNMENT is now ready with a carefully calibrated action plan for its offensive against Pakistan. Government sources say that after several meetings of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) as well as other informal meetings between the Prime Minister and his colleagues, a rough timetable for action has now been drawn up.

The guiding force of this

schedule is the conviction that India will not shy away from military action if required but that such action will not be India's first response.

Instead, the Government hopes to keep up the pressure on Pakistan through a series of diplomatic offensives. The decision to recall our High Commissioner from Islamabad is the first of these. Though Pakistan has said that it will not recall its head of mission, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, the Ministry of

External Affairs is expected to refuse to deal with him. Instead, it will deal with the Deputy High Commissioner.

The Indian Government will also ask the Pakistanis to scale down the strength of their mission. It believes that over 60 per cent of the 'diplomats' at the mission are spies and reckons that this offensive provides as good an opportunity as any to scale down the ISI presence in Delhi. At the same time, India will recall all economic and cul-

tural staff from its mission in Islamabad.

The next series of measures will target Pakistan International Airlines. PIA will be asked to stop flying to India and all overflights by Pakistani aircraft will be banned. This move will cost PIA millions of dollars as it needs to overfly India to reach destinations in the East. Air India already avoids Pakistani airspace so there is no scope of retaliation.

Then, Pakistan's Most Fav-

oured Nation trading status will be cancelled. Though this will hurt India more, the Government says it is prepared to pay the price.

After that, the campaign moves into high gear. A move to ask SAARC to throw out Pakistan or at the very least, to avoid next month's SAARC summit in Kathmandu has been considered. So far at least, the consensus of opinion is against it.

Certain sections of the Government favour the option of

abrogating the Indus Waters Treaty. This would have disastrous implications for Pakistan, so, despite having abrogated the treaty, India would not actually stop the flow of water. But it would keep the option of doing so alive. However, the Prime Minister is yet to approve such a move.

The Government believes that such a strategy would convince General Musharraf of the seriousness of India's intentions. World pressure might also cause the General to crack down on

his extremists and rogue elements in the ISI.

Should the General remain unconvinced, then a military action plan is also ready. This would consist of an offensive in PoK (from our perspective, this is Indian territory) and then — if Pakistan retaliates, as it might well — a limited war in all theatres.

As of now, the Government hopes this will not happen. But it is prepared to see its strategy through to the bitter end.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 11 2001

India turns the heat on Pakistan

Govt singles out Lashkar-e-Toiba, demands action from Islamabad

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Pinning the blame for Thursday's attack on the parliament complex directly on the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba, India has asked Pakistan to stop the activities of that militant outfit as well as the Jaish-e-Mohammad, arrest their leaders and freeze their financial assets.

Foreign secretary Chokila Iyer summoned Pakistan's high commissioner Ashraf Jehangir Qazi to South Block on Friday afternoon and issued a verbal *demarche*, demanding that Islamabad take action against the two groups. However, no time-frame was specified.

Pakistan had banned the Jaish-e-Mohammad after the U.S. designated the group as a terrorist organisation following the October 1 attack on the Srinagar assembly. The Lashkar, however, has not been banned in Pakistan. Unlike the more shadowy Jaish, the Lashkar has a substantive and highly visible presence, with sprawling properties in several towns and cities.

Forcing Pakistan to take legal action against the Lashkar—including a freeze on its financial assets—would seriously hamper the group's ability to function. Perhaps that is the reason why the government is officially emphasising the primary role of the Lashkar rather than that of the Jaish, even though IB sources say the latter group was the mastermind behind Thursday's terrorist strike.

Speaking to mediapersons at an impromptu briefing soon after the diplomatic message was delivered, external affairs minister Jaswant Singh said, "We have technical evidence that the attack, not just on the symbol but the seat of Indian democracy and sovereignty of the people, was the handiwork of a terrorist organisation based in Pakistan, the Lashkar-e-Toiba. We have, therefore, requested, demanded of Pakistan that the activities of the Lashkar and the Jaish be stopped

in Pakistan, and that their leadership, which is well-known to Pakistan, be taken into custody, and their financial assets and access to financial assets be stopped."

While refusing to go into details of the nature of the evidence India had, the minister termed it "entirely credible". He emphasised that "the demands made in the *demarche* were also in accordance with international obligations and commitments on countering terrorism".

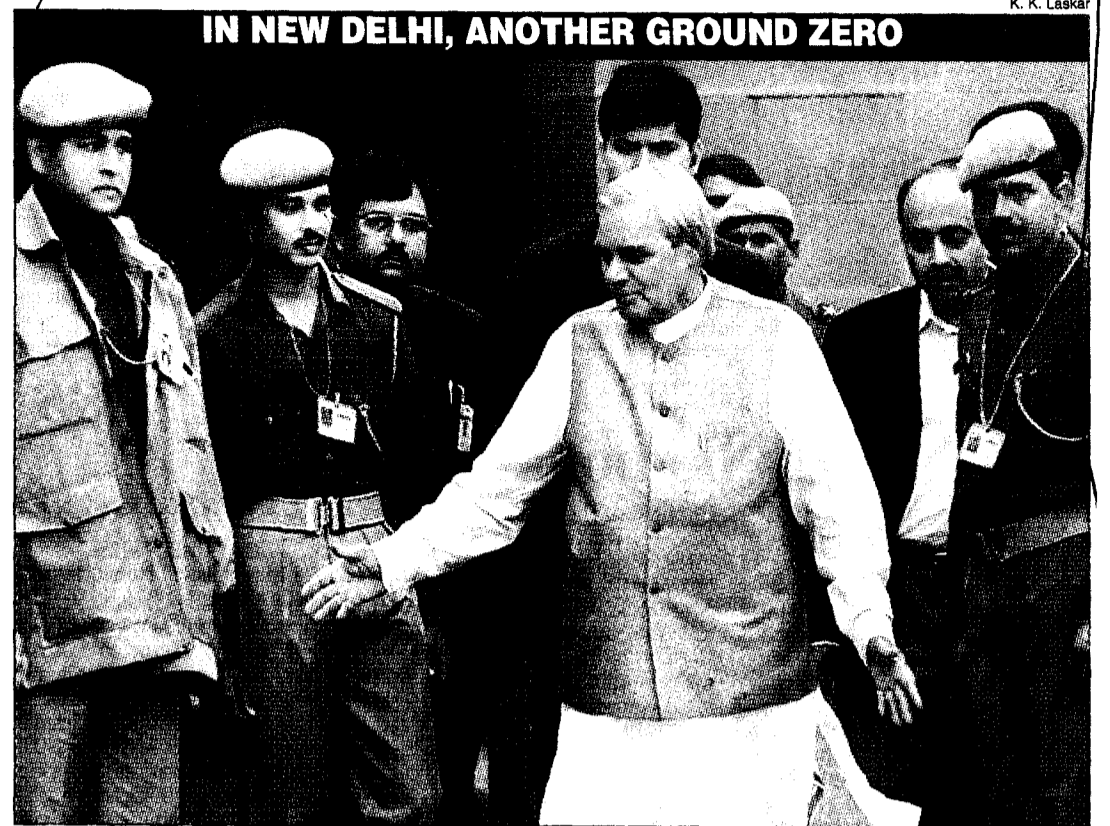
Friday's demands are the strongest and most specific made by India so far, and go well beyond the generic call for an end to cross-border terrorism. India's decision to turn the heat on its neighbour was also evident in Mr Jaswant Singh's refusal to elaborate on the issue of the possibility of hot pursuit.

Asked whether the security forces would pursue Kashmir militants across the Line of Control, the minister said he would respond to the question by referring the questioner to Thursday's cabinet resolution. The resolution had said India would "liquidate terrorists and their sponsors—whenever they are,

wherever they are".

The minister refused to say whether there was any evidence of the hand of the government of Pakistan in the incident or its continuing support to these terrorist organisations, saying the origins, funding and patronage of the Lashkar and the Jaish would provide the answer to that question. He said the decision on whether the evidence against the Lashkar would be made public had to be weighed against the requirements of the agencies which were gathering the intelligence. However, India had shared the information it had with the U.S. and some other countries, he said.

▶ Related reports on Pages 7 & 9
▶ See Edit: Smart Intelligence, Page 10



REMAINS OF THE DAY: Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee talks to CRPF personnel who fought the suicide squad members in the gun battle that took place on Thursday in the parliament complex in New Delhi.

Overnight The day after, it's business as usual

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: The day after the terrorist strike, it was business as usual inside the parliament complex. The drive up Rajpath to Vijay Chowk was unhindered. But for a few more uniformed, gun-toting men, there was no sign of anything unusual at the wrought-iron gate of the complex opening into Vijay Chowk.

The men at the barricade peered closely at the parliament security sticker and waved the car in, no doubt reassured by the identity card one held out. The short drive from the gate into the car park was as crowded and undisciplined as ever. A car without a proper sticker parked in a wrong place made an official scream. "Call the crane and have it towed away," he shouted in an effort to overcome his own nervousness. After the death and mayhem of Thursday, an edginess was not unexpected.

The sandstone walls of parliament were pock-marked by bullets and the smell of blood hung heavy

in the air. The parliamentary security staff in their dark coats looked extra vigilant. At entrance No. 12 the scene of the gun battle, a familiar watch and ward officer shook hands. His colleague, J.P. Yadav, had fallen to the terrorists' bullets only a few feet away. But other security men were sullen and had thrown a cordon, making the area beyond that point off-limits for visitors.

A middle-aged man keen to check for himself what he had seen on TV was insistent. "I am an MI let me go and see where it all happened," he said and walked for ward. A frail, elderly man approached the security officer on duty and flashed a card. "I am an ex-MP, let me also go in," he pleaded. Someone else wanted to know whether the car carrying the terrorists was still on the premises.

A constant stream of camera men and curious visitors surrounded Vice President Krishan Kant's pilot car which was hit by a hail of terrorist bullets.

Jaish-e-Mohammad behind attack, says IB

By Pratyush Kanth
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: The Intelligence Bureau (IB) says it has intercepted "several messages" from terrorist groups and is working on the assumption that the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad is responsible for the attack on parliament on Thursday.

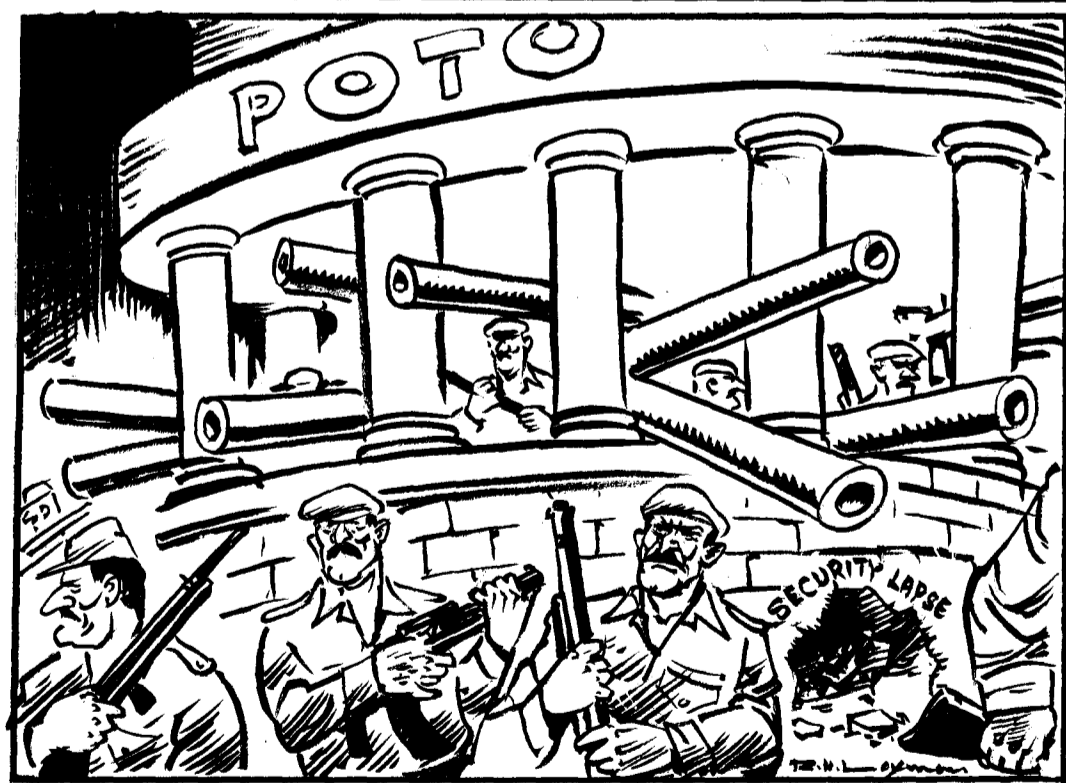
IB sources said messages like '*Allah par fida ho gaye*' (They have died for the love of God), '*Is bare me aur baat nahi*' (We will not discuss this operation any more), and '*Mubarak ho*' (Congratulations) were intercepted by Indian security agencies just after the attack on the parliament complex.

The IB is collecting information about the "key persons" directing these terrorists in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. "We have marked out about 40 persons who we think may have helped these terrorists. Our intelligence wing in Kashmir has also given us some vital information about a few persons in Delhi and its surrounding areas who may have helped

them in organising the attack," said a source from the IB.

IB sources say that the prime suspects in instigating the attacks are the leaders of Jaish-e-Mohammad, Maulana Masood Azhar of Pakistan, British national Omar Sheikh, and Kashmiri terrorist Mushtaq Ahmad Zargar. All three were in detention in India and were freed in exchange for the release of the passengers and crew of the Indian Airlines flight hijacked to Kandahar in December 1999. "The three have very good contacts in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Mumbai," said an IB official.

IB sources do not rule out the possibility of one of the terrorists, who has reportedly been injured in the firing, escaping during the confusion which followed the shootout. "We have some indications that a sixth person was involved in this attack. We are using human and technical intelligence to track him down. Senior officials of the Delhi police have been briefed by us," said the official.



REAGONS, KLAXONS, FAKE IDs ARE ALL AVAILABLE FOR A PRICE

1 Who were they?

No official word yet. But suspicions hover around Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad.

2 What was their plan?

Probe suggests they wanted to enter parliament. They were even prepared for a hostage situation as they carried dry fruits supplies for ten days. They were also carrying cell phones.

3 The sixth man mystery

Though the police commissioner of Delhi says it is possible and that the sixth terrorist may have been hurt, but not everybody is so sure

4 For how long were they in Delhi?

Only guesses so far. But the presence of two identity cards of a computer institute in Adarsh Nagar suggest they may have either enrolled there or were using it as cover.

5 What about the car?

The ambassador was purchased from Karol Bagh on December 1 by Ashid Hussain Khan, a resident of Baramullah in J & K for Rs 1.1 lakh. The dealer had taken a picture of Ashid.

6 Who were their local contacts?

Not known yet. But they may have been at a distance of 10 kilometres

HEAT ON PAKISTAN

Rein in terror groups, Islamabad told ● New Delhi seriously weighing 'hot pursuit' option

HT Correspondents
New Delhi/Jammu/Srinagar,
December 14

A FAVOURABLE diplomatic opinion and hard evidence suggesting the involvement of Pakistan-based terrorist groups in the attack on Parliament has reportedly encouraged New Delhi to consider the option of destroying terrorist camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh's statement that the evolving security scenario required "extraordinary" response is being interpreted by South Block insiders as a pointer to this emerging option. Both the Foreign and the Defence ministries believe India will be able to sustain a 'hot pursuit' and its diplomatic and military fallouts.

Singh today met US envoy Robert Blackwill and told him that the Government possessed intercepts of messages between Lashkar-e-Tayyeba leaders in Pakistan with their cadres in J&K on plans to attack the Parliament House.

The information Singh shared with Blackwill has been furnished to some other world capitals to justify New Delhi's case for a tough response on the lines of the US attack on Afghanistan. It has also been conveyed to friendly powers that though General Musharraf expressed his condolence, he stopped short of calling yesterday's strike a terrorist attack.

Blaming Lashkar for the strike, India today told Pakistan to arrest its leaders. Pakistan first responded by warning that India would pay a heavy price for any misadventure but later softened its stand, saying it would like to see the evidence.

Foreign Secretary Chokila Iyer summoned Pakistan High Commissioner Ashraf Jehangir Qazi and told him that India wanted Pakistan to stop the activities of Lashkar and Jaish-e-Mohammad and freeze their assets.

Lashkar dismissed the allegation, calling it a ploy to malign the "freedom struggle" in Kashmir. Its spokesman said India was trying to use the opportunity to get the Poto passed and crush the "freedom fighters".

Jaswant Singh said India had "technical evidence" that Lashkar was behind the attack but declined to divulge the evidence for "obvious difficulties"

in making it public.

Asked on the 'hot pursuit' demand by BJP MPs, he said the Government's position was reflected in the Cabinet resolution adopted yesterday in which it had declared that it would liquidate terrorists and their sponsors "wherever and whoever they are".

On whether India would consider military retaliation, he said New Delhi's position was outlined in the Cabinet resolution and "it is not open for me to speculate".

Refuting any Pakistan connection to the attack, its military spokesman Maj-Gen Rashid Qureshi said, "India seems to be trying to create tension by blaming Pakistan, but I want to convey to India that it will pay heavily if they engage in any misadventure."

Media reports in Pakistan said Musharraf has put country's armed forces on high alert and that the President held talks with military commanders to review the situation. Foreign Office sources said he discussed the situation in his calls to Colin Powell, Tony Blair and Kofi Annan last evening.

Later in the day, Foreign Office spokesman Aziz Khan said, "If the Indian Government provides us evidence regarding the involvement of any Pakistan-based organisation in the attack, we'll examine it." He reiterated that Pakistan has never allowed anybody to use its soil to carry out terror attacks against any country and was one of the first countries to condemn the attack.

Investigations by *Hindustan Times* show while Lashkar may have carried out the attack, it was planned by Hizb-ul-Mujahideen in mid-November, immediately after it replaced pro-peace Abdul Majid Dar as chief commander. Two top Hizb militants — Abdul Rashid Hajjam and Inyatullah Wani — had met Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat in Delhi in November and again in the first week of this month to work out the plan.

This group was apparently entrusted with the task of arranging the boarding and lodging for the suicide squad that came from Pakistan. The five suicide attackers arrived in Delhi two days before the strike and came from Pakistan via Nepal, say Intelligence sources.

More reports on Pages 7 & 9



THE DAY AFTER: A Parliament worker cleans bloodstains on a pillar inside Parliament House on Friday.

ARVIND YADAV/HINDUSTAN TIMES

CCTV footage and Delhi Police story differ

Hemendra Singh Bartwal
New Delhi, December 14

THE DELHI Police has apparently got its facts wrong while reconstructing the sequence of events during the terrorist attack on Parliament House on Thursday. The police version, that the car-borne terrorists entered Parliament complex from the main entrance on Vijay Chowk side and turned left towards the Rajya Sabha gates, is not quite correct. And this is proved by the video footage of the closed circuit TV cameras (CCTV) installed outside the Parliament building to monitor the security situation in the complex.

The footage of the incident clearly shows the white Ambassador used by the desperadoes entering swiftly from the Parlia-

ment Street side at 11.41 am and speeding towards the opposite end where the Rajya Sabha gates, No. 11 and 12, are located. According to a senior official, this fact has been corroborated by the BJP's Rajya Sabha member BP Singhal, whose white Contessa vehicle was following closely behind the terrorists' car and entered immediately after it.

Singhal, a former Director General of Police and VHP chief Ashok Singhal's brother, reportedly told Lok Sabha Speaker GMC Balayogi later that even before the attack began, the occupants of the Ambassador had aroused his suspicion. The car was moving fast in an erratic fashion and he noticed that several people were tightly crammed in it.

Though he may have faced

some dangerous situations in his police career, this is one incident Singhal is not likely to forget in a hurry. For he narrowly escaped death at the hands of the ultras as they opened fire soon afterwards near the Rajya Sabha gate from where he was to enter the building. The MP apparently ordered his driver to get him away quickly as the CCTV footage shows his car reversing at breakneck speed, doing an about-turn near Gate No.1 and dashing wildly back out of the Parliament Street entrance.

An official said the terrorists seemed to have chosen the Parliament Street entrance for getting in as there is a tremendous rush of vehicles there during the morning hours and chances of entering the Parliament premises

undetected are high.

That there was no system of checking each car and its occupants obviously helped the militants. The guards were supposed to make a physical check of each car and ascertain the identity of its occupants but this was not being done most of the time, the official admitted.

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the US, an expert committee headed by Delhi Police Joint Commissioner Suresh Roy had reviewed the Parliament security set-up and made several recommendations to tighten it in view of a similar threat in the capital. The report of the committee was submitted some time back and its recommendations are yet to be implemented.

Unprecedented security for PM's city visit

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, December 14

THE PRIME MINISTER flew into the city at 10.25 pm today amid unprecedented security. He will spend the night at the Raj Bhavan before leaving for Santiniketan tomorrow.

Vajpayee, who will preside over the convocation ceremony at Visva-Bharati as its Acharya, will also attend two programmes in the city tomorrow. He leaves for New Delhi in the evening.

Hours after terrorists struck in New Delhi yesterday, the Centre sought a report from the State Government on steps taken to ensure impregnable security for the Prime Minister.

"For the first time, surveillance equipment, including radars at the Kalaikunda, Barrackpore and Panagarh airbases, will remain operational round the clock," an officer informed. The usual procedure is to switch them off for brief intervals every day.

Nearly 2,000 men in uniform stood guard along the stretch from the Dum Dum Airport to the Raj Bhavan as the Prime Minister's cavalcade drove down. Sources said that sharp shooters too were deployed on high-rise buildings all along the route.

The Raj Bhavan, completely sanitised, resembled a fortress. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Reserve Force) Jayanta Basu personally marshalled the 250 uniformed men as they threw a tight security ring around the building. That apart, 15 special commandos were posted inside the Raj Bhavan. Jammers and censors have been installed around the Raj Bhavan.

The Royal Calcutta Turf Club, from where the PM's helicopter leaves for Santiniketan at 9.35 am tomorrow, is being covered by the First Battalion of the city police. The Army and police have carried out routine anti-sabotage checks at the helipad.

At Santiniketan, the Puraballi Mela Ground has been sealed off. No one will be allowed within 45 feet of the Prime Minister.

Related reports on Page 3

23/12

Time for Pak. to act: India HO-1

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 22. Keeping up the pressure on Pakistan, India today said that it was looking for "concrete action" by Islamabad against the leaders and activities of the two Pakistan-based outfits involved in last Thursday's attack on the Parliament House.

India has accused the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) of masterminding the attack. "The time has come for

Pakistan to take action. There is no room for prevarication," the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Ms. Nirupama Rao, said when asked whether India would look afresh at its decision to recall its High Commissioner from Pakistan now that Islamabad has reportedly frozen the assets of the LeT.

Disregarding the Pakistani move, the spokesperson said that Islamabad had to take action against "the leadership of these

groups also." In its verbal demarche delivered to the Pakistan High Commissioner last Friday, India had stated that apart from blocking the Lashkar's finances, Pakistan needed to arrest the leaders of the organisation.

India today routed its demand on Pakistan for action against the LeT and the JeM through its comments on Friday's statement by the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, who had called upon the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez

Musharraf, to "take decisive action against the LeT, the JeM and other terrorist organisations, their leaders, finances and activities."

Welcoming Mr. Bush's call, the statement said, "this is what we have called upon Pakistan to do." It added that the "international community will judge the response by what concrete action Pakistan takes."

India, she said, was fully justified in demanding "comprehensive action" against the LeT and the JeM and other organisations that had made anti-India activities their sole agenda. The LeT received sustenance from Pakistani agencies to conduct operations against civilians and the security personnel in India, she said.

Troop build-up

India has moved forward its key forces to operational locations. Pakistan has also pushed forward its key military assets. Except for the Peshawar-based 11 Corps that has been positioned along the border with Afghanistan, Pakistan has moved the rest of its forces closer to the Indian borders.

We do not have 'infinite' patience: Jaswant

KABUL, DEC. 22. Asserting that India did not have "infinite" patience, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, today said the recall of the Indian High Commissioner from Islamabad was only a "signal" to Pakistan that it recognised the enormity of the situation after the attack on Parliament.

"The step was only a signal, a message to Pakistan so that it recognises the enormity of the situation," Mr. Singh said when asked about New Delhi's decision to recall the High Commissioner, Mr. Vijay Nambiar.

Mr. Singh, who represented India at the installation of the new interim government in Kabul head-

ed by Mr. Hamid Karzai, was talking to reporters after reopening the Indian embassy.

He said the attack on Parliament was not just an attack on the "stones and mortars of a building called Parliament but on the very sovereignty of India." Mr. Singh said India had patience, but "it is not infinite".

'Must act on demarche'

On his return to New Delhi tonight, Mr. Singh stressed that Pakistan must act on the demarche demanding a ban and freeze of assets of the LeT and the JeM — PTI

U.S. asks Pak. to act against Jaish, Lashkar

WASHINGTON, DEC. 22. The United States has categorically asked Pakistan to take action against the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and other terrorist organisations operating from Pakistan.

"The President calls on him to take action against the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad and other terrorist organisations, their leaders and their finances," the White House press secretary, Mr. Ari Fleischer, said.

"The President will support President Musharraf in his efforts against terrorism," he told reporters on Friday.

Condemning the attack on Parliament and the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, he said, they "were meant to strike at the Indian democracy and kill its leaders.

Mr. George Bush, Mr. Fleischer said, "has

every confidence in Gen. Musharraf's capacity" to act against the terrorists.

The U.S. State Department spokesperson, Mr. Richard Boucher, said that though the U.S. had asked Islamabad to take immediate action against the outfits, it rejected claims that the Pakistan Government was involved in the attack on the Indian Parliament.

"Now that there is the evidence, the U.S. is confident Gen. Musharraf will act against them," he said. "India has released certain evidence linking the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, both of which are based in Pakistan, to the terrorist attacks."

"We do know those groups have committed terrorist acts and they intend to sabotage efforts at Indo-Pakistan reconciliation and to undermine Gen. Musharraf," Mr. Boucher

said, adding, "we know these groups have bases in Pakistan... and how they operate."

He, however, denied Pakistan's involvement. "We have not seen anything that would indicate the Pakistan Government was somehow behind these attacks."

'U.S. defusing tensions'

At a roundtable with a group of reporters at the Oval Office on Friday, Mr. Bush said the U.S. was "very much involved" in defusing tensions between Pakistan and India. Asked whether he would appoint a special envoy to the region, Mr. Bush said, "no, we don't need one," and added that the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, had been in contact by telephone with officials in the region. — PTI, AFP

THE HINDU

23 DEC 2001

India piles pressure on Pakistan

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Dec. 22. — A day after India recalled its envoy to Islamabad, it remained firm in its demand that Pakistan take decisive action against terrorist groups operating from its territory.

(The Prime Minister said in Gwalior tonight that though the country prayed for peace, it wouldn't hesitate to perform its duty during a crisis. India is well versed in the art of war, he added, PTI reports.)

The government wasn't satisfied by Islamabad merely freezing the financial assets of the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, a foreign ministry spokesperson said. "We want the leadership of these organisations arrested and we want justice."

It seems India won't reconsider in a hurry its decisions to recall the high commissioner and terminate train and bus services between the two countries. "The time has come for Pakistan to take comprehensive, all-round action against all terrorist groups operating against India from its soil," the spokesperson said.

(There was, however, no confirmation in Islamabad that the assets of the two groups have been frozen. PTI adds. The Lashkar denied the report)

There are no indications that New Delhi will mount a major diplomatic offensive by sending special envoys to world capitals to explain its viewpoint, a sign of the government's confidence.

Further diplomatic actions, that could include reducing the number of officials in Islamabad, would be taken if Pakistan failed to meet India's demand for action against the terrorist groups.

Cutting off diplomatic ties will be among the most extreme options and that would require Pakistan almost immediately doing so.

Meanwhile, India's diplomatic onslaught has brought about a slight but perceptible shift in the international opinion.

Mr. George W Bush has called on General Pervez Musharraf to "take decisive action against the Lashkar, Jaish, and other terrorist organisations, their leaders, finances, and activities."

In response, New Delhi said: "This is precisely what we've called upon Pakistan to do."

On Gen Musharraf's statement that India's reaction was "arrogant and kneejerk," the spokesperson said: "We've acted on the courage of convictions and are fully justified in taking this action."

India's traditional ally, Russia, called for res-

straint, but termed New Delhi's decisions as "an internal affair". Editorials in leading American papers commended India's measures and directly accused Pakistan of not doing enough to curb terrorism.

The British media too accused Pakistan of not doing enough against anti-India terrorists operating from its soil.

Qazi persona non grata?

NEW DELHI, Dec. 22. — India has recalled its envoy to Islamabad but the latter has not reciprocated. And this has left the Pakistani high commissioner here, Mr Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, in a curious and diplomatically unenviable situation.

Diplomatic relations having been effectively downgraded, Mr Qazi's presence will become largely unnecessary. He is now effectively a persona non grata, though the Centre wouldn't declare him such.

India's official contact with the mission will be mostly through the deputy chief, Mr Jaleel Abbas Jilani.

Should Mr Qazi now wish to meet someone senior in the government, his access would be unofficially restricted to the joint secretary level. — SNS

■ More reports on pages 7 & 10

THE STATESMAN

23 11 2001

Pak. allows Jaswant to fly over its airspace

By Pranab Dhal Samanta

NEW DELHI, DEC. 22. Even as India stepped up diplomatic pressure on Pakistan by withdrawing its High Commissioner on Friday, it did not stop the aircraft carrying the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, to Kabul from flying over Pakistan airspace today.

The IAF Boeing 737, which departed from Delhi at 7 a.m., took the shortest possible route to Kabul as it headed north-west towards Amritsar before crossing over to Pakistan airspace. It then flew over Lahore, and touching the imaginary points Indek, Jabar, and Kandu, entered Afghan airspace. The flight was, however, asked to stay away from the Sargodha military base near Lahore. It is understood that this was done following a problem which had cropped up when the IAF flight ferrying the newly-appointed Afghan Foreign Minister, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, to Delhi a couple of weeks ago was warned that it was flying too close to the Sargodha base.

Though flights carrying Indian officials have been using this route after the United States started its military campaign in Afghanistan, this was the first aircraft carrying important officials to overfly Pakistan after the December 13 attack on Parliament. Moreover, sources said, the diplomatic offensive launched by India could have resulted in Pakistan closing its airspace to Indian aircraft.

While none of this may have

happened, there was talk among officials on Friday to change the route for security reasons. In which case an alternate route would have to be planned for Mr. Singh's plane. Security reasons had also prompted the circuitous route taken by the Ilyushin-76 that carried the first Indian diplomatic mission to Afghanistan after Kabul's fall.

About a month ago, this plane took a route that avoided Pakistan. Flying south-west from Delhi, the plane headed for Rajkot in Gujarat before crossing Indian airspace at Jamnagar. It flew south of Pakistan over the Arabian Sea towards Oman, then turned north into Iran and entered Afghanistan from the Iranian side. However, this route took about six hours more than it normally would have taken via Pakistan.

Meanwhile, it is learnt that Pakistan has also given clearance for Mr. Jaswant Singh's flight to cross its airspace during the return journey to New Delhi.

IT, Communication Ministries merged

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 22. The Government today issued a notification merging the Ministries of Communication and Information Technology. To be known as the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), it would comprise three departments — posts, telecom and IT.

23 DEC 2001

Musharraf terms India's response 'arrogant'

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Pak 40-1

28/12

XI'AN, (China), DEC. 22. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today denounced what he called India's "very arrogant and knee-jerk response" to December 13 attack on Parliament. But Pakistan would not respond in kind, he said. "We regret the very arrogant and knee-jerk response of the Indians," he told presspersons here.

With reference to India's troop movement along the LoC, the recall of its envoy to Pakistan, and its decision to call off the bus and train services between the two countries, the General was asked if Islamabad would respond in kind. He said "no."

Gen. Musharraf's comments were his first on India in three days in China, during which he has generally avoided reporters. He declined to answer further questions after praying at the Great Mosque here, a Chinese city towards the eastern end of the ancient Silk Road and home to the famed Terracotta warriors.

'Osama is probably dead'

Gen. Musharraf said he was "reasonably sure" that the Saudi mastermind, Osama bin Laden, had not escaped to Pakistan and that there was a "great possibility" that he was dead, a report from Beijing said.

In an interview broadcast on the State television, he said "he's not in Pakistan, of that we are reasonably sure. We have sealed the borders between Afghanistan and Pakistan... May be he is dead because of all the operations that have been conducted..." he said,

adding, "there is a great possibility that he may have lost his life there."

However, Pakistan would hand over Osama to the United States, if caught. "If he does enter Pakistan, if we identify him, he will be handed over." — AP, Reuters

Not aware of any action: Lashkar

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 22. The much-awaited announcement on action against the Pakistan-based militant outfits, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad, named by India as responsible for the December 13 attack on Parliament, did not come till late in the evening amid indications that the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Vijay K. Nambiar, is planning to leave at the earliest.

The spokesman for the Lashkar, Mr. Yahya Mujaheed, told *The Hindu* "we are not aware of any move by the Pakistan Government against our organisation. We fail to understand how it can act against us when we have no operations in Pakistan."

Reacting to reports that Islamabad was under tremendous pressure to act against the Lashkar, he said the U.S. move was unfair. His organisation had nothing to do with terrorism. "We possess no assets in Europe or America, neither we have any network across Pakistan." The Lashkar feared nothing from the U.S. "We believe in Allah, we work for Allah."

Pakistan would have to think a

"thousand times" before taking any action against his outfit. "The people of Pakistan look upon the mujahideen in Kashmir as heroes, they would not tolerate any action against us."

In a separate statement, the Lashkar chief, Prof. Muhammad Saeed, said "New Delhi or any other world power which has evidence about the Kashmiri mujahideen's involvement should come out with solid evidence. We are only promoting education and preaching Islam in Pakistan... We have written a letter to the U.S. State Department too, inviting attention to the fact that the mujahideen are only waging a just struggle for their right to self-determination."

Meanwhile, diplomatic sources said Mr. Nambiar, who has been recalled to protest the Musharraf Government's inaction, would leave for New Delhi early next week. "The indications from the Indian High Commission are Mr. Nambiar would leave by the first available flight, irrespective of the action contemplated by Islamabad. The row between India and Pakistan is not expected to be resolved soon," a senior Western diplomat said.

A reason for the "delay" in initiating action against the outfits could be the absence of senior leaders of the Musharraf regime. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, is away on a trip to China and the Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, is expected to return from Kabul only later in the night.

23 DEC 2001

China tells Pakistan to resolve Kashmir issue through talks

BEIJING: Rejecting Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's request that China use its influence and help find a solution to the Kashmir issue, Beijing on Friday said the "best way" would be for India and Pakistan to resolve the problem through peaceful bilateral negotiations.

Addressing a select gathering of newspaper editors, scholars and policy-makers at a breakfast-meeting here, Gen Musharraf said he had requested Chinese President Jiang Zemin, during their summit talks on Thursday, to use his influence in settling the Kashmir issue. Stating that there was a "high degree of tension" between the two nuclear states after the recent attack on the Indian Parliament, Gen Musharraf



Gen. Musharraf

warned that it would further escalate if the "root cause" of the problem was not addressed properly.

A Chinese foreign ministry official told reporters that Mr Jiang had stressed Beijing's desire to see a peaceful settlement of the issue and wanted to see direct talks between Islamabad and New Delhi. He said Beijing was willing to mediate between India and Pakistan to ease tension in the region, but made it clear that the initiative to improve their ties should come from the two countries themselves. The official said, "China will help relax tensions and improve relations between India and Pakistan, but the key to the question is for the two countries to solve their dispute in a peaceful manner." (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

2 650 2001

BUS, TRAIN SERVICES TO LAHORE OFF FROM JANUARY

India recalls envoy to Pak.

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, DEC. 21. In a dramatic development, India today decided to recall its High Commissioner and terminate land transport links with Pakistan as part of its effort to exert "maximum pressure" on Islamabad to crack down on the terrorist outfits involved in last Thursday's attack on the Parliament House. India had last recalled its High Commissioner from Pakistan in 1965.

India has also unilaterally decided to terminate the Samjhauta Express train, which runs between Amritsar and Lahore. The bus service from New Delhi to Lahore that symbolised a transient thaw in Indo-Pak. relations in early 1999 is also being stopped. Both the bus and the rail links will be snapped from the beginning of next year. According to an official statement, the services are not being terminated immediately to facilitate the return of citizens of the two countries.

The statement issued today said that Pakistan's inaction against the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) after December 13 and the "complete lack of concern" towards cross-border terrorism were responsible for its decisions. India's stance was conveyed to the Pakistani High Commissioner by the Foreign Secretary, Ms. Chokila Iyer.

Government sources pointed out that the High Commissioner, Mr. Vijay Nambiar, was expected to return home shortly. They added that the decision to recall the High Commissioner was part of India's "graduated response" to last Thursday's development. Further diplomatic measures in future to reinforce India's determination to curb Pakistan-based terrorism cannot be ruled out.

The move does not necessitate reciprocity by Pakistan as New Delhi had not declared the Pakistani High Commissioner, Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, persona non grata, the sources added. In an interview to a private television channel, Mr. Qazi, however, described the announcement as "unfortunate" and stated readiness to act against terrorists provided New Delhi furnished Islamabad with concrete proof.

This evening's announcement by the Ministry of External Affairs

'It is a message for Pak.'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 21. The Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan,



was preceded by a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS).

The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee presided. His key Cabinet colleagues and the three service chiefs attended the meeting.

According to sources, announcement is meant to reinforce the pressure on Pakistan to act against the LeT and the JeM as the signal being sent from here is that India's concerns on terrorism are not merely confined to rhetoric.

In fact, the hardening of India's stance is part of a rapidly evolving diplomatic exercise that seeks a Pakistani crackdown on the LeT and the JeM at its heart.

India's troop mobilisation as a response to the Pakistan build-up along the borders also dovetails in this effort. By moving its troops, India has conveyed to Islamabad and the rest of the world that it is not ruling out a military option as a last resort to curtail Pakistan based anti-India terrorist activity, analysts say.

India's move to put pressure on Pakistan, however, is not linked to the announcement by the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, imposing financial curbs on the LeT, the sources stressed.

In fact, the mood in official circles here is that the U.S. pronouncements must now be followed by meaningful decisions on enforce-

Mr. Vijay K. Nambiar, said here today that India's decision to recall him from Islamabad was meant to "deliver a message" to the Pakistan Government.

"I suppose it is reflected in the decision announced by the External Affairs Ministry spokesperson and, more important, the message gets across," he said when approached for his comments on the latest developments.

It is not clear yet when exactly Mr. Nambiar would leave Islamabad and for how long New Delhi intends to 'withdraw' the High Commissioner from here. Perhaps, it is for the first time since the 1971 conflict between India and Pakistan that New Delhi has taken such a drastic step.

ing its intent. Government sources have been less than enthusiastic about Mr. Bush's description of the LeT as a "Kashmir"-based extremist group. This view, it is pointed out, contradicts the assertion in a White House Fact Sheet that describes the LeT as the armed wing of the "Pakistan-based", religious organisation. However, India after taking a "holistic view" of the U.S. response, has welcomed Mr. Bush's statement.

'Take bodies of terrorists'

NEW DELHI, DEC. 21. India today asked Pakistan to take the bodies of five terrorists killed in the suicide attack on Parliament on December 13.

The Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan, Mr. Jalil Abbas Gilani, was summoned to the foreign office and conveyed India's readiness to hand over the bodies to Pakistani authorities.

"Now that there is no doubt that the terrorists were Pakistanis, Islamabad should take the bodies," a spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said.

She said it had been established that the killed terrorists — identified as Mohammad, Raja, Haider, Humza and Rana — were all Pakistani nationals.

'Pak. will not respond in kind'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 21. While regretting the Indian decision to recall the High Commissioner to Pakistan and suspend the rail and road services between the two countries, Pakistan has said that it has decided not to respond 'in kind' to New Delhi's action.

In a carefully-worded statement, the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, said here tonight that his country was of the view that in the present 'tense situation', it was all the more necessary to keep open all the channels of communications.

There was the suggestion in his statement that Islamabad has no intention of downgrading its mission in New Delhi and follow India's example by recalling its High Commissioner, Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi. Islamabad's response followed an emergency meeting presided over by the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, in the evening.

It is said that the decision followed a directive from the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, currently away in Beijing on a five-day state visit.

It is clear that Islamabad does not intend to join issue with New Delhi at this juncture but it wants to make out a case before the international community that it has no intention of escalating tension.

A senior Pakistan Foreign Office official said India's action was unprecedented since the war between the two countries in 1971. "We do see it as a serious development that could impact Indo-Pak.

relations in a big way in the coming days and weeks but our position on the attack on Indian Parliament remains the same".

Mr. Aziz Khan said India's decision was regrettable and the suspension of the train and bus services would severely affect the people and trade.

He said the Indian allegation against Pakistan of continued promotion of cross-border terrorism was rejected. India was reminded to provide "credible evidence" of any involvement of Pakistan-based groups or individuals in any terrorism incident in India for investigation and appropriate action by Pakistan.

The spokesman said that New Delhi had persistently turned down Islamabad's offer of a joint inquiry into the 'true motives' and identities of the perpetrators of the terrorist incident. Pakistan would persevere in its 'policy of restraint' and would continue to work for the lowering of tensions.

On the U.S. decision to freeze the financial assets of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, a senior official of the Musharraf Government said that it would not affect Pakistan. "The U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, while announcing the decision said that Lashkar is an outfit operating in Kashmir and is a source of trouble for both India and Pakistan."

The observation is significant as in recent days the Lashkar has been maintaining that it does not operate from Pakistan soil. Recently the outfit's spokesman claimed that it operated from Muzaffarabad, the capital of the Pak-Occupied Kashmir (PoK).

"The information provided by the co-collaborators of the terror attack conclusively proves their Pakistani identity.

In fact, one of the terrorists made a phone call to his family members in Karachi a day before the attack," she said.

PM briefs President

The Prime Minister today briefed the President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, about the Government's decision to recall its High Commissioner from Islamabad. Mr. Vajpayee was with the President for about 30 minutes at Rashtrapati Bhavan. — UNI

Opposition not consulted, says CPI(M)

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 21. The CPI(M) today said the Government did not take the Opposition or the country into confidence before taking a major measure such as recalling the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan.

The CPI(M) politburo member, Mr. Sitaram Yechury, said the measure could be understood if the Government had evidence showing Pakistan's involvement.

He said the move came at a time when international opinion was gradually building in India's favour and suggested that the Government should have consolidated the position by marshalling evidence.

It is up to Govt.: Cong.

The Congress steered clear of making any detailed observations. Mr. Natwar Singh, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Department of the AICC, said that as far as the Congress was concerned, it had given its broad support to the Government. It was now for the Government to decide on matters related to the recall of the High Commissioner, and the termination of the Samjhauta Express and the bus to Lahore. "We do not come into the picture."

The BJP's spokesperson, Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, described it as a "welcome step in right direction". He said that the Prime Minister had already made it clear that the attack on the Parliament was carried out by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists and it was a crime against the entire nation. It was the first step by the Government in response to the December 13 attack and more steps would be taken in the same direction, he said. But he refused to divulge any details.

22 DEC 2001

Parliament staff held for passing state secrets

SR1
21/12
Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 23. — India today denied Pakistan's allegation that a member of its diplomatic staff in New Delhi was "kidnapped" and "tortured" by the Indian police.

Sources in the Ministry of External Affairs said a Pakistan High Commission employee, Mohammed Sharif Khan, was last night caught red-handed by Delhi Police accepting "sensitive" documents and detained for questioning. Khan has been asked to leave the country.

In a late night raid, the special cell of Delhi Police caught a senior executive assistant, posted at the questions cell of the Parliament Secretariat.

Ajay Kumar (48), a resident of Nanakpura, was handing over a bag to the Pakistan High Commission employee — reportedly an Intelligence agent — outside a fast food restaurant in Rajendra Place, near Karol Bagh. The police had already been tipped off that the documents being passed on pertained to national security.

The bag contained particulars of a certain cantonment area of the Indian Army. It also contained sensitive information pertaining to defence, atomic energy, nuclear research, ship designing, technology upgradation and railway

security.

Later, Kumar said he had been in touch with the Pakistan High Commission based intelligence agents for the past few years and in return received substantial payments.

"He used to supply information about location of various defence units and movements on the basis of his personal observation and pass on sensitive documents, which he had access to because of his official position," an officer said.

Kumar reportedly told the Delhi Police that Sharif Khan had on several occasions requested him to arrange for a Parliament entry pass for him. "Kumar claims he was not able to do this. We are verifying that," said officers.

"Khan had also asked for details of security arrangements and Kumar told him that the security staff inside Parliament were unarmed".

Till late tonight, it was not established whether Khan had played any role in the 13 December attack on Parliament.

Earlier, Pakistan said Khan had been illegally detained and tortured and it had lodged a strong protest over the matter, UNI adds from Islamabad.

A Pakistan Foreign Office statement said Khan was kidnapped at 5.30 p.m. yesterday while shopping. During interrogation, he was stripped naked, severely beaten up and tortured.

THE STATESMAN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2001

THE NEW CRISIS IN TIES WITH PAKISTAN

THE POLITICAL LOGIC of India's decision to recall its High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Vijay Nambiar, seems to suggest that the latest crisis in bilateral relations can yet be managed with care and prudence from both sides. A silver lining is that New Delhi has not severed the overall diplomatic link with Islamabad. The Vajpayee administration's move must necessarily be acknowledged in the larger context of the aborted yet heinous terrorist strike against India's parliamentary democracy on December 13. Moreover, India's security concerns deserve to be articulated in a manner that could elicit empathy from the global community. At one level, New Delhi's action appears to have been taken to assuage the moral indignation of the Indian people themselves. So, if the "message" about India's mood is sought to be conveyed to Pakistan in this manner and in lieu of any action of muscle-flexing by New Delhi at this stage, the present phase of diplomatic escalation on the bilateral front may yet be contained. Pakistan's immediate pledge to refrain from a tit-for-tat reprisal can serve as a helpful gesture in this limited sub-text of an enormously complicated relationship. While the political-military establishments of the two countries find themselves on a dangerous collision course yet again, the need to allow some space for the people on either side to keep alive a semblance of normality cannot be exaggerated. Utterly indefensible, therefore, is New Delhi's decision to suspend the rail and road links between India and Pakistan with effect from the approaching New Year's Day. *gnd*

New Delhi's move to recall its envoy is perhaps a sign of its political will to explore all non-military options in order to pressure Islamabad to take action against the anti-India terrorist groups that Pakistan is hospitable to. Deplorable, though, as a negative sign is New Delhi's move concerning people-to-people contacts. The Samjhauta Express Train that links Amritsar

to Lahore and the Delhi-Lahore bus service have often helped the ordinary people on either side to transcend the psychological barrier between the two neighbours in ways that their political leaders have rarely been able to appreciate or emulate. India's security authorities are said to be concerned about the possible misuse of these transportation links by some subversive elements from Pakistan. Yet, the danger is that the suspension of these services will fuel speculation that New Delhi may have begun to consider a military option. Nonetheless, New Delhi's apparent gameplan in this overall situation is to make use of the standard diplomatic methods of expressing displeasure so as to force Islamabad to reverse its policy in regard to the anti-India terrorist groups that operate under Pakistan's tutelage or tolerance. Given this, New Delhi will do well to treat the recall of its envoy as a temporary measure.

RO-10 22/12
Of direct relevance to the latest crisis is the dispute arising out of India's reluctance to share with Pakistan any piece of evidence that might establish a criminal connection between the attack on the Parliament House in New Delhi and the two identified terrorist groups. Now, the U.S., which is closely monitoring the new confrontational surge in South Asia, seems satisfied with "certain evidence" that New Delhi "has released" in this regard. The State Department has also noted that the terrorist outfits in question "have bases in Pakistan" and that the U.S. would look forward to seeing President Musharraf take steps against these groups. However, the U.S. has at this point rejected the suggestion that the Pakistan Government itself is involved. Given such international sensitivities, New Delhi should take the U.N. into confidence about the evidence and explore ways of convincing Pakistan too. The critical mass of mutual suspicions on the India-Pakistan front should be deflated so that the flash point is not ignited.

THE HINDU

24 DEC 2001

Bullets fly at border

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, December 23

THE TROOPS build-up along the Indo-Pak border reached a flashpoint today when Indian and Pakistani soldiers engaged in a fierce gunbattle in the Samba and Poonch sectors of Jammu after Pakistan Rangers ambushed a BSF patrol in the Banglad area.

Three jawans were killed and three others critically wounded when Pakistani Rangers ambushed a BSF patrol party along the Zero Line in the Samba area of Jammu division, official sources said.

India was swift and impressive in counter-attack, destroying 10 Pakistani bunkers and killing or wounding more than 20 Pakistani soldiers with heavy artillery and mortar fire, BSF sources said.

The jawans ambushed earlier had been patrolling the border close to the Gallard outpost following reports of a huge Pakistani border build-up.

When they neared a field, the Pakistani Rangers opened fire from close quarters. Head constable Jaiprakash and constable K Bhai were killed on the spot. Three other constables, Chanderkosh, KC Das and Bhasker, were badly wounded. They were rushed to the military hospital here. Unofficial reports, however, put the death toll at four. A civilian, Dwarikanath, was injured too.

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met in the Capital to review the fast worsening situation on the border. The CCS was chaired by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and attended by Defence Minister George Fernandes, Home Minister LK Advani, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, Planning Commission Deputy Chairman KC Pant and the three Service chiefs.

On India's options in the developing situation, Jaswant Singh later told the media that he could not divulge what the Government was planning to do. But India was prepared to meet any situation. The Government could unveil its thinking only gradually, he added.



AP/PTI PHOTO

An Indian jawan keeps tab on Pakistani troops movement near Jammu from his bunker.

The External Affairs Minister lashed out at President Pervez Musharraf's description of the Indian withdrawal of its High Commissioner as an "arrogant and knee-jerk response." "I do not wish to descend to the level of military barrack room dialogue in this regard. This is extremely regrettable," he said after a nearly two-hour meeting of the CCS.

The Indian reaction had been

"instinctive". The Pakistan President did not appear to have given much thought to what he had said. For Musharraf to describe an issue of such high importance in the words he used "is really for him to be living in an Alice in Wonderland kind of situation," he added.

Defence Minister George Fernandes told a news agency that Indian forces were on high alert on the Pakistani border but he

still did not expect war to break out.

Pak threat: The Pakistan Communications Minister, Lt-Gen (retd) Javed Ashraf, said the chances of a war were slim, because both countries are nuclear states and "if it ever comes to destruction of Pakistan and threat to our solidarity, then we would use any weapon that we have."

PAK HIGH COMMISSION STAFFER CAUGHT SPYING

MOHAMMAD SHARIF Khan, a Pakistan High Commission staffer, was caught "red-handed" in New Delhi on Saturday night while receiving sensitive information from an Indian contact near Nirula's restaurant at Rajendra Place in central Delhi, the police said. The Indian contact has been identified as Ajay Kumar, a senior executive assistant, with the question cell of the Parliament Secretariat.

Pakistan, however, on Sunday accused India of kidnapping and torturing Khan and said it had lodged an official protest with the Indian mission in Islamabad. Pakistan said Khan was kidnapped by Indian Intelligence operatives, stripped, severely beaten and tortured. "The medical report confirms that Khan was ruthlessly beaten and tortured," it said. "Khan was freed after being forced to sign a statement acknowledging involvement in espionage." India denied the allegation. *Detailed report on Page 9*

- Massive Pakistan Army build-up along border, p9
- Exodus from border villages as tension mounts, p9
- Hurriyat's link with DU Prof comes to fore, p9
- IAF team to study US air tactics, p12
- Police use Afzal to hunt Ghazi Baba, p9
- Ultras panned digital eye, p9

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 DEC 2001

Vajpayee's remarks unfortunate: Pak.

12/12 By B. Muralidhar Reddy HD-12

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 11. Pakistan has described as "unfortunate" the remarks of the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in Japan that the atmosphere was "not congenial" for resumption of dialogue between Pakistan and India. Meanwhile, in an interview, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, said that his country was willing to enter into a sustained, meaningful and result-oriented dialogue with India to find a just solution to the Kashmir dispute.

Gen. Musharraf told the Russian newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* that the main cause of Indo-Pak. tension and hostility was the unresolved dispute of Jammu and Kashmir and the "relentless Indian repression of innocent Kashmiris".

"Pakistan stands for a peaceful negotiated resolution of the dispute in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people." Both countries were bound by their commitment to the international community and also the Kashmiri people to resolve the dispute as envisaged in the Security Council resolutions.

To a question on the reported remarks of Mr. Vajpayee at the end of his five-day trip to Japan, the Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, said Pakistan was open to the resolution of all out-

standing issues with India. Reiterating that Kashmir was the main issue bedevilling relations, he said Islamabad was up front on the subject at the Agra Summit in July last. Pakistan desired peaceful resolution of the dispute.

"It is unfortunate if the Indian Government and leadership believed that the atmosphere is not congenial for resumption of dialogue. We may differ on the interpretation of congenial atmosphere but Pakistan sincerely believes that we need to take the first step and talk."

Maj. Gen. Quereshi also disagreed with the reported remarks of Mr. Vajpayee that Pakistan was creating hurdles in the coming elections to the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. He maintained that India had created the problem in Kashmir and whatever was happening there was the result of the people's reaction to the "oppression and suppression of their rights".

To a question on India's decision to revitalise the Pant Committee and engage Kashmiri leaders in the dialogue process, the Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, claimed that the All-Party Hurriyat Conference had rejected any proposal for talks without Pakistan's involvement.

'No division in Pak. society'

In the interview published on Sunday, Gen.

Gen. Musharraf
Musharraf asserted that there was no division in Pakistani society over the decision of his Government to join the international coalition and also against the military strikes in Afghanistan.

"The vast majority of Pakistanis have strongly backed the Government's stance to support the international coalition in its fight against terrorism." The decision to join the coalition was based on a "principled position to oppose terrorism in all its forms and manifestations". While maintaining that the vast majority of the people was behind the Government, he said, "There are many political parties in Pakistan which are functioning freely. They may differ with some aspects of the Government policy and in the wisdom of the decision to back the international coalition."

Asked to evaluate the two-month anti-terrorist campaign, he said, "I think it is too early to pass a judgment and probably one could assert at this point in time that some of the objectives have been met while others are still to be met." On Afghanistan's future, he said, any new Government there should be broad-based, multi-ethnic, freely-chosen and friendly towards its neighbours, including Pakistan.

The former King, Mr. Zahir Shah, was a respected figure and could keep Afghanistan united. "He can act as a symbol around which the people can rally for peace in Afghanistan."

THE HINDU

12 DEC 2001

West worried over Indo-Pak sideshow of regional rivalry in Afghanistan

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: India makes rapid diplomatic inroads into Kabul through the Northern Alliance leadership. Pakistan makes a beeline for the Pashtun command of Hamid Karzai in Kandahar.

India strengthens its alliance with the U.S. and tidies up its ties with Japan. Pakistan heads for the familiar comfort of China.

India tightens its embrace of troubled Nepal. Pakistan takes advantage of the defeat of Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh, woos the more Islamist Khaleda Zia, and reaches out to the military junta in Myanmar.

So what if India and Pakistan do not play cricket with each other? They are engaged in a far bigger

strategic game in the neighbourhood. As the version two of the Great Game is being played out in the killing fields of Afghanistan, western analysts are watching with great interest the India-Pakistan sideshow that has all the trappings of a regional rivalry.

Except, India, by virtue of its secular ideology, consistency and size, is finally walking tall. Pakistan, unsure and adrift, is trying hard to play catch-up.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Afghanistan itself, where for years the two countries backed rival factions. Now, with the fall of the Taliban, it is New Delhi's day, as its Northern Alliance proteges are swept into power.

But Islamabad is not giving up without a fight. As deftly as it ditched the Taliban, Pakistan is now cottoned on to the newly-cho-

sen Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai, hoping to arrest Kabul's tilt towards India.

According to reports from Pakistan, consternation about the visit to New Delhi by Afghanistan's presumptive foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah on Wednesday, just days after Interior Minister Qanooni's visit, has led the Musharraf regime to try and get Mr Karzai to visit Islamabad.

Attempts are also afoot to drive a wedge between Mr Karzai and the Alliance leaders by suggesting that the former is unhappy with the visits and the utterances of the designated ministers. Mr Karzai, who was educated in Shimla, has himself not said a word.

Meanwhile, as Pakistan tries to get a diplomatic toe-hold in Kandahar, India has swiftly gotten a foot-hold in Kabul, where it is

poised to be among the first countries to re-open its diplomatic mission (which will happen almost simultaneously with Kabul opening its mission in New Delhi).

Not to be outdone, Pakistan too has said it will reopen its embassy in Kabul, although its diplomats have been a no-show so far, given the public hostility against the Taliban-backers.

In Washington, senior administration officials say an Indo-Pak rivalry in Afghanistan is the last thing they want, while the war against terrorism is still incomplete and the world is faced with the enormous task of the country's reconstruction.

But they are also deeply appreciative of New Delhi's humanitarian aid to Kabul, including the dispatch of medical personnel and supplies.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 DEC 2001

No talks with Pak now: PM

Tokyo/Isamabad, December 11

INDIA TODAY showed no signs of relenting on the issue of talks with Pakistan even as Pervez Musharraf said he was ready for "sustained, meaningful and result-oriented" dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue.

In Tokyo today, Atal Bihari Vajpayee said the atmosphere was not "congenial" now for such an exercise, especially in view of the war in Afghanistan.

He also asked Islamabad not to create hurdles in the way of holding Assembly polls (in Jammu and Kashmir). Let the people of the State freely come out, participate in the elections without fear," the Prime Minister said.

He said Japan and other friendly nations wanted India to resume talks with Pakistan to resolve outstanding disputes, but he told his Japanese counterpart Junichiro Koizumi that India was facing certain difficulties

and the atmosphere was not "congenial" for talks. Vajpayee said he told Koizumi that there would soon be elections in Jammu and Kashmir and people would be free to decide what they want in a democratic manner.

Meanwhile, in an interview to the Russian newspaper Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Gen Musharraf said India and Pakistan were bound by their commitment to the United Nations and to the Kashmiri people to resolve the issue according to the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Pakistan was willing to enter into a dialogue with India to find a just solution of the issue on that basis, he said.

Gen Musharraf said Pakistani forces were capable of defending the country's territorial integrity. "They would also ensure that Pakistan played its due role in the fight against terrorism."

In Tokyo, before leaving for New Delhi today, Vajpayee said Japan and India agreed to

enhance defence exchanges.

On the issue of terrorism, the Prime Minister said: "We condemned terrorism and agreed that it cannot be justified wherever, whenever and for whatever reason." Asked if Japan would back India in getting a permanent seat in the Security Council, he said his Japanese counterpart had given an assurance in this regard. In return, India would help Japan secure a seat in the International Court of Justice.

On the reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-torn Afghanistan, India and Japan were of the view that the agreement reached on Kabul should be properly implemented and the two countries should work in close coordination in this regard.

"We can help Afghanistan only in a limited way but Japan would have to bear the major burden," he said, adding a meeting was being convened on the issue. On the issue of signing of CTBT, Vajpayee said Japan accepted that



PTI PHOTO

Advani greets Vajpayee after his return from Japan on Tuesday.

many countries were yet to sign the treaty but it would be better if New Delhi came forward and initialled the treaty and "the matter ended there". Before leav-

ing for India, Vajpayee had an audience with the Japanese Emperor Akihito, who hosted a lunch in his honour.

Agencies

Musharraf warns bigots, Masood under detention

After freeze, Pak turns on heat

FROM IDREES BAKHTIAR
AND PRANAY SHARMA

Karachi/New Delhi, Dec. 25: A day after freezing the accounts of Lashkar-e-Toiba in a token gesture, President Pervez Musharraf appeared to be warming up to take tougher measures against terrorist outfits with India holding aloft the spectre of war.

The general returned home from a visit to China to warn that "no bigoted extremist will be allowed to derail us". His strong words were backed up by action as the leader of Jaish-e-Mohammad, Masood Azhar, was today detained in his house near Bahawalpur in Punjab.

India has demanded the arrest of the leaders of Lashkar and Jaish, two jihadi outfits that it accuses of having a hand in the December 13 attack on Parliament. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee signalled to Musharraf that India was not satisfied with the freeze of Lashkar accounts as the group itself said it did not have any money in banks in its name.

India had expected Pakistan to take some visible action by Christmas, a call to which Musharraf appeared to be responding tentatively. "(The) vast silent majority should vow not to be voiceless passive onlookers to our internal destruction. We must act in unison," he said at a ceremony to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Pakistan's founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

The general was referring to the threat Pakistan itself faced from fundamentalist outfits. "We are confronted with inter-



Nambiar in New Delhi. (Reuters)

nal and external challenges. But let me assure my countrymen that your armed forces are fully prepared to and capable of defeating all challenges."

In Islamabad, Rashid Qureshi, spokesman for the military regime, confirmed that Masood Azhar, who recently floated Al-Furqan after the crackdown on Jaish, had been placed under house arrest. But no one was taking calls at his residence and his cellphone was switched off.

India had demanded that Pakistan close down the offices of Lashkar and Jaish, arrest their leaders and cut off their finances. It turned up the pressure

today on Musharraf to crack down on the terrorist outfits with Vijay Nambiar, the recalled ambassador to Pakistan, saying: "If he is taking action, some of it must be visible to the Indian people."

He said a war could not be ruled out but emphasised that there were ways of avoiding it. "One hopes one does not reach that stage but the indications are not very good," Nambiar told Reuters before leaving Islamabad.

Vajpayee, celebrating his birthday today, said: "We do not want war but it is being thrust on us. We have to face it."

"We have stated that this time the fight should be such that it should be the last on the issue of terrorism," he said.

Behind the militant language lay the barely-hidden assurance that India still intended to settle the crisis through diplomatic means.

Vajpayee expressed hope that the international community would be able to mount enough pressure on Musharraf for him to act against the terrorist outfits. "We have other weapons in our quiver. Taking into consideration the time frame and the results, we are moving ahead step by step," he said.

Indications suggest India may downsize its Islamabad mission further and ask Pakistan to do the same if Musharraf sits tight.

The Pakistan President stepped aside from anti-India rhetoric, except to quote from an interview Jinnah had given in 1948. Jinnah had said: "If India gives up its superiority complex, the two countries can resolve their vital differences."

■ See Page 6

QUOTE

Things are bad

VIJAY NAMBIAR

THE TELEGRAPH

26 DEC 2001

Advani anti-terror test for Pak

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Dec. 19: Home minister L.K. Advani has called on Pakistan to hand over Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar to India to prove its seriousness about fighting terrorism as part of a broad-based international coalition that was cobbled together by the US after the September 11 strikes.

Giving almost identical replies in both Houses of Parliament after a two-day discussion on the December 13 attack on Parliament, the home minister demanded that Pakistan must hand over mafia don Dawood Ibrahim and Ghazi Baba, the Jaish supreme commander in India, as well. Advani raised the matter in the presence of foreign minister Jaswant Singh, who was seated next to him in the Rajya Sabha.

Singh had accompanied Azhar to Kandahar in December 1999, when the militant was freed along with accomplices by India to secure the release of the Indian Airlines passengers held hostage in Afghanistan.

After the attack on Parliament, there

are some signs that Pakistan's attitude towards terrorism may be changing. For instance, they have insisted on madarsas getting registered. But we want Pakistan not just to condemn the attack but also take action against the Jaish and the Lashkar-e-Toiba which are involved in it," Advani said.

He declared that when Pakistan stopped sponsoring terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India, it would be seen as the biggest proof of Pakistan's sincerity in combating terrorism.

But the home minister indicated that he was not too hopeful. "When Musharraf came to India for talks, there were several reasons why nothing came of them. But the biggest reason was his televised news conference in which he described the terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir as a freedom struggle and put it on par with India's support for the Mukti Bahini in Bangladesh," Advani said.

Like Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Advani was critical of the US — though he did not name it — for not coming

down strongly on Pakistan after the assault on Parliament. "Geographically, may be it suits people to have Pakistan as an ally now. Pakistan knows a lot about the Taliban so I can understand why you need Pakistan," he said.

However, Advani added that people in India were justified with their feeling that Pakistan was responsible for terrorism in the country that had resulted in the killing of over 60,000 people in the Valley. He hoped that the US would stick to its stand when it stated that the war against terrorism would not end with the Taliban or Osama bin Laden but would continue.

Advani made it clear that the war against terrorism should not be perceived as one between Hindus and Muslims but between "barbarism and democracy". "Like the US, India is a live, vigorous democracy". He added that terrorism could not be equated with communalism and fundamentalism which he described as "evils". "But terrorism goes beyond that, it is barbarism," the home minister emphasised.

THE TELEGRAPH

20 DEC 2001

All options are open: Vajpayee

'Decision will be taken in the national interest'

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee told Parliament on Wednesday that although nobody wanted a war, India was keeping all its options open in its ongoing battle against terrorism. He, however, assured members that a final decision would be taken after a thorough consideration as well as consultations with all political leaders.

Intervening in the debate on the December 13 attack, Mr Vajpayee came down heavily on the U.S. for asking India to exercise restraint. Without naming the U.S., he pointed out that even after the terrorist attack, some were "preaching to India that it exercise restraint". That advice, he said, should be tendered to "our neighbour" which is also a member of the international coalition against terrorism.

He also castigated other western countries in equally strong words, stating that "there should be no double standards in measuring terrorism in different parts of the world". He reminded them that an international coalition against terrorism was at present in place and that the bodies of the five Pakistani terrorists and the bullet marks in parliament's building were proof enough of the conspiracy to strike at the very heart of Indian democracy.

Pak markings on grenades

NEW DELHI: In another indication of the Islamabad connection to the December 13 attack, the markings of a company in Pakistan—Wah Nobel Industries, a subsidiary unit of a Swedish firm—have been found on the grenades and detonators used by the attackers, Delhi police sources said on Wednesday. (PTI)

He said parliament was chosen by the terrorists deliberately as it was the heart and guardian of Indian democracy. "Those who sent the terrorists to parliament must have given a deep thought to it," he said, adding, "The whole country will unitedly face this challenge." While hoping that the international community would support India in its fight against terrorism, he declared that India was capable of fighting its own battles and would not depend on others.

Recalling how the government had succeeded in putting an end to terrorism in Punjab, which at one stage had threatened the country's unity and integrity, Mr Vajpayee said, "We know how to tackle terrorism."

Lauding the services of the security personnel who laid down their lives while protecting "our seat of democracy", he said, "We will have to go deep into the incident as to how the terrorist entered parliament precincts and remove any shortcomings."

As for India's response to the latest act of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, he said the issue "is not whether there should be a war or not but whether it is required and under what circumstances should it be initiated". He went on to say that questions of war and peace were not decided in a hurry and these needed serious consideration. "We have to look at all our options," Mr Vajpayee said. A final view will be taken after considering the pros and cons, keeping the country's interests in mind and after consultations with other political leaders.

Stating that India was exercising restraint, Mr Vajpayee said this "should not be construed as a sign of weakness. Ours is a thriving democracy and we should give due respect to the people's sentiments."

THE DIVIDING LINE



Army soldiers patrol the Line of Control in the Nowshara sector, 150 km from Jammu, on Wednesday.

'Army prepared to deal with Pakistan build-up'

Times News Network and Agencies
NEW DELHI: The army is well-prepared and has taken "appropriate steps" to thwart any threat whatsoever from the military build-up across the border in Pakistan.

"There is a build-up on the other side with Pakistan moving in troops. Certain (Pakistani) forces which should have gone back have not gone back (from the border). We are watching what is happening with a great deal of interest," said army chief Gen S u n d e r a j a n Padmanabhan on the sidelines of a seminar here on Wednesday.

Asked whether the army would launch "surgical strikes" against terrorist camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, as was hotly debated after the December 13 terrorist attack, he said, "If I have to do it, I won't tell you...in any case, it is a political decision."

Defence sources said the armed forces were not opposed to the idea of "surgical strikes" or "hot pursuit" across the border

but wanted the political leadership to take all possible eventualities, including a full-fledged war, into account.

Intelligence reports said Pakistan was building up its army reserves along the border following Gen Pervez Musharraf's "sensitive strategic conference" with his top army commanders. Pakistan had also

Certain forces which should have gone back have not gone back. We are watching with interest

—General S. Padmanabhan



deployed sabotage experts from the Special Service Group (SSG) in sensitive areas along the Line of Control (LoC) and the international border in the Jammu-Poonch sector, including the "most sensitive" A k h n o o r -

Pallanwala-Chamb sub-sector, according to intelligence sources.

SSG units had carried out demolition and sabotage inside Indian territory in Jammu during the 1971 war, the sources said. They had also carried out some airborne operations deep inside the Indian segment of the LoC during that war in the Rajouri and Baramulla sectors.

Pakistan insists on a joint probe

9 WJ
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HD-1
WJ 12

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 19. For the second time since the December 13 attack on the Indian Parliament House, Pakistan today summoned a senior diplomat in the Indian High Commission to the Foreign Office and reiterated its desire for a joint probe. The reiteration of the desire for a joint investigation was perhaps made before the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, intervened in the Lok Sabha and the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, replied to the debate on the statement on the Dec. 13 incident.

There was no specific comment from Pakistan to the intervention made by Mr. Vajpayee and the comments made by Mr. Advani in the course of his reply. "In the last few days we have already made known our position. We have nothing more to add", a senior official in the Pakistan Foreign Office said. A statement is expected tomorrow answering some of the specific points made by the Prime Minister and the Home Minister.

Asked about the reported coun-

sel by the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, to the Pakistan Government to restrain the militant outfits operating from Pakistan, the Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, said that he was not aware of such a statement.

President Musharraf last night reportedly received a telephone call from Gen. Tommy Franks, chief of the U.S. Army's Central Command. He briefed the President about the general military situation in Afghanistan. It is understood that the political situation, particularly in the context of anger in India, in the wake of the attack on the Indian Parliament building was also discussed.

At the second meeting with the diplomat in the Indian High Commission, the Foreign Office is believed to have repeated the points it has made in the last few days in public as well as through the written reply to the demarche given by the Indian government to the Pakistan High Commissioner, Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, two days after the Parliament attack.

THE HINDU

20 DEC 1999

India must end propaganda: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 19. The Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, today told the media that "India must end baseless propaganda against Pakistan and give a positive response" to the Pakistani offer of joint investigation of the attack on the Indian Parliament House.

He said the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, had condemned the attack and promised to take action if any organisation or individual from Pakistan were found to be involved in the attack.

At the same time, he said, Pakistan would respond with force if India tried to cross the LoC. Commenting on the statement of the

Indian Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, he said India was trying to malign Pakistan through propaganda and covering up 'its own terrorist activities'.

He said Pakistan had rejected India's allegations as no Pakistani secret agency or person was involved in this 'heinous' attack.

On Tuesday he had said that India seemed to be moving according to a premeditated plan. He had said that while the most preliminary investigations had not yet started, it had blamed Pakistan.

Asked if India had given any documents in support of its charges "this is the first time, I have heard this. Nobody has received any document. This is

what they do. This is absolutely untrue and they try to precipitate crises. We tell the Indian Government — look, we are ready to assist you. We will cooperate in an impartial inquiry. Let's have a joint inquiry."

In a related development the former Prime Minister and Chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, has expressed concern over the attack.

In a statement today she said the attack could "have serious repercussions on South Asia" and urged the military regime to take immediate steps to defuse the tension, "before it escalated further".

THE HINDU

20 DEC 2001

35 Pak soldiers killed, posts on LoC smashed

Kavita Suri in Jammu

Dec. 19. — About 35 Pakistani soldiers were today killed and at least 25 Pakistani posts destroyed in Jammu sector on the Line of Control in Nowshera, Poonch and Rajouri. This is a retaliatory action taken by the Army against yesterday's unprovoked shelling from across the border, defence sources said.

The heavy shelling, started by Pakistani troops to provide cover to infiltrators last evening, was resumed today, the sources said.

"They started heavy mortar shelling and fire at 10.40 a.m. and it continued till 1.30 p.m. However, we retaliated with a heavy amount of fire which resulted in the smashing of at least 25 Pakistani posts. The casualties on the other side were expected to be more than 35. We could see many posts burning from our forward posts," the defence sources said.

Speaking to The Statesman over phone from Rajouri sector, Major General Randhir Singh, GoC, 25 Infantry Division, who looks after the LoC in the Jammu region, said the casualties on the other side were around 25. An equal number of their border posts were also destroyed. There was no casualty or damage on the Indian side, he added.

Responding to Army chief Gen S Padmanabhan's statement in New Delhi that they were monitoring the situation along the LoC, the GoC said since Pakistan was not

respecting the sanctity of the LoC and was violating it again and again, forces were right in retaliating.

The situation all along the LoC, he said, was

We're watchful: Army chief

NEW DELHI, Dec. 19. — The Army chief, General S Padmanabhan, today said the build-up of Pakistani troops is being "watched". He said certain forces, which participated in the Pakistani army exercises, "should have gone back, but they have not as yet."

"We are watching everything across the border with a great deal of interest," Gen Padmanabhan said.

The Army's "knowledge base" is being updated, he added. Asked if any counter-measure is going to be taken in view of the build-up, which consists of infantry divisions, the tanks having gone back after the exercises, he said: "We won't be stampeded into any action... We have a clear idea of what we are doing." — SNS

under control and the troops were fully prepared to face any kind of situation. Unconfirmed reports said troops had evacuated some villages along the LoC in Nowshera. The reports indicated that apart from constituting Border Action Teams,

comprising Pakistani army regulars and commandos, the ISI had also inducted the Special Service Group of the Pakistani army. The group specialised in sabotage operations on the LoC in Jammu.

India today denied that its troops shelled civilian positions in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, adds PTI. "Indian troops never resort to shelling of civilian areas," a defence ministry spokesman said while reacting to a transnational wire service report that three persons, including a woman, were wounded in shelling by the Indian Army on villages in PoK opposite the Nowshera sector.

Pakistan has reiterated its demand for a joint probe into the attack on Parliament.

Meanwhile, security forces in Jammu and Kashmir shot dead 16 ultras belonging to the Lashker-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammed overnight.

The Army has also intensified its movement in the border areas of Rajasthan, adds SNS from Jaipur. The Army and the Air Force are on high alert in the state.

"Army has not yet been deployed on Indo-Pak border in Rajasthan. It's only the BSF which is manning the borders," an officer said.

In Jodhpur, the district administration yesterday had a "blackout" exercise to check emergency services. The Army has snapped communication links between the Jodhpur cantonment and the rest of Jaipur.

Editorial: Careful, clear & resolute! page 4

PM: Diplomacy only one option...

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 19. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee today criticised the USA for its policy of "double-speak" emphasising that terrorism can't have different definitions for different nations. "Terrorism can't be divided into compartments," he said during a debate in the Lok Sabha on the attack on Parliament.

Mr Vajpayee assured the House that "India was not totally dependent on diplomacy though world opinion is with us". If action is required, we won't hesitate, he said. It was a trying time for the country and patience was running out, he added.

In what could be regarded as the first Indian reaction to the long-running US sermon advocating restraint, the Prime Minister asked America to advise "our neighbouring country to act in a decisive manner against the terrorist organisations operating

from there." What more proof is now needed to show that the Pakistan-based terrorist outfits are behind the attack, he asked.

"On one hand, they (the USA) say India has the right to self-defence and on the other, they say we should be patient and exercise restraint in responding to the attack on our sovereignty," he said.

"Our patience should not be mistaken for our weakness... We don't expect anyone to fight our war. No country would come and join field with us in our war against terror. But the country is capable of meeting the challenge," Mr Vajpayee said.

Both PM and home minister were careful, though, not to say anything in the Lok Sabha that

could be construed as building 'war hysteria' and made clear India's preference would be to avoid a war. The government said it would take into account military and civilian inputs before taking any action against the perpetrators of 13 December.

Mr LK Advani endorsed what Mr Vajpayee said earlier by reminding the members that when the USA declared war against terror, it did so on its own strength.

The timing of India's response could not be disclosed on the floor

of the House, Mr Advani said, while refuting the Opposition charge that the government had not taken the House into confidence on how it was planning to react to the terrorist attack.

Mr Advani bluntly told the House that India had two options before it — it could take the attack on Parliament as one of many terrorist attacks in the country or it could strike back to end terrorism. The consensus was for taking the challenge seriously and responding appropriately.

Recalling Mr Chandra Shekhar's opposition to the idea of war, the Prime Minister said: "It reminded me of a scene in Mahabharata when Arjun was standing in the middle of the battlefield and was in a state of confusion. On the advice of Lord Krishna, he fought the war finally."

Parliament was adjourned sine die today.

Another report on page 2



Mr Vajpayee at a function in New Delhi after his Parliament speech. — AP/PTI

Forces moved to Pakistan border

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Just a matter of caution, says defence official

By Rajat Pandit
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: In what is officially being described here as a purely precautionary move, the Indian army has moved some of its strike forces, including armoured and mechanised elements, to positions closer to the international border with Pakistan. Army headquarters has also issued orders "restricting" leave to its personnel throughout the country. "This is just a matter of abundant caution in response to the sizable Pakistani build-up," a senior defence ministry official said. Officials, for instance, point to the Pakistani army strike formations present in the Ravi-Chenab corridor, barely 35 km from the Akhnoor border, which can be used as a launching pad for incursions into India.

"These Pakistani formations were supposed to move back after completing their winter exercises but have instead remained there or moved forward. The army would be remiss if it did not move when Pakistani formations have moved themselves to positions that can be used as useful jump-off points for an attack," an officer said.

In Punjab, Indian army units are being deployed in sectors like Ferozpur, Khemkaran and Amritsar, among others.

Officials say that while some movements are usual in this season because of military exercises, the December 13 attack and the intense Indian anger may have fuelled fears in Islamabad of an Indian cross-border retaliation. But the Indian precautions are also mandated by the proximity of Pakistani forces to the border.

While Pakistani strike formations, such as its I Corps at Mangala, are within hailing distance of the Indo-Pak border, Indian formations are some distance away (at Ambala, Mathura and Bhopal) with their constituent formations spread across the country. The other Pakistani strike formations are at Multan and Bahawalpur, and there are reports that both have moved

towards the Indian border.

While the movement of strike formations is an important clue to heightened tension, the other indicators presaging a conflict remain unchanged. In any serious build-up or suggestion of imminent war, forward airfields and field radars are normally activated, and aircraft and anti-aircraft batteries are armed with missiles. As of now, none of these things appear to have taken place.

Among the army units that have been moved forward are the 6 Mountain Division based in Bareilly, the Allahabad-based 4 Division and the 54 Division in Secunderabad. These are all associated with strike formations built around a nucleus of armoured and mechanised divisions.

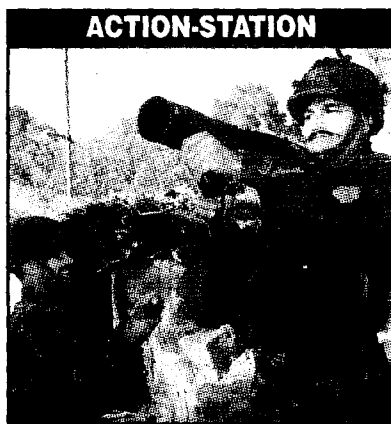
These are the formations that are used for any cross-border military attack. Army officials in Secunderabad said the orders for movement of artillery units and an infantry division were received on December 16, three days after the terrorist attack on Parliament.

Some IAF bases like Awantipora, Jammu, Udhampur, Jaisalmer and Amritsar are also on a round-the-clock alert to thwart any challenge. IAF chief Air Chief Marshal A.Y. Tipnis on Thursday asked station commanders in the Western Air Command, which covers a huge area from Bikaner to Ladakh, "to maintain operational preparedness, keeping in view the present security environment".

The army has also reinforced the Border Outposts (BOPs) and the defensive 'ditch-cum-bund' stretches along the border with additional troops and arms, including the Line of Control in J&K.

"We have intelligence that Pakistan has deployed Border Action Teams (BATs) and specialised sabotage units in sensitive areas along the LoC to create trouble. There have also been one or two reports of Pakistani UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) violating Indian airspace in the last few days," an officer said.

(With inputs from TNN, Hyderabad)



ACTION-STATION
Two Indian soldiers check out a rocket launcher in the Nowshera sector of Jammu on Thursday.

No PM-Musharraf meet in Nepal, says India

NEW DELHI: India on Thursday firmly ruled out any meeting between Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on the sidelines of the SAARC summit in Kathmandu early next month, saying the climate for dialogue is not "propitious". "The situation engendered by the attack on Parliament House by Pakistan-based terrorist outfits, and the lack of response from Pakistan in taking action against these groups do not create a climate for dialogue," an external affairs ministry spokesperson told journalists. (PTI)

ANGER AND ANGST IN ARGENTINA AS THEY ST...

THE TIMES OF INDIA

21 DEC 2001

Pak. refutes Vajpayee's charges

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 20. Pakistan today categorically refuted the charges made by the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, accusing elements in Pakistan of sponsoring the December 13 terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament and said that it apprehends that the attack was aimed at "maligning and harming the legitimate struggle" in Kashmir.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, told a news conference here that Islamabad was of the view that an "impartial and comprehensive" inquiry of the incident was necessary to unmask the motives and the ugly face of the perpetrators of the act of terrorism.

In response to a question whether Pakistan feared an attack from India, the spokesman said that Pakistan was in favour of resolution of all differences with India including Kashmir through peaceful means.

"Pakistan does not want tensions to raise. Efforts are on at the diplomatic level. On Wednesday, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, spoke to the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Colin Powell, on the subject," he said.

Mr. Khan repeatedly maintained that there was need to differentiate between "freedom struggle" and terrorism and it was not proper

on the India to level charges against any one without providing "credible evidence". The spokesman said that Pakistan was ready to examine any evidence against an individual or organisation in Pakistan for involvement in the December 13 attack.

The spokesman said that Pakistan, itself being a victim of terrorists, condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. He said that in line with this policy, Pakistan had strongly and unequivocally condemned the attack on Parliament.

"It is regrettable that the Indian Prime Minister has rejected Pakistan's eminently fair proposal for a joint inquiry into the incident. The consistent Indian refusal for an impartial and neutral inquiry was creating doubts about its motives."

"We apprehend that the terrorist attack was aimed at maligning and harming the legitimate Kashmiri struggle in IoK for the realization of Kashmiri people's inalienable right to self-determination. An impartial and comprehensive inquiry of the incident was necessary to unmask the motives and the ugly face of the perpetrators of this act of terrorism."

"We have noted the Indian Prime Minister's comments ("The partition of the Indian sub-continent is a reality which should be accepted by all") and hope that the proponents of

'Akhand Bharat' would also hear and adhere to this sane advice. Pakistan strictly believes in peaceful co-existence and has no territorial ambition against any country.

We are of the firm opinion that all bilateral disputes and differences should be resolved peacefully on the basis of justice and fair play. However, any misadventure on our border or the LoC in Kashmir would be met with full force."

In an interview to the Pakistan English daily, *Dawn*, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, has said that there should be a universal definition of terrorism and terrorists, which could be either individuals or state. On the Indian charges, the Minister has said that it was 'typical Indian style' of assuming the role of complainant and judge at the same time.

On the fate of the SAARC Summit, the Minister has said that Pakistan was ready to attend the meeting. Asked about the prospects of a meeting between Mr. Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf on the sidelines of the Summit, the Minister has said: "Though we are willing for resumption of dialogue, we will not request the Indian Prime Minister for a meeting with Gen. Musharraf."

THE HINDU

21 DEC 2001

Delhi rules out Atal-Pervez meet

HT Correspondent & PTI
New Delhi / Islamabad, Dec 20

INDIA TODAY ruled out any meeting between the Prime Minister and the Pakistani President on the sidelines of the Saarc summit in Kathmandu, saying the time was not "propitious".

Earlier, Pakistani Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar had said his country would not ask for a meeting between Atal Bihari Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf in Kathmandu even though Islamabad was willing to resume the dialogue with India.

"Though we are willing in resuming the dialogue, we will not request Indian Prime Minis-

ter for a meeting with President Pervez Musharraf," Abdul Sattar said. He said despite the present tensions between India and Pakistan over the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament, Pakistan would attend the SAARC summit, local daily Dawn quoted him as saying today.

The ministerial committee meetings of the SAARC would begin from January 2 while the summit was scheduled to be held on January 3 and 4.

"We are ready to attend these meetings," Sattar said but was not ready to speculate about the prospects of Vajpayee-Musharraf meeting.

Sattar said Pakistan always wanted to resolve the differ-

ences with India through a dialogue. He said Musharraf went to New York last month with the hope of meeting Vajpayee on the sidelines of UN General Assembly session. "The meeting failed to materialise as India showed no interest in it," he said.

Reacting to allegations levelled by India that Pakistan was fomenting terrorism, he said there should be a universal definition of terrorism.

Noting that India did not agree for an impartial inquiry into the December 13 terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament, he said, "It was a typical Indian style of playing the role of complainant and judge at the same time, which he said was not acceptable

to any civilised society."

Benazir concerned: Former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has expressed concern over the attack on Parliament last week and called upon the military regime in Pakistan to take immediate steps to defuse the tension.

"The attack on the Indian Parliament could have serious repercussions on South Asia. There is growing talk of India considering retaliation against the groups it holds responsible for the attacks. I, therefore, call upon the military regime to take immediate steps to defuse the tension caused by the incident," she said in a statement.

INDIA SHARES EVIDENCE WITH WESTERN ENVOYS

Vajpayee-Musharraf meet in Kathmandu ruled out

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By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, DEC. 20. A week after the terrorist attack on the Parliament House, India has virtually ruled out a meeting between the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, on the sidelines of next month's SAARC summit at Kathmandu.

"The question of talking to Pakistan given its attitude and its unresponsiveness in taking meaningful action against terrorist groups operating from its soil against India really does not arise," the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said today in response to questions.

The spokesperson clarified that the attack on Parliament by the Pakistan based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) had sealed India's decision against a dialogue with Gen. Musharraf at Kathmandu. "The incident of attack (on Parliament) and the lack of response has introduced complexities in the Indo-Pak. discourse."

The spokesperson made these observations when asked to comment on an earlier statement by the Prime Minister indicating the possibility of a meeting with Gen.

Musharraf at Kathmandu. Sources said the decision was part of an exercise to signal India's determination to fight terrorism and to ensure that the LeT and the JeM were reined in.

Not surprisingly, India has decided not to further substantiate its case but insist on immediate action by Pakistan against these groups. "Pakistan should take meaningful action based on the demands contained in the verbal demarche delivered last Friday,"

the spokesperson asserted. India in its recent demarche to Pakistan had demanded that Islamabad terminate all activities of the LeT and the JeM, the detention of the LeT's top leaders and the sealing off of the offices of the two organisations in Pakistan.

While the Government decided against sharing evidence implicating the LeT and the JeM with Pakistan, it nevertheless took concrete steps to acquaint the key industrialised world with the sta-

tus of its investigation of the attack. According to the spokesperson, the Foreign Secretary, Ms. Chokila Iyer, today met the Ambassadors from Germany, France and Britain to disclose the evidence that had been gathered — implicating the LeT and the JeM in the attack.

Apart from these countries, India appears to have been encouraged by the response of the United States to its post-attack diplomacy. In response to a question, the spokesperson said that it was her understanding that the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, in his recent conversation with the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, indicated Washington's inclination to declare the LeT and the JeM "Foreign Terrorist Organisations" soon.

She pointed out that the Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group on counter-terrorism was meeting in India next month to further discuss this subject threadbare. The Government also appears to have been satisfied with the letter to the Prime Minister, signed by 60 U.S. Congressmen condemning last Thursday's incident.

U.S. wants evidence shared: Page 12

Not our problem, says Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 20. Pakistan tonight said that it was ready for the resumption of a dialogue with India at any time, at any level and at any place. But if New Delhi had a problem in a meeting between the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, at Kathmandu, there was little it could do.

Reacting to the news from New Delhi that there would be no meeting between Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Vajpayee at Kathmandu on the sidelines of the SAARC summit, the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Khan, told *The Hindu* that "our position on the subject is very clear".

Pakistan was of the view that problems could be resolved only through negotiations. "The position remains the same. The ball is in the court of India. If India has a problem with a meeting at Kathmandu, it is India's problem, not ours."

THE HINDU

21 DEC 2001

Musharraf warns India against 'adventurism'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 15. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today made a conditional offer to act against any individual or group in his country if India provided proof of involvement in Thursday's attack on Parliament.

In a brief interview to the State-run Pakistan Television, Gen. Musharraf maintained that, as of now, not only was the proof 'inadequate' but there were also indications of a "design" behind the "operation."

"Having said that we are willing to take action, let me say that whatever our analysis said is that the proof is inadequate at the moment. In fact, there are a lot of indications which may indicate a design behind this operation. So we would like to be very sure. We need concrete evidence if it is a terrorist act and if at all anyone is

India Pak
involved... We will cooperate as long as there is evidence against any individual or group."

Gen. Musharraf warned India against any adventurism in Pakistan, saying it would retaliate with force. He also complained against New Delhi's "growing rhetoric" against Islamabad. *10-1*

The readiness expressed by the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman on Friday to examine any evidence of the involvement of the Lashkar-e-Taiba came as a surprise here. Only last week, the Lashkar had asserted that it had always been operating from the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and not from Pakistan. The assertion came after a section of the press reported that the Lashkar had shifted its operations to Muzaffarabad in the wake of the United States' decision to place it on the 'terrorist exclusion list.'

THE HINDU

16 DEC 2001

Islamabad offers to play police

Islamabad, Dec. 16 (Agencies): Pakistan tonight brushed aside Delhi police's claim that its nationals were involved in the attack on Parliament but suggested a joint probe into the strike.

"India is jumping to hasty conclusions without conducting a preliminary inquiry. We want India to desist from jumping to conclusion without conducting a preliminary inquiry. It is not proper," Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's spokesperson Rashid Qureshi said.

Accusing India of making "irresponsible" statements, he said Islamabad wanted a joint inquiry by Indian and Pakistani investigators.

"We would like to assist the joint inquiry into the attack.

Pakistan will take firm action, if anybody is found involved in the attack," Qureshi added.

Echoing Musharraf who had yesterday warned India against "adventurism", his spokesman said action would be taken against any individual or group, if credible evidence was furnished by India.

However, Pakistan's demand for a joint probe did not figure in its reply to the demarche handed over by Indian foreign secretary Chokila Iyer to Pakistan high commissioner Qazi Ashraf Jehangir two days ago.

Musharraf, too, did not mention the joint probe proposal in his interview to the state television, where he promised action if India furnished evidence.

In its reply handed over to the

acting Indian high commissioner and counsellor Vishnu Prakash, Pakistan condemned the attack on Parliament and sought evidence from India about involvement of Pakistani individuals and groups.

Pakistan said that after receiving the evidence from India, it would examine and conduct its own investigations and take appropriate action. It asked India not to take any hasty action before handing over the evidence to Pakistan.

Diplomatic sources here said Prakash was called to the foreign office and handed over the response to the Indian demarche.

Qureshi took strong exception to home minister L.K. Advani's demand for the arrest of the Lashkar leaders.

"We want to make it clear to India that irresponsible statements or ultimatums by the Indian leadership hinting at any action on the Pakistani borders or LoC (Line of Control) will not be acceptable to us," Qureshi said.

Islamabad has briefed diplomats of western and Islamic countries on the situation arising out of the Parliament attack.

"Pakistan has assured the important countries, including US, Britain, China, Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries that if India provided concrete proof and evidence of any group or individual's involvement in this terrorist act, action would be taken," *The Nation* daily said.

Fear grips Delhi academia after attack cloud on colleague

THE TELEGRAPH

17 DEC 2001

'INITIAL PLAN WAS TO TARGET DELHI AIRPORT'

Jaish, Lashkar carried out attack with ISI guidance: police

By Prashant Pandey

NEW DELHI, DEC. 16. The conspiracy to carry out a "fidayeen" attack on the Parliament House on December 13 was a joint operation planned by the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) at the behest of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

This followed a pact between the JeM chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, and Zakir-ur-Rehman of the LeT, the Delhi Police Commissioner, Mr. Ajai Raj Sharma, said at a press conference here today.

The JeM commander in India, Ghazi Baba, a Pakistan national now hiding in the Adu Hills of Pahalgam, told Mohammad Afzal, main co-ordinator of the Jaish-e-Mohammad in Delhi and a resident of Sopore in Baramulla, that a "fidayeen" attack was to be carried out in Delhi.

The initial plan was to target the airport, but the idea was dropped and Parliament was chosen instead. Instructions to this effect were passed on to the conspirators by the ISI through the top brass of the two militant outfits involved.

Police said investigations revealed that the militants were in constant touch with Syed Abdul Rehman Geelani, a lecturer at Delhi University's Zakir Hussain (Evening) College, who was arrested on December 15.

Geelani was in constant touch with Afzal and his cousin Shaukat, a resident of Mukherjee Nagar in North-West Delhi. In the first week of December, a meeting attended by the three and the "fidayeen" squad was held at Shaukat's residence.

Police teams raided Shaukat's residence from where his wife, Afzan Guru, was arrested. She said that after the attack on Parliament, Shaukat and Afzal had left for Srinagar in a truck (HR-38-E-6733). This information was flashed to the Jammu and Kashmir police and a Delhi police team was also flown to Srinagar. The two were arrested and brought back to the Capital. A laptop and Rs. 10 lakhs were recovered from the duo. The details of



Mohammad Afzal (extreme left) with Syed Abdul Rehman Geelani and Shaukat Hussain (both bespectacled), arrested in connection with the Parliament House shoot-out case, being produced in New Delhi on Sunday. — Photo: Sandeep Saxena

the conspiracy were apparently stored in the laptop.

Police said that in February, Tariq, a close associate of Ghazi Baba, contacted Afzal in Srinagar and motivated him to join the JeM. Afzal came to Delhi and motivated Shaukat — with whom he was living — and Geelani.

In October, Mohammad, a Pakistan national and a JeM militant, appointed leader of the "fidayeen" squad, was introduced to Afzal. He came to Delhi with Rs. 50,000 and a laptop. A week later Raja and Haider — also Pakistan nationals and JeM militants — came to Delhi. In the first

week of December, two more — Rana and Hamza — joined them. All the five militants stayed at two hideouts arranged by Shaukat at Christian Colony and Gandhi Vihar in Mukherjee Nagar.

The last batch of two militants came with two holdalls containing four AK assault rifles, three pistols, a grenade launcher, 15 shells, 15 grenades, two packets of detonators, radio-activated devices and two wireless sets.

The militants bought a black Yamaha from Karol Bagh for Rs. 20,000 and conducted reconnaissance of Parliament from outside. They bought five mobile phones, six SIM cards, five cargo trousers, five T-shirts, five jackets and five pairs of shoes from Tibetan market in Civil Lines. They also bought five backpacks from Chandni Chowk in North Delhi and three police uniforms from Kingsway Camp.

To assemble the Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), they bought 30 kg of ammonium nitrate, 4 kg of sulphur and 4 kg of aluminium powder, a 30-kg-capacity container and five small containers from Tilak Bazaar in Khari Baoli. They also procured fake identity cards and parking labels. On December 11, they purchased the white Ambassador car from Karol Bagh and fitted it with tinted glass and red flash beacon.

On December 13, all of them assembled at Gandhi Vihar and Mohammad, the squad leader, handed over the laptop and Rs. 10 lakhs to be given to Ghazi Baba by Afzal. The five militants then drove into Parliament House from Gate No. 2. Prior to entering the complex, Mohammad called Afzal on the mobile phone, asking him to watch the Parliament proceedings on television and inform him about the presence of VVIPs in the House. However, Afzal could not respond promptly and Mohammad decided to go ahead with the plan. A shoot-out followed and all the five — Mohammad, Rana, Raja, Haider and Hamza — were killed.

Police have recovered chemicals, detonators, unused IEDs, a map of Delhi, a sketch of Chana-kypuri and other incriminating material from the hideouts.

The four accused have been remanded to seven-day police custody.

Professor guided
'fidayeen': Page 11

Pak. seeks 'credible evidence'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 16. Pakistan, it is believed, has communicated its response to the demarche given by the Government, seeking action against the militant outfits, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad. On Saturday, the Counsellor (Political) in the Indian High Commission, Mr. Vishnu Prakash, was reportedly summoned to the Pakistan Foreign Office and handed over the response.

Pakistan has rejected the Indian demands saying no evidence has been provided to substantiate the charges. According to an official of the Pakistan Foreign Office, in its response, Islamabad has asked for "credible evidence" to support New Delhi's charge that

the Pakistan-based organisations were behind the attack on Parliament. It has sought an "impartial investigation" to "establish the truth." The Foreign Office is believed to have said that once concrete proof was produced, Pakistan was prepared to examine the evidence and the demands. The response has counselled New Delhi not to take any steps that could vitiate the atmosphere and have a "negative" fall-out.

Meanwhile, the Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, has accused India of "jumping to hasty conclusion without even a preliminary inquiry." Asked to react to the revelations by the Delhi Police Commissioner, Mr. Ajay Raj

Sharma, about the involvement of the Jaish in the December 13 attack, he told *The Hindu* that "India should avoid making irresponsible statements."

Islamabad was prepared to be a part of a joint inquiry into the attack and was ready to assist New Delhi in the investigations. "The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has already announced that the Government is prepared to take action against any individual or group if concrete proof of involvement in the attack on Parliament is produced," Maj. Gen. Quereshi said, adding that Pakistan had already denounced the incident and the attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in October.

Situation reviewed: Page 12

India must exercise restraint: Powell

WASHINGTON, DEC. 16. The U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, today virtually asked India to desist from military action against terrorist camps across the border following the attack on the Parliament House and cautioned that tension in Indo-Pak. relations had the potential of "becoming very dangerous".

He told NBC television India clearly had a legitimate right to self-defence "but I think we have to be very careful on this because, if in the exercise of that right of self-defence, states are going to be at each other, it might create a much more difficult situation which could spiral out of control."

Answering a question about India's threat to retaliate against Pakistan, Gen. Powell said "it is important to note President Musharraf immediately condemned the attacks" and said "he is taking action against two organisations that have been tentatively identified as the ones which might have been responsible for this."

The U.S. was encouraging both countries to join this campaign against terrorism but not escalate it to a level where it could get out of control. He said the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, had made it clear that he was allowing some time to get a reaction from the Pakistani Government. — PTI

'Rupin Katyal killer led the attack'

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, DEC. 16. The leader of the *fidayeen* squad which attacked Parliament on Thursday was one of the hijackers of the Indian Airlines flight from Kathmandu to Kandahar in 1999. This information was given by Mohammad Afzal, one of the masterminds of the attack on Parliament. He was arrested by J&K police on Saturday from Baramulla.

The Director-General of Police, Mr. A.K. Suri, told *The Hindu* that Afzal told police during preliminary interrogation that Mohammad, the leader of the suicide squad, was one of those who hijacked IA flight. He reportedly killed Rupin Katyal on board after the latter had an argument with the hijackers, Mr. Suri said. This had established direct links between the Jaish-e-Mohammad and the Taliban which supported the hijackers and facilitated the release of the JeM chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, another Harkat ideologue, Omar Sheikh and Al-Umar Mujahideen chief, Mushtaq Zargar alias Latram. He must have given more information to Delhi police, Mr. Suri added.

On the arrest of three more persons of whom two are called Ashiq Hussain Khan, in whose name the car used in the attack was purchased, Mr. Suri said, "nothing has been confirmed as yet". They would continue to be with police for further investigations. A senior official told *The Hindu* that those arrested from Sopore had no links with the plan and the militants had given the names to mislead police.

We have strong proof: Advani

By Vinay Kumar

NEW DELHI, DEC. 16. The Vajpayee Government feels that it has sufficient evidence to nail Pakistan-based terrorist outfits — the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad — in the December 13 attack on Parliament House.

Taking a "very serious view" of the strike, the Government would further intensify diplomatic initiative in driving home the message to Islamabad that New Delhi would want an effective action against the Lashkar and the Jaish.

"The evidence collected by police while cracking the terrorist strike of December 13 is indeed clinching. Apart from this, on the basis of various other inputs, which we will pass on to the Pakistani establishment, we would expect the Pakistan Government to take action against Lashkar and Jaish and ban their activities," the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, said this evening.

Talking to *The Hindu*, the Home Minister said the Government would consider all aspects on the basis of all the inputs and "in that context and see what is to be done." All the five terrorists killed by the security personnel in the Parliament House compound were Pakistani nationals, Mr. Advani pointed out.

Emphasising that the attack on Parliament could

not be considered as yet another incident of terrorism, Mr. Advani said the Government was moving forward in a manner to indicate that it would decide upon "an appropriate action."

Asked about his reaction to the Pakistan offer of a joint investigation and action if India gave evidence of involvement of any Pak-based terrorist group or individual, Mr. Advani said: "We have doubts over their (Pakistan's) intentions. They have the temerity to suggest that the attack was engineered by Indian agencies. It only shows their way of thinking and puts a question mark on their criticism of the attack. If they (Islamabad) are serious in rooting out terrorism, they better show it and it becomes their duty to end all support to terrorism."

Though the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, had referred to the war against terrorism having entered a decisive stage, Mr. Advani did not spell out the Government's response to the attack. "The Government will see what is to be done."

Describing the terror strike as an attack on the country's symbol of democracy, Mr. Advani said that he shuddered to think of the consequences had any one of the heavily armed terrorists entered Parliament House. "Their design was foiled by the security personnel who made a supreme sacrifice by laying down their lives," he said.

Smash PoK camps, demand BJP MPs

Indo-Pak HGT 15/12

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, December 14

EVEN AS the Government maintained that it will not link yesterday's terrorist attack in Parliament to its efforts to push through an anti-terrorism law, the BJP could not help reverting to a hawkish mode to stave off criticism over alleged intelligence and security lapses.

A group of BJP MPs met Prime Minister AB Vajpayee today to say that "hot pursuit" of terrorists and destruction of their training camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was the need of the hour. They also asked him not to lose precious time in enacting Poto.

Yesterday, when the Opposition blamed the Centre for "lapses" that enabled the attackers gain entry into the Parliament complex, the response was rather weak. The Government refused to join issue with the Opposition on the charge of security failures, saying the



Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee surrounded by SPG guards arrives at Parliament House on Friday in New Delhi.

need of the hour was unity.

BJP leaders pointed to the Cabinet's resolution, which outlined the Government's approach in words that sounded rather like US President Bush's

resolution after the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington. The resolution said, "By the attack, the terrorists have yet again flung a challenge at the country. The nation

accepts the challenge. We will liquidate the terrorists and their sponsors wherever they are, whoever they are — as our valiant security forces have done in this particular instance."

But, when Advani was asked by reporters whether the resolution meant that the Government would go in for a "surgical-type" operation, he side-tracked the question.

As the Congress and the Left quickly reiterated their opposition to the Poto Bill and sought to point out that the attack had taken place in spite of its existence as an ordinance, BJP leaders said they wanted rancour and the political stalemate to end first. BJP chief K Jana Krishnamurthi said, "This is not the time to put the Government in the dock or just talk about Poto. Whatever powers are need by the Government to combat terrorism must be given to it. Of course, with adequate safeguards."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 DEC 2001

India wants to damage us: Musharraf ⁹²⁰ _{pmk}

By Amit Baruah

SINGAPORE, DEC. 14. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has claimed that India's actions in Afghanistan were only aimed at damaging Pakistan.

"India just wants one thing. They want to damage us. Anything they want to do in Afghanistan, the purpose is only one: how to do something that will be against Pakistan, that will damage our cause. That is their sole purpose," he said in an interview to *The Far Eastern Economic Review*. Referring to the invitation extended to the interim Afghan Interior Minister, Mr. Yunus Qanooni, by New Delhi, the General said "We are not bothered. I am sure we want to play a positive role in Afghanistan. We are their neighbours. Geography, our common history, our common culture and

religion cannot be undermined by any actions of India."

Gen. Musharraf denied that his Government was sponsoring violence in Kashmir saying, "Whatever is happening in India is indigenous. It is by the people of Kashmir."

On the proposed India-Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline, he said Pakistan was absolutely for it. "It is India that does not want it because of its own suspicion. Unfortunately, there is a lot of suspicion on both sides."

The General said he did not see any role for either Mr. Nawaz Sharif or Ms. Benazir Bhutto (former Prime Ministers now in exile) in the general election scheduled to be held in Pakistan by October next year. "Their parties will have a role. It will be a party-based election. The (Pakistan) People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim

League are two of the important parties and we wish them well."

On the role of the National Security Council in a future government, he said a decision had not been taken on its composition. "It has to be representative. It has to be a balanced composition which can ensure checks and balances on the function of the Government without being intrusive. I don't envisage the NSC having any role in the day-to-day functioning of the Government, but certainly overseeing and making sure that the national interest is held supreme at all times by the Government."

'N-weapons secure'

Gen. Musharraf claimed that Pakistan's nuclear weapons and technology were absolutely secure. "We have institutionalised arrangements. There are custo-

dial safeguards. I'm very sure that there cannot be any proliferation, there cannot be any breach of security; our nuclear and missile assets cannot fall into the wrong hands at all.

"This I am very positive and sure of. Now these (Pakistani nuclear) scientists that we are talking of; these are a few irresponsible people. Whoever has done anything, if we are investigating, then we will move against them; will take legal action against them," he promised.

Asked about reports that two Pakistani nuclear scientists had fled to Myanmar, the General said this was news to him. "This is the first time I hear of it. I have no such information. Nobody has told me. I didn't know about it and I have not spoken to anyone on this issue."

THE HINDU

15 DEC 2001

'Would we kill our own jawans?'

Pak charge foolish, says PM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA/SANTINIKETAN, Dec. 15. — Pakistan would gain nothing by making the "baseless" charge that India had engineered Thursday's attack on Parliament, the Prime Minister said today.

"How foolish it is to level such a charge: as if we'd get our jawans killed to attract global attention. Why is Pakistan repeating what it had said when some Sikhs were killed by terrorists during President Clinton's visit?"

Pakistan had described the attack as "stage-managed" by India "because it knows we'll tell the world how our neighbour could be made an ally in the war against terrorism... when it itself is sponsoring terrorism," Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee said at a CII conference in Netaji Indoor Stadium.

Evidence was being collected and the truth about the attack would unfold soon, he said.

"We're being told to exercise restraint and have patience. We've read the lesson on patience, but the question is how long can we remain patient. We're at the end of our tether."

Deviating from his speech on national housing, he said: "Why was our Parliament chosen for the terrorist strike? First, it was the J&K Assembly building... now our Parliament. The intent is clear: to wipe out our country's leadership, irrespective of political affiliations. I shudder to think what would have happened had one of the terrorists managed to enter the House."

"We stand united to face the challenge posed by the terrorists and their sponsors. We've ideological differences, but our patriotism unites us and we'll give a fitting rebuff... to the terrorists who've put our patience on trial." He said he had gone out of way to es-

establish amity with Pakistan by travelling to Lahore by bus. "And Pakistan requited our friendship with enmity and treachery. The Kargil war was thrust on us. We were then advised even to cross the border and retaliate, but we only drove away the intruders..."

"Now our eyes are opened and we are determined to face the challenge."

Earlier in the day at Santiniketan, he said India would defeat terrorism at any cost and those behind the at-

tack on Parliament must know that the democracy and the people could not be cowed down by terror. He was addressing the convocation of Visva-Bharati, of which he is the chancellor.

Without naming Pakistan, he said: "It's shocking that its (terrorism's) promoters in our neighbourhood have turned even some schools for religious education into factories of terror. Acts of aggression are often sought to be justified in the name of religion, although no religion sanctions hatred and violence."

Terrorism had many dimensions and so the strategy to defeat it would have to be implemented across many fronts, he said. Before the terrorists' hands were trained to kill, he said, their minds were trained to hate.

What was important in today's situation is was a wholesome education. "This is where Tagore is still relevant in his ideal and ideas of education. His vision of education affirms the intimate relationship between *shiksha* (education) and *shanti* (peace)."

He left Kolkata tonight for Delhi.

- Editorial: Get lexicon right! page 8
- Highlights of probe, page 10
- More reports on pages 7 and 10



ANOTHER FEATHER IN THE MAESTRO'S CAP: The Prime Minister presents the *Deshikottama* to Anjad Ali Khan at the Visva-Bharati convocation in Santiniketan on Saturday. — Rajib De (Report on page 3)

Kidnap accused Malcolm shot dead

India, Pak in war of words

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, Dec. 15. — India and Pakistan today intensified the war of words, 48 hours after the attack on Parliament by Lashkar-e-Taiyaba terrorists.

India has indirectly blamed Pakistan for the attack as the LeT operates out of Pakistan and PoK and is partly financed by the ISI.

Pakistan has not directly replied to the Indian charges. General Pervez Musharraf and his military spokesman, Maj-Gen Rashid Qureshi, have dismissed allegations about a Pakistani angle.

India reacted strongly with Mr George Fernandes saying the LeT was "clearly a Pakistani outfit." He said: "No outfit can take this type of step without support of the people who have brought it up."

The defence minister further said the basic question

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, Dec. 15. — Malcolm Pingault, an accused in the Roy Burman abduction case and a suspect in the murder of Navaz Wadia, was shot dead in Lake Town this morning.

According to eye-witnesses, Malcolm and another youth were taken out of a white Maruti van near Tehtala on Jessore Road around 9.15 a.m. While the youth fled, Malcolm was shot in the throat, chest and back and then hacked with a sharp weapon. He died on the spot.

The Mumbai-style operation created panic in the area and people rushed for cover. Within minutes all shops closed down. Police have got the number of the vehicle and are trying to track it down.

This is the second time in about a week that an

■ See SHOT: page 3

was to see what the terrorists were up to. He asserted that they were certainly pre-

Lashkar HQ

NEW DELHI, Dec. 15. — The Lashkar-e-Taiyaba's headquarters is in a village, 30 km north of Lahore. It's located in the village of Nangal Sadhan in Muridke, about 30 km from the International Border. It's right opposite the Gurdaspur district of Punjab. About 250-300 LeT personnel are present in the area. Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists are also trained there. There are LeT camps all over Pakistan. — SNS

pared to blow up the entire political leadership of the country. Asked about strikes across the border, he said certain camps along the Line

of Control have already been hit. Defence ministry sources said these were assembly camps, hit by artillery fire from the Indian side.

Gen Musharraf told Pakistan TV that his agencies had found no evidence regarding the LeT's involvement in the attack on Parliament. He also stopped short of calling the attack a terrorist effort. He warned that any "adventurism against Pakistan would be met with force."

"We will take action against anybody from Pakistan involved in these acts, if at all proved... (But the) proof is inadequate at the moment. In fact, there are a lot of indications which may implicate a design behind this operation. We would like to be very sure. We need concrete evidence that if it is a terrorist act and if at all anyone has been involved, we would like to move against them," Gen Musharraf said.

Newly introduces



Upping the ante: Intensified Pak firing along the LoC in Jammu sends a jawan rushing for cover on Tuesday. — AP/PTI

Land, air intrusion by Pak

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, Dec. 18. — Two Pakistani planes today violated Indian airspace at Pallanwala, Jammu sector. In another incident, two villagers were shot when a group of infiltrators, backed by the Pakistan army's Border Action Team, intruded into Indian territory in Jhanger, Nowshera, on the LoC in the Rajouri sector.

Sources said two Pakistani planes, probably unmanned aerial

vehicles, entered Indian airspace in Pallanwala this afternoon, on a reconnaissance mission before turning back. Army officers were not available for comments.

Sources at the 16 Corps in Nagrota said infiltrators intruded into Indian territory late this evening and started firing at the villagers living near the LoC in the Jhanger area. Two villagers died and another was injured.

However, Indian troops' retaliatory firing forced the infiltrators to withdraw. In the same sector,

Pakistani troops again tried to violate the LoC. They fired at an Army patrol but the latter retaliated with heavy mortar shelling. Sources said a Pakistani border post was damaged.

Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged fire at several points on the International Border in the Jammu and Kathua districts.

Reports about a heavy build-up of Pakistani troops poured in from the border areas in Jammu and Kashmir. The exchange of fire was still on when reports last came in.

Afroz confession

MUMBAI, Dec. 18. — Mohammed Afroz Abdul Razak, suspected Al-Qaida member, today made his voluntary confession in the court of additional metropolitan magistrate, Mr VP Tavra. The proceedings were held in camera. The confession was recorded in the presence of special prosecutor Mr Ujjwal Nikam. — SNS

Tajik defence minister

NEW DELHI, Dec. 18. — The Tajik defence minister, Colonel-general Sherali Khairulloev, will hold talks with Mr George Fernandes, tomorrow. — SNS

Officials visit US carrier

NEW DELHI, Dec. 18. — Defence ministry officials and armed forces officers were today invited on board the USS Carl Vinson, a US aircraft-carrier involved in the battle against the Taliban. The visit aimed at improving Indo-US military ties. — SNS

Who will land the toughest job around?

Nilova Roy Chaudhury
in New Delhi

Dec. 18. — The post of Indian ambassador to Islamabad can be considered as the crowning glory of a foreign service official's career. However, for many, it has been a crown of thorns.

The current envoy, Mr Vijay Nambiar, might be replaced next year by either Mr TCA Rangachari, who has served Islamabad as deputy chief of mission, or by Mr Shashank, special secretary at the foreign ministry. The envoy to Germany, Mr Ronen Sen, was first chosen to replace Mr Nambiar. But a bypass surgery moved him out of reckoning.

Mr Rangachari's appointments have been a little jinxed, officials said. He wanted to go to Beijing, but lost it to Mr Shiv Shankar Menon. He was expected to go to Berlin, but Mr Sen's ill health has left him with few options.

Mr Gopal Krishna Gandhi, ambassador to Colombo, may head for London to replace Mr Nareshwar Dayal after March 2002 when the next reshuffle in the foreign service begins. The current deputy chief of mission, Mr Hardeep Puri, will then head for Geneva for the Permanent Mission. His wife, Mrs Lakshmi Puri, the ambassador to Rumania, is likely to go on deputation to the UN, also at Geneva. She was earlier considered to head the Indian embassy in Berne.

Mr Kanwal Sibal is expected to return from Paris around March and take over as secretary (west) in South Block from Mr RS Kalha who will retire.

OPPOSITION CAUTIONS AGAINST CROSSING LoC Military option kept open

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 18. — India reserves the right to use force in self-defence and in the war against Pakistan-backed terror, the Lok Sabha was told today.

The Opposition, however, cautioned the government against crossing the border or LoC and urged it to consider "war" as the last option.

The matter came up in the House when Mr LK Advani made a statement detailing the attack on Parliament. He also briefed the members on the progress of the probe into the attack. The Question Hour was suspended to let Mr Advani read the the four-page statement.

He said the attack was carried out by two-Pakistan based outfits — Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammed. Pakistan was organising such acts of terror because being "a product of the indefensible Two-Nation Theory... a theocratic state with an extremely tenuous tradition of democracy", it couldn't reconcile itself with a "secular, democratic, self-confident and steadily progressing India," he said.

The House was united against terrorism but opinions differed on using force and crossing the LoC to stamp out the roots of terror. While the government says it has kept all options open and the Prime Minister had earlier warned "yeh ladai ab aar paar ki ladaye hai" (it's going to be a decisive battle)," the Lok Sabha was concerned over the prospect of yet another war with Pakistan.

Mr Omar Abdullah, the minister of state for external affairs, said: "To combat Pakistan's design we'll use force, if

necessary. To defend our border and to defend the country's security, if the need arises and when we find there is no alternative, we will use force."

When interrupted by the Opposition, he said: "No government can say they wouldn't use force when it comes to defending the nation even if it's your government."

But the Opposition differed. Mr Shivraj

Congress would support any "well considered decision" to fight terrorism.

Mr Chandra Shekhar too warned the government against waging a war. "It's a dreaded and dangerous thing. I know what war is. I'll continue to oppose any idea of war."

The Opposition came down on the Prime Minister and home minister for not taking

the House was not being taken into confidence about the steps the Centre was considering to meet the threat of terrorism.

"Whatever we learn we learn from the media, on the deliberations in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security yesterday. There's nothing in the home minister's statement which has not been reported," Mr Chatterjee said.

Earlier, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav (Samajwadi Party) raised the same point and urged the government not to link Poto with the attack. Poto was in force when Parliament was attacked, he said.

Mr PR Das Munshi (Congress) wondered why the enhanced security visible today was not there on 13 December though Mr Vajpayee and Mr Advani had frequently talked about Parliament being the terrorists' target.

The debate will continue tomorrow. In the Rajya Sabha, the Opposition offered full support to the government in defeating Pakistan-backed terror, but raised a few questions on security lapses.

Lashing out at the USA for asking India to show restraint, the Opposition urged the government to take appropriate short- and long-term steps that would be "effective and sustainable" in wiping out Pakistan-organised terrorism.

Earlier in the day at the BJP parliamentary party meeting, Mr Vajpayee dismissed as "ridiculous" Pakistan's proposal for a joint probe into the attack, adds UNI.

Without naming the USA, Mr Vajpayee said some countries were advising India to keep a restraint. "Why not they tell us what should be the retaliatory action." India, he said, had been fighting terrorism for the past two decades and observing restraint.

Highlights of Advani's statement

- The attack was executed by two Pakistan-based outfits — Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammed
- The main conspirator was Mohammed; he was trained by the ISI in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir
- Afzal was assigned the task by the Jaish chief in India, Gazi Baba
- The ultras who attacked Parliament House had stayed at Mukherjee Nagar and Timarpur in North Delhi
- The hideouts were arranged by Shaukat Hussain
- Among other things, three police uniforms, a large quantity of ammonium nitrate and other materials used for assembling IEDs were seized from the hideouts

Patil (Congress) said the war should be the last option, when all diplomatic "weapons" were exhausted. He expressed concern over the demand of the "war MPs" (BJP members who have been advocating crossing the LoC to strike terrorist camps).

"We shouldn't run away from war if it's inevitable, but before going in for war we must give a cool thought..." Mr Patil, however, assured the government that the

any steps to prevent the attack despite being warned by Intelligence agencies. The government was also slammed for not taking any Opposition member into confidence even six days after the incident.

"The Prime Minister and the home minister owe an explanation to the nation for not acting to prevent the strike despite intelligence reports," Mr Somnath Chatterjee (CPI-M) said. He wondered why

Attack probe homes in on laptop, chemicals

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 18. — Delhi Police today arrested two shopkeepers who sold chemicals for making explosives to the militants who attacked Parliament five days ago.

Police said SAR Gilani, the Delhi University lecturer who has been arrested, had purchased aluminium powder and ammonium nitrate from two Khari Baoli shops a few months ago.

Police is now concentrating on the laptop which it seized from the two main accused, Mohammed Afzal and his cousin Shaukat Hussain, arrested in Srinagar by the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

The duo were reportedly about to deliver the laptop — given to them by Mohammed, the *fidayeen* squad leader — to Ghazi Baba, the Jaish-e-Mohammed supreme commander in India.

Large amount of information has already been decoded but the investigating agencies are taking it with a pinch of salt. "We will have to verify every minute detail. It is strange that a terrorist who expected to die in a suicidal strike was walking around with names and pictures of militants or supporters. We are wondering whether this is their own form of counter-intelligence," said investigators.

Police have reportedly seized seven floppies also but officers refused to confirm this. The deputy commissioner (special cell), Mr Ashok Chand, said the computer has partially been decoded.

Sources, however, said experts have cracked the password and found that the laptop contained details of key contact persons, pictures of some unidentified people and details of safe-houses.

"The people whose photographs were in the computer — in bitmap files — are not famous. We

assumed they aren't the targets. But they could be contacts, militants, or supporters. We're forwarding the prints to all districts in Delhi and J&K," said an investigator. Police are forwarding information on the maps of vital installations in Delhi and Srinagar, which were in the databank, he said.

Officials said experts were finding it difficult to decode the computer as "virtually" everything was in code. So far, none of the decoded information suggests the possibility of an immediate, second strike.

Mr Chand said the man arrested in J&K yesterday was not Tariq, the main contact person for Ghazi Baba, but a man named Tanvir who had no connection with the Parliament attack.

Kyas Abdul Al Kareem, a Jordanian student, who was picked up for questioning, was not involved in the Parliament case, police said.

Kashmiri students under scanner

Sanjay K Singh in New Delhi

Dec. 18. — Kashmiri students in Delhi University, particularly those pursuing post-graduate studies, are being kept under close surveillance.

The home ministry has issued a directive to this effect following the attack on Parliament, senior DU officials said.

The Union home secretary, Mr Kamal Pande, and the joint secretary, Mr PK Jallali, were not available for comments.

The DU authorities have been asked to be on "alert" and keep an eye on "suspicious" activities.

"Police patrol at night is being increased and we have told wardens of the students' hostel to maintain records about students who enter or leave the hostel premises late at night," an official said.

The north district police (DU is under its purview) said Kashmiri students are being "watched."

Activities of students from South Asia and the Arab countries in the USA were strictly monitored after the 11 September terrorist strikes. The students later complained of harassment.

The DU authorities have been asked not to "harass" any student in the name of security. They are to ensure that the "review" is kept "secret."

Strike inside Pak ruled out

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, December 17

THE CABINET Committee on Security (CCS), which met here today, appears to have decided not to go in for hot pursuit or air-strikes in PoK to combat terrorism. During a 90-minute meeting, chaired by Prime Minister AB Vajpayee at 7, Race Course Road, consensus emerged on a more measured response, in keeping with India's political and diplomatic offensive against Pakistan.

Top military brass briefed the CCS before it arrived at a decision. Chief of Naval Staff Sushil Kumar, Vice-Chief of Army Staff NC Vij and Vice-Chief of Air Staff S Krishnaswamy briefed the CCS about the likely consequences of a political decision to take military action against Pakistan for engineering cross-border terrorism.

The service chiefs reflected the armed forces' view that strikes against terrorist training camps would have little impact in curbing terrorism, as these camps are "no more than drill squares and firing ranges". The psychological impact of the strikes ought to be weighed against the military escalation such action would cause. Also, many camps are located deep inside Pakistani territory — in the case of Jaish at Karachi.

Crossing the Line of Control could lead to a four to six week all-out war, the CCS was told,

and in an extreme case, a nuclear exchange. First use of nuclear weapons is the rationale in the Pakistani scheme of deterrence.

During the briefing, the dissimilarity of the Indo-Pak situation with the US-Afghanistan and Israel-Palestine scenarios was also brought out. While there was tremendous asymmetry between the military capabilities of US and Israel versus the Taliban and Palestinians, Pakistan's military might is considerable, with India just enjoying an edge in terms of its conventional forces. But the key is that both Pakistan and India are nuclear powers.

The armed forces reportedly favour covert action "within the spaces available", alongside a politico-diplomatic offensive for inflicting costs on Pakistani for sponsoring terrorism.

The draft of the statement that Home Minister LK Advani is expected to make in Parliament on Tuesday was also finalised during the meeting. Advani is expected to make public the sequence of events leading to the terrorist attack on Parliament on Thursday, and the Government's response to the challenge.

After the meeting, Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh told the media that the Government was alert to the movement of Pakistani troops along the Line of Control.

Related reports on Page 9

3 more held for Parliament raid

New Delhi, December 17

THREE MORE arrests were made today in connection with Thursday's attack on Parliament even as New Delhi rejected Pakistan's offer of a joint probe into the incident.

J&K police arrested a man called Tariq who acted as one of the conduits between Ghazi Baba, Jaish-e-Mohammad's supreme commander in India, and Mohammed Afzal, one of the four persons rounded up earlier.

Delhi Police in the meantime held two persons after 35 kg of RDX was recovered from a house in Gandhi Vihar. Subhash Malhotra, the landlord of Afzal, and Virendra Pal, a property dealer, were picked up for not informing police about the new tenant as per rules.

The duo was arrested under Section 188. As per the rules, a landlord is duty-bound to inform police about new tenants. Malhotra had failed to do so even one month after renting out the apartment. Pal, who had helped Jaish's pointsman in Delhi Mohammad Afzal to rent the house by presenting him as a student, was arrested on the same charge. Investigations showed Tariq had also stayed in the house. Jaish has denied any role in the attack.

Detailed report on Page 9

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

19 DEC 2001

Lashkar behind attack: Jaswant

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, DEC. 14. India today held the Pakistan based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) responsible for Thursday's terrorist attack on the Parliament House and urged Islamabad to take action against this outfit.

In a demarche delivered by the Foreign Secretary, Ms. Chokila Iyer, to the Pakistani High Commissioner, Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, India said that it had enough "technical evidence" to hold the LeT responsible.

The External Affairs Minister,

Mr. Jaswant Singh, said at a press conference this evening that India, on the strength of this evidence, had "demanded" from Pakistan the termination of all activities of the LeT and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM). This includes the detention of the LeT's top

leaders and the sealing off of the offices of the two organisations in Pakistan. The JeM was responsible for the October 1 attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. Incidentally, the U.S. State Department has recognised the LeT and the JeM as supporters of terrorism. According to Mr. Singh, India also wanted Pakistan to block the LeT's access to funding.

In case India can prove the LeT's hand in the attack, enormous international pressure can be mounted on Pakistan as this organisation is based near Lahore. This is on account of the provisions of United Nations security Resolution 1373 passed on September 28 which makes it mandatory for all countries to deny "safe havens" to those who finance, plan, support, or commit terrorist acts. Defiance of this is difficult as it can be "enforced" under Chapter 7 of the U.N. charter.

Not surprisingly, aware of the legal openings for mounting collective pressure on Pakistan, India has shared its evidence with some of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council as well as other key countries.

The demarche takes note of the message sent by Pakistan's President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. Analysts here say that Gen. Musharraf's statement, for the first time, expressed concern for the well-being of the Indian security forces involved in countering the attack on Parliament. Besides, unlike the past, it does not describe the attackers as "freedom fighters" but, instead characterises them as "armed intruders". The interpretation here is that the Gen. Musharraf's observations are a response to the mounting international pressure on him to distance Pakistan from terrorism. To a question, Mr. Singh denied that the Pakistani forces had been placed on alert across the Line of Control.

India's actions to counter terrorism after Thursday's attack would be guided by the Cabinet resolution passed on Thursday, Mr. Singh said. He was responding to questions on whether India was planning military retaliation against Pakistan.

Handiwork of Indian agencies: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 14. Pakistan tonight virtually endorsed the contention of the militant outfits that the attack on the Indian Parliament on Thursday could have been "stage-managed" by the Government to divert attention from "internal problems" and to defame the "freedom struggle" in Kashmir.

The Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, told the 'News Night' programme on the State-run Pakistan Television that Islamabad was expecting some "such drama by the Indian Government after its total isolation from the international community" in the wake of the September 11 attacks in America.

The observations came hours after the Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Ahmed Khan, said Pakistan was ready to examine any evidence provided by India on involvement of the Lashkar-e-Taiba in the attack.

It was counter-productive for Pakistan and the militant outfits operating in Kashmir to indulge in such an operation. "Such an

incident is against our interest whereas it serves a number of purposes of the Indian Government," he said to a question.

New Delhi wanted to equate the "freedom struggle" in Kashmir with terrorism and continue with its policy of "oppression and repression." "Several organisations in India were unhappy with New Delhi. It could even be POTO or the coffin scandal."

He wanted to know why India had not shown the faces of the attackers. "They have not given us any proof. They don't seem have any proof and yet fingers are being pointed towards Pakistan."

To a question whether the attackers could have been Pakistani prisoners of war (PoWs) in Afghanistan, who were reportedly handed over by the Northern Alliance to New Delhi recently, he said he had only read reports about it.

Maj. Gen. Quereshi wanted to know how the attackers got the uniforms of the security forces and how they got inside the Parliament complex despite the Indian Government having prior information on the possibility of

such an attack. "All I say is that nothing is beyond the Indian agencies. Look at Chattisinghpura."

On how the incident could impact the relations between India and Pakistan, he said that since the Agra summit, New Delhi had been looking for excuses not to talk to Pakistan.

He claimed India had moved three Army divisions to Kashmir in recent days and said that if New Delhi were to attempt any "misadventure", Pakistan would give a befitting reply.

A conspiracy: Lashkar

In a statement, Lashkar alleged that the attack was "a conspiracy to label" Pakistan and 'jehadi' organisations as terrorists. Its spokesman, Mr. Yahya Mujahid, said that 'mujahideen' (holy warriors) never targeted civilians. "India wants to take advantage of the current situation and malign the fight for freedom in occupied Kashmir. Lashkar and other organisations are not involved in these incidents. India itself is aiding and committing state terrorism in Kashmir."

Police claim 'clinching evidence'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 14. A day after the terror strike at the Parliament House, security and intelligence agencies today felt that the needle of suspicion pointed to the Pak-based terrorist groups— Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad — on the basis of evidence available so far. As many as 14 persons, including two Pakistan nationals, have been picked up for questioning by the Delhi Police. But the suspicion does not appear to be a firm pointer so far in unravelling the mystery of "Who is behind it?"

Experts from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) have picked up some "vital clues" from the spot. The expertise of the U.S.

investigating agency — Federal Bureau of Investigation — was also put at the disposal of the Home Ministry by the U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Robert Blackwill.

Another crucial clue, sources said, could come from a person arrested by the Special Operations Group (SOG) in Baramulla district in Kashmir. He could be vital in unearthing links with those who had masterminded Thursday's operation. A special team of the Intelligence Bureau and the Delhi Police is said to have been sounded out for rushing to Srinagar.

The Delhi Police Commissioner, Mr. Ajai Raj Sharma, said that they had "some vital clues" and sought two days' time to come out with

"concrete results". "We are not in a position to disclose anything right now as it might affect investigations," he added.

Police said that two Pakistani nationals, Mohammad Shafiq and Firoz Durrani, staying at Ambassador Hotel at Khan Market here were detained. They were reportedly picked up from near the Indira Gandhi International Airport while trying to flee the country.

The two persons are reported to have made several calls to Pakistan, and Toronto, Canada before the attack on Parliament House. They also made calls around 8-30 a.m. from a PCO inside the hotel — hours before the incident.

The PCO booth owner, Mr. Deepak Chawla, said that one of the two suspects, around five feet and seven inches tall, clad in a blue sweater, came to make the calls.

Immediately after the attack, a police team reached the hotel to detain the two but they had left for the airport, where they were nabbed. The two suspects were brought to the hotel this morning and interrogated. While one of them was going to Toronto, the other was planning to fly to the U.S. In another breakthrough, police identified the shop from where the terrorists had bought the car used in the attack.

'Next target Bush'

PTI reports:

"This is the property of the Ministry of Home Affairs and nobody can stop this car," wrote the terrorists in small-sized letters on the Home Ministry sticker pasted on the front windscreen of the Ambassador car.

"Atal Behari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani are Indians and we are going to kill them. They are friends of George Bush and our next target is George Bush," the message read.

Afroz to confess on Tuesday

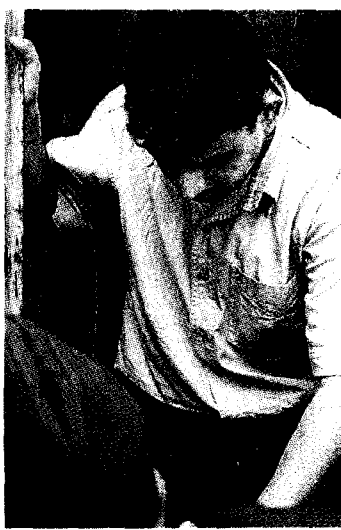
MUMBAI, DEC. 14. Mohammed Afroz Abdul Razak, alleged member of the Al-Qaeda, told a magistrate here today that he wished to confess voluntarily and refuted allegations of his father that he was mentally sick or that police had tortured him, even as the court decided to record his plea on December 18.

Twentyfive-year-old Afroz had allegedly conspired with others to blow up the House of Commons in London, Parliament House in New Delhi and Romal Towers in Sydney.

Afroz told magistrate V.P. Taware that the police had not pressured him to make a confession and that he had come to the court on his own accord. He dismissed his father's allegations as baseless.

"I do not want to engage any advocate to defend me. I have decided to confess on my own. It is also not true that I am mentally sick and I do not want to undergo any

psychiatric treatment," Afroz told the magistrate in fluent English. — PTI



Afroz Razak arrives at a court in Mumbai yesterday. — PTI

15 DEC 2001

THE HINDU

12 Pak soldiers killed in LoC firing

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29/11

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU/NEW DELHI, Nov. 28.

— At least 12 Pakistani soldiers were killed and 14 of their bunkers destroyed after Indian troops retaliated last night against unprovoked mortar and artillery firing from across the LoC.

A spokesman of the Army's 16 Corps, that looks after Jammu, said Pakistani troops fired on several positions in Poonch and Mendhar sub-sectors.

Six of the 14 Pakistani bunkers have been flattened, while eight suffered extensive damage. Nine bunkers were at high altitude and fitted with heavy weaponry and mortar guns. Sources said the toll on the Pakistani side may be higher.

The 16 Corps spokesman said the unprovoked firing and shelling on Indian positions along the LoC was probably aimed at pushing a large number of militants into India. Sources said India's retaliation was prompted by the death of more than 10 soldiers, including a major, in an encounter with militants at Surankote yesterday.

Intermittent firing from across the border also took place at some other areas, such as Kerni, Krishna Gati, Mendhar, Laam, Bhawani, Bhimbergali, Nowshera and Pallanwalla in Rajouri-Poonch sector. Two persons have been injured in Laam sub-sector, Rajouri.

Pakistan Rangers have stepped up firing on villages and outposts along the international border in Samba. The Indian forces returned the fire. The exchange continued till this morning, sources said. A girl has been injured at Kote Kuba.

This is the second incident of its kind along the LoC in Jammu in the last one-and-half month. On 15 October, in a "punitive action", the Army had flattened several Pakistani posts that were aiding and abetting infiltration. About 30 Pakistani soldiers were reported killed in the exchange of fire.

After the two-day shelling, Mr George Fernandes, who had just taken over as defence minister, spoke of being ruthless against Pakistani shelling and firing in the Poonch-Rajouri area, a prime spot for infiltration.

Very often, Pakistani troops shell Indian positions to keep heads on this side of the LoC down so that the infiltrators have more time to slip in. Indian troops are more forthright about returning fire because the decisions are now mostly taken locally, by the division or corps.

Pak denial: Pakistan today denied reports quoting Indian defence sources that 16 Pakistani soldiers were killed and 12 of its bunkers destroyed, PTI adds from Islamabad. The Indian "claims are false," said the defence spokesman, Maj-Gen Rashid Qureshi.

Three civilians were killed and 20 injured in Rawalkot sector, which was referred to by the Indian troops as Poonch, he said. The Pakistani army, he said, hasn't suffered any casualties.

BSF casualty: A BSF assistant commandant and two jawans were killed and three injured when ultras attacked a search party at Achabal in Kashmir's Baramulla district, UNI adds.

■ General strike in Kashmir valley, page 8

Pak President ready to discuss all issues

PM, Pervez may meet in Kathmandu

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 24. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee today said he may meet General Pervez Musharraf during the Saarc summit in Kathmandu in the first week of January.

"If I go there, if he comes there, we may meet", Mr Vajpayee told reporters during an informal chat at a lunch hosted by senior BJP leader, Mr Vijay Kumar Malhotra.

The external affairs ministry had earlier hinted at the possibility of the two meeting in Kathmandu.

This will be the first meeting between the two leaders after the Agra summit. Relations froze because of Gen. Musharraf's insistence on talking only about Kashmir and India's refusal to recognise it as the key issue.

They did not meet on the sidelines of the UN in New York.

Mr Vajpayee's statement assumes significance in the context of the global fight against terrorism and talks about a representative government in Afghanistan.

Mr Vajpayee said many countries had appreciated India's move to open a liaison office in Kabul.

What role would India play in the government formation there? The Prime Minister said it remained to be seen how the situation unfolded. India favours implementation of the UN Security Council resolution on the issue and the world should try to implement that.

The Prime Minister expressed concern on the influx of Bangladeshis into India and said the government was trying to ensure that they were provided full security by the Bangladeshi government in that country. India's main priority is to ensure their safe return and security, not debate on their status as "refugees" or "infiltrators", he said.

This is likely to enthuse the BJP which has demanded refugee status for the Bangla families if they needed to stay in the country for long.

Musharraf ready for talks: General Musharraf today said he was ready to discuss all pending issues with India but insisted that the focus should be on Kashmir, reports PTI from Islamabad. He was addressing a joint press conference after his talks with the European Union delegation.

The Pakistani information secretary, Mr Anwar Mehmood, said Gen. Musharraf was ready to meet Mr Vajpayee during the Saarc meet in Kathmandu. "We are ready for talks with India", he said. Mr Mehmood was reacting to Mr Vajpayee's statement expressing willingness to hold talks with Gen. Musharraf during the Saarc meet.

Gen. Musharraf said: "Kashmir undoubtedly remains the main dispute

SRINAGAR BLAST

JAMMU, Nov. 24. — At least 30 people were injured in a grenade explosion in Lal Chowk in central Srinagar around 2.30 p.m. today. Militants had hurled the grenade at a vehicle but it missed the target and exploded on the road. Security forces have launched a manhunt for the militants.

The Army repulsed a fidayeen attack by Lashkar-e-Taiyaba militants on their camp in Pulwama district last night. Two militants were killed in the encounter. — SNS

■ Photograph on page 10

adversely affecting Indo-Pak relations. But we are prepared to discuss each and every issue, provided the focus is on Kashmir". India has given the wrong impression that Pakistan was not ready to discuss any other issue except Kashmir, he said.

On charges of "cross-border terrorism", Gen. Musharraf said: "All the three words in the claim are wrong, ab

initio. An indigenous freedom struggle is going on in Kashmir and there is no question of crossing over. Secondly there is no border, the status is that of the Line of Control and thirdly, there is no terrorism as it is a popular striving and struggle for freedom".

The Pakistani President accused India of not implementing the UN Security Council resolution on plebiscite in Kashmir, saying it has curbed the rights of the Kashmiri people. He urged the EU to play an active role in the peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

Border firing: Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged fire in some border outposts in Jammu and Kathua districts late last night, official sources said today, UNI adds from Jammu. There are no reports of loss of life or property.

THE STATESMAN

India-Pakistan talks: yes, no, maybe

By Kanti Bajpai

10-12 23/11
WITH THE Northern Alliance's dramatic gains in the ground war in Afghanistan, India must turn its attention to relations with Pakistan. Islamabad has indicated its willingness to resume talks. The External Affairs Minister has said he will visit Pakistan. On the other hand, the Prime Minister has suggested that he is in no hurry to restart the dialogue. Should India talk to Pakistan or not?

The most honest answer is that it is hard to say. There are those in India who always favour talks; and those who would never talk unless Pakistan was on the verge of strategic surrender. And then there are those who hedge, with "maybes" and "it-all-depends". This third position is one that many would identify with, and it is worth exploring. What are the signs and contingencies that should incline us to resume negotiations?

By far the most important factors relate to Pakistan's attitude and to developments within that country. Islamabad has more than once invited Indian leaders to visit Pakistan to take the Agra dialogue forward. General Pervez Musharraf's rather crude language on India-Pakistan relations and his recent remarks in the United Nations General Assembly notwithstanding, he has visibly committed himself to talks.

The second positive sign was his use of the word "terrorism" to describe the attack on the Kashmir Assembly on October 1. This is one of the very few times a Pakistani leader has allowed the "T-word" to pass his lips. If we are looking at tea leaves and trying to divine future trends and directions in Pakistan, one thing we should watch for is how often Pakistani officials use this word. The more often they can do so, the more reassuring it will be to Indians who want their country to restart the dialogue.

More important than this is what Gen. Musharraf has done domestically. A number of his policies merit more acknowledgment in India. For instance, in response to the U.S.' request, the Pakistani President sacked his ISI chief. He also rearranged his top military structure by changing some of the corps commanders, including Gen. Mohammed Aziz, a well-known hardliner.

Whether we resume talks with Pakistan will in the end depend on the attitudes of the Indian leadership and the public, but those attitudes will partly be conditioned by the behaviour of two actors — Pakistan and the U.S.

The Pakistani President has made other important domestic moves too. For one thing, he has repeatedly suggested that extremism has no place in Pakistani political and social life. Before the Agra summit, he had made rather similar remarks, a point that was not lost on New Delhi. The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, in his press conference before the summit, noted Gen. Musharraf's altered tone and hinted that it had been a factor in India's decision to invite him to Agra. That the summit did not turn out to be the success everyone hoped for does not detract from the importance of the Pakistani President's remarks. If India and Pakistan are to resume a dialogue, we will need to hear more such statements from the Pakistani leader and to see actions against groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Jaish-e-Mohammad, the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen.

There are at least two other things that Gen. Musharraf has done which augur well. Commensurate with his criticism of extremists, he has gone on record as saying that Pakistan's madrassas will have to behave better, will have to be modernised and regulated. This is an absolutely vital issue. The Wahabi-funded religious schools as well as other more locally-funded ones have been the greatest force for fundamentalism and militant Islam. A lot of madrassas are doing good work and are perfectly respectable. A lot are not. Those that are not need to be made better. We will have to watch and see what Gen. Musharraf does in respect of these institutions and whether or not his actions will match his words in the months to come.

The second good augury is a related one. Since September 11, the General has arrested and placed under confinement various religious leaders and extremist political figures. If Pakistan's body politic is to be de-toxified, this also is necessary, at least as a shock therapy. There has to be

room for dissent, even politically distasteful dissent of the kind that some of these groups represent; but those who advocate hatred and violence can and should be lawfully detained in crisis moments such as these. If Indo-Pakistan relations are to move ahead, Gen. Musharraf will need to bring the rabble-rousers and agent provocateurs under control.

Finally, we shall have to assess how stable Gen. Musharraf's Government is going to be. So far so good. Two months after the September 11 events and Pakistan's joining the coalition against terrorism, the Pakistani President seems firmly in charge. The political demonstrations against him and the U.S. have, by all accounts, been small. A certain amount of staged public unhappiness was in any case not unhelpful to the General. It improved Pakistan's bargaining room with the international community and gave Gen. Musharraf a chance to be statesmanlike. Those who know Pakistan recognise that the Army is a very powerful institution, one that is more or less immune to sustained public protests. The chances therefore are that Gen. Musharraf will be around to fashion a long-term policy towards India.

India's relations with Pakistan march to the tune of another player as well, and that is the U.S. In the days after September 11, there were moments when it looked like Indo-U.S. relations would sour and Pakistan-U.S. relations would bloom in rather uncomfortable ways. Two months later, from New Delhi's viewpoint, things seem more congenial. This is good news for Indo-Pakistan relations.

The greatest difficulty for New Delhi is the tendency of most Americans to see Kashmir in terms that suit Pakistan. Whatever we in India have said or done, the common sense of U.S. officials remains that the accession of Kashmir is controversial, that Kashmir is the central dispute, and that the present troubles are a result of

bad Indian policies in the late 1980s. Official U.S. policy shies away from such hard pronouncements, but there is little doubt that this describes the substructure of American thinking.

Attitudes such as these are slow to change and, even as we go about trying to alter U.S. views, we must accept that this is one element of the diplomatic game that does not favour us. Fortunately, a spate of pronouncements and policies in the U.S. are helping to solidify relations and to serve as ballasts against our fears of a tilt. Three things are worth noting.

First, the U.S. stand, most recently articulated by Gen. Colin Powell, that there are no good terrorists and bad terrorists, just terrorists plain and simple, was music to New Delhi's flapping ears. Washington's insistence, during the Musharraf visit, that India and Pakistan should find a mutually acceptable solution to Kashmir was also most welcome.

Second, high-level contacts between the two countries are burgeoning. The Indian Prime Minister's visit to Washington was a good idea, even if it was overshadowed by the Pakistani President's. The Home Minister's trip to the U.S. is important and should enhance the collaboration against terrorism. The bilateral Defence Policy Group will soon meet.

Third, areas of cooperation were announced during the Vajpayee visit which could help give greater substance to the idea of strategic engagement — cyber terrorism, peacekeeping assistance, anti-terrorism assistance, export controls, nuclear safety. A U.S. ship called at Chennai for refuelling, and the two countries are exchanging intelligence information at unprecedented rates and levels. The tea leaves suggest that the portents for India-Pakistan talks are not all bad. Whether we resume talks with Pakistan will in the end depend on the attitudes of the Indian leadership and the public, but those attitudes will partly be conditioned by the behaviour of two actors — Pakistan and the U.S. There are changes afoot in Pakistani and U.S. policies that could alter the present, rather negative Indian attitude to resuming the subcontinental dialogue.

(The writer teaches at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.)

23 NOV 2001

I supported US for Kashmir's sake: Musharraf

Mubashir Zaidi
Islamabad, November 19

PRESIDENT PERVEZ Musharraf said on Monday that Pakistan had joined the US-led campaign against terrorism in order to protect the nation's security interests on the Kashmir and nuclear fronts.

"The decision greatly helped Pakistan to achieve diplomatic gains," Musharraf told local government representatives of Sindh during a meeting at President House. "It was motivated to protect Pakistan's interests on the Kashmir and nuclear fronts."

"Kashmir cause and nuclear capability are our core security interests. We have succeeded in that. Furthermore we have also earned economically. Today, Pakistan is playing an important role in the international community and has emerged as a frontline state."

The President, according to a press release, also asked the local government heads to play their role in making Pakistani society free from extremism, hatred and intolerance. "There are some extremists who are indulging in violence. I call upon the local governments to prevent such elements from creating law and order problem," he directed.

He said that madrasas and mosques have been misused by extremists for fanning hatred. "Mosques and madrasas have been misused and have failed to play designated role."

"The Government will not allow these madrasas and mosques to be used for fanning religious hatred and violence. They will be dealt with an iron hand."

The President asked the local

police to cooperate with the heads of respective governments to root out extremism from the society and make Pakistan a progressive and moderate state.

Tribal leader arrested: The authorities on Monday arrested a leading religious leader from a tribal area on his return from Afghanistan and registered a case against him for possession of illegal weapons.

Maulana Sufi Mohammed, head of Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Shariah, had gone to Afghanistan couple of weeks ago along with at least 2,000 armed Pakistani tribesmen to fight alongside the Taliban.

With the Taliban regime on the verge of a collapse, Sufi Mohammed tried to sneak back into Pakistan on Sunday night. He was stopped by personnel of the Frontier Constabulary at the border and not permitted to cross the border.

He was later allowed by the authorities to cross the border but immediately arrested when he did so and had a case for possession of illegal arms registered against him. He faces a maximum of 10 years in prison.

So far all the leaders of religious parties are in custody, including Qazi Hussain Ahmed (Jamaat-i-Islami), Maulana Fazlur rehman (Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam, Maulana Azam Tariq (Sipah-i-Sahaba), Liaquat Baloch (Jamaat-i-Islami) and many others. They were booked on charges of sedition that carries a maximum of death penalty.

Interior Minister Lt General Moinuddin Haider has said that the Government would try these religious leaders for spreading violence.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 NOV 2001

Musharraf's rigid stance evident at U.N.

By K.K. Katyal *MD-14*

NEW DELHI, NOV. 15. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, may have hoped to impress the U.S. and others in the West by his suggestion in the U.N. General Assembly address for talks with India on the nuclear issue but, in practice, hardly improved the prospects of a dialogue. He did seek to showcase his ideas but could not persuade himself to get rid of the catch which had prevented discussions on the subject in the past.

Q. No. Park
One, there was nothing to suggest that Pakistan was willing to delink the nuclear issue from the Kashmir problem. Two, his focus was on bilateral restraints in matters which required multilateral treatment. His approach smacked of ideas which, in part, formed the basis of suggestions for a bilateral nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), rejected by New Delhi.

At Lahore, in February 1999, Pakistan had agreed to delink the nuclear matters from the "core issue". This was evident from the fact that the discussions between the two Prime Ministers, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee and Mr. Nawaz Sharif, produced two documents — the Lahore Declaration dealing mainly with Kashmir and political issues, and the Memorandum of Understanding devoted exclusively (in the operative portion) to the nuclear issues. Gen. Musharraf, however, was not inclined to delink the two issues — as was clear from the discussions at the official and non-official levels (in the Neemrana talks, for instance). That he stuck to this approach is now evident from the following formulations: "We are ready to discuss how Pakistan and India can create a stable South Asian security mechanism through a peaceful resolution of disputes, preservation of nuclear and conventional balance, confidence-

14/11
building measures and non-use of force prescribed by the U.S. charter. In this context, we are ready to discuss nuclear and missile restraints as well as nuclear risk reduction measures with India in a structured, comprehensive and integrated dialogue."

Pakistan's obsessive concern with Kashmir gave a peculiar commotion to "peaceful resolution of disputes", otherwise a commendable proposition. And hence the linkage. If, however, there is a departure from the earlier approach, it could be made explicit.

Another key sentence in the General's address is "We are ready to formalise a bilateral treaty with India for a mutual test ban". This subject forms the core of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), on which both India and Pakistan had expressed themselves in the past. New Delhi found flaws in the treaty and, as such, chose not to accede to it.

In the changed context after Pokharan-II, India agreed to work for national consensus (for signatures on the treaty). Pakistan, on the other hand, indicated its readiness to sign it, irrespective of the position taken by India, but had not done it so far. To talk of "bilateral treaty for a mutual test ban" now was pointless. An issue that had been the subject of multilateral discussions and was multilateral in character could not be confined to bilateral commitment.

Also, the talk of "nuclear and conventional balance" was based on the concept of parity which had not been acceptable to New Delhi because of its wider security threat perceptions. On its part, India had mooted certain ideas like no-first-use-of-nuclear-weapons, which could form the basis of discussions. Along with the do's and don'ts listed in the Lahore MoU.

THE HINDU

NOV 15 2001

57-8 (11) Ind. Pak

Battered Indian official returns from Pakistan

19/11

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 13. — The Indian high commission official in Islamabad, Mr Devinder Kumar Gupta, who was picked up by Pakistani intelligence men last week, arrived at the Indira Gandhi International Airport this evening. He was issued a notice to leave the country by Islamabad and freed late last evening by the Pakistani intelligence officials.

His face swollen, bruises and contusions visible on the face and the head, Mr Gupta, his wife, child and an elderly relative, arrived at 4.45 p.m. by a Pakistan International Airlines flight. He is expected to be taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences for treatment.

Speaking after his arrival, Mr Gupta said, "It was a retaliatory step to settle scores". Earlier this month, a Pakistani high commission official in Delhi was asked to leave the country by New Delhi. He said, Indian officials posted at the high commission are threatened by Pak intelligence officials.

Recalling the evening of 7 November, Mr Gupta said "I was going to the nearby market with my wife. There were over a dozen men in plain clothes who asked me to accompany them for questioning".

When Mr Gupta protested, the men started beating him. "One of the men dragged me to their vehicle and even my wife was injured in the scuffle," he said. Mr Gupta, posted in the Indian high commission 15 months ago, was forced to board the Pakistani intelligence wing's vehicle.

He was taken to an "unknown place" in Islamabad and confined to a dark room for six days. "They never asked me any questions. All they did was

BLAIR VISIT IN JAN

LONDON, Nov. 13. — The British Prime Minister, Mr Tony Blair, has agreed to make a formal visit to India in January 2002, the Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, said today.

He told a press conference here that dates for the visit were being finalised through diplomatic channels.

Referring to questions being raised about his visit to London because of Mr Blair's visit to New Delhi last month, Vajpayee said he was here as Mr Blair had invited him.

Justifying his visit, he said if he could go to Washington from Moscow why not London.

He said he could talk to leaders over telephone but personal face-to-face interaction had its utility.

Mr Vajpayee mentioned that the Canadian Prime Minister told him that Montreal was only one hour's flight from the US and that he could make a visit to the country.

"While I thanked him for the invitation I told him that I am not in a position to go there now now because of my pre-occupation," he said. — PTI

beat me up whenever they came into the room."

He could hardly walk and had to be supported by a press attache from the Indian high commission, Mr Kamal Parvez. "He was in complete shock and he couldn't utter a single word for three hours even after being freed by them," Mr Parvez said here. He added that when senior high commission officials informed the Pakistan government about the incident, "We were told that Mr Gupta had an argument with the Pakistani officials which led to a scuffle".

THE STATESMAN

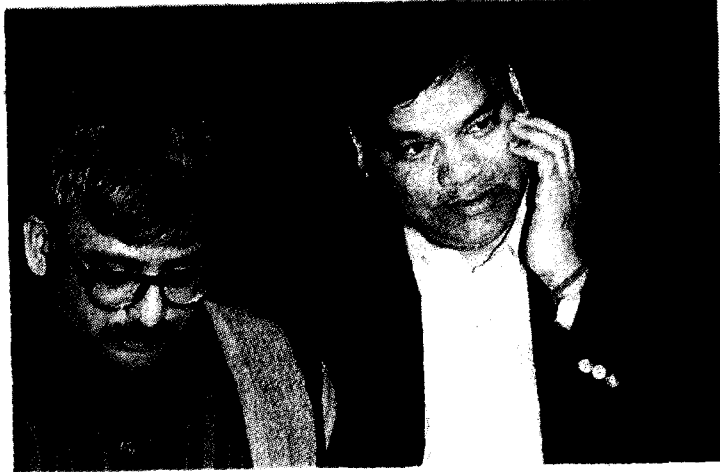
Harassed embassy staffer arrives in Delhi

By Our Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI, NOV. 13. With his right arm flung round a friend for support and trying desperately to hide his face with the other, Mr. Devendra Kumar Gupta, the Indian staffer who was abducted and beaten up by Pakistani intelligence officials on Thursday, arrived at Delhi today.

Despite being in a visibly painful state, Mr. Gupta almost succeeded in dodging the few mediapersons who were holding out placards of his name at the visitors' lounge of Indira Gandhi International Airport here. The press attache in the Indian High Commission at Islamabad, Mr. Kamal Parvez, confirmed that the man beside him was Mr. Gupta.

With his identity disclosed, Mr. Gupta took the palm off his face laying bare the bruises on his forehead, and a deep wound on his left temple. A swollen face, a bad limp, and repeated cries of agony told the rest. Mr. Gupta was in urgent need of medical atten-



The Indian High Commission staffer, Mr. Devendra Kumar Gupta (right), who was allegedly beaten up by the ISI, showing his injuries to presspersons at the Indira Gandhi international airport in New Delhi on Tuesday.— Photo: Sandeep Saxena

tion. An assistant at the visa section of the Indian High Commission, Mr. Gupta said he had gone to the market with his wife on Thursday night, when suddenly some people surround-

ed him, roughed up his wife, forced him into a Landcruiser, and took off. "I don't know where they took me. But all they did was to beat me up. They never asked any questions, just kept beating

me up." The relentless bashing up, Mr. Gupta said, went on for almost four to five hours without a break. "I did not have the opportunity to pose any questions.

All they told me was that this was in retaliation to the expulsion of a Pakistan High Commission staffer here. According to them, their staffer was beaten up by authorities here and this was a revenge."

By now, Mr. Gupta, who was accompanied by his wife and children, was writhing in pain. He was immediately packed off in a car by officials to All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). A last-minute attempt to talk to Ms. Gupta was met with the rebuff: "We have had enough. I don't want to speak to anyone. Thank you."

Meanwhile, according to sources, preliminary medical examination at the AIIMS indicated that Mr. Gupta has suffered internal injuries with possibilities of fracture in the legs and hips.

India, Pak. exchange fire in Siachen sector

19-11-81 By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, NOV. 12. The Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged fire in the Siachen glacier sector on Sunday but there were no Indian casualties, an Army spokesman said today. Both sides traded artillery fire which was initiated by Pakistan in the Gyong sector.

Reacting to a Pakistan Defence Ministry claim that the Indian Army, supported by heavy artillery and mortar fire, had attacked a Pakistani post and that three Indian soldiers were killed, he said it was unfounded. The firing had begun from the Pakistani side and there were "absolutely no" Indian casualties.

B. Muralidhar Reddy reports from Islamabad:

The Pakistan Army has claimed that it effectively repulsed an 'unprovoked' Indian attack at Gyong sector on Sunday night.

According to the Inter-State Public Relations Directorate (ISPR) of the Pakistan Army, a company of Indian Army comprising more than 60 soldiers, supported by heavy artillery and mortar fire, attacked a Pakistan post in Gyong in a bid to occupy it.

"The soldiers of the Pakistan Army deployed at the post detected the Indian move and successfully repulsed the attack inflicting heavy casualties on the assaulting Indian troops. The bodies of three soldiers are still lying abandoned near the Pakistani post," ISPR said.

13 NOV 2001

9/22
P/W
HDI

Pak. will never be able to get Kashmir: Vajpayee

M/11

By P.S. Suryanarayana

NEW YORK, NOV. 11. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has flayed Pakistan for turning its focus on Kashmir in the evolving context of the U.S.- led campaign against international terrorism.

Speaking at a dinner hosted by the Indian American community here on Saturday, Mr. Vajpayee asserted that Pakistan would never be able to lay its hands on Kashmir.

In the address in Hindi, Mr. Vajpayee could hardly appreciate why the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, would want to hold talks with him at this stage on foreign soil. Mr. Vajpayee, who has made a virtue of reticence in the public domain during his ongoing diplomatic voyage across three major countries, finally chose to answer Gen. Musharraf. But in doing so, he managed only to heighten the cold war of strategic calculations in the already frosty bilateral relationship.

At a press conference earlier in the day, Gen. Musharraf said, "Pakistan remains ready for the re-

sumption of dialogue with India." However, according to him, "one can't clap with one hand". This should not prevent the two countries from thinking big. In Gen. Musharraf's view, "We (India and Pakistan) must stop the arms race, we must reduce the defence forces and yes, we must even de-nuclearise South Asia."

On Pakistan's military profile, Mr. Vajpayee told the Indian American audience that Gen. Musharraf was trying to raise the bogey of a threat from India to procure F-16 fighter bombers from the U.S. The apparent reference was to Pakistan's efforts to settle the books with regard to the freeze on the supply of F-16s under the Pressler Amendment.

In a confrontation over the relative relevance of India and Pakistan to the current U.S. aims and strategies in Afghanistan, Mr. Vajpayee argued that Gen. Musharraf's bluff had been called. Having fashioned the Taliban, the Pakistani leader was now sacrificing it. Earlier, Gen. Musharraf had contended that the Taliban was an "indigenous" force.

11

12 NOV 2001

Ostrich barb at Atal by 'Dove' General

New York, November 11

PAKISTANI PRESIDENT Pervez Musharraf played the dove yesterday when he said he was ready for a dialogue with India, which should not do an "ostrich" on Kashmir.

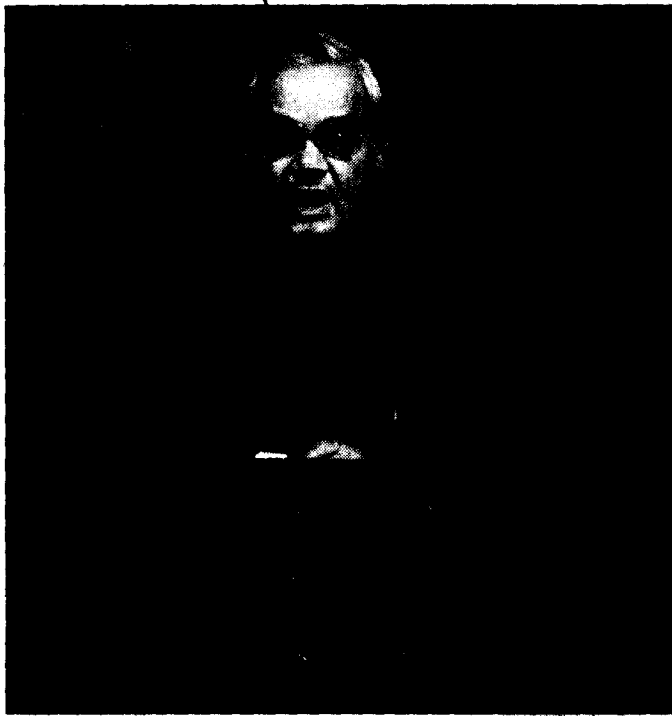
The President had earlier brought up Kashmir in his speech to the UN General Assembly. Happy being a front-line State in the international campaign in Afghanistan, he told a press conference at the UN that "Pakistan remains ready for a dialogue with India and I look forward to restarting the process."

He accused India of having gone back on a settlement at the Agra summit. "One can't clap with one hand."

On why the two countries were not talking to each other, he said "You ask exactly the same question to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee." It was up to Vajpayee and Jaswant Singh to decide whether to visit Pakistan.

Earlier in his speech at the General Assembly, Musharraf gave his own spin to terrorism. "The question is, whether it is the people asking for their rights in accordance with the UN resolutions who are to be called terrorists or whether it is the countries refusing to implement the UN resolutions who are perpetrators of State terrorism."

On the reasons behind terrorism around the world, Musharraf said "It is the unresolved



Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee addresses the 56th UN General Assembly at the UN headquarters in New York on Saturday.

political disputes the world over: disputes in Bosnia, Kosovo, Palestine and other places.

"Unfortunately all these disputes involve Muslims, and more sadly Muslims happen to be the victims in all which tends to give a religious tinge to these otherwise political disputes. Lack of progress in resolution has created in them a sense of deprivation, hopelessness and powerlessness."

Musharraf called for a "just and honourable" solution for Kashmir.

On whether the West would give a clean chit to India in the interest of the current campaign against international terrorism, Musharraf said "I don't think anybody is giving any clean chit to anyone. We have to fight our own battles which we are doing to the best of our ability."

PTI PHOTO

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

India perpetrating state terrorism: Musharraf

MAUREEN NANDINI MITRA
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

UNHQ, Nov. 11. — General Pervez Musharraf continued his anti-India rhetoric in the UN General Assembly yesterday, accusing New Delhi of "perpetrating state terrorism", but reiterated his offer to resume talks with India.

The Pakistani President alleged that Indian security forces had killed over 75,000 Kashmiris and attributed these killings to foreign terrorists. "It's time India must stop such deceit," he said, demanding that the UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir be implemented.

He equated the "liberation struggle" in Kashmir with the conflicts in Palestine, Bosnia and Kosovo, saying "such unresolved political disputes" were the real cause behind terrorist acts around the world. "A just and honourable solution to Kashmir and Palestine disputes are major burning issues."

He said: "The question is if the people asking for their rights in accordance with the UN resolutions are to be

called terrorists, or whether it's the countries refusing to implement UN resolutions who're perpetrating state terrorism".

But at a press conference later, Gen. Musharraf more or less admitted that he wasn't quite successful in conveying to the Western world the difference between terrorism and freedom struggle.

"One doesn't really give clean chits to anybody on such important issues. We've to be logical enough to fight our own case, to convince the world about our ideas on Kashmir, which we're doing to the best of our ability. And I can... say we've been fairly successful in convincing the world that Kashmir is a dispute that needs to be resolved peacefully in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmir people."

"In my interactions with President Chirac and Prime Minister Tony Blair, we did talk about these (issues). They gave their own stand but they do understand our points of view."

He said Pakistan was ready to discuss nuclear and missile restraints as well as nuclear risk reduction meas-



General Pervez Musharraf

ures with India. "We've declared a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. Pakistan was not the first to initiate nuclear tests and will not be the first to resume them. We're ready to formalise a bilateral treaty with India for mutual test ban."

Calling India's backing out from the Agra summit "unfortunate", he said he looked forward to resuming talks between the two countries. "I look for-

ward to a visit by the Indian Prime Minister or the foreign minister. We've extended an invitation to them. It's up to them whether they want to come or not. The delay in interaction is not from our side."

On the Afghan war, he said: "I'm against this word 'war', frankly. There's no war going on in Afghanistan. It's an operation against terrorists, their abettors and supporters."

He said his country's decision to join the battle against terrorism was "a deliberate, principled" move.

Pakistanis "still suffer from a sense of betrayal and abandonment" from when they were "left in the lurch (by the USA) in 1989 after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan."

He iterated that military operations in Afghanistan must be short and must avoid civilian casualties. "The international community, in particular the UN, must... promote a political process that can ensure a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. This objective can only be achieved with a broad-based government which is represen-

tative of all the ethnic groups."

He projected former Afghan king, Zahir Shah, as the possible leader of the new Afghan government once the war was over. "King Zahir Shah has ruled the country for over 40 years. and if the people of Afghanistan think that he has a role to play... then one wouldn't deny him that role."

Will the Afghans forget Pakistan's "abandonment of their cause"? He shot back: "What cause are you talking about? Let me clarify that one takes action according to environments and ground realities. Having diplomatic ties with a country doesn't at all mean that you're accepting everything they're doing."

"The Taliban was created from within,... Now the wrong perception that everyone has is that the Pakistan military was participating with them. Nothing can be more farther from the truth."

"Pakistan was not equipping them, we don't have the resources to do that. And whatever resources we have, maybe there's an eastern direction where we would like to concentrate them on."

PM takes swipe at Pak in UN address

U/II
9/11/01 PAK 95-2
Referring to the "barbaric terrorist acts" against the US on September 11, Vajpayee said these had reminded the world that neither distance nor power insulates a state from terrorism.

Declaring India's support to the current campaign against terrorist networks in Afghanistan, Vajpayee expressed hope that it reached an early and successful conclusion. Afghanistan's current travails could only end with

the establishment of a broad-based, representative and neutral government which would stop the export of terrorism.

"Located as it is in Afghanistan's neighbourhood, India's vital national interests are affected by developments in it. We also have traditionally close links with Afghanistan. That is the basis for our belief that India can play a useful role in this process," he said.

INDIAN EXPRESS

11 NOV 2001

Wrapping up US visit, PM takes swipe at Pak in UN

AGENCIES *Jwdv Pak*

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 10

WITH *92-1111* the Indo-US joint statement making a cursory reference to the terrorist attack on October 1, Prime Minister A B Vajpayee used his address to the UN General Assembly to make another veiled attack on Pakistan.

Speaking at the 56th session of the Assembly, Vajpayee said that some states follow a policy of sponsoring and sheltering terrorists and asked the international community to "firmly rebuff any ideological, political or religious justification for terrorism."

"We should reject self-serving arguments seeking to justify terrorism according to its root causes and therefore justifying action somewhere while condemning it elsewhere," he said.

Vajpayee said people in India know from their bitter experience that terrorists develop global networks driven by religious extremism. Their operations are supported by drug trafficking, money laundering and arms smuggling, he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INDIAN EXPRESS

PM peppers UN sermon with lunch miss

Vajpayee targets Musharraf menu

FROM K.P. NAYAR

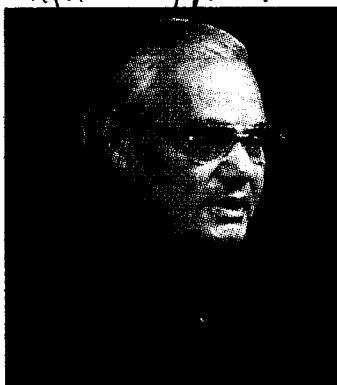
New York, Nov. 10: Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today pre-empted Pakistani dictator Pervez Musharraf in the UN General Assembly by calling for a comprehensive rejection of "self-serving arguments seeking to classify terrorism according to its root causes".

And to avoid even a chance meeting and a handshake with the terrorism-sponsor-turned-anti-terrorism-coalition-partner, Vajpayee stayed away from a lunch hosted by UN secretary-general Kofi Annan on the opening day of the general debate in the General Assembly.

By firmly rebuffing any ideological, political or religious justification for terrorism, Vajpayee anticipated Musharraf's speech in which the President referred to Kashmir's so-called freedom struggle and India's "state terrorism" in Jammu and Kashmir.

Rightly expecting Musharraf to argue that India's Kashmir policy is responsible for terrorism in the state, the Prime Minister criticised those who justify "terrorist action somewhere while condemning it elsewhere".

Since Musharraf was speaking in the General Assembly after



Vajpayee at the UN. (AFP)

Vajpayee, the Prime Minister would not have got a chance to rebut any arguments by Pakistan's President. Vajpayee did not, however, refer to Pakistan by name in his 15-minute address, once again delivered in Hindi.

Notwithstanding Vajpayee's unequivocal rejection of Musharraf's double standards on terrorism, Pakistan's President was the flavour of the weekend in New York.

President George W. Bush led the pack of leaders queuing up to talk to and fetter Musharraf, whose country has a strategic role in the current conflict in Afghanistan.

Bush is hosting a private dinner for Musharraf tonight and is

expected to announce a new instalment of aid, including trade incentives, to Pakistan.

Since Musharraf is being lionised by the international media, which is dogging his every move, even a casual handshake with Vajpayee at Annan's reception would have hogged television news and made it to the front pages of the international media.

It is understood that Vajpayee was advised by his top aides to avoid a dilution of the strong anti-terrorism message in his UN address.

In his address, the Prime Minister cautioned states, including the US, which had failed to take seriously his dire warnings about terrorism at previous UN General Assemblies that "neither distance nor power insulates a state from terrorism".

Also, for the first time since the US bombing of Afghanistan started more than a month ago, India explicitly asserted that "it supports the current campaign against terrorist networks in Afghanistan".

Officials accompanying the Prime Minister said this assertion should not be interpreted as support for a war against Afghanistan.

■ Atal rejects dud trade cheque, Page 6

THE TELEGRAPH

11 NOV 2001

South Block outrage at 'abduction'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE 5/1

NEW DELHI, Nov. 9. - Pakistani Intelligence operatives "abducted" two Indian High Commission officials and their families in separate incidents in Islamabad yesterday.

The South Block "summoned" the Pakistan High Commissioner, Mr Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, today and protested against this "crude and uncivilised" behaviour.

The secretary, ministry of external affairs, Mr RS Kalha, conveyed India's strong protest at the two "serious" incidents of "intimidation, forcible abduction, harassment and assault".

According to the ministry of external affairs, Mr P Ravindran was travelling by bus to Lahore en route to the Indian border at Wagah-Attari with his wife and son.

As the bus reached Lahore, an individual, who introduced himself as an ISI officer, demanded to see the contents of Mr Ravindran's bag. When Mr Ravindran refused, the person "forcibly" opened the bag.

"He sought to confiscate money but returned it when Mr Ravindran threatened to report the incident to the police. The ISI official threatened him with dire consequences if he returned to Pakistan," said MEA officials. Mr Ravindran lodged an FIR at the Gulberg Police Station in Lahore.

The second incident took place in Islamabad around 9 pm (PST). Mr Devendra Kumar Gupta, an assistant with the visa section in the Indian high commission, and his wife, were returning from a public

■ See OUTRAGE: page 8

THE STATESMAN

10 NOV 2001

SI-8
9/20/11
10/11

OUTRAGE:

(Continued from page 1)

shopping area in a taxi. Eight Pakistani Intelligence officials in a land cruiser intercepted them. Mr Gupta and his wife were reportedly dragged out of the taxi. "Mr Gupta's wife was gagged and manhandled by an operative", said MEA officials.

Mr Gupta was then pulled into the land cruiser and driven away to an unknown destination. He was released early today in a "badly beaten and bruised state". An FIR has been lodged with the Kohsar Police Station in Islamabad.

The MEA said the Indian high commissioner, Mr Vijay Nambiar, had personally informed the Pakistani foreign secretary, Mr Inamul Haq, about the first incident. The dubious nature in which the Pakistani officials behaved "naturally raises obvious questions", officials said.

India condemned the "high-handed" actions, saying it violated the Vienna Convention and the Bilateral Code of Conduct for the Treatment of Diplomatic / Consular Personnel that has been agreed to by India and Pakistan. "Pakistan's repeated transgressions of its obligations in this manner form a consistent pattern and raise serious questions about its attitude and approach to its commitments under international and bilateral agreements".

THE STATESMAN

10 NOV 2001

Indo-Pak war on US soil

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, November 8

IN A thinly-disguised attack on Pakistan, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today warned the United States that the battle against terrorism will be defeated "if members of our coalition are permitted to indulge in terrorist activities elsewhere".

Vajpayee, who arrived here from Moscow last evening, went on the offensive in the course of an address to the House International Relations Committee as he reminded the US that the battle against terrorism cannot end in Afghanistan.

"Condoning terrorism anywhere encourages terrorism everywhere," he remarked and said that as victims of terrorism over the last two decades, India knew it only too well that if this menace was not tackled globally

and comprehensively, it would raise its ugly head in various regions of the world. The Prime Minister had a similar message to convey to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Vajpayee's US visit may have been intended to bolster the global campaign against terrorism, but Indo-Pak affairs appeared to loom large in the American consciousness on the eve of his talks with President Bush.

There was no mistaking the American focus as word was out that the US had sought the good offices of Russia to impress upon India the need for restraint in Kashmir and resumption of dialogue with Pakistan.

Diplomatic sources have told journalists accompanying the Prime Minister that the Russians have told the Americans that it is Pakistan that needs to be cautioned. If India does not rebuff

the attacks in Kashmir, terrorist groups enjoying Pakistan's backing will be emboldened.

Even though the Prime Minister ruled out a meeting with President Musharraf in New York later this week, speculation is rife here that Bush will make a fresh appeal to Vajpayee when he meets him tomorrow. The US believes that even a symbolic meeting between the two leaders will go a long way in toning down the shrill Indo-Pak rhetoric.

Vajpayee, on his arrival here, made clear his intentions. As reporters questioned him if he could still meet Musharraf in the light of the US's behind-the-scenes moves, Vajpayee let it be known that there is no change in his stance that a conducive atmosphere should be created first. "I will meet him in New Delhi, not in New York," he said in a seeming tone of finality. He also gave a

short shrift to questions on whether India was concerned with the US's growing proximity to Pakistan. "Achhi baat hai (it's a good thing)," he remarked.

Nonetheless, he was convinced that the US would not supply Pakistan military hardware. Indian embassy sources here have been expressing the sentiment on the premise that Bush would not like to see an arms race in the sub-continent. Military sales are now a subject of presidential discretion, under the authority vested by the Congress.

At his meetings here, the Prime Minister, while reaffirming India's strong support to the ongoing Afghan operation, will seek a due role for New Delhi in the consultations on the post-Taliban set-up. India is keen to be co-opted in the 'six plus two group' and has been greatly enthused by the Russian support in this regard.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

9 NOV 2001

Talks with Pak will lead nowhere

SUDESH K VERMA
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

AMRITSAR, Nov. 2. — The Prime Minister today hardened his stand on talks with Pakistan, saying terrorism in J&K had intensified and that there was no peace on the borders. Though India always favoured talks, the situation was such that talks won't lead to anywhere, he said.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee was speaking at a meeting of BJP workers here.

He said the movement of Indian troops along the borders shouldn't be seen as a precursor of something serious. "India has never taken the first step, but will leave no stone unturned to defend its borders and fight ter-

rorism."

India wants to live in peace but its forces are ready for any challenge, he said. The Prime Minister slammed Pakistan for trying to renege on the earlier agreements signed by its heads of government.

He defended his decision not to meet General Pervez Musharraf in New York, saying Islamabad wanted New Delhi to begin from where the two countries had left in Agra. "Why not go back to the Lahore declaration or Shimla agreement? Agreements weren't signed between individuals, but heads of two government. India has honoured all the international commitments."

He said the Lahore declaration, signed by him and Mr Nawaz

Sharif (then Pakistani Prime Minister), had condemned terrorism and expressed determination to fight it. Referring to his Lahore bus yatra, he said when talks were progressing, Pakistan was preparing to invade Kargil.

Mr Vajpayee said India was aware that it couldn't change its neighbour and that developing friendly ties was the only way out. But Pakistan must first stop its anti-India rhetoric and change its stand on Kashmir. The two countries can have better trade and cultural ties and learn to live in peace.

He said delegates from across the world wanted India to talk to Pakistan. But after they meet Indian leaders and get familiar with the facts, they go back con-

vinced that Pakistan must first stop cross-border terrorism. "We ask them to pressure Pakistan." India has been exercising restraint, missing on the Pakistani side, he said. Substantiating his claim, he said the recent attack on J&K Assembly was not just a terrorist act, but aimed at throttling democracy in the state.

Hired armed personnel under the garb of terrorists perpetrated the act, he said. The so called terrorists were not even aware of the details of the Assembly complex and the chief minister's identity. "They kept shouting who is Abdullah. Find him etc."

Mr Vajpayee said the Akaji Dal and BJP joined hands in Punjab not to share power, but to improve the state's social fabric

that had been damaged by terrorism. He vowed not to let terrorism raise its head again.

Advani silent: It wouldn't have mattered much, but for Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's observation at the recent party council meeting in Delhi where he spoke about communication gap and that he was called for the valedictory address while Mr LK Advani was asked to give the margdarshan.

Today, Mr Vajpayee speech combined margdarshan and valediction. Mr Advani was at the back of the stage and didn't utter anything. A leader said Mr Advani didn't speak because the party wanted to keep the focus on Mr Vajpayee.

26/11
9:20 pm



Mr AB Vajpayee in Amritsar. — AP/PTI

More reports on page 8

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2001

10/10
THE IMPERATIVE OF RESTRAINT 8/11

THIS IS NO time for brinkmanship in the subcontinent. With the U.S.-led campaign entering a very decisive phase, there is, instead, a desperate, urgent need for India and Pakistan to tone down their rhetoric and continue the policy of restraint that has generally characterised their stances since the September 11 terrorist strikes. The ominous prognostications coming from the Vienna-based U.N. watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, cast a special responsibility on the two nuclearised neighbours not to say or do anything that can exacerbate tensions and heighten the dangers of a conflagration. It is in this context that one must express grave apprehensions over the war of words that has erupted between the two countries. The open charges and counter-charges in the past few days of troop movement along the border and the sorry spectacle of the United Nations military observer in Kashmir making totally unacceptable remarks and then apologising for them have tended to surcharge the atmosphere. Pakistan has said that these are routine military exercises which take place around this time every year. If India has reason to doubt the statement, it has ways of seeking clarifications and delivering diplomatic protests even as it takes counter measures. Both countries have also set in place confidence-building tools, including the hotline between the Directors-General of Military Operations, which should be utilised to clarify the position and defuse tensions. There is nothing to gain by going public and provoking panic. Islamabad needs to realise too that appeasing domestic constituencies cannot come at the cost of the national, and international, good.

In these extraordinarily troubled times, when the maximum of restraint and caution should be exercised particularly in sensitive border areas such as the Chicken Neck in the Jammu region, the public posturing of the type

being witnessed helps neither side. There is the real danger on the contrary of the situation spinning out of control. It is the felt concern that one misstep by either country has the potential to spark a conflagration, with catastrophic consequences for the region and the world, that has seen the avalanche of VVIP visits to India and Pakistan since the U.S. launched its campaign against Afghanistan. The leaders of the U.S., England, Germany and now France have all but one message to both countries: restraint.

Behind the message is the widespread concern over the nuclearisation of the subcontinent, a concern which has been immeasurably deepened by the daring September 11 attacks in New York and Washington. The terror campaign has introduced a new element of potential disaster: nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists. This heightened concern, verging on panic in some capitals, is reflected in the stark warning from the IAEA. The agency's Egyptian-born director, Muhammad el-Baradei, has spoken of how the international community is not just dealing with the possibility of Governments (running those "rogue" states) diverting nuclear material into clandestine weapons programmes. The world has now been exposed to the potential of terrorists targeting nuclear facilities or using radioactive sources to incite panic, contaminate property and even cause death among civilian populations. The disturbed conditions in Pakistan and the presence and power of the fundamentalist terrorist groups there are a particular source of concern to the international community. The Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, has declared that his country's nuclear arsenal is in safe, foolproof custody. This is reassuring but the world will continue to watch warily to see if nations have the resources to prevent the explosive match of the terrorist and the nuclear bomb.

THE HINDU

3 NOV 2001

Rumsfeld may meet George

Pakistan

masses

border

9 nbs
pak

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STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 1. — Pakistani troops, including soldiers from the "strike" corps usually meant for offensive operations, have been brought closer to the LoC and the international border with India.

Islamabad has said it's just an exercise, but Indian officials are worried especially because it coincides with the Afghan war. They've, however, ruled out any serious escalation of tension. "This is part of the normal winter exercise but the timing is worrying," a military officer said. (But the foreign ministry tonight accused Pakistan of pursuing "manoeuvring tactics" on the issue of tension on the LoC, UNI adds. "Pakistan is crying wolf about Indian troops concentration," a ministry official said. India has been saying it hasn't massed troops along the LoC.

(Pakistan tonight said the allegations of troops movement was a "belated effort by India to apportion the blame on Islamabad for rising tensions," PTI adds from Islamabad.)

Strike corps men in Mangla have been moved to Akhnoor sector, around the Chenab-Jhelum corridor. Soldiers of the other strike corps, based in Okara-Multan, may also be closer to the border. The strike corps have an armoured divisions and an infantry division each.

The Pakistani formations involved in the exercise are 8 Independent Armoured Brigade (part of the Mangla strike corps) and men from 12, 6, 17, 3 and 31 divisions. An officer said troops from the "holding" corps too have been moved closer to the border. They include 10 Corps (opposite J&K), 30 Corps in the Sialkot-Shakargarh sector, 31 Corps in Bahawalpur and 5 Corps in

Karachi. Usually, divisions comprising about 15,000 men form a corps, but this time, only elements of the divisions have been moved.

The Pakistan army has said it is an exercise it conducts every year. But this time, it seems to have moved more elements than needed for an exercise and also combat support groups such as engineers.

Officers said the movements began very slowly about three weeks ago. There are two infantry brigades and an armoured brigade in the Akhnoor sector, meaning about 35,000 soldiers and possibly 150 tanks. The troops are around Kharian. Indian forces have taken precautionary measures and "geographically weak" areas have been strengthened.

Pakistan has also massed troops in Bahawalpur sector, opposite Barmer, Rajasthan. Here too, the Indian troops have been deployed and they have performed some exercises. The Pakistani forces are about 80-90 km from the international border.

UN observer apologises: Maj-Gen Herman K Loidolt, chief of the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan, has apologised to the defence ministry for making irresponsible statements to the press in Srinagar a few days ago. He had said India and Pakistan were not serious about solving the Kashmir problem.

George-Rumsfeld meet: The US secretary of defence is likely to meet Mr George Fernandes on Monday. Mr Donald Rumsfeld will visit Russia and may come to India for a day.

Shelling: Pakistani troops today shelled in Uri sector, injuring four Army porters, PTI adds from Srinagar adds. The shelling started at 9 a.m. and lasted an more than an hour.

THE STATESMAN

2 NOV 2001

'SUSPICIOUS, KARGIL-SCALE BUILD-UP'

Pak. moves more troops along Indian border

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By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, NOV. 1. India today claimed that Pakistan had moved additional troops to areas facing Akhnoor in Jammu and Kashmir and Ganganagar in the Rajasthan sectors.

Defence Ministry sources here said that from earlier this week, Pakistan had been moving some reserve troops and armoured formations facing the Indian border in these sectors. The extra build-up amounts to two infantry divisions and a large armoured brigade in the Chenab-Jhelum corridor facing Akhnoor.

Pakistan has also moved an additional armoured division and two independent armoured brigades in Bhawalpur facing Ganganagar district in Rajasthan. Both movements have mechanised and support columns.

The Directors-General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of both the countries are said to have discussed the issue at their weekly tele-conference. Pakistan has said that these were "routine exercises" which take place around this time every year. However, officials here say that these high-level troop movements include strike elements such as armoured, mechanised and air formations and other combat arms. An exercise like this could be converted into an assault in no time.

Analysts say the Akhnoor area is Pakistan's best hope of cutting off Jammu from Kashmir. The Jammu-Poonch road goes via Akhnoor and even the Jammu-Pathankot axis will be threatened. India has fought fierce battles in 1965 and 1971 in these areas, which analysts say, is difficult to hold. In view of the

threat perception, the Army has taken preventive steps to forestall any assault. Officials sources say a build-up of similar scale had taken place during the Kargil war.

Maintaining that the Pak. build-up looked suspicious, Defence Ministry officials said Islamabad had been told that India had not moved any army reserve divisions from central or eastern theatre into Jammu and Kashmir.

'Pak. intentions exposed'

(PTI reports:

Reports of Pakistani military build-up facing India in Akhnoor in Jammu and Kashmir and Ganganagar in Rajasthan indicated a "mismatch" between Islamabad's "crying wolf" about India and its real intentions, official sources said.

"Such reports indicate that

while Pakistan is crying wolf about the so-called Indian design on it, it is Pakistan that is in reality indulging in aggressive manoeuvres that heighten tension between the two countries," the sources added.)

'No Govt.-Army discord'

India has denied Pakistan's allegations of "disparity and disconnect" between the Government and the Army.

Official sources said the Government and the Army were in harmony over the approach to tackle cross-border terrorism. There was nothing new in what the Army Commander had said while addressing a seminar in Jammu. In fact, he had only echoed the observations of the Defence Minister and the Prime Minister on Wednesday in Somnath. Defence Ministry officials

said the "complete message" sent to the "Pakistan Army opposite Northern Command" by Lt. Gen. R. K. Nanavatty was as follows: "We are committed to restraint along the line of control and the international boundary in J & K. If, however, the Pakistan Army or terrorists assisted by the Pakistan Army, continue to carry out hostile acts to include sabotage, infiltration, raids or intrusions in violation of the Shimla agreement, we reserve the right to take military action against Pakistani military and/or terrorist targets as deemed appropriate."

Islamabad, unfortunately, detected a dichotomy in approach towards J & K on the basis of initial reports of Gen. Nanavatty's address which had omitted a couple of critical qualifying clauses, said officials.

It is blame game: Islamabad

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 1 Pakistan today described Indian allegations about movement of additional troops by Islamabad as a 'belated attempt to put the blame' for raising tension on the Line of Control (LoC).

Answering a question at a press briefing, the Press Secretary to the Pakistan President, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, said New Delhi's allegation only demonstrated that the Indian intelligence was 'very weak'.

Maj. Gen. Quereshi maintained that it was nothing but an attempt to put the blame on Pakistan after India was surprised at the ability of Pakistan to gather intelligence. His reference to the charges made by Pakistan on October 16 about movement of troops along the LoC and International Border (IB). "I think India was taken aback when we disclosed the movement of its troops along the LoC and IB immediately after the unprovoked firing by its forces on October 15. This is a belated attempt to shift blame on to Pakistan", he maintained.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, who appeared at the press briefing, said the demonstrations in different parts of Pakistan signifying compassion for innocent victims of stray bombs had been larger because of deep feelings of sympathy with the Afghan people.

"It is illogical to interpret such a natural reaction as danger to the stability of the state or the government", the Minister said.



INDIA READY TO MEET ANY THREAT

Have no illusions over Kashmir, PM tells Pak.

By Manas Dasgupta

SOMNATH (GUJARAT), OCT. 31. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today asked Pakistan not to harbour any illusion that it would ever be able to dismember Kashmir from India.

In an obvious reference to the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf's recent statement on "chhudiyan" (bangles), Mr. Vajpayee said "some people" harboured an illusion that India was weak and could be dictated terms. "They get such ideas from seeing our women wearing bangles, but they forget that with the bangles also come 'steel Kada,' the symbol of brave warriors, among the people in Punjab."

He said India's patience and love for peace were often misread as its weakness. "Let there be no such disillusion, India today is strong, united, progressive and ready to face any challenge. We will never accept another division of the country." He said the Army was on high alert, the scientists engaged in their jobs and the country's youth ever-prepared to meet any threat.

Mr. Vajpayee was addressing a public meeting here on the

occasion of the completion of the golden jubilee celebrations of the reconstructed Somnath temple, coinciding with the 126th birth anniversary of the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the main architect of rebuilding the ancient temple from its ruins. Mr. Vajpayee also laid the foundation for the "Morarji Desai ghat," where the ashes of the former Prime Minister was immersed in the Arabian Sea, and inaugurated a drinking water supply scheme for the temple town in Junagadh district in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat.

The Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, who is also a member of the Somnath temple trust, the Textiles Minister, Mr. Kashiram Rana, the Chief Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, the Union Ministers of State, Dr. Vallabh Kathiriya, (Heavy Industries), and Mr. Harin Pathak (Defence), and the State unit president of the ruling BJP, Mr. Rajendrasinh Rana, were among those present.

Reminding the people that the Somnath temple was a symbol of the country's culture, prosperity and national self-respect, Mr. Vajpayee said the present terrorist elements

resembled closely those who repeatedly attacked and looted the temple in the past. "But like the Somnath temple was rebuilt amidst its ruins and the attackers were defeated, those who are trying to dismember India now would also be repulsed and the country would remain a strong and united nation," he said.

Reiterating that Kashmir was an integral part of the country, the Prime Minister said nothing could change its status any more. "We have once accepted the painful and unfortunate partition of the country, a result of political manoeuvring by the foreign rulers, but we will not allow another division under any circumstances," he said.

Mr. Vajpayee paid rich tributes to the memory of Sardar Patel and said that without him the country would perhaps never have been able to overcome the British Government's game to divide India in small princely states and become a strong nation. "We will have to defend our unity with all our mite as a true tribute to the Sardar," he added.

The Prime Minister announced that Somnath would soon be linked by a broad gauge railway line. He also promised Central assistance to develop the entire Somnath complex and other pilgrim and tourist spots in the State, including Porbandar, birth place of Mahatma Gandhi, Dwaraka, Palitana, the famous Gir lion sanctuary and other centres.

Mr. Modi, while welcoming the guests, said the Prime Minister last week sanctioned Rs. 2 crores for repairs of Bet-Dwaraka, ancient capital city of Lord Krishna, damaged in the January 26 earthquake.

Mr. Vajpayee complimented the "indomitable spirit" of the people of Gujarat and the way they were "fighting back on their own" to rebuild the State from the rubble caused by the earthquake. It was the same spirit that was seen in the Sardar's character that guided him to bring about the unity of the country against heavy odds, he added.

While Mr. Advani also paid tributes to the Sardar, describing the Somnath temple as the symbol of the country's cultural resurrection and unity, Mr. Modi announced the State Government's decision to set up a "Sanskrit University" in Somnath as envisaged by Sardar Patel more than 50 years ago.



The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee (under the umbrella), comes out of the Somnath temple in Gujarat on Wednesday. — AP

THE HINDU

1 NOV 2001