

Centre-Hurriyat talks may resume soon

11/12
Statesman News Service

Six children injured in Surankot blast

NEW DELHI, Dec. 10. — Formal, structured talks between the Centre and the All Party Hurriyat Conference may resume soon with both sides "preparing" for the talks, senior officials said.

The Centre's core group on Kashmir, headed by Mr KC Pant, with representations from domestic and external intelligence agencies, has been "reactivated".

Meanwhile in a major departure from recent practice, the Hurriyat didn't call for a J&K strike on the Human Rights Day today. Instead of a strike, the Hurriyat chose the far less confrontational route of organising a seminar.

Such changes, symbolic but important, sources said, indicate the problems that bedevilled earlier attempts to have a dialogue may appear less formidable this time.

The Centre had earlier offered the Hurriyat a dialogue and Mr Pant visited Jammu and Kashmir to hold talks with all groups. The

JAMMU, Dec. 10. — Six children were injured in an explosion at Chitti Patti village in the Dandi Dhar area of Surankot tehsil, Poonch district, yesterday afternoon.

The children were playing in a field when a suspected improvised explosive device went off. Six children sustained splinter injuries in the explosion. Police and security forces rushed to the village and shifted the injured to the sub-district hospital at Surankot, sources said. The condition of the injured is stable and they were responding to the treatment.

Initial reports suggested that a rocket was fired by an unidentified group of terrorists on a security post, but it misfired and fell on the field. But, probe carried out by local police and security forces revealed that an IED, planted by the ultras in the field, had exploded.

Security forces carried out a search operation in the village and other areas but no one has been arrested. — SNS

Hurriyat had refused.

According to Hurriyat leaders the logic behind the rejection was simple — the Centre was backtracking from its promise. Hurriyat leaders claim that the deal was to allow APHC to visit Pakistan and on their way back the Centre was to announce the name

of its Kashmir interlocutor. But a couple of fallouts put a spanner to the deal.

The Centre objected to the pro-Pakistan leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani from visiting Islamabad. Secondly, New Delhi announced Mr Pant's name without the prior knowledge of APHC.

11 DEC 2001

address the critics of the government.

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Three to Tango

9/12

The Centre's decision to institute a "core group" to begin a dialogue with the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has not come a moment too soon. These columns have advocated for a while now that if New Delhi wished to benefit from the US-led war in Afghanistan it would have to win some political battles of its own in Kashmir. However, given the Centre's indifferent track record in the Valley, and the history of botched-up opportunities, this latest initiative doesn't give much cause for optimism. Unfortunate as the Kargil war was, many believed that it has opened the window for establishing peace in the Valley. And yet far from capitalising on this, India's Kashmir policy has drifted along, further alienating the people of the state. Last year saw much action on this front, with the policy touted as the living embodiment of *insaaniyat*. However, the government's security forces negated any chance of defusing tensions by committing a rash of human rights excesses. Though this is not to suggest that the *insaaniyat* card in itself would have resolved the Kashmir imbroglio, it was certainly the opening gambit for a government hoping to win the hearts of the Kashmiri people. If nothing else, its success would have signalled that the government desired to premise its future initiatives in Kashmir on its awareness of past mistakes and a genuine desire to not repeat them.

9/12

So is New Delhi's latest "core group formation" initiative a case of doing too little, too late? May be not. Today, Kashmir stands at the crossroads and if New Delhi plays its cards well it could still successfully negotiate the bumpy road to peace. What's more, the government's initiative may yet find support from an unlikely quarter — the APHC. Last year, hardliners in the APHC, led by Syed Ali Shah Geelani, had warned the Indian government that it would not support any peace proposal or rein in the militants, unless New Delhi accepted that Kashmir was a disputed territory. This year, post 9-11, the APHC has turned that rhetoric on its head. It condemned terrorism and welcomed the Centre's latest initiative, saying that it "was open to a negotiated settlement, provided Pakistan too was included". The last bit was to be expected given the nature of the APHC's past demands, and indeed the time may have come for the Indian government to drop its opposition to tripartite talks. So far, this intransigence has only resulted in positions being further hardened after every round of Indo-Pak talks. The first step in any peace process has to be 'conflict management' from which neither the APHC nor Pakistan can be excluded. More importantly the timing may be just right for us. Engaging Pakistan now will ensure that New Delhi remains on the right side of any international moves to pressure India to talk with Pakistan. A dialogue would also pre-empt any moves by General Pervez Musharraf to use his "strategic ally" status with the US to internationalise the Kashmir issue. Additionally, with the General under pressure to crack down on jihadis, Pakistan and the APHC will be bargaining from substantially weakened positions, which will allow India to articulate its interests and drive the best bargain possible.

Ashok Emklem

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 DEC 2001

Jehadi card

13/1/92 Of diminishing value

The outlook for Kashmir in the aftermath of the Taliban's defeat remains uncertain. It is true that Kashmir now has the dubious distinction of being the only cause in the area which can claim a radical Islamic status in the eyes of the interested. It is, therefore, valid to assume that some of the jihadis out of a job in Afghanistan will be deployed in Kashmir by their patrons in Pakistan. Indian Army sources seem to be anticipating this. However, it is also true that the international community's focus on Islamic terrorism continues to be sharp and critical and any immediate resurgence of the phenomenon in the neighbourhood will attract the kind of attention that Pakistan may wish to avoid because in Kashmir, radical Islam has an unmistakable Pakistani imprint. The Lashkar-e-Toiba's decision to shift its headquarters to Muzaffarabad in the POK is a reflection of these new realities. The organisation has been put on the American blacklist and this move may be the first step towards reinventing its credentials. The Pakistanis, in fact, are said to be advising jehadi elements to reintegrate with local Kashmiri outfits. It is unlikely, in view of such developments that Pakistan or the jehadi faction in general will favour a preponderance of foreign jihadis in Kashmir so soon after Afghanistan, especially since Pakistan continues to maintain a supposed distinction between terrorism and freedom struggle. Besides, the demise of the Taliban regime may have a demoralising effect on jehadi elements in Kashmir for two reasons: one, because of the loss of an ideological hinterland from which they drew moral and financial sustenance, two, because the example can no longer be held up for emulation. Lots of Kashmiris will have seen and read about the plight of the Afghans.

How can the government of India exploit the situation? Absolutely no idea. A core group is being constituted with the aim of persuading whoever is willing to listen to participate in elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Even Shabbir Shah won't buy that. Much was being read into an announcement made by a Hizbul commander in Kashmir that the outfit was willing to declare a ceasefire and talk peace, if "the international community takes steps to resolve the conflict" and may even float a political platform. The commander was immediately pulled up by the leadership in Pakistan and all suggestions of a truce were forthwith repudiated. The Hurriyat's response is going to be the same: involve Pakistan. Forming a government in Jammu and Kashmir would like killing their constituency and fighting on Farooq Abdullah's turf. Besides the little difficulty of selling their identity to people in Jammu and Ladakh. This will require the kind of commitment to the Indian Constitution that no one in the Hurriyat would be willing to make.

Centre forms core group for talks with Hurriyat

BY OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

AA-1
10/12

New Delhi, Dec. 9: The Centre has decided to engage the All Party Hurriyat Conference in a dialogue and has formed a "core group" consisting mainly of bureaucrats and intelligence officials for this purpose.

Sources in the government said the core group will be headed by Planning Commission deputy chairman K.C. Pant.

Mr Pant is also the Centre's interlocutor on Kashmir affairs.

Other members of the core group are the Prime Minister's adviser on Kashmir affairs A.S. Daulat, who has for long worked behind the scenes interacting with Kashmiri militant groups and some Hurriyat leaders. Mr Daulat will now start formal negotiations with Kashmir leaders, sources said.

A joint secretary from the Prime Minister's Office, an additional secretary from the Union home ministry and the chief of the Border Security Force will also be part of the Kashmir core group.

A similar group headed by Mr Daulat has already been co-ordinating on Kashmir affairs between New Delhi and the chief of the joint command in Srinagar. With Mr Pant being

■ Turn to Page 2

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J&K

Army ambushed in J&K, 6 civilians die



Policemen and civilians carry the bodies of the victims in Baramulla. Javed Shah

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■ Victims killed in crossfire, say security forces
■ Locals on rampage, want bodies handed over

MUFTI ISLAH & MIR EHSAN
BARAMULLA, DECEMBER 8 284

SIX civilians were killed in firing today when an army operation against militants appeared to go horribly wrong. In the aftermath, a civilian mob threw bricks and stones and kept senior police officials virtually captive while tussling with policemen to take control of the bodies being kept on the lawns of the district-hospital here.

The firing was sparked when, at 11-20 a.m., militants ambushed an army convoy travelling from Chowkibal towards Baramulla in the Azadgunj area of the main town. Two militants, one armyman were also killed while seven jawans were wounded in the incident.

There are several versions of what happened next. Witnesses said the firing lasted for one hour, during which the army suffered some casualties. As the firing died down at Azadgunj, the army reportedly fired indiscriminately into the market, and also along the Srinagar-Baramulla national highway.

"The Army fired indiscriminately upto Delina," Shabir Ahmad, a witness said, adding troops kept on firing on the three-km stretch along the highway.

Baramulla deputy commissioner Naveen Chowdhary said the civilians were killed in the crossfire when army personnel and a nearby BSF picket retaliated. Firing from both sides "continued for sometime", injuring more people, he said, adding that he would order an inquiry into the episode.

A senior police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the high civilian toll was because the marketplace, part of the scene of the battle, was crowded with Id shoppers.

Witnesses said the first to fall to the

Meanwhile, 3 militants killed

■ SRINAGAR: Three foreign militants were killed in an encounter with security forces at Nildagar in Kupwara. One AK rifle, three magazines and 80 rounds were recovered from the spot. While in Teligam in Baramulla, another unidentified militant was killed in an encounter. Security forces also apprehended five persons from Kralgund area along with 11 kgs of RDX, 13 detonators and one remote control device. One Ghulam Mohi-ud-din War, a resident of Lach, Handwara, was also apprehended with five detonators and one kg of RDX. —ENS

bullets was a local boy, Nazir Ahmad, followed by Ghulam Hassan Khan of Kanawar. Witnessess said the army also fired on a matador at Kantbagh, where Abdul Rehman and Nazir Ahmad Khan of Uri were killed.

Another civilian, Sarabjit Singh, was killed while driving his car.

The victims were carried to the district hospital, where the scene turned to one of pandemonium. Stones and bricks towards the main lawn, where Chowdhary and other officials were trying to lift the bodies into a police vehicle. The locals wanted the bodies taken out in a procession but the police refused, believing it would heighten the tension.

"We want to maintain some sort of order", DSP Showkat Malik shouted before a kangri (firepot) landed near him.

Eventually, the police fired dozens of rounds in the air to contain the mob, which tried to attack the vehicle carrying staffers of *The Indian Express*.

Chowdhary was bundled into an ambassador, and the bodies were rushed to the Baramulla PCR.

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 9 DEC 2001

Hizbul arrest busts Kashmir hawala racket

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, December 7

THE POLICE today busted a major Hawala network in Srinagar and arrested over a dozen prominent businessmen on the charge of trafficking hawala money in the Kashmir Valley.

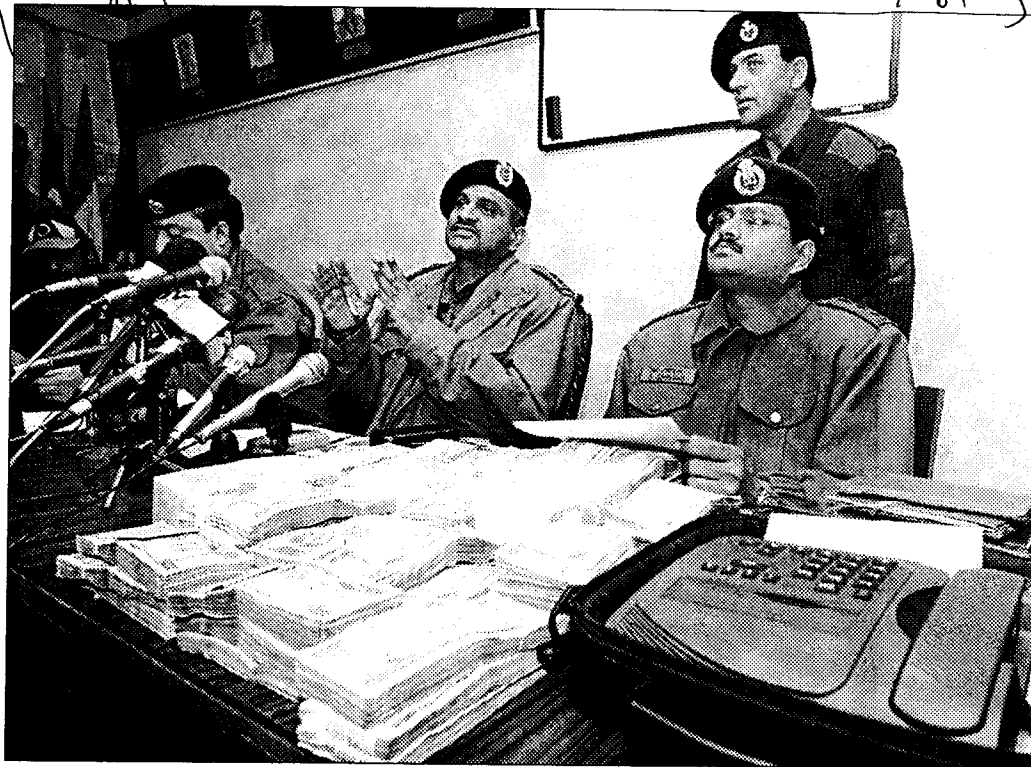
The raids were conducted after senior Hizbul Mujahideen functionary Abdul Rasheed Lone alias Molvi said during interrogation that these businessmen were bringing in money from Pakistan through hawala channels to finance militant outfits. Those arrested include a pesticides dealer, a forest lessee and owners of some major business houses in Baramullah and Srinagar.

Rasheed Lone of Baramullah was arrested from Parimpora in Srinagar last night.

IG (Kashmir Range) K Rajandran said the police, in their drive against people involved in financing militant organisations, seized an Ambassador car JKT-1531 near Parimpora. The driver managed to escape, but his accomplice, Rasheed Lone, was arrested. Two polythene bags with cash worth Rs 40 lakh and a satellite phone were seized. The money was hidden in one of the door panels of the vehicle. Rasheed Lone will be prosecuted under Poto.

Another man, reportedly a Hizbul functionary from Pakistan called Shafiq-Ur-Rhman Bajwa alias Fayaz of Rahim Yaar Khan, was following the car in a scooter. He too abandoned the vehicle and ran away. The police said Fayaz is in charge of the Hizbul funds and has been operating in the Valley for six years.

Documents seized from the



Police officers show currency notes amounting to Rs 4 million seized from a Hizbul Mujahideen commander in Srinagar on Friday.

scooter indicated that it was registered in the name of Manzoor Ahmed Yatoo in Srinagar — a relative of Ghaznavi.

Lone has admitted that he was a Hizbul functionary and had been operating along with Nazir Ahmad Yatooq alias Shakar Ghaznavi, the divisional commander of the outfit. The money was to be delivered to Ghaznavi. Ghaznavi was responsible for large number of killings in north Kashmir.

Lone's interrogation led to police raids at several premises in

Srinagar and Baramullah. Over a dozen persons, mostly businessmen, were picked up. The police have also launched a manhunt for Fayaz and Ghaznavi.

Hizb ultras kill 2 jawans

WHILE A complete shutdown threw life out of gear in the Valley, militants struck in north Kashmir's Pattan quarter and killed two personnel of the military's Intelligence wing.

The strike called by the Jaish-e-Mohammad in protest against

the implementation of Poto paralysed life in the Valley. All business establishments and educational institutions were closed and traffic remained off the road.

Militants killed two jawans of the military Intelligence at Wanigam near Pattan in Baramullah. The jawans were on routine patrol in the village, when militants fired at them. They have been identified as Las Naik Jai Singh and Javid Khan. Hizbul Mujahideen has owned responsibility for the attack.

Lashkar and Jaish in new US terror blacklist

S Rajagopalan
Washington, December 7

THE US State Department has put Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and Jaish-e-Mohammed on a fresh "Terrorist Exclusion List" that will enable the authorities to deny visas and carry out deportations. The two Pakistan-based outfits are among 39 groups put on the new blacklist.

This is the first concrete action by the US against Lashkar. A separate order of the Department of Treasury had frozen Jaish's assets two months ago.

However, the two groups are still to be included in the State Department's list of "Foreign Terrorist Organisations". Inclusion in that list is regarded as the ultimate branding of terrorist groups, giving the authorities sweeping powers to go after their members and supporters.

India has for long been demanding a formal designation that will be tantamount to a ban on these two outfits and some other terrorist groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir. Nonetheless, it has welcomed the moves against Lashkar and Jaish.

RAZZAK BEING INTERROGATED

MOHAMMAD AFROZ Abdul Razzak, who was arrested by the Mumbai police for his suspected links with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida outfit, is being interrogated by the Crime Branch to establish his exact role in an international conspiracy to conduct terror strikes in different countries.

"He is currently in custody and is being interrogated. No information can, however, be disclosed at this point as it might hamper investigations," Joint Commissioner B Mohite said in Mumbai on Friday. He also refused to confirm reports in a section of the media about Afroz's alleged connections with the IC-814 hijackers and of his pivotal role in an attempt to hijack a Manchester-bound flight that was targeted to crash into the House of Commons in September.

Mohite merely said, "The media would be briefed at the appropriate time," and urged the media not to publish stories that are "detrimental to the progress of the case". Afroz, who was produced on Thursday in the Esplanade Court, has been charged with serious offences, including waging war against the Government of India and for committing depredation on territories that are at peace with India.

'Burglar' row: Maharashtra Minister of State for Home Kripa Shankar Singh's remark that suspected al-Qaida militant Mohammad Afroz Abdul Razzak was just a burglar, triggered an uproar in Maharashtra Assembly on Friday, with the Opposition accusing Singh of shielding Afroz and demanding his resignation. Displaying news clippings, Opposition leader Narayan Rane (Shiv Sena) and senior BJP leader Gopinath Munde drew the attention of House over Singh's statement in a Marathi daily and questioned his propriety in making it. They said Afroz might now use the Press statement in his defence in court.

Singh told the House that his observation had been based on the information provided by the Mumbai Police Commissioner. An unimpressed BJP demanded a probe into Singh's statement.

PTI, Mumbai

The new list — issued yesterday by Secretary of State Colin Powell in consultation with Attorney-General John Ashcroft — also includes the al-Rashid Trust and Harkat-ul-Jihadi-Islami.

At present there are four different terrorist lists in circulation, giving rise to considerable confusion even within the administration. Apart from the yesterday's list, there are the State Department's list of FTOs, a list of "Other Terrorist Groups" that is not subject to legal measures and the Treasury Department's list which names

153 terrorist groups and front organisations whose assets has been frozen.

Harkat-ul-Mujahideen is the only J&K outfit on the FTO list, whereas Lashkar and Jaish are still on the list of "Other Terrorist Groups".

Announcing the new list, an official said: "The campaign against terrorism will be a long one, using all the tools of statecraft. We are taking a methodical approach to all aspects of the campaign to eliminate terrorism as a threat to our way of life."

US ban may not work in Valley: Lashkar, Jaish hire local cadre

NAZIR MASOODI
SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 27

THE US move to blacklist the Lashkar and the Jaish as terrorist organisations certainly puts pressure on Pakistan but as far as violence in the Valley goes, not much will change, at least in the short term.

And the main reason for this, observers say, is that both the groups have been rapidly "indigenising" themselves, recruiting their cadres from the local population.

Hurriyat executive member Abdul Gani Lone says that the presence of foreign militants has

distorted the Kashmir "freedom struggle." Speaking to *The Indian Express*, he said: "I have said this on Pakistani soil earlier but it was resented here as also there. Now, recently even the Hizbul has echoed the same thing."

However, his chairman Abdul Gani Bhat disagrees: "Ban or no ban, this makes no difference." Without naming the Lashkar and the Jaish, he said: "Kashmir is a disputed issue which involves, primarily the people's right to self-determination. And he who demands that this right be implemented, in letter and spirit, can never be called

and classified as terrorists," Bhat said. "I do not accept the argument that those fighting for freedom struggle are terrorists. But what has confused the situation is September 11," Bhat said.

Observers point out that like the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen which was banned in 1996, both Lashkar and Jaish can change their nomenclature and operate under new names. Efforts to give Lashkar a "Kashmiri rather than Pak colour" have already started after supremo Hafiz Mohammad Saeed resigned and appointed Abdul Wahid Kashmiri as his successor.

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Advani backs Kalyan fetters on cops

■ Says police at Ayodhya on Dec 6 were 'only' barred from firing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 27

UNION Home Minister L K Advani today "endorsed" the Kalyan Singh Government's controversial decision "prohibiting" the police from firing under any circumstances in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992.

In his deposition before the Liberhan Commission, Advani revealed that the decision to impose such a restraint on the police was "mentioned" to him "earlier" by Kalyan Singh.

"The fact that I did not in any



way try to change his stand may be regarded as my endorsement,"

Advani said, adding that he even divulged the decision in his

public meetings leading to the fateful day.

This prompted Commission's counsel Anupam Gupta to say, "A decision by the law enforcement authorities taken on the spot is one thing. A decision not to fire taken in advance as a policy decision and to make it public is another."

Advani came out in support of the advance ban on firing while denying the allegation made in the Narasimha Rao Government's White Paper that the police had failed to protect Babri Masjid "because of the orders of the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh not to use force."

Advani's contention is that "the state had embargoed use of fire arms and not use of force as such."

According to this, an executive fiat can apparently take away the statutory powers of the police, who are authorised

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SPECIAL REPORT

INDIAN EXPRESS

28 DEC 2001

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Al-Qaeda man held in J&K

By Our Correspondent

JAMMU, DEC. 24. The Jammu and Kashmir police have arrested an Al-Qaeda terrorist who is said to have been entrusted with the task of establishing modules of the outfit in various parts of the country, including in Delhi, by involving foreign nationals.

The Inspector-General of Police, Jammu range, Mr. P.L. Gupta, told newsmen here today that the arrested person, Qamar Ayub, son of Mohammad Ayub, resident of Mirpur district of Pakistan, was

also the chief of the Harkat-ul-Mujhaideen for Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Gupta said the police had identified the pointmen for different regions and arrested a Palestinian in Delhi who was an important link in the network. Mohammad Tahir Nadri, a resident of Bihar, found to have been a motivator behind the militants' conspiracy, too had been arrested.

Qamar Ayub had been in close touch with the Al-Qaeda leadership and had entered India through the Line of Control in

Kupwara sector. His plan was to target vital installations in the State capital. Israeli and American establishments were believed to have been on the hit-list. The network also planned to target the MLAs' hostel in Jammu and to eliminate the political leadership of the State.

Sources say that in view of tight security at the Assembly complex in Jammu, a conspiracy had been hatched to attack the MLAs' hostel and target the legislators living there. Mr. Gupta said the arrest of the Pakistan national was made

following the disclosure by Abdul Rahim Wani, zonal president of the People Democratic Party and resident of Lolab Kashmir. He is said to have helped Qamar Ayub get a fake identity card of a special police officer and was using him as a driver. Wani had also been provided security in the form of two police personnel, who have since been dismissed.

THE HINDU
wishes its readers
a **MERRY CHRISTMAS**

THE HINDU

2 Armymen die in fidayeen attack

Rashid Ahmad
Srinagar, December 4

TWO ARMY personnel, one of them a junior commissioned officer, were killed today in a gunbattle when the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba's fidayeen squad struck at the headquarters of 21 Rashtriya Rifles, Bagatpora camp, in Zachaldara area of Kupwara district.

Three militants of the Lashkar were also killed in the shootout, a defence spokesman said. The Lashkar ultras barged into the headquarters around 11.30 am. The militants tried to ram their car into the main gate but failed because of heavy barricades erected outside the gate.

The militants, sources said, alighted from the vehicle and rushed inside the camp and fired indiscriminately. At least three jawans were wounded in the firing. The militants fired on the nearby picket targeting troops, seriously wounding two Army personnel, who later succumbed to their injuries.

Sources said the militants have been identified as Abu Bakar, Abu Hamzah and Abu Fitar of the outlawed Lashkar-e-Tayyeba. A large cache of arms and ammunition were recovered from their possession. The area was cordoned off after the attack and senior Army officers rushed to the spot, the spokesman said.

Meanwhile, security has been stepped up around vital installations, including security camps, to thwart any further suicide attacks. Official sources quoting Intelligence reports said, militants were planning to intensify suicide attacks on vital installations, particularly security camps in the Valley.

There has been a spurt in militant activities in the past few days. Militants attacked an Army convoy at Chursoo near

Awantipora in south Kashmir at 9.30 am today. Sources said that a driver of a private vehicle was injured in the incident. No damage was reported either to army or the militants.

Security forces have shot dead seven militants in the past 48 hours. The forces killed three militants of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba at Narupora in Koker-nag in Anantnag district. Two more militants were killed at Hangul Gund village in the same area in a clash. Sources said six houses were gutted during the encounter. The spokesman said two more militants were killed in another encounter with security forces at Satinar in Gurez sector.

Sources said unidentified militants shot dead Abdul Rasheed Peer, Imam of a local mosque at Warsun in Kupwara. Sources said that Peer, who was also a Jamaat-e-Islami activist, fell to the bullets of the unknown assailants, when he was coming out of the mosque after offering his evening Ramazan prayers on Monday.

Guerrilla leader held: Indian border guards arrested a woman guerrilla commander allegedly involved in militant activities in Kashmir, a senior official said on Tuesday.

The militant, identified as Mughli Begum, alias Saddam, was arrested by personnel of the Border Security Force (BSF) on Monday from Reyar village in Kashmir's central district of Budgam. "Mughli is involved in militant activities and is the district commander of Dukhtaran-e-Milat (Daughters of Faith)," said Rajinder Singh Bhullar, deputy inspector-general of the BSF. Dukhtaran-e-Milat is a leading women's separatist group. It claims to be a socio-religious group favouring Kashmir's accession to Pakistan.



Mughli, a separatist militant, speaks to reporters in Srinagar after she was arrested on Wednesday.

POTO BETTER THAN TADA: FAROOQ

JAMMU AND KASHMIR Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah has said that Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (Poto) is better than Tada. He dispelled fears that the ordinance would be misused, but warned that those involved in terrorism would not be spared. He was talking to mediapersons at SK International Convention Complex where he hosted an iftar party this evening.

"We implemented the Ordinance to ensure that peace returned in the State and the militants who killed innocent people did not get away with it. We can't allow people, who kill us, to roam freely," Dr Abdullah said. He assured that the Assembly elections, due next September, will be free and fair. "I will have no problem if the Centre sends its observers," the chief minister said.

HTC, Srinagar

Good response to bandh call against POTO in Kashmir

By Shujaat Bukhari

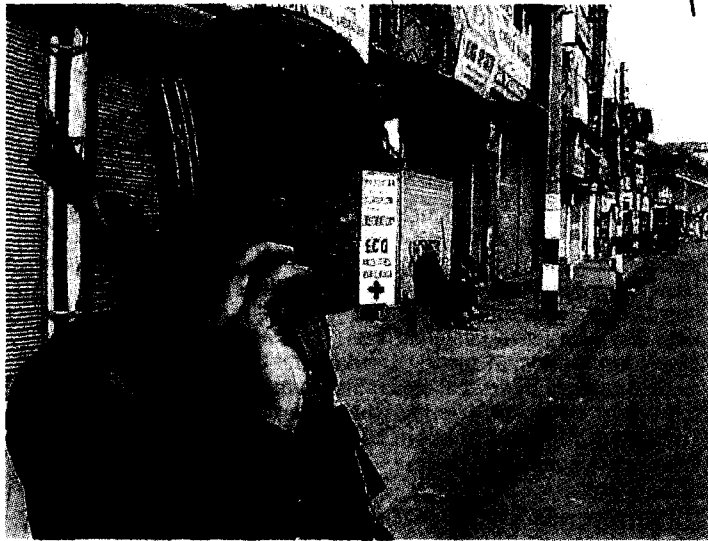
SRINAGAR NOV. 28. The implementation of the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO) has raised a storm in Kashmir. A bandh was observed today against the "black law", in response to a call by the Kashmir Bar Association, which has vowed to fight the ordinance at all levels. All shops, business establishments and educational institutions remained closed and attendance in Government offices and banks was also affected.

Various sections fear the worst treatment at the hands of police and security forces, under the ordinance, which came into force on Sunday. Legal luminaries have questioned its implementation when it is yet to be ratified by the State Assembly.

Defending the ordinance, the Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, said "we need a harsh law to fight the proxy war and this ordinance is one of the best tools to crush the ongoing militancy. I have time and again been of the view that the POTO or any such law should be implemented only after a thorough discussion with the general masses," he said adding, "but to fight terrorism in my State, I cannot wait for the Centre to pass the ordinance. Thus my Government is left with no option but to implement the POTO."

He expressed confidence that the ordinance would be ratified in the Assembly. He said the State Government will include any alteration made by the Centre. He termed the registration of cases against people under the POTO as a "good beginning".

Almost all the political parties, except the National Conference, have decried the State Government's decision on implementing



A BSF jawan keeping vigil at Lal Chowk during the day-long bandh against POTO in Srinagar on Wednesday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

the POTO. Senior Hurriyat leader, Mr. Syed Ali Geelani, said, "POTO is an organised, illegal and unconstitutional move against democracy and freedom."

The Democratic Freedom Party leader, Mr. Shabir Shah, said "it is still being debated in Parliament, but the State Government has been in a hurry to get it implemented in order to crush innocent civilians".

It is illegal as it has neither been approved by Parliament nor ratified by the State Assembly, said Mr. Tariq Hamid Qarra of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). The CPI(M) state secretary and MLA, Mr. Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, said the implementation of the 'draconian' ordinance had come at a time when major political parties in the country were against it.

Meanwhile, the police have ar-

rested the chairman of the Human Rights Front, Mr. Mohammad Ahsan Untoo, from his residence last night. The front is mobilising people's support against the POTO and has decided to move the court.

PTI reports:

Police fired teargas shells and used batons to disperse violent crowds in many parts of the State. Several youths took to the streets to protest the arrest of a person on charges of harbouring militants and sealing his house at Safakadal on Sunday under the POTO, official sources said.

Police resorted to mild lathi-charge to chase away protesters at Rambagh, Natipora, Chanipora, Batmaloo and Lal Bazar. At Batmaloo, Rainawari and Safakadal, crowds resorted to stone-pelting, they said. However, no one was injured in the clashes, they added.

THE HINDU

28 NOV 2001

Delighted Delhi grabs Hizb double bonus

FROM SEEMA GUHA

New Delhi, Nov. 21: The Indian establishment is delighted with the news from Srinagar. The Hizb-ul Mujahideen, Kashmir's home-spun militant group, distinct from the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba, the Harkat-ul Mujahideen or the Jaish-e-Mohammed, has indicated it was considering floating a political party of its own. The Hizb also said the door for dialogue with the Centre was still open.

The government's reply was almost immediate. It sent across a very public and positive response to the valley. Home minister L.K. Advani sent the message out from the Rajya Sabha today.

"I will examine the Hizb-ul Mujahideen statement," the minister said. He said the Centre is willing to talk with any group prepared to lay down arms and come to the negotiating table. This was one of the essential components for dialogue, Advani explained.

Both the government and the Hizb seem willing to give each

other another chance after the previous offer of a unilateral ceasefire by the Hizb was scuttled by Islamabad. Significantly, this is the first time that the Hizb leadership has talked to reporters since the moderate Abdul Majid Dar was unceremoniously dumped by Pakistan and replaced by Saiful Islam, a man of their choice as the chief commander of the group.

The divide between Salahuddin, the Pakistan-based leader of the Hizb, and its valley-based commanders has widened in recent months. There has been no attempt either from Salahuddin or Dar to bridge their differences. Indian officials believe that despite the change in leadership, Dar and his moderate line continues to prevail in Kashmir.

Policy planners here see the Hizb's move to float a political party as a very positive indication. New Delhi realises that a solution to Kashmir through negotiations with Pakistan is almost impossible. Considering there is a national consensus on Jammu and Kashmir being an integral part of India, officials are relying very

heavily on an election to break the current impasse in the state.

The Centre's emphasis is to get the various home-grown separatist groups as well as the Hurriyat to take part in the elections. "Once this is done, half the battle is won," says a senior official. The effort now is to get at least some of the Hurriyat leaders to participate in the elections. The Centre is aware that hardliners like Geelani and a few others may not agree, but there are smaller outfits, which make up the 22-party Hurriyat Conference, who can be persuaded to contest the election.

Shabir Shah and his party have already been in touch with K.C. Pant, the government's interlocutor for Kashmir. Though the Centre is somewhat disappointed at Shah's inability to get the message across to the people in the valley, they know that if the Hizb were to form their own political party, the momentum for elections would be quickened.

Indian policy planners believe the routing of the Taliban in Afghanistan and subsequent turnabout by Pakistan's President

Pervez Musharraf will influence the way Kashmiri separatists think. Moderate elements in the valley, despite lip service to referendum, involvement of Pakistan on any decision on Kashmir and hopes to get the US and western democracies to put pressure on India over Kashmir, are gradually seeing the writing on the wall.

The change of government in Kabul may be just the respite India needs to get a break in Kashmir. Policy makers know that the going may not be easy, as Islam-

abad will try its best to stop the Hurriyat leaders from being part of any political process in Kashmir. Pakistan-based militant groups will reinforce those already operating in the valley to ensure that the public do not come out to vote.

India is, however, hoping that by the time polls are held in the state, the security forces would have cleared the state of foreign mercenaries and polls can be held with relatively less danger of disruption by the terrorists.

Some of India's intelligence agencies hope to use Musharraf's swift change of side in Afghanistan to show up Pakistan as an unreliable ally. "If Pakistan is not lifting a finger to save Pakistani jihadis, holed in at Kunduz, will Islamabad bother about the fate of Kashmiris? Kashmir is important only when it serves Islamabad's self interest," an official said.

However, this appears too simplistic a view. People in Kashmir can make their own deductions.

Centre open to talks with Hizbul

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, November 21

HOME MINISTER L K Advani said in the Rajya Sabha today that the Government was ready to talk with militant groups in Jammu and Kashmir "irrespective of its past". But an important criterion would be their willingness to "lay down arms and come to the negotiation table".

Replying to supplementaries during the Question Hour on terror unleashed by militant outfits in Jammu and Kashmir, he said the Government would examine the Hizbul proposal for a dialogue on Kashmir.

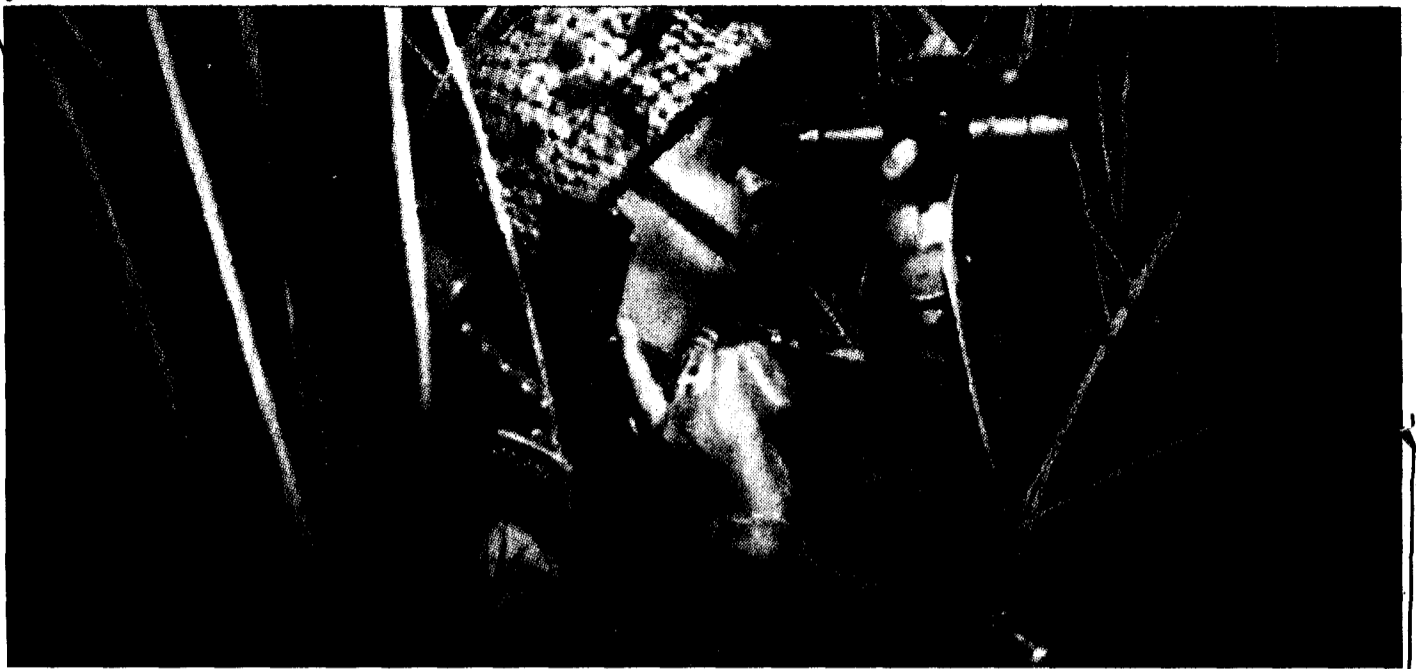
Dr Karan Singh had asked if the Government was ready for a "new political opening" by holding parleys with representatives of the Hizbul Mujahideen or the Hurriyat. Dr Singh referred to statements by the Hizbul Mujahideen that they did not want foreign terrorists to have any role, wanted to float a party and were prepared for talks.

Advani said militancy had been continuing in Jammu and Kashmir for over a decade. Without naming Pakistan, he said the military regime in the neighbouring country had promoted terrorism. The Kargil defeat encouraged further acts of terrorism, he said.

He said India had gradually succeeded in mobilising international opinion in its favour for containing terrorism. The events following September 11 had convinced the world of India's position, he said.

Minister of State for Home I D Swami said attempts at "cultural invasion" by militant groups like the Lashkar-e-Jabar and the Dukhatarn-e-Milat had failed. Their diktats on dress code for women had "fizzled out" after two incidents of acid throwing.

Advani said there was no proposal to have refugee camps for Afghans.



A soldier keeps vigil near the LoC in Akhnoor sector on Tuesday.

AP PHOTO

Pak Hizb leaders disown truce offer

Mubashir Zaidi
Islamabad, November 21

THE HIZBUL Mujahideen leadership in Pakistani-administered Kashmir today disowned the statement made by deputy supreme commander Asad Yazdani in Srinagar yesterday that the Hizb was ready to consider a ceasefire and start a dialogue with the Indian Government.

"Asad Yazdani is not a spokesman for the Hizbul. He is just an ordinary Hizb Mujahid. We strongly deny what he has said about ceasefire. Our position remains the same. At a time when the freedom movement is making successful advances on all fronts, the ceasefire option is untimely, unnecessary and an unwise step. It is a deliberate and intentional attempt to impair the ongoing armed struggle," Hizb spokesman Saleem

Hashmi told *Hindustan Times* from Muzaffarabad on Wednesday.

He said that the Mutahidda (United) Jihad Council (MJC) had already denounced the ceasefire offer by APHC chief Abdul Ghani Bhat on November 12 calling for a ceasefire by all groups, including Indian security forces and Mujahideen, in Kashmir.

Hashmi said that things like ceasefire had been tested in the past and had proved harmful rather than beneficial for the freedom movement. "Those who have such a thinking must keep in view the sacrifices of 80,000 lives which were offered for the freedom of Kashmir and not for the ceasefire," he said.

He said that if the Hurriyat leaders have become tired of the struggle, they should quit and lead the life of a recluse and avoid impairing the freedom movement with unnecessary statements. "We make a hum-

ble and sincere submission to them to refrain from making such meaningless and irresponsible statements. Otherwise, God forbid if the movement suffers any loss, its responsibility would lie on the APHC leaders," he added.

Hashmi said that the MJC continue to stick to its resolve to carry on the ongoing movement on all fronts, particularly on the militant front, with full force and vigour till they achieve the right to self-determination.

On the question whether the Hizbul would take action against Asad Yazdani for making such an irresponsible statement, Hizb spokesman Saleem Hashmi said that it could not be ruled out. "We will first verify the contents of the statement from Asad Yazdani. If we find out that he has acted against the Hizb line, we will take strong action against him," he insisted.

The challenges in J&K

By Balraj Puri

HD-12
19/11

THE WORLD, they say, changed on September 11. How does the change affect the situation in Jammu and Kashmir? In all probability, militancy, by whatever name it is called, is likely to decline.

In the early 1990s, human rights was on top of the international agenda. Violations attracted censure. Kashmiri secessionists, who began the armed struggle, sought and often got sympathy for what they called a liberation struggle, not only from foreign countries, but also from many a liberal element within the country. By now the form the movement has acquired — by the spate of killings of innocents — approximates what the world has recognised as terrorism; which has come on top of the international agenda. The “global war against terrorism” is bound to adversely affect the terrorist movement in the State. A number of organisations involved in the movement have been banned by the U.S. More direct action against them and more support to New Delhi in dealing with them are likely to follow after the war in Afghanistan is over.

As Pakistan joined the U.S.-led war against the Taliban, pro-Taliban terrorist groups operating from its territory declared a jihad against Gen. Musharraf's Government. Some of them were active in Kashmir also. Since they depended on the Pakistan Government for arms, training and sustenance, their capacity to fight on two fronts was severely undermined.

The people of the State are visibly disillusioned with the promises the movement made. They are unhappy with the Pakistan Government too for being the principal ally of the U.S. in the Afghan war, which has resulted in the killing of many innocents. If Pakistan could stab the Taliban, its own creation, in the back for the sake of its national interest, would it not let down Kashmiris for the same reason? Further, the open rift between the militants and the overground secessionist leadership on the attitude towards the Pakistan Government has damaged the credibility of both.

New Delhi does not seem to be attaching much significance to the Kashmiri Muslims' “disillusionment”. Principally because they have not remained unaffected

ed by the anti-America wave sweeping across the Muslim world. There are many reasons cumulatively responsible for it. Anti-America sentiments may or may not be rational and justified. But they cannot be equated with anti-India sentiments. And in no case does expressing them constitute a legal offence.

The action against anti-America demonstrations elsewhere in the country, the police firing on Muslim groups for distri-

tunity to Pakistan to internationalise the Kashmir issue. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, then urged India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir issue through mutual dialogue taking the wishes of the people into account. He added that he “will do what I can to bring India and Pakistan together to have good, meaningful discussions for a solution on Kashmir”.

Tension with India on Kashmir suited Pakistan to neutralise the hostility of its

non-Kashmiris are concerned.”

The capacity of local Kashmiri militants to carry on an armed revolt, without the support of Pakistan and possibly of the local people, will obviously be extremely limited; security forces can meet the challenge of the local armed revolt.

The real question that far-sighted people in the State and the Government of India have to face is what will happen to the sentiments of anger and discontent, which got channelled into the outlet of an armed rebellion, after that outlet is closed. Will the present system — political parties, political leaders, constitutional and institutional forms, administrative and power structure — or any modifications thereof be able to accommodate those sentiments? Likewise, will the people in Jammu and Ladakh who suppressed their aspirations to support the ruling Kashmiri Muslim leadership in its fight against secession and Pakistan-supported militants continue to do so? Will the ethnic and religious communities in the State consider forging mutually satisfying and cordial relations between themselves? Will the Government of India seize the opportunity of restarting a dialogue on the appropriate status of the State and the regions within it? Will the State throw up a leadership capable of restarting an internal dialogue — to reconcile the diverse interests and aspirations of the people of the State — and external dialogue on behalf of a composite and harmonious State on its appropriate status?

As circumstances have forced India and Pakistan to be on the same side of the global war against terrorism, they will also be forced to hold a dialogue on all issues including Kashmir. The question of cross-border terrorism, which blocked further progress of the Agra process, will hopefully be resolved, as discussed above, and the prospects for such a dialogue will improve. Instead of waiting to be pressured by foreign powers to talk to Pakistan, India should take the initiative, making use of the favourable international situation. In fact, India should, in its own enlightened and long-term interest, help Pakistan recover from its current shocks which has split its personality, so that it becomes a stable and friendly neighbour.

Instead of waiting to be pressured by foreign powers to talk to Pakistan, India should take the initiative, making use of the favourable international situation.

buting pamphlets appealing for boycott of products of multinationals in Malegaon and the ban on the Students Islamic Movement of India have all further alienated Kashmiri Muslims.

India missed an opportunity of playing a historic role as a bridge between supposedly-clashing civilisations (Islamic and western). What seemed to have further deflected India from this role was the emergence of Pakistan as a frontline state against terrorism, prompting New Delhi to start competing with Islamabad for being a more reliable ally of the U.S. and seeking priority for dealing with terrorism in Kashmir. If America can attack Afghanistan for harbouring Osama bin Laden, why can't India attack training camps of terrorists across the LoC, so ran an argument. Consequently, Indo-Pakistan tension was revived.

These Indian postures were taken by the anti-terrorism coalition as a diversion from its main and immediate target. As they could not afford to let down Pakistan — when it was faced with the gravest threat to its stability and integrity and when its role was crucial in the anti-Taliban war — the coalition's leaders urged the two countries to cool down and resolve their differences, including those on Kashmir, through talks. Again, the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, undiplomatically made a visit to the U.S., coinciding with that of the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf. It gave another oppor-

people against its support for the war on Afghanistan. Its rulers argued that they had to either accept Indian hegemony and compromise on Kashmir or join the coalition under America's leadership. But it did not suit India's national interest to witness a revival of the Kashmir issue. It tended to dilute the anti-Pakistan sentiments among Kashmiri Muslims and rekindled hopes in the secessionist camp of keeping the issue alive.

Otherwise, in the normal course, Kashmir could not have escaped the logic of the anti-terrorism war in which Pakistan is an active partner. Pakistan will not be able to, nor will it be allowed by world powers, to continue support to terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. Moreover, despite the recent short-sighted policies of the Indian Government, and Pakistan's importance as a frontline state, “the structural imperatives of Indo-U.S. relations have not been transformed,” says Mr. Ejaz Haider, editor of Pakistan's *Friday Times*. He adds, “India's size, political institutions, military, diplomatic and economic potential are factors that not only make it a potentially dominant player in the region, but afford it a convergence of interests with the U.S.”

Similarly, the former Pakistan Prime Minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, warned against attempts by non-Kashmiris to dominate the self-determination movement. For, “international abhorrence of terrorism will come into play where the

THE HINDU

19 NOV 2001

Hizbul rejects PM & Hurriyat's call for peace

Srinagar, November 13

HT 9/11
THE PAKISTAN-backed Hizbul Mujahideen has rejected Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's appeal to lay down arms and participate in the next Assembly elections.

The Hizbul spurned the Hurriyat Conference's call for a ceasefire as well.

Responding to Vajpayee's recent appeal to militant groups to participate in elections, the JUI spokesman said the people of Jammu and Kashmir have already rejected the "so-called elections" and would ensure complete boycott of the upcoming elections.

Yesterday, the Hurriyat Conference had called for a "comprehensive ceasefire" by terrorists and security forces as part of a "three-point formula" to resolve the Kashmir issue.

A Junid-ul-Islam spokesman told a local news agency that Hizbul Mujahideen has chalked a "new military strategy" during a two-day conference of "field commanders".

The "field commanders" have been directed to strictly implement the "instructions", he said but did not elaborate.

Separatist organisations in the State reiterated that they would not join the election fray, terming the polls as "futile".

"Our struggle is not just to capture power for five to six years but for total resolution of the vexed issue of Jammu and Kashmir, once and for all," Hurriyat Chairman Abdul Gani Bhat said.

J&K Democratic Freedom Party president Shabir Ahmad Shah also said that elections would be yet another "futile exercise". "It will take us nowhere."

Shah said though his party was not against elections, the most important need now was to address the Kashmir issue first. "This is more important than any electoral exercise," he said.

Former Chief Minister and president of Awami National Conference G M Shah said he considered elections as a "drama full of irregularities".

PTI

India ready for talks on no-war terms: Advani

HT Correspondent & PTI
New Delhi, November 13

DIALOGUE WITH Pakistan is always on the cards provided Islamabad pledges there would be no war, open or covert.

India made this clear at the meeting between the Home Minister and British Defence Secretary Geoffrey Hoon at North Block this evening.

On the Kashmir issue which also came up during the discussion, Advani said in unequivocal terms that India and Pakistan have a "wide gulf" in perception, but New Delhi had always been trying to bridge it through talks.

Stating that there was always a scope for resumption of the dialogue process, Advani said it must be understood that since the Shimla Accord, India has

been making efforts to narrow down differences.

After the Prime Minister's Lahore bus trip, what India got in return was Kargil conflict. But despite that, it invited the Pakistan President for talks in Agra.

Hoon promised that Britain would "use its influence" so that cross-border terrorism in Kashmir ends. "All forms of terrorism including that experienced by India in Kashmir," he said after talks with Defence Minister George Fernandes.

Hoon's statement comes a day after the meeting between Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Atal Bihari Vajpayee in London. "Both India and Britain have suffered terrorism for long. We wish the events in Afghanistan will send a strong signal to those governments

sponsoring terrorism".

But such promise by Britain is not new. It was first articulated by Blair's former foreign secretary Robin Cook during his visit here last month. Britain's Terrorism Act 2000 has already made it difficult for Pakistani groups active in Kashmir to raise funds openly.

Hoon's visit here sent signals that the deal for the Advanced Jet Trainer (AJT) was about to be closed.

He had visited Hindustan Aerospace when he was here last year. British Aerospace was expected to transfer its capacity to the Bangalore factory for manufacturing the Hawk aircraft.

But today's round of talks gave no indication that the Indian Air Force would get its long delayed AJTs. The deal has

been under negotiation since 1983. Defence Minister George Fernandes admitted it was discussed today and hoped they would soon come up with a solution.

Hoon said, "Indians are patient. We would like to see it (the closing of the sale and technology transfer) resolved quickly."

The greatest challenge for New Delhi for the past few years had been cross-border terrorism, Advani has said.

While expressing gratitude to the UK for having taken note of India's security concerns and banned outfits perpetrating terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, Advani told Hoon that after the Afghan crisis was over, the Musharraf regime would have a totally different attitude to the menace than it has now.

Hurriyat offers 3-point plan to resolve J&K crisis

Times News Network and PTI

SRINAGAR: The Hurriyat Conference on Monday called for a "comprehensive" ceasefire by all groups, including the militants and security forces, as part of its three-point formula to resolve the Kashmir issue.



A.G. Bhat

The 23-party separatist alliance of political and religious groups said the formula also envisaged trilateral talks and setting a time-frame for a solution to the vexed problem.

"We propose negotiations involving India, Pakistan and true representatives of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, a simultaneous ceasefire by all involved and a time-frame for the resolution of the Kashmir issue," Hurriyat chairman Abdul Gani Bhat told newsmen here.

Mr Bhat said the appeals by world leaders in recent weeks to address the Kashmir issue was

a "shot in its arm" for the amalgam.

Mr Bhat said the chances of a solution to the Kashmir issue had brightened especially after the recent offer by U.S. President George W. Bush to bring India and Pakistan together to have good and meaningful talks on Kashmir, taking into account the "wishes of the people of the state". Elaborating on the Hurriyat's ceasefire proposal, Mr Bhat said it was in favour of a "conjoint ceasefire".

"All concerned need to go for a ceasefire simultaneously, so that it does not meet the same fate as that of the unilateral ceasefire announced by the Hizbul Mujahideen in July 2000 and the Indian government's unilateral ceasefire in November last year," Mr Bhat said.

Reacting to criticism by state and central leaders that the Hurriyat comprised agents of Pakistan, Mr Bhat said, "We are masters of our fate. The Hurriyat has taken its decisions on its own and did not take dictation from others."

Calling for comprehensive negotiations to

resolve the Kashmir issue, Mr Bhat said it was a "volcano" which would explode, "smashing India, Pakistan and Kashmir" if a solution was not found.

He said the Hurriyat leaders were the true representatives of the people of J&K.

Meanwhile, All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) senior leader Abdul Gani Lone on Monday said the Hurriyat leadership had been holding "informal" talks with the Centre for resolving the Kashmir issue. However, he alleged that the Centre had violated the terms of references agreed to between the two sides which included facilitating the Hurriyat leadership to go to Pakistan for talks with the militant leadership there.

"We had been negotiating with each other and we had asked the Centre to initiate some confidence-building measures (CBM) and prove its sincerity before the Kashmiri people that it was willing to solve the issue," Mr Lone told reporters here.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

13 NOV 2001

More aid, no gains for Pak on Kashmir

S Rajagopalan & Agencies
New York, November 11

FOR ALL its new proximity with the US, Pakistan has not gained anything of consequence on the Kashmir issue in the wake of Pervez Musharraf's much-hyped meeting with George W Bush.

All that Bush has promised a demanding Musharraf is that the US would offer its good offices to bring India and Pakistan together for "good and meaningful talks" for a solution on Kashmir. Washington has given short shrift to Islamabad's refrain of third-party mediation.

The only significant concession to Pakistan's position seemed to be a call to the Northern Alliance to stop short of capturing Kabul. With Musharraf by his side at a joint Press conference, Bush said the US could accomplish its military mission in Afghanistan without the Northern Alliance taking Kabul. Musharraf "agreed totally".

Bush encouraged "our friends" to head south, but added that it should not enter "the city of Kabul itself." He said he would like to see it become an open city with all parties sharing power "We believe we can accomplish

MUSHARRAF MOOTS NUKE TEST BAN TREATY WITH INDIA

PAKISTAN President Pervez Musharraf, has proposed a "bilateral treaty" with India for a mutual ban on nuclear tests. The proposal came in the course of his speech at the UN General Assembly, shortly before his dinner meeting with President George W Bush, during which the two leaders referred to the need for "enhanced non-proliferation measures at the global and regional level."

PTI, New York

our military missions by that strategy," he said.

But the joint statement, adopted by the Bush-Musharraf meeting, did not mark any departure from the known American position on Kashmir. It said: "India and Pakistan should resolve the Kashmir issue through diplomacy and dialogue in mutually acceptable ways that take into account the wishes of the people of Kashmir."

The statement reinforces the Indian stance that any discus-

sion on Kashmir will have to be strictly bilateral in accordance with the Shimla Agreement. The words "mutually acceptable ways" serve to reaffirm the Indian line.

Musharraf's indirect justification of terrorist activities in Kashmir under the garb of "freedom movement" cannot possibly influence the US since the same yardstick would then have to be applied to terror groups supporting the Palestinian cause.

For Musharraf, the main gain was an American commitment to step up economic aid. Bush has pledged \$1 billion, but the amount falls far short of what Pakistan has been seeking. Rescheduling of old debts has, however, brought a modicum of relief.

The Bush administration is expected to come up with some more sops for its new critical ally in the war against Afghanistan. The measures could include widening the market access for Pakistani textiles by revising the quota. Pakistan is unlikely to come by rewards of a more potent nature. Musharraf has made a strong pitch for F-16s, but a wire service has quoted Bush administration officials as discounting the possibility.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES.

12 NOV 2001

Militants storm army camp

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, NOV. 4. Four jawans were killed and five injured when Lashkar-e-Taiba militants attacked an Army camp in the Peth Dialgam area of Anantnag district late last night. A militant was killed in the gun fight.

Soon after the incident, some intemperate jawans entered the houses of villagers and beat up the inmates including women and children. Many villagers were injured. A Lashkar spokesman rang up Srinagar newspaper offices and claimed responsibility for the attack.

19 militants killed

Our Correspondent writes from Jammu:

Security forces killed 19 militants this morning in two separate encounters at Loran-Mandi in the Poonch sector and the Gandoh area of Doda district.

Defence sources said ten militants were killed while

exfiltrating to the other side of the border in Loran-Mandi. In another operation, security forces foiled an attempt of infiltration from across the border and killed six militants. The operation too was still on. The militants, according to Defence sources, belonged to a little-known Lashkar-i-Islami.

37 labourers rescued

PTI reports:

The Army today rescued 37 labourers trapped under snow at the high altitude Zojila Pass on the Srinagar-Leh highway, Defence sources said.

The operation to rescue the labourers was launched soon after the Border Roads Organisation informed the Army about the mishap early today. Helicopters were pressed into service and Armymen were sent to help the BRO rescue to the labourers, the sources said.

THE HINDU

5 NOV 2001

UN raps general for Kashmir remarks

United Nations, November 2

THE UNITED Nations has disowned remarks made by its chief military observer in Kashmir, Major General Hermann K Loidolt, and reprimanded him for making political observations without getting clearance from the headquarters.

"I would like to make it clear that what he (Loidolt) said does not represent the views of the Secretary-General," Manoel De Almeida E Silva, deputy spokesman for UN Secretary General, told reporters yesterday.

Loidolt, who heads the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), at a press conference on October 29, described the Kashmir issue as "multi-layered" and said "all of us are aware of the situation in Kashmir and the games both parties — India and Pakistan — are playing with this tormented country".

Reacting to his statement, the UN spokesman said "chiefs of the mission in the field are required to discuss with the headquarters and get clearance when they are going to make political statements".

"Major General Loidolt did not

comply with that in this case and he has been reminded of the limits of his responsibility," he added. Loidolt yesterday expressed "sincerest apology" for his "misbehaviour" in making political comments.

The apology comes three days after the remarks of head of the UN military observer group in India and Pakistan triggered a controversy. In a letter sent to the Director General of Military Operations, he "deeply regretted" the incident.

Reacting to his statement, Minister of State for External Affairs Omar Abdullah yesterday said India would lodge a protest with the UN for his controversial comments. Loidolt had said that the situation would become more tense in the time to come, "not only along the LoC, but also in the whole of Jammu and Kashmir State".

"We all know there is no easy solution. Whatever the reason is for playing political games, may it be diversionary manoeuvre on the Pakistani side, to make India the real enemy instead of the US, or may it be the dawning of next election in India. It will be an issue for the US to solve," he had said.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 NOV 2007

Cool it on J-K: France to Delhi

SONIA TRIKHA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 2

ON THE eve of Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's tour to Russia, US and Britain, there were fewer takers in the world today for New Delhi's concerns on Pakistan exporting cross-border terrorism. France, India's staunchest friend in Europe, joined in what every visiting leader from Tony Blair to Colin Powell and Gerhard Schroeder has said: Don't escalate tensions in the region and don't expect the Western world to publicly denounce Pakistan's role in cross-border terrorism.

The visiting French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, held talks with Minister for External Affairs Jaswant Singh today. The one concession from Paris that was music to India's ears was that France too does not favour the inclusion of the Taliban in a new government in Afghanistan and that India

must have a larger role in creating that new arrangement.

But on Kashmir, Vedrine made it clear that France will do nothing to upset the coalition against terrorism, of which Pakistan is a key member. "We know Kashmir is a problem. These issues should be dealt by the two countries with responsibility and in a cool-headed fashion," he said after meeting Singh. He said India and Pakistan must exercise restraint and engage in dialogue.

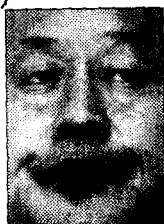


External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh with French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine in New Delhi on Thursday. PTI

Mori treads middle path, seeks restraint over Kashmir

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 30 OCTOBER



AS THE Japanese Prime Minister, Mr Yoshiro Mori had last year readily accepted the Indian viewpoint on cross-border terrorism in J&K emanating from Pakistan.

As a special envoy of another Japanese Prime Minister, Mr Mori used the opportunity to ask India and Pakistan on Tuesday to exercise "maximum restraint" over Kashmir, even admitting ignorance about the source of the attacks in J&K.

"Heightening of tension in Kashmir is a matter of concern which poses a negative effect on the stability of South Asia," Mr Mori said on Tuesday afternoon after meeting the Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, the home minister, Mr L.K. Advani, and the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes.

Reflecting the changed international circumstances which led Japan to lift the economic sanctions against Pakistan, and India and Tokyo to even consider changing its defence profile in its support of the US-led campaign against terrorism, Mr Mori followed Washington's example by sparing Pakistan the blame game over Kashmir.

This led to him skirting the whole issue of terrorism by Pakistan in J&K by saying: "we should focus on what we do rather than where it comes from," refusing to publicly endorse India's stand.

He regained the balance however, when he said terrorism of all varieties needed to be condemned.

The Economic Times

31 OCT 2001

Kashmir Conundrum

Freedom Struggle is not Terrorism

By SHABIR CHOUDHRY

LAST year I wrote a series of articles arguing that acts of violence where innocent citizens become a target should not be covered under the noble name of jihad, as the teaching of Islam and rules of engagement in jihad do not allow killing of innocent people.

At that time, jihadi forces were at their peak and few people dared to criticise them. One might call it imprudence but I was one of those who spoke out against them, and as a result I was accused of being 'anti-jihad', 'anti-Islam', 'anti-movement' and 'pro-India'. My crime was to oppose the 'Talibanisation' of the Kashmiri struggle for independence, as in my view, this changed the character of our freedom struggle and was not in the best interest of the freedom movement. Our struggle was for a united and independent Kashmir where all Kashmiris, irrespective of their religion and social backgrounds could live in peace and harmony.

The tragic events of September 11 and subsequent international reaction have changed the attitude of the world to many things, especially towards the use of religion to promote political agendas. This change is also reflected in articles by Pakistani writers. Imtiaz Alam, a columnist in the *News* says: 'He (president Musharraf) has to be aware of not only extremists who are preparing for small mutinies and forming a joint front with the Taliban in the frontier regions, in particular, but also those jihadis who have an international agenda and are not loyal to the cause of Kashmiris. Before we go to the UN with a clean chit in 90 days, and before India succeeds in converting the political issue of the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris into 'terrorism', we have some time in helping the Kashmiri resistance to isolate such foreign elements who want to defame their liberation movement by targeting civilians and resorting to individual terrorism'. The presence of non-Kashmiri militants is giving the impression to the world that it is not a Kashmiri struggle and also helps India's propaganda.

Our agenda is to determine our future and once that goal is achieved we can have friendly relations with both India and Pakistan; the jihadis want to plant their flag on Red Fort in New Delhi and subsequently conquer Washington.

It is often said that one person's freedom fighter is another person's terrorist. This debate has been

going on for many decades, and it is unlikely that a consensus on this controversial terminology will be reached soon. Although there is no agreed definition of a freedom fighter, one can say that a freedom fighter does not wage war on people.

The aim of the freedom fighter is to fight against colonial rule, oppression of the state and injustice, and his target must always be non-civilian. He must win the confidence of the people and persuade them to support the fight against injustice and oppression. A terrorist on the other hand kills people indiscriminately to achieve his goal, whatever that may be. This policy or strategy of indiscriminate killing clearly distinguishes a terrorist from a freedom fighter.

Similarly, some governments also resort to indiscriminate killings of ordinary people in order to ensure that they don't co-operate with freedom fighters. But often this policy backfires as it further alienates the people, who start to hate

side of the divide, supporting the fight against 'international terrorism'. Despite this, both have wasted no opportunity to criticise each other. There have even been some border clashes and the danger of a war between the two has added a new dimension to the region's problems.

Both India and Pakistan need to realise that the international political environment has changed dramatically, resulting in new alignments and new alliances. In this changed environment, the international community has little or no tolerance for violence and does not subscribe to any policy that could possibly lead to disputes settled by use of force. It is, therefore, imperative that the two countries learn from their past mistakes, carefully analyse the situation around them and find a way to resolve the Kashmir dispute.

Even before September 11, there was no military solution to the Kashmir dispute, and this is why for many years I have been encouraging the parties to resolve the dispute by a process of dialogue among all the parties to the dispute. Kashmir is not a simple law and order problem as assumed by some sections of the Indian establishment; nor it is a religious war or problem related to the two-nation theory, as projected by Pakistan and some organisations supported by it. It is an issue of the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination; it is they who should decide the future of their state. And any attempts to crush the freedom movement by the use of force or to divide the state, would lead to more trouble in the region and possibly a war.

Perhaps the Indian government should reflect on this editorial, in the Srinagar-based *Kashmir Times*: "New Delhi has not learnt any lesson from its past mistakes and is looking at the problem of terrorism or violence in Kashmir in isolation and purely as a law and order problem to be dealt with by using maximum force and repressive measures. Such a policy has proved counter-productive in the past and the consequences of fighting militancy with use of excessive force in a vacuum can be even more disastrous...The violence in Kashmir is not the cause but consequence of the failure of New Delhi to solve the basic political problem of Kashmir..."

(The author is a JKLF leader and director, Institute of Kashmir Affairs, London)

IN BRIEF

- Targeting civilians can never be part of any jihad
- Kashmir wants to live in peace with India and Pakistan
- Freedom fighters must win the hearts of the people
- New Delhi must solve the basic political problem of Kashmir

and oppose the authorities, as has happened in Kashmir. Successive governments in Kashmir were responsible for gross human rights violations and this has resulted in further alienation and more anger.

By now, both India and Pakistan should realise that they have tried everything from full-scale wars, border clashes and the Kargil expedition to the Simla accord, the Lahore Declaration and Agra, to settle the Kashmir dispute. But the dispute persists, threatening the peace and stability of the region. Events in Afghanistan have overshadowed other disputes temporarily but it must be remembered that the Kashmir dispute and that of Palestine pose more of a threat to world peace.

Pakistan and India have clashed over everything since 1947, but significantly, have agreed to keep the Kashmiri people away from the negotiating table. Now, for the first time in their troubled history, both India and Pakistan are on the same

THE TIMES OF INDIA

31 OCT 2001

Security forces storm mosque

SRINAGAR, OCT. 28. Security forces today stormed the mosque in Budgam district of central Kashmir to flush out a militant holed up in the shrine, official sources said.

Intense gunfire broke out as personnel of the Special Operations Group (SOG), Jammu and Kashmir police, entered the mosque at Panzan village near Chadoora, some 18 km. from here.

The militant entered the mosque on Saturday after security forces laid siege to the village on getting information that some ultras were hiding there.

SOG personnel had taken control of the ground and first floors of the mosque, the sources said, adding that the lone militant was holed up in the 'minar' of the shrine. A Special Police Officer was wounded in the exchange of fire. The sources said security forces took the action after repeated appeals to the barricaded ultra to surrender did not yield any result.

Shujaat Bukhari writes:

Panzan wore the look of a garrison area as Army reinforcements arrived today well before the operation "flush out" began. On Saturday, a joint party of the BSF and the Special Operations Group (SOG) surrounded the village after receiving information that 11 militants were hiding there. As they tightened the cordon, the militants broke up into groups in a bid to escape. A militant, who tried to pass himself off as a local, was arrested. But trouble started after some in the

group took refuge in a mosque.

Reports said that only one militant was inside the mosque and that nothing was known about the other two. The militant, sources said, threw grenades and fired upon the security forces.

Personnel from the BSF, SOG, Army and the district police were strengthening the cordon. The Budgam SP, Mr. S.A.H. Bukhari, said that the village headman was deputed to persuade the Jaish men to surrender. However, only one militant came out to meet him and refused to surrender, saying, "I have come to achieve martyrdom."

Senior police, Army and BSF officials, including the Kashmir DIG, Mr. K. Rajindra, and Mr. Bukhari are camping in the village.

Meanwhile, a BSF Assistant Commandant and an Assistant Sub-Inspector were among 17 killed in incidents across the State since yesterday. Police said militants ambushed a convoy of the BSF and the SOG, Handwara, at Nutnusa on the Sopor-Kupwara Road late on Friday.

In the gunbattle that followed, militants killed the Assistant Commandant of 81 battalion BSF, Mr. Vikas Bhardwaj, and an ASI of SOG, Mr. K.L. Khajuria. One BSF jawan was injured. After the incident, security forces launched a combing operation and killed three militants.

Six militants were killed in Poonch, four in Anantnag and two in Baramulla in separate encounters, a police spokesman said.

THE HINDU

30 OCT 2001

Mosque siege ends, ultra killed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR, Oct. 29. — Security forces killed the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba militant holed up in a mosque in central Kashmir's Badgam district this morning ending a 45-hour-long stand-off without any damage to the place of worship, an official spokesman said here.

After killing the militant hiding in a bathroom adjacent to the mosque with a grenade, troops conducted a thorough search to ensure that no other ultra was present inside the religious place in Pazan village, 18 km from here, he said.

Four BSF personnel and a special police officer were injured in the operation, the spokesman said. An AK assault rifle, four magazines and 27 rounds of ammunition were recovered from the slain ultra.

Earlier reports that the militant belonged to the Hizbul Mujahideen or Jaish-e-Mohammed were proved wrong as the documents seized from the slain ultra indicated he was a member of the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba, he said. The operation to clear the mosque of the militant started last evening when a joint party of the SOG and BSF moved inside. The ultra resorted to heavy firing and lobbed grenades critically injuring an SPO and a BSF jawan. The operation was suspended late last night though the troops had taken up position on the second floor of the mosque.

Suspecting the militant was hiding, security forces today searched the area. However, when the forces moved towards the bathroom adjacent to the main mosque, the militant hurled a grenade at them injuring three BSF jawans. The troops killed the ultra.

GREF officials injured: Militants triggered an IED in Doda district of Jammu division last night injuring three government officers who were travelling in an Army vehicle, officials said.

THE STATESMAN

DSP KILLED IN EXPLOSION ✓

Militants holed up in mosque open fire

HD-1
28/10

9.8.2001

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, OCT. 27. Three militants of the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad are holed up in a mosque in Budgam district of Kashmir and, in the continuing exchange of fire with the security forces, a fourth militant has been captured alive.

In other militancy-related incidents, a Deputy Superintendent of Police was killed elsewhere in the State even as the Kashmir Valley observed a total strike called to protest "occupation by Indian forces on this day in 1947."

On specific information, a joint party of the Special Operations Group (SOG) and the Border Security Force cordoned off Panzan village, around 30 km from Srinagar, around noon today, police sources said. As the forces tightened their grip, three militants took shelter in a local mosque and one ran into an adjacent house.

In the gunbattle that followed, the security forces captured the militant from the house. The others were battling the security forces till reports last came in.

The security forces are observing restraint and avoiding action that could desecrate the mosque, police said. They had sent a village headman in to prevail upon the militants to surrender, who reportedly refused to turn themselves in saying, "we have come to die." Reinforcements from the Rashtriya Rifles and police forces have been rushed to the spot.

In another incident, a DSP, Mr. Devendar Sharma, SDPO, Basohli, was killed along with his driver



Security personnel taking position on Saturday outside a mosque in Panzan, where militants are holed up.

when militants detonated an improvised explosive device in Kalti, 45 km from Kathua. The Inspector-General, Jammu zone, Mr. Radhavinod Raju, told *The Hindu* that the officer was on his way to Billawar when his vehicle was blown up. Two policemen travelling in the vehicle were injured.

In Srinagar, militants hurled grenades at Karan Nagar, Bakhshi Stadium, Barbarshah and the Dalgate in which four BSF jawans and 13 civilians were injured.

Strike in Valley total

In the Kashmir Valley, normal life was paralysed as a strike called by the All-Party Hurriyat Conference and other organisations evoked near total response. All the shops, business establishments, educational institutions,

banks and Government offices remained closed. The Hurriyat had given the call to protest the "landing of the Indian troops in Kashmir on this day in 1947."

Leaders under house arrest

PTI reports:

Two Hurriyat leaders — Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Mr. Abdul Gani Lone — were placed under house arrest and contingents of local police deployed outside their residence on the outskirts of the city, official sources said. Restrictions were also placed on the movement of the president of the Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party, Mr. Shabir Ahmad Shah, from his residence at Barzalla in uptown city.

Interview with Andrab: Page 10

THE HINDU

28 OCT 2001

Ultras' attack on J&K airport foiled

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, Oct. 22. - Security forces today foiled a *fidayeen* attack on Avantipur's Quil's airport, used by the defence forces. A four-member Lashkar-e-Taiba suicide squad tried to enter the airport, 50 km from here, triggering a heavy exchange of fire. All the four militants were killed in the encounter. A Defence Security Corps non-combatant, Prakash, too was killed and three BSF jawans, an IAF man and a civilian were injured.

The militants, posing as policemen, tried to enter the airport premises in a silver-grey Tata Sumo (JKOIE 1109) around 1.30 pm. On being stopped by security forces, they started firing. The encounter took place about two km from the runway. The area around the airport has been sealed off and security forces in Kashmir valley put on high alert.

Two of the terrorists were identified as Abu Umar and Mohd Zakaria, both from PoK. A piece of paper with Abu's name and address was found in his pocket. The terrorists had AK-47 rifles and grenades.

Security forces were able to thwart the attack because intelligence agencies had information that suicide bombers were likely to attack IAF's forward airbases, a Union home ministry official said. The information was passed on to the Army and paramilitary forces in the region.

The IAF airfields in the valley are being made more "secure" to protect fighter and transport aircraft, helicopters and other expensive equipment, said Air Marshal VK Bhatia, who commands the IAF's Western Command.

The total "assets" of the IAF in an airfield like Avantipur could be about Rs 10,000 crore. In Avantipur the perimeter is about 12 km and the fencing is being replaced by a wall. "We are refining our standard operating procedures and our quick reaction capabilities," Air Marshal Bhatia said.

Air Marshal Bhatia spoke of a second line of defence with watch-dogs to prevent attempts at sabotage. The IAF has six airfields in J&K; two in the valley, at Avantipur and Srinagar; two in the plains, at Jammu and Udhampur and; two in Ladakh, at Thiksey and Leh.

The Avantipur airfield has several squadrons of fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters, but they were far away from the gate where the militants attacked the securitymen.



Bodies of the four suicide attackers at Avantipur in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday. - AP/PTI

23 OCT 2001

11-11-10

'U.S. not for independent Kashmir'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17. The U.S. State Department, in continuing to call for a dialogue between India and Pakistan for the resolution of the Kashmir issue, has clarified that Washington is not pushing the idea of a separate or an independent Muslim state.

When the Deputy Spokesman of the State Department, Mr. Philip Reeker, was asked on Tuesday if the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, was endorsing the idea of an independent state, he reiterated the standard line which, among other things, calls upon India and Pakistan to resolve the issue through a dialogue, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Mr. Reeker rejected the notion that there had been a "new" formulation of policy, and the questioner's perception that the Kashmiri people aspired for an independent Muslim state and it had been approved of by Gen. Powell during his trip to the region.

"No, and I am not endorsing your concept of the belief of the people of Kashmir. So I think we will continue to have the same policy

on Kashmir that we've had for so many years; and that is that the two sides need to resolve this peacefully and the way to do that is through dialogue. And it's important for all sides to reduce the violence and to try to pursue a dialogue," Mr. Reeker said during the regular briefing.

Meanwhile, it is not clear if the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, will sign the bill that lifts all the sanctions against Pakistan before leaving for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum meeting in Shanghai today. He has expressed his support for the measure, which was cleared in the House of Representatives through a voice vote on Tuesday after having been cleared by the Senate unanimously on October 5.

The bill, which was sponsored by the Senator, Mr. Sam Brownback, authorises Mr. Bush to exercise waivers of foreign assistance restrictions to Pakistan by September 30, 2003. It also authorises him to assist Pakistan — and India — if a determination is made that it is in the national interest of the U.S. and important in the efforts to "respond to, deter or prevent acts of international terrorism."

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

Farooq backs Army action across LoC

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 17. - Dr Farooq Abdullah, today fully supported the Indian army's offensive across the LoC in the Medhar and Akhnoor sectors of Kashmir on Monday.

Dr Abdullah said: "We have been asking for a long time that India should show its teeth to the people concerned. The successful operation launched by the Indian army at the LoC two days back has been a very positive development."

The J&K chief minister met Mr LK Advani this afternoon to discuss the implication of Mr Colin Powell's statements in Islamabad and New Delhi.

Mr Powell said in Islamabad yesterday that the Kashmir issue should be resolved according to the wishes of the Kashmiri people. The US Secretary of State, however, clarified his statement today.

"Mr Powell's compulsions in this regard are understandable. We have to fight the battle against terrorism on our own. The American action in Afghanistan should be rapid and should ideally finish before the onset of winter. A long drawn conflict in the region would not be favourable," Dr Abdullah said.

The J&K government had asked the Centre to impose an all-India ban on terrorist out-



A jawan on vigil in Srinagar on Wednesday.— API/PTI

fits like Lashkar-i-Taiyaba, Jaish-i-Mohammed, Al-Badar and others outfits. Dr Abdullah said the terrorist camps in the valley were still operational and the ground reality had not changed even after the US-led campaign against terrorism.

18 OCT 2001

America on Tuesday admitted using the US AC-130H Spectre gunship that sprays cluster bombs on enemy troops and provides cover for allied forces.

Powell lands Kashmir punch

HFA 17/10

No red carpet welcome for US Secretary of State in Delhi

**HT Correspondent & Agencies
Islamabad, October 16**

THE SIGNALS that Colin Powell — who reached New Delhi late tonight — sent out at his joint Press conference with General Pervez Musharraf earlier in the day were not too encouraging for India. He said Kashmir was central to the relationship between New Delhi and Islamabad, insisted that both sides should start talking and promised concrete steps to strengthen Pakistan's economy.

Musharraf, whose country has always wanted international mediation in Kashmir against New Delhi's insistence on a bilateral solution, said Powell had expressed Washington's willing-

ness to play a "helpful role" in improving India-Pakistan relations. He also announced that Pakistan would back the international coalition against terrorism within the three parameters of intelligence sharing, use of airspace and logistical support.

The US Secretary of State called for a peaceful resolution to the Kashmir problem through dialogue with a "determined respect for human rights". "We too believe the Kashmir issue is central to the relationship and can be resolved if all parties are engaged with a willingness to redress their concerns in mutually acceptable ways," Powell said shortly before leaving for India. His talks with the Pakistani President earlier in the day were

focused mainly on Afghanistan. The Kashmir problem, he said, should be resolved through "peaceful, political and diplomatic means and not through violence and reliance on force but with a determined respect for human rights".

Emphasising that terrorism has no place in the civilised world, the US official said he had thanked the Pakistani President for his condemnation of the October 1 car bomb attack in Srinagar.

"In my conversations here and in my conversations in India, I will press for both sides as I have here today that dialogue between both sides is important," he said. Musharraf said he had conveyed to Powell that Pakistan wanted "tension-free" relations

with India but "Kashmir remained at the heart of India-Pakistan tensions".

"Beginning of a dialogue is the most important thing now," Powell said. "That is the message I will be taking to India." He also spoke of "mutual respect and desire to accommodate the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and respect for avoiding confrontation."

Stressing the need for avoiding "provocation", he said: "I will press upon both sides that dialogue is important." He recalled that President Bush had praised Musharraf's call to Atal Bihari Vajpayee earlier this month. "We discussed ways to promote stability in South Asia which we all know is a critically important part of the world."



AP PHOTO
US Secretary of State Colin Powell with Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh after his arrival in New Delhi on Tuesday from Pakistan.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

17 OCT 2001

Al Qaida warns U.S. not to back India on J&K

LONDON: For the first time, Osama bin Laden's Al Qaida network has brought Kashmir into its current conflict with the U.S. and its allies by demanding that they stop supporting India on the issue.

In a videotaped statement telecast on Saturday night by Qatar's Al Jazeera television channel, Al Qaida spokesman Sulaiman Abu Ghaith threatened the U.S. and Britain with more suicide attacks and cautioned Muslims against travelling by air and staying in high-rise buildings.

"These storms will not calm until you retreat in defeat in Afghanistan, stop your assistance to the Jews in Palestine, leave the Arabian peninsula and stop your support for the Hindus against the

Muslims in Kashmir," he said.

While the reference to Kashmir by the Al Qaida in itself is a new development in the current drive against terrorism, it does not surprise Indian security and intelligence agencies who have for long known about the involvement of bin Laden's mercenaries in Jammu and Kashmir.

Home minister L.K. Advani said in Agra on Saturday that bin Laden and his outfit were closely associated with terrorist groups in Jammu and Kashmir as was evident from the recovery of bin Laden's photo-

graphs from apprehended and slain terrorists.

Britain and the U.S. have termed the latest Al Qaida statement as propaganda. (PTI)



Al Qaida spokesman Sulaiman Abu Ghaith speaks in this picture taken from a video recorded 'very recently' at an undisclosed location in Afghanistan. The video was aired on Saturday.

SUSPICION PROMPTS CHANGES IN PRIVACY

THE TIMES OF INDIA

15 OCT 2002

'Autonomy talks not shelved'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, Oct. 13. — Dr Farooq Abdullah today said a formal dialogue was still going on between the Centre and the state regarding the issue of granting autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a tele press conference organised by the Doordarshan Kendra here today, the J&K chief minister said the National Conference government was committed to the people of Kashmir on the autonomy issue and it was part of its election manifesto. "We are still discussing the autonomy proposal with the Centre," he said.

Asked whether he was satisfied with the security measures taken by his government to tackle militancy in the past five years, Dr Abdullah said though no government would be fully satisfied with the measures or the achievements yet they had done very well.

Earlier, describing the Indian public opinion as favourable to restoration of greater autonomy of J&K, he said the Centre has nominated Mr KC Pant to deliberate with the state Governor on the autonomy report passed by the state legislature.

"We believe in dialogue, not in gun to sort out our problems," the chief minister said, hoping that the Centre will ex-



Dr Farooq Abdullah

pedite the process on this vital issue.

Dr Abdullah said a report on regional autonomy in the state is also complete and under consideration. This will take care of the aspiration of the people living in various regions and sub-regions. The government's endeavour is to fulfil the urges of the people of Ladakh and Jammu regions and to ensure that interests of one region don't conflict with another, he said. "We are vehemently opposed to the division of the state and domination of one region or the other," he added.

On his government's achievements, he said he would never claim to have achieved everything. There are some shortcomings as well but the achievements in various sectors of development are discernible, he said. "My endeavours are continuing," he added.

Dr Abdullah said he didn't enter into the electoral arena in 1996 with big promises but he only assured a dignified and better life to the people who had suffered because of militancy over the years.

He went on to refer to the changing scenario with shops remaining open till late hours, normal civil life picking up with social functions like celebration of marriages reverting to normal times, economic activity getting fillip, administrative machinery fully geared to provide responsive governance, political activity picking up with Opposition cadres canvassing for their policies and programmes in remote pockets etc.

But for the Centre's liberal help, he said the state wouldn't have overcome its problems.

Though a marked achievement in various sectors has been registered, yet the government's priority for the remaining one year would be to step ahead towards fulfilling targets set for the people's upliftment.

14 OCT 2002

Protests in Kashmir against attacks

18/10 By Shujaat Bukhari 10/1

SRINAGAR, OCT. 12. A bandh was observed in Srinagar and other parts of the Valley today in protest against the U.S. attacks in Afghanistan. Police used teargas shells to disperse the protesters.

The call of the Hurriyat Conference, which supports Pakistan's decision to back the U.S., to the people to observe restraint went unheeded.

Shops, business establishments and educational institutions remained closed. Small groups of youth took to the streets raising slogans against the U.S. and set its flag on fire. After Friday prayers, a demonstration was held outside the downtown Jamia Masjid where Mirwaiz Umar Farooq addressed a gathering. Later, the protesters took out a procession and stones were thrown at the police.

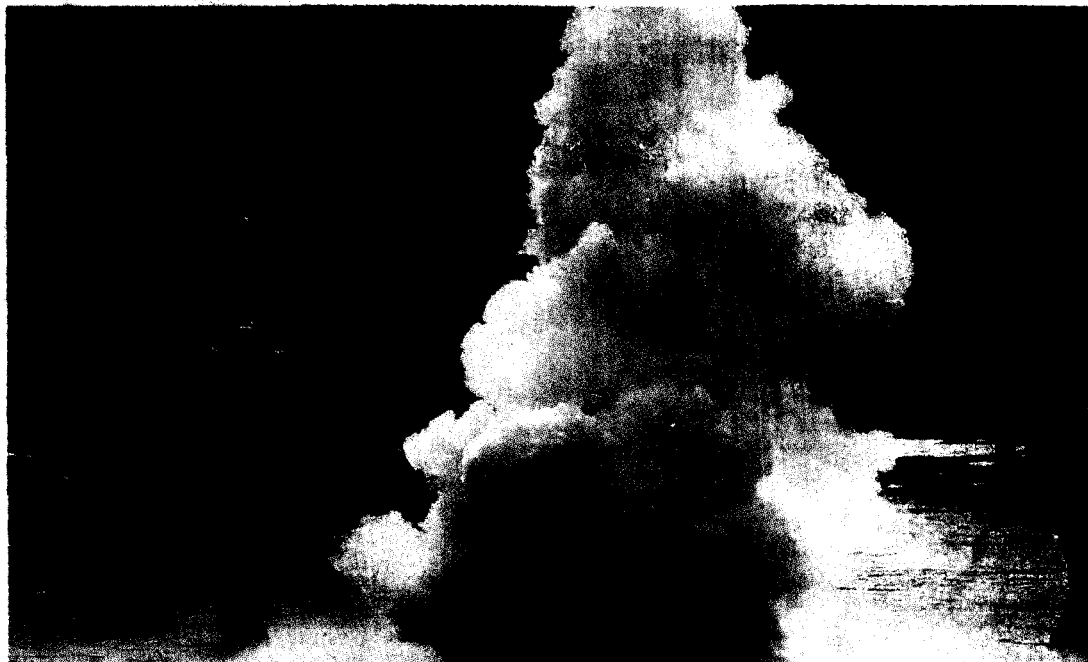
Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said negotiations should be initiated with Afghanistan rather than force being used there and appealed to the United Nations to prevent a disaster.

In Maisuma area, a group of women of the Dukhtaran-e-Millat took out a procession and burnt the U.S. flag. Police used force to disperse them and pitched battles went on for some time.

Demonstrations in Delhi

By Our Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI, OCT. 12. The Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid today staged a sit-in demonstration at the Masjid complex and activists of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and other Left parties held an anti-U.S. demonstration near the American Centre here.



Police burst teargas shells in Nowhatta area of downtown Srinagar on Friday to disperse demonstrators protesting against U.S. attacks on Afghanistan. — Photo: Nissar Ahmed

In his hour-long speech after the Friday prayer, the Shahi Imam reiterated that the U.S.-led air strikes on Afghanistan were an attack on Islam. "Islam regards oppression worse than murder," he said, even as his supporters raised pro-Taliban slogans.

Arguing that the Majlis Shoora of Jama Masjid Mushawarati Council had supported his stand to extend moral support to the Afghan ulama's call for 'jihad', he accused the U.S. of targeting civilians in their attacks.

Charging the Pakistani President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, with treachery, the Shahi Imam said, "today, the people of Pakistan are against Gen. Musharraf. Time will

come when they will teach his Government a lesson."

He also appealed to the Organisation of Islamic Conference not to support the attacks.

With the Delhi police deciding not to allow the protesters near the U.S. Embassy, a sit-in protest was held inside the Jama Masjid complex after his address. Prayers were offered by the demonstrators for the safety of the "brave, courageous and modest" Afghan people.

Activists of the CPI(M), the Forward Bloc, the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the CPI took out a protest march to the American Centre against the U.S.-led strikes in Afghanistan.

The CPI(M) politburo member,

Mr. Prakash Karat, denounced the attacks and termed them a 'wanton destruction of innocent lives'. The U.S. military action was a unilateral move bypassing the United Nations and in defiance of international laws.

Other speakers included the CPI general secretary, Mr. A.B. Bardhan, and the Forward Bloc leader, Mr. Debabrata Biswas.

A large number of Shiv Sainiks led by the party leader in North India, Mr. Jai Bhagwan Goyal, held a demonstration at Jantar Mantar against Osama bin Laden, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and the Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid.

THE HINDU

PM talks tough on Kashmir

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 11. — Buoyed by US strikes on terrorist camps in Afghanistan, a tough talking Prime Minister today said the government would "not shy away from intensifying security forces' operations against terrorists in J&K."

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's statements are being interpreted as indicative of the government's resolve to strike out terrorist groups from the Valley through sustained action by military and para-military forces.

Mr Jaswant Singh said Mr Vajpayee did not mean "hot pursuit" across the LoC. But the Prime Minister's words reflect a strong

opinion among decision-makers who favour striking directly at terrorist-training camps to end "cross-border terrorism."

Was Mr Vajpayee specifically hinting at military action against terrorists? Mr Singh said the process to flush out terrorists from J&K is on. Significantly, Dr Farooq Abdullah asked during an interview yesterday why MiG aircraft could not be deployed to destroy terrorist camps in PoK.

After last month's attacks in the USA and the formation of a "global alliance against terrorism", top military and government officials have urged the government to consider military strikes against terrorists in the Valley.

One reason the US secretary of state, Gen. Colin Powell, is visiting India is to assuage outrage at continuing terrorist attacks here. Mr Vajpayee had written to Mr George Bush immediately after the J&K Assembly strike, saying India's patience had limits, and that Pakistan-sponsored terrorism had to be curbed.

The possibility of crossing the LoC was discussed during the Kargil conflict. There was a feeling, particularly among the IAF, that targets across the LoC, which is Indian territory, held by Pakistan, should be hit. The government decided otherwise. Analysts feel this is the right time for strikes on these camps. But the government has officially denied

such a possibility.

The minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr Omar Farooq, today said: "We have a history that we have never waged any war." "We can," he said, "invoke Resolution 1373 of the UN by which we can stop funding of these militant groups and pressure Pakistan to stop giving diplomatic and moral support to them."

India will ask the global coalition against terrorism to exert pressure on Pakistan to stop these training camps. "If these steps are taken the militant camps will close down," Mr Farooq said. War is never decided by consensus. "Circumstances are created which force a country to go to war."

THE STATESMAN

Spurt in Kashmir violence leaves 15 dead

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, October 6

A SERIES of landmine blasts, grenade explosions and shootouts ripped through the Kashmir valley today killing three army personnel and a policeman, while six others were injured. Six militants and five civilians were also killed in separate incidents of violence while a grenade explosion in Anantnag left one dead and 14 others injured.

Over 5,000 people protested against the killing of Mohamad Ibrahim Dar and his son Abdul Rasheed Dar at Jaggarpura village in Kupwara. They alleged that security forces barged into Dar's house early this morning and passed remarks at the womenfolk, when Dar and his son protested they

were shot dead. Rasheed was an employee in the Government Rural Development Department. Security forces allegedly killed another civilian, Ghulam Ahmad Khan (75), when he protested against their atrocities in Jaggarpura.

An official spokesperson, however, said they were killed in a crossfire between militants and security forces. The spokesperson also said an activist of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba was killed in the encounter.

Militants blew up an army vehicle by activating an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) at Pahloo village in southern Kulgam tehsil. Three soldiers were killed and six jawans were injured in the incident. Unofficial sources said one of the wounded jawans later suc-

cumbed to injuries in the hospital, taking the toll to four.

The Hizbul Mujahideen, which claimed responsibility for the attack, said its activists detonated the landmine through a remote control device at 9.15 am today, when an Army patrol was on move in the area. A caller, identifying himself as spokesperson of the outfit, claimed that over a dozen security personnel were killed or injured in the blast. Sources said the security forces have laid a siege in the area and a major operation has been launched to nab the militants responsible for the attack.

Two more landmine blasts occurred at Awantipora on Srinagar-Jammu Highway and Ender village in Anantnag's Koker-nag quarter, causing damage to house and a parked vehicle. No

casualties were reported in the two incidents.

Militants fired rifle grenades on the pickets of security forces at Firdous Cinema and Fateh Kadal in Srinagar. An official spokesman said the grenades missed the intended target and exploded on the road without causing any damage.

Militants shot dead a selection grade constable of Jammu and Kashmir Police at high-security Hari Singh High Street in the capital's civil line area, this afternoon. Sources said the two assailants armed with silencer-fitted pistol had targeted the cop.

Jaish-e-Mohammad, responsible for Monday's car blast and the Assembly blast, claimed that the constable was associated with the special operation group and was killed by Jaish activists.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

-7 OCT 2002

Will it ever end?

KASHMIR'S AGONY is deepening with each passing day. Hopes of peace dawning in the wailing Valley are fading. Politics has taken a backseat and violence rules.

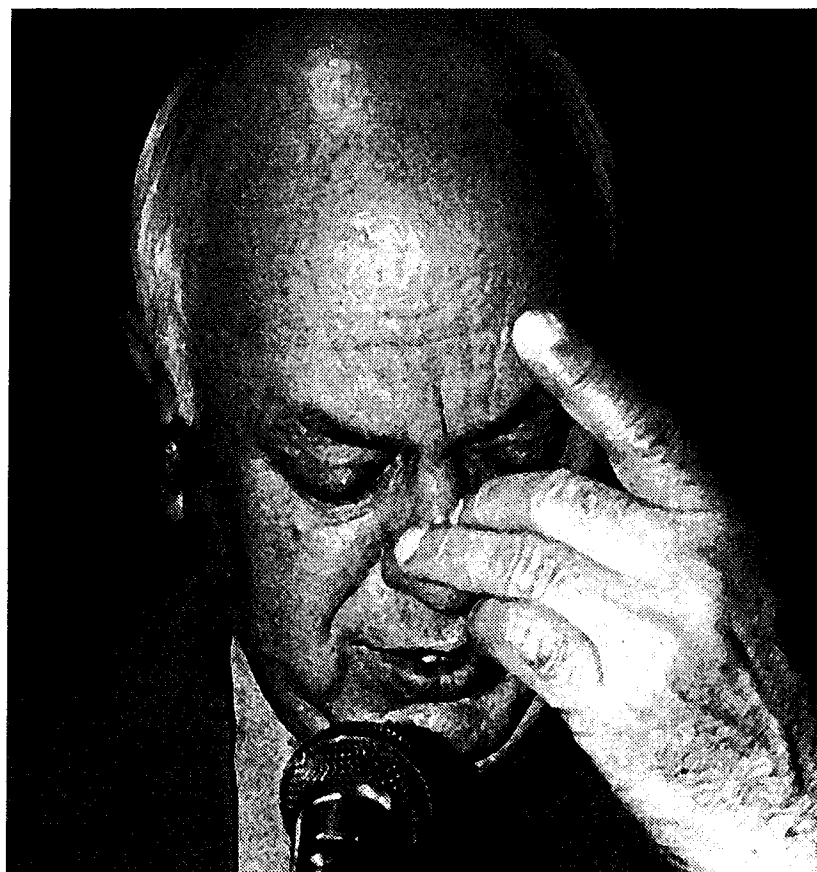
"We could see worse than this as the militants are desperate to harm the civilians and remain on centre stage. They are not quitting the Valley," says the Director-General of Police, Mr. Ashok Kumar Suri, who led his force to rescue those trapped when militants struck at the Assembly complex in Srinagar killing over 30 people.

The failure of the Agra summit, and then the strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon changed the direction of Kashmir's peace process. Worried about the outcome of summit, the militants were desperate to draw the world's attention. Massacres in the Jammu region followed the summit's failure. The Pakistan President, General Pervez Musharraf's pro-Kashmir stand boosted the morale of militants giving them an impression that only an armed struggle would succeed.

Back home Gen. Musharraf did try to contain the jihadi forces but their involvement in Kashmir was never questioned. It was only with U.S. pressure after September 11 that the military regime closed down some offices of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.

Officials say that what keeps the pot boiling in Kashmir is the continued infiltration from across the border. "There is no let up in that, they come with the latest weaponry," admits a top security official.

For his part, Mr. Suri says that over 900 militants have been killed in the past four months, an all time high. Violence, he says, has assumed dangerous proportions, increasing by 50 per cent. Official figures reveal that 2,563 people have been killed in the State since January 1. Out of them, 1,431 were militants,



Farooq Abdullah breaks down after the October 1 attack.

*Kashmir's agony is deepening with each passing day...
The militant strikes of October 1 have further complicated the situation, writes Shujaat Bukhari.*

387 security personnel and 745 civilians. The number of militants could have been much more but for the six-month ceasefire. It was during this time

the graph of civilian casualties went up. Mr. Suri claims local support to militants is waning and attributes fear to the success of the strike call given by

militants in support of Osama recently.

In the last couple of weeks with the focus shifted to combating global terrorism, the Government of India's persistent efforts to draw world attention to Kashmir militancy were going awry. But the action by the suicide bomber and the subsequent gun battle in the Assembly complex in Srinagar on October 1 changed the situation. "It is a setback to militancy as civilians got killed and anger among the people is visible," says an analyst. Pakistan is also not happy with this militant action as it has given an edge to India in pleading its case. Even the Pakistan media has been very critical of the blast. The Pakistan Government openly condemned the action, even knowing that the JeM had claimed the responsibility.

Since Pakistan has joined the American alliance in fighting terrorism at global level, the militancy in Kashmir will see a change in case the U.S. strikes against Afghanistan. Fighting the jihadis in his own land, Gen. Musharraf's policy towards Kashmir is bound to change. Observers in Srinagar are of the opinion that nothing can be anticipated in respect of Kashmir if there is a war against Afghanistan. "It is a very crucial phase and has to be seen in the backdrop of the international alliance against Afghanistan of which Pakistan is a part," says Mr. Tahir Mohiuddin, editor of the mass-circulated Urdu weekly *Chattan*.

Intelligence agencies are also worried by how close the October 1 blast came to harming the Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, his Ministerial colleagues and legislators. Officials point out that only the fact that the day's proceedings ended at 1 p.m. instead of the scheduled 1-30 saved them. In fact, the militants were heard shouting "*Farooq Kahan Hai*." The October 1 action was perhaps to show Gen. Musharraf also that the militants can carry out actions

on their own, wherever and whenever they want.

The changing situation has also pushed the Hurriyat Conference to the wall. When the blast took place, its leaders refused to comment perhaps waiting for the Pakistan Government's response. The other day they issued a statement generally condemning "innocent killings". The feeling among the people is that they lack leadership. Kashmiris now yearn for a genuine political leadership which could at least share their grief.

Caught unawares

AS THE attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly complex left yet another tale of death and sufferings in the Valley, it became clear that the Centre had gone wrong in its initial assessment that Pakistan-trained foreign militants had been asked to retreat in view of the imminent raids by the U.S. in Afghanistan.

After the September 11 terrorist strikes in New York and Washington, the mounting pressure by the U.S. on Pakistan to crack down on terrorist organisations had given rise to hopes in the establishment in New Delhi that militants would leave Jammu and Kashmir and training camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir would be disbanded. But New Delhi's hopes have obviously failed to materialise.

Gathering its wits and in a bid to finetune the response of the security agencies, the Centre rushed the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, to Srinagar to undertake a comprehensive review of the security scenario in the State. When Mr. Advani asked Pakistan to hand

over the Jaish-e-Mohammad chief, Masood Azhar, to India, he also reiterated India's endorsement of the U.S. stand on rooting out international terrorism through a global response.

New Delhi pointed out that there was a limit to India's patience to such "manifestations of hate and terror from across the border", and stressed that involvement of a Pakistani national, Wajahat Hussain of the North-West Frontier Province, in the "worst incident of terrorism this year" had once again proved the Pakistani hand in the suicide bombing.

Putting international pressure on Pakistan and handling the problem of cross-border terrorism through diplomatic channels notwithstanding, the Government's

New Delhi was apparently hoping the U.S. would pressure Pakistan to restrain the jihadis, says Vinay Kumar.

response to the recent escalation of violence has been conventional to say the least. With the lull in terrorist strikes in the State now gone, it is sinking in that there could be no substitute to a proactive approach to tackling terrorism.

While dwelling upon the phenomenon of "fidayeen" (suicide) attacks, security analysts point out that unconventional situations need unconventional responses. It is here that specific intelligence inputs are needed, as otherwise the security forces are left wondering from where the next "fidayeen" attack will come. The post-September 11 scenario has shown that the Indian establishment was hoping that the U.S. would be able to pressure Pakistan to restrain the jihadis. This has obviously not happened. Now, scores of innocent civilian lives have been lost to the terrorist violence.

The Home Ministry says that from 1991 till September 2001, as many as 50,519 incidents of terrorist violence took place — killing 9,487 civilians and 2,884 security personnel.

The perpetrators

The following is a profile of the main militant outfits active in Jammu and Kashmir:

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT): The front ranking militant group, the LeT comprises highly indoctrinated cadre drawn from madrassas. With Markaz Dawa Al Irshad as the patron organisation based in Lahore, the LeT changed the complex of militancy by introducing fidayeen (suicide squads) which claimed a heavy toll of security forces. It came into existence in early 1990 but became active in Kashmir only towards the end of 1994. It has a large number of guerrillas with a substantial participation by locals who guide them to their targets.

Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM): The JeM was founded by Masood Azhar who was released from jail in exchange for the passengers of the Indian Airlines flight hijacked to Kandahar in December 1999. Masood Azhar managed to get a large number of youth who graduate from madrassas under the new banner. Believed to be supported by Osama bin Laden and having close links with Mullah Omar of the Taliban, Masood could draw members from other outfits such as Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. The JeM owned responsibility for the October 1 blast at the Assembly complex.

Harkat-ul-Mujahideen: It came into existence after the U.S. Government banned the Harkat-ul-Ansar. Like the

LeT and the JeM, most of this organisation's cadre are foreigners. They specialise in detonating improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Though pushed to the background after the JeM was launched, it continues to operate independently in Kashmir. Many of its members had fought in Afghanistan against Russia.

Hizb-ul-Mujahideen: Out of more than 50 militant organisations in 1990-92, the Hizb is the only one which retains its indigenous character. This is the largest group in Kashmir. Formed in 1990 after Tehreek-e-Jehad-e-Islami merged with it, most of its militants were from the Jamat-e-Islami. Initially, the Jamat owned it as its armed wing but later distanced itself from militancy.

Al-Badr: A smaller group but highly motivated. Is believed to be supported by the Jamat-e-Islami Pakistan. Its activities in Kashmir are not on a large scale and it operates alongside other organisations. Its members were highly trained in camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Al-Umar Mujahideen: Another group of local militants which was revived when its chief commander, Mushtaq Zargar alias Latram, was released along with Masood Azhar. It has been reportedly working in tandem with the JeM and guides the organisation in Kashmir. — S.B.



The aftermath of the assault on the Assembly complex in Srinagar.



'WILL INDIA ACT AFTER KASHMIRIS PERISH?'

Farooq breaks down, calls for war against Pakistan

28K
HD
9/10

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, OCT. 3. The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, today urged the Centre to wage a war against Pakistan to dismantle the training camps there and root out terrorism.

Referring to the suicide attack on the State Assembly on Monday, which claimed 36 lives, an emotionally-charged Dr. Abdullah broke down, as did the others in the Assembly. Weeping, he said "we are caught between two nations — one (Pakistan) perpetrating gruesome violence against our people and another (India), watching, without taking any firm action against them."

Dr. Abdullah said he was ready to go to the border if Pakistan wanted "my head." "Agar tumhein Farooq ki laash chahiye to mein border par aonga, lekin hamaray masoom logon ko chod do" (if you want Farooq's body, I will come to the border, but spare our innocent people), Dr. Abdullah said, tears rolling down his cheeks.

Advocating a war against terrorism, Dr. Abdullah asked "if the U.S. could not wait for a day after Black Tuesday (September 11), are not twelve years too much for testing our patience?"

Will India act after the Kashmiris perish, Dr. Abdullah asked during an obituary reference in the Assembly. He urged the Prime Minister to act as the time had come to face the challenge of terrorism with full might.

Coming down heavily on Pakistan for aiding and abetting terrorism in the State, Dr. Abdullah sought the removal of the Musharraf Government on the same lines as was being contemplated in the case of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Earlier, the Speaker, Mr. Abdul Ahad Vakil, moved the reference and gave details of Monday's incident. The Assembly was later adjourned sine die.

Hand over Masood Azhar: Advani

By Our Special Correspondent

SRINAGAR, OCT. 3. The Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, today asked Pakistan to hand over the leader of the Jaish-e-Mohammad, Maulana Masood Azhar,



The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, wiping away his tears while mourning those killed in the militant attack on the Assembly in Srinagar.

— Photo: Nissar Ahmad

to India, and said New Delhi expected the United States to include the outfit in the list of banned terrorist organisations. At the end of his one-day visit to Srinagar, Mr. Advani told mediapersons that the JeM had owned responsibility for the attack on the Jammu & Kashmir Legislature on Monday and that Pakistan had disassociated itself from the outfit.

"Pakistan cannot deny that Maulana Azhar is there. If they (Pakistan) are honest about fighting terrorism, let them hand over the JeM leader to India so that he is brought to justice," Mr. Advani said. "We believe that international terrorism is a global menace... It needs a global response and we have endorsed the stand taken by the U.S. in this regard."

Pak.'s anger: Page 11

THE HINDU

4 OCT 2001

U.S. war against terror will cover J&K

Bush govt. assures India help in addressing Pak-aided militancy

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: Through clenched teeth and with kid gloves, the United States has agreed to address India's problems with terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

The commitment comes from several top administration officials, including secretary of state Colin Powell and defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld, both of whom external affairs minister Jaswant Singh met on Tuesday.

However, in keeping with the sensitivity of the current situation, none of the officials publicly named Pakistan as a sponsor of terrorism, although they did not disagree with such characterisations which Mr Singh made throughout the day.

Mr Powell perhaps made the clearest call when he said that Monday's attack against the Jammu and Kashmir legislature was "clearly an act of terror", a substantial departure from the usual description of such events as violence by State Department mandarins.

"The events that took place in Kashmir, that terrible terrorist act, that heinous act that killed innocent civilians and also struck at a government facility..it is this kind of terrorism that we are united against," Mr Powell said.

"And as the President made it clear..we are going after terrorism in a comprehensive way, not just in the present instance of Al Qaida and Osama bin Laden, but terrorism as it affects nations around the world, to include the kind of terrorism that affects India," he added.

Asked specifically about Pakistan, its role



U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell, accompanied by defence minister Jaswant Singh, answers reporters' questions after a meeting at the State Department in Washington on Tuesday.

and the links between the terrorists in Afghanistan and those in Kashmir, Mr Powell dissembled, as have many other administration officials.

"We are going after the Al Qaida network in its various manifestations and Osama bin Laden and his lieutenants who are in

Afghanistan, in the first instance. And as I said previously and the President has said repeatedly, we are going to be conducting a campaign that goes after terrorism," he hedged.

Defence secretary Rumsfeld was equally coy about Pakistan's role in fomenting terrorism as apparent in this exchange.

Q: India has always had the position based on available evidence that Pakistan actually harbors and in fact provides safe haven to terrorists. What is your view on this?

Rumsfeld: We've had discussions about a number of countries and the issue of terrorism and the importance of addressing it in a variety of different ways, as different countries are. And it is—it is a problem, as I have indicated, that in the case of this one network called Al Qaida, (it) is in 50 or 60 countries.

Without naming Pakistan, Mr Rumsfeld however said that "terrorists are" operating in countries because countries are tolerating that and "if we are to assure the way of life of free systems such as in our country and in India, the only choice we have is to take the battle to them."

Despite the politic silence about its client state's dubious role in the region—that U.S. officials privately acknowledge but publicly avoid mentioning—Mr Singh returned home sufficiently assured that Washington would act against it. "I see that the U.S. really has no option. You cannot fight terrorism..by addressing one manifestation of it and leave the others alone, because all others will turn back and do exactly the same as has been happening earlier in India or elsewhere," he told a television show.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

4 OCT 2001

2bV Suicide Mission 11-10-10

The brutal attack on the Jammu and Kashmir assembly complex by a four-member *fidayeen* squad comes even as analysts were predicting a period of relative peace for the state consequent to the focus shifting to Afghanistan. It was believed in particular that the terrorists who had made J&K their favourite hunting ground would now cross over to join the developing war in the neighbourhood. Monday's militant strike on the J&K legislature demolishes this notion even as it cautions us against putting too simplistic a spin on what is clearly a complicated problem made more complex by the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. *Prima facie*, the needle of suspicion points at Pakistan, and indeed, for official India the attack only confirms the long-held view about Pakistani terrorism. That the Jaish-e-Muhammad is based in Pakistan and at least one of the dead assailants was a Pakistani national would seem to buttress this argument. From the Indian government's point, then, it is only fair that the Americans take note of our complaint, and urgently so in the context of their own recent suffering. However, there are questions that this premise doesn't sufficiently answer. Would Pakistan mount such a savage attack in Kashmir at a time it has been strenuously striving to be on the same side as America? And in a war focused specifically on terrorism at that? It is difficult to believe that general Musharraf would compromise himself so blatantly when he needs more than ever to dispel the impression that he supports terrorism.

Cynics would no doubt see all this in a different light. Which is that having joined the United States in its fight against terrorism, general Musharraf needs as rarely before to pacify the jihadis and demonstrate his commitment to Kashmir. And what better way to achieve this than by executing a daring strike on the seat of power in Srinagar? It is common knowledge that the compulsion to make common cause with the United States has greatly discomfited general Musharraf who has had to face enormous domestic criticism on this count. Quite aside from the powerful lobby of jihadis, there is also a strong anti-American opinion that he has to contend with. This must explain why Pakistani newspapers, even while welcoming the support given to the US, have tended to advise the general against going the whole hog in the war led by the US. The Pakistani president is undeniably trapped in a 'damned if you do, damned if you don't' dilemma. The J&K attack perhaps stems from this peculiar situation. It could be a message from the jihadis that general Musharraf can overrule them only at his peril. Implicit in the attack could also be a warning to India about joining any global war against terrorism. The Vajpayee government must move with caution in dealing with this, and doubly so since the US response has made it clear that India cannot count on it for help.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

2001

Blast in front of J&K House, 26 killed

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, Oct. 1. — A suicide squad of militants today blew up an explosive-packed Tata Sumo at the entrance of the J&K Assembly and then entered the building throwing grenades and firing automatic weapons. The militants were later gunned down by security forces. Twenty-six people were killed and about 60 injured.

A report said the militants had set off two more blasts inside the Assembly building.

A Jaish-e-Mohammad spokesman later called a TV correspondent and claimed responsibility for the attack. The group is headed by Maulana Masood Azhar who was released in exchange of the passengers of the hijacked plane in December 1999.

There were conflicting reports about the number of militants who stormed the Assembly

building. Sources told **The Statesman** that three ultras in police uniform entered the building, while agencies said two got out of the vehicle, the third being killed in the blast.

Unconfirmed reports said the militants had hijacked the vehicle which belonged to the telecommunications department. They released the driver shortly before the attack.

The DGP, Mr AK Suri, said two militants were shot dead when they tried to escape after setting on fire a part of the building. The attack took place around 1.45 p.m. About 15 minutes earlier, most of the legislators, minister and the chief minister had left the Assembly.

However, the Speaker, Mr Abdul Ahad Vakil, and some other persons were inside the complex. Unconfirmed reports said a business advisory committee meeting was in progress then and the law minister, Speaker, Deputy Speaker, four legislators, As-

sembly secretary and watch ward staff were in the complex.

A report from Delhi said that after an hour of encounter, commandos rescued the home minister and Speaker. It said the attackers had planned to take hostage the VIPs who were in the building then.

An official spokesman said among those killed were 11 securitymen, 12 civilians, a traffic constable and two college girls. Three Assembly staff, including the assistant secretary and under-secretary were among them.

Cabinet committee: The Cabinet committee on security today decided to take additional security measures after it reviewed the situation in J&K, SNS adds from Delhi.

Pak condemns blast: Pakistan has condemned the blast, saying it was aimed at "maligning the Kashmiris' struggle for self-determination, a report from Islamabad said."



Bodies of victims lie outside J&K Assembly building after a suicide squad set off an explosion in Srinagar on Monday. Twenty-six people were killed and about 60 injured in the blast and the subsequent firing between the militants and security forces in the Assembly building. — APTI

THE STATESMAN

OCT 23

2001

Muslims protesters burning the American flag in downtown Srinagar near Kashmir's main mosque on Friday, during an anti-U.S. rally. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

Pro-Taliban rallies in Kashmir

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, SEPT. 21. In a severe setback to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), a complete strike was observed across Kashmir Valley to express solidarity with Afghanistan and the Saudi fugitive, Osama bin Laden. Police opened fire in the air to disperse pro-Taliban processions at various places.

The call given by Pak-Afghan Defence Council and supported by four front-ranking militant organisations — Jaish-e-Mohammad, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Al-Badr and Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen — besides the women's group, Dukhtaran-e-Millat, evoked near total response.

All shops and business establishments, educational institutions, banks and Government offices were closed. Transport services were also affected partially and inter-district bus services remained off the roads. Some groups

of youth took to the streets in Maitsumma in the morning and pelted stones at the police who had been deployed in strength.

After the Friday prayers, demonstrations were witnessed in downtown areas of Jamia Masjid, Kawdara, Rajouri Kadal, Bohri Kadal and adjacent localities. Hundreds of people took out processions raising slogans such as "Taliban zindabad, Afghanistan zindabad", "Lashkar ke mujahidou ham tumhare sath hein".

They also set afire the U.S. flag and burnt effigies of the American President, Mr. George W. Bush.

Police opened fire in the air and used tear-gas shells to disperse the processionists. Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Hurriyat leader, who delivered the Friday sermon at the historic Jamia Masjid, tried to prevent the people from taking out a procession but failed.

The militant organisations have thanked the people for observing

the strike and not giving heed to the Hurriyat appeal. The Dukhtaran-e-Millat chief, Ms. Asiya Andrabi, said "today's strike has proved that people are with militants active in jihad and not with the selfish politicians".

The Al Umar chief, Mr. Mushtaq Zargar, has impressed upon the Muslim world to get united to fight the U.S. plans of attacking Afghanistan. "It will be an attack on the entire Muslim world," Mr. Zargar, who was among the three militants released in the Kandahar hijacking, said in a statement.

Criticising the U.S. for falsely implicating Osama bin Laden in the bombings in New York and Washington, he said "Osama is a true Mujahid of Islam".

When asked about the people's response to the militant call, the senior Hurriyat leader, Mr. Abdul Gani Lone, said "People were terrified. Otherwise, they were ready to abide by our call".

THE HINDU

22 SEP 2001

Kashmir militants get trained in Afghan camps

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 21. - The Centre has details of over 20 terrorist training camps in Afghanistan spread over 10 provinces.

In these camps, over 1,500 militants of different nationalities and factions, including those fighting in Jammu and Kashmir, are being trained.

Taliban soldiers are trained in some of these camps, but the others are for Arab, West Asian and central Asian terrorists. The recruits are in the use of automatic rifles, explosives and other weapons as well as ideological indoctrination. The in-

formation about these camps, some of which were set up by Pakistan, has been shared with the USA.

■ Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Tayyaba militants are being trained in a camp in Kandahar.

The LeT is a larger outfit and the comparatively newer JeM, commanded by Maulana Masood Azhar, released after the Indian Airlines' IC-814 hijacking in 1999, are active in J&K.

The camp was or is commanded by an officer of the ISI, Col Bahadur Khatak.

■ There are three more camps in Kandahar area (Shri-nak,

Ghazabad and Darunta). The Ghazabad camp is for preliminary training while the Darunta camp is for the Taliban and though it is believed to be commanded by a Col Saifullah of the ISI. The total strength of the four camps is about 200, with the Kandahar camp being the largest.

■ The Nangarhar province is full of such camps, with the Centre identifying about five at Bandi Darunta, Hadda Farm, Khost, Nangarhar town and Jalalabad. The Hadda Farm and Khost camps, with strengths of 150 and 200 respectively, are for Kashmiri militants. The smaller Nangarhar camp, in Ta-

(about 70 people), is also for Kashmiri militants, but excels in ideological training. It is headed by Maulana Abdul Rehman. About 25 people can be trained at Bandi Darunta and 100 at Jalalabad.

■ There are two camps in Kabul province - at Rishkor, with a strength of 250 for training Taliban troops and at Bagram South for Arabs. The latter camp is for about 100 terrorists.

■ There is a small camp in Pakhtia for 50 terrorists and a similar one in Logar province for people of West and central Asia.

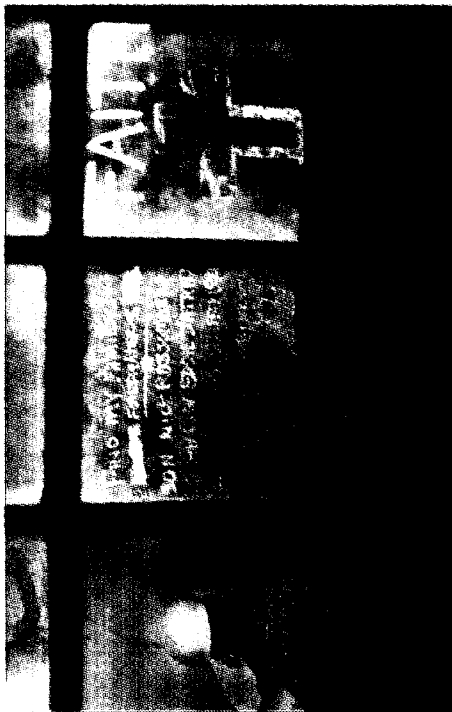
■ At Koh-e-Siah Boz in Ta-

khar, 50 Taliban recruits from madrasahs are trained, while in Kunduz town and Naghloodam in Kunduz, over 100 people are being trained.

■ There are three camps in Balkh province - at Mazar-i-Sharif, Deh Dadi and Kod-e-Barg where about 200 people are being trained.

■ In Herat, there is a camp for 60 Taliban troops and at Hilmand a smaller camp for about 25 people.

These camps were set up a few years ago but may have been temporarily cleared as they are likely to be the first targets of the US strike aircraft and cruise missiles.



A rescue worker looks out onto windows in a building across the street from the World Trade Center on Thursday. - AP/PTI

THE STATESMAN

22 SEP 2001

22 SEP 2001

KASHMIR SUCCESS

Army Gaining Upper Hand

PRIME Minister Vajpayee's cease-fire in Jammu and Kashmir was a bold initiative that reflected the Kashmiri people's desire for peace. When it was first announced in the holy month of Ramzan last year, it had generated an electrifying wave of excitement and a glimmer of hope for the future. However, disappointment had soon followed at the systematic disruption of the cease-fire by fanatical mercenary terrorists sponsored by Pakistan's jihadi groups. Despite grave provocation by way of fedayeen attacks on its camps and enhanced levels of terrorism, the Indian army had held its fire and followed a policy of non-initiation of combat operations. This implied that the army would retaliate only when attacked first and that too only against terrorists who were unmistakably identified to be armed.

It was a policy that called for the highest levels of restraint and discipline in combat against terrorist insurgents who had no scruples. These mercenary terrorists from across the border with Pakistan did not hesitate to mercilessly kill, maim or wound innocent Kashmiris to gain media attention and thereby keep their so-called jihad alive, even when the Kashmiri people were tired of over a decade of militancy and wanted peace above all else. In especially targeting the minority community in the areas south of the Pir Panjal Range, the terrorists were quite obviously executing the ISI's old strategy of creating an ethnic and communal divide.

IN CONTROL

Finally, after two extensions, the government decided to let the cease-fire lapse and the security forces were once again free to initiate active counter-insurgency operations against the militants. The army had utilised the cease-fire interlude to build up its intelligence network, step up its civic action programme and increase its contact with the Kashmiri people to win the battle of hearts and minds. Events of the last three months have shown that efforts have borne fruit.

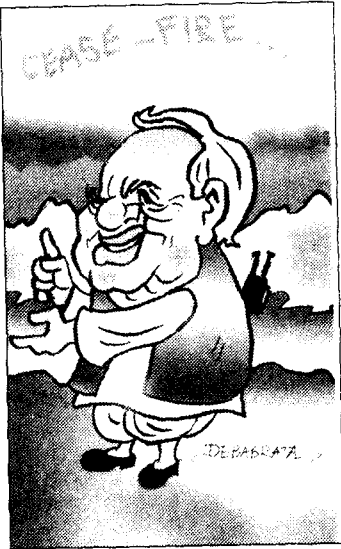
Due to the cooperation of the people of J&K, stemming from their intrinsic belief that the so-called jihadis were ruining their lives and holding the future of their children hostage for their nefarious ends, "actionable" intelligence started flowing more freely to the army and spectacular results were achieved in operations. In the three month period June-August 2001, the army has eliminated approximately 600 mercenary terrorists, the highest ever in any comparable three month period since the present phase of militancy began in 1989-90. The ratio of army personnel to terrorists killed has gone up to 1:7. The counter-infiltration net along the LoC has been considerably tightened. Every day reports come in of major success in preventing infiltration. On some days the number of mercenary terrorists killed while attempting to penetrate the gaps along the LoC has ranged between 10 and 15.

In fact, in sheer frustration at the foiling of its attempts to abet infiltration, the Pakistan army has started violating the cease-fire that it had fairly

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

By GURMEET KANWAL

assiduously observed along the LoC for almost six months. A number of forcible attempts to recruit young Kashmiri boys to join the so-called jihad have been successfully thwarted. About 100 young men have been returned to their parents. The conclusion is unmistakable: despite sporadic attacks by fedayeen squads and some massacres in isolated villages inhabited by the minority community, the army is in control of the military situation and the terrorists are on the run. The qualitatively superior



results in operations achieved over the last three months can to a large extent be attributed to the success of the army's ongoing modernisation drive. In recent years, the army has been constantly striving to upgrade its technological capability. Better intelligence and surveillance capabilities are providing relatively more effective early warning of infiltration attempts, particularly at night and during bad weather conditions. Improved tactics due to the experience gained over a decade and the introduction of more effective close quarter battle weapons and are paying rich dividends. This synthesis of trained and motivated combat troops with sophisticated modern technology is bound to generate even greater success. Naturally, the process is an ongoing one and a lot still needs to be done to reach an optimum level of combat efficiency.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Due to the constantly increasing military control over the internal security situation, the pressure on the army is continuously decreasing. The raising and induction of additional Rashtriya Rifles battalions in J&K has enabled the army to considerably reduce the number of regular infantry battalions being employed for counter-insurgency operations. Both these factors have led to a situation where the troops can be given more time off for rest and recuperation and recreational activities than was the case till a few years ago.

Every battalion being inducted into J&K for counter-insurgency operations is being given one to two months of basic on-the-job training. The aspect of safeguarding human rights is emphasised during training and closely monitored by the commanders during the conduct of operations. The key principles applicable in upholding human rights have been enshrined as commandments and issued to the troops. On the rare occasion that violations do occur, these are mainly attributable to instinctive reactions in the heat of the moment. Notwithstanding the motivation or

the cause, deterrent punishment is speedily awarded to the individuals concerned and the results of the trial conducted are widely publicised. Gradually, the whole process is being made more and more transparent.

Contrary to media apprehensions, the recent extension of the provisions of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act to the areas south of the Pir Panjal Range will enable the army units, including the Rashtriya Rifles battalions, deployed in the affected areas to do their job better rather than lead to human rights violations. In the remote and often inaccessible areas in Doda, Baderwah, Kishtwar and the interior areas of Udhampur, Rajauri and Poonch, the army's presence has increased over the last few years due to the ISI's efforts to enlarge the arc of militancy to areas beyond the Kashmir Valley. In these areas it is not operationally expedient to secure the presence of a magistrate or obtain written permission before launching cordon and search operations. Nor can apprehended militants be handed over expeditiously to the civil police.

In over a decade of militancy in J&K, the army alone has killed approximately 12,000 militants and mercenary terrorists. Over twice that number have been apprehended and handed over to the J&K police for the civil judiciary to proceed against them. More than 30,000 Kalashnikovs (AK-47s, AK-56s and AK-74s) and other major weapons have been recovered from the militants and from their hidden arms caches.

RIGHT CONDITIONS

Several hundred thousand rounds of ammunition have been recovered. The TNT stocks that have been recovered are sufficient to blow up several high-value targets many times over. A stage has been reached where the militancy in J&K is being driven primarily by foreign mercenary terrorists controlled by Pakistan's ISI and there are only a handful of "indigenous" militants still left in the fray. Abdul Ghani Lone of the Hurriyat admitted as much in a recent statement. The notable successes of the army, combined with those of the other security forces, have created the right conditions for a political dialogue to be initiated to eliminate the root causes of militancy in Kashmir.

Contrary to the canards being spread by vested interests, that the army is tired and India is negotiating from a position of weakness in J&K, the army has actually enhanced its capability to deal with the foreign-sponsored insurgency by several orders of magnitude. In fact, the army has never been so assured in dealing with the so-called "guest" militants as it is today in J&K. The other central and state forces such as the BSF, CRPF and the J&K police (particularly its special operations group), have also considerably improved their ability to support the army's pro-active stance. Together the security forces have given the Government of India a strong platform from which to negotiate a solution to the long-standing J&K issue and to firmly tell General Musharraf and his colleagues in Pakistan's ruling coterie that the core issue as far as India is concerned is the cessation of cross-border terrorism and that further progress in negotiations is contingent on this condition.

Grant J&K pre-1953 status

9/8 19/9
RAJINDAR SACHAR

A SOLUTION of Jammu and Kashmir has assumed urgency with general elections scheduled next year. Of course, an agreement between India and Pakistan is essential to stop cross-border terrorism. But once a solution within J&K is worked out, Pakistan would be under terrible pressure to endorse it.

No government, either in India or in Pakistan, can go beyond converting LoC into international border. But it is equally clear that nothing less than an offer of pre-1953 status with similar privileges to regions of Jammu and Ladakh will be acceptable to the people of J&K.

Home Minister L.K. Advani's fusillade against pre-1953 status is misplaced. It is commonly known that the instrument of accession permitted Parliament to make laws with respect to defence, external affairs and communications.

The Delhi agreement of 1952 between the J&K government and the Union government carried matters further. The J&K government conceded that in the event of war or external aggression, the Centre would have full authority to take steps and even proclaim emergency. It was also agreed that except for a few subjects vested in the Centre, the rest of powers will be with the state. Non-application to the state of Article 352 or Article 356 is thus understandable considering that the misuse of Article 356 is galore and there is sizable opin-



ion which advocates even deletion of Article 356.

Instead of governor being appointed by the Centre, the head of state, i.e., Sadar-i-Riyasat, will be elected by the state legislature — a strong suggestion is already afoot to have the appointments of governors cleared by the leader of opposition and some even doubting the necessity of the institution of governor — this provision cannot be faulted.

Advani had mentioned amongst the main reasons for not agreeing to pre-1953 status, the absence of jurisdiction of the Election Commission and the Supreme Court and the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG).

Advani's complaint is laughable. He himself is on record that barring 1977, all the other elections in J&K were rigged — the credit for 1977 belongs to Morarji Desai and not the Election Commission. Is it any won-

der that the EC does not enjoy any credibility in J&K? As regards the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, if the people of J&K are hopeful of impartial justice by judges appointed by the state government and do not like their decision to be challenged in the Supreme Court by way of a special appeal, why should the government object to it? The ineffectiveness of the CAG to prevent UTI and other scams hardly inspires confidence in it as a watchdog.

Advani and others assume that granting pre-1953 status will leave the people, especially the minorities, at the whim of the executive. This is sheer ignorance. The fundamental rights chapter of the Constitution was extended to J&K in 1954. The Constitution of J&K (1957) itself grants fundamental rights of equality, protection of minority rights and freedom of speech. The High Court of J&K is empowered to issue writs,

directions in the same manner as in the rest of India.

Already Stephen P. Cohen has urged the US government that it should play the role of a mediator in the dispute. This nefarious suggestion deserves to be rejected. That is why there is an urgency that the Government of India should unilaterally offer pre-1953 status to J&K with similar regional autonomy to Ladakh and Jammu. This must be accompanied by a "really free and fair" election as is being promised by the prime minister. History reminds us that the EC cannot by itself fulfill this requirement. Of course, there can be no question of polls under UN supervision as demanded by the Hurriyat. A satisfactory genuine solution can be found by involvement of NGOs and impartial observers duly authorised by the EC to monitor the elections. It will give transparency to the election results. But all this is possible only if all political parties endorse acceptance of pre-1953 status.

It cannot be denied on the specious plea that it will have domino effect and other states would demand similar status. This plea ignores that J&K already enjoys special constitutional status. The BJP should not create a phantom where none exists and then don the role of knight in shining armour to fight that phantom which is its own creation.

The writer is a former chief justice of the Delhi High Court

INDIAN EXPRESS

14 SEP 2001

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2001

KASHMIR IN PURDAH

149-12

IT IS A measure of the terror that fundamentalist extremism can wreak that a shadowy group of Islamic militants, whose very identity is open to question, is able to hold the women of an entire State to ransom. The Lakshar-e-Jabbar's criminal demand that all Muslim women of Jammu and Kashmir observe purdah or risk being shot in the legs has drawn a noticeable veil of fear over the Valley. While the coercive 'writ' issued by the Lakshar-e-Jabbar, which came into effect earlier this week, has evoked only partial compliance, menacing signs of this vicious assault on women have already begun to surface. This and other such gender-specific diktats issued recently by the little-known militant group — including an order that women be stopped from sitting next to men on public buses — have succeeded in evoking serious apprehensions about attempts to Talibanise the social fabric of the Valley.

Ironically, the men who have issued the diktat on purdahs purport to do so in the name of religion. But the barbaric acts committed by such unthinking zealots — including two savage attacks with acid on women who appeared bare-faced in public in Srinagar last month — are wholly un-Islamic and only serve to spread a false and unfortunate image about the religion. Non-Muslim women have also come under the harsh purview of the Lakshar-e-Jabbar's dress code with Hindus ordered to wear the traditional bindi and Sikhs directed to cover their heads with saffron cloth. The purpose of these decrees are ostensibly only to distinguish such women from Muslims, but they are unmistakably similar to those issued in Afghanistan by the Taliban authorities, who ordered religious minorities to wear tags to identify themselves as non-Muslims. The practice of forcing social groups to wear distinctive clothing or identifying marks — which is reminiscent of the Nazi policy of forcing Jews to wear yellow stars — is abhorrent and deserves to be con-

demned in the strongest terms.

12/9

It is perhaps not altogether surprising that the Lakshar-e-Jabbar's threatening decrees have found support with some fundamentalist groupings, most notably the influential Jamiatul-Mujahideen and the radical women's outfit, the Dukhtaran-e-Millat or Daughters of the Faith. No militant and separatist group has directly criticised the purdah decree though objections have been raised about the manner in which it is being opposed. The strongest condemnation of this ugly trend has come from some of the moderates who make up the All Party Hurriyat Conference who have disparaged the acid attacks and other such barbaric practices aimed at coercing women to adhere to the dress code. If the Valley is to be prevented from falling under the further sway of misguided religious crusaders and myopic fanatics, then the voices of all those opposed to such savagery must be strengthened.

This is not the first time that Islamic militants have attempted to force the population of the Valley to conform to their ultra-conservative diktats. For instance, about a decade ago, the hardline Dukhtaran-e-Millat launched a campaign to force women in Srinagar to wear the veil and threw paint on those who failed to comply. Such campaigns, however, have been mercifully short-lived. Images of Kashmiri women rushing to get their burqas stitched and reports of harried tailors working overtime to meet the sudden demand have reinforced fears that it may be somewhat harder to overcome the Lakshar-e-Jabbar's campaign this time around. It is a campaign buttressed by intimidation and its success can be nourished by little else than a diet of fear. In these challenging and turbulent times; one can only hope that the people of Kashmir will have the strength and the resolve to disregard the belligerent threats and resist the Talibanisation of their Valley.

THE HINDU

12 SEP 2001

'Let both countries manage J&K's defence, foreign affairs'

WIDELY respected in Kashmir's political and separatist circles for his sincerity to the "cause", People's Political Front chairman Fazal Haq Qureshi, came to the international limelight when Hizbul Mujahideen chief commander (operations) Abdul Majid Dar announced his name as the Hizbul emissary for proposed talks with India.

Though the unilateral ceasefire announced by the Hizbul fizzled out, Qureshi, whose role as interlocutor has been replaced by KC Pant, is observing the emerging political situation in the trouble-torn state carefully. Stated to be close to Dar, Qureshi has played a long innings in the separatist movement. He was founder-member of the first prominent underground separatist group, Al Fateh, in the late 1960s. The outfit worked for three years before being exposed in 1971.

Many Al Fateh members were arrested along with Qureshi who was suspended from his service in the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Secretariat. Unlike other separatist leaders who managed to get huge funds and improved their lifestyles, Qureshi lives in a single-storey house in Bilal Colony of Soura on the outskirts of Srinagar.

The man who gave a tough challenge to Sheikh Abdullah for his "sell out" to the Indian government on the Sheikh-Indira Accord of 1975, discusses the Kashmir situation in an interview with KAVITA SURI. Excerpts:

Last year, your were appointed the Hizbul emissary after the unilateral ceasefire declared by the militant outfit. This year another ceasefire was announced and

KC Pant made interlocutor. How was last year's situation different from the present one?

If we interpret last year's unilateral ceasefire move by the Hizbul Mujahideen, I think it was beautiful and many hopes were attached to it. I don't think the next ceasefire move by the Indian government had that big a dimension. There are no two

opinions that the Hizbul ceasefire move was a well-considered and well-conceived one. It was thought it could pave the way for a permanent settlement of the Kashmir dispute. On Mr Pant's visit to Kashmir as the government of India's emissary, an All Party Hurriyat Conference general council meeting was convened after a long time. It was discussed that if he was talking peace then that made a bad story because peace without solution of the dispute had no significance. Hence it was rejected.

Though Mr Pant tried to meet us, I think the passion involved in the move made by the Hizbul was missing this time. But at the same time, I feel that inviting General Pervez Musharraf for a dialogue was a dynamic step taken by India which had all along demanded that cross-border terrorism be stopped before any dialogue with Pakistan.

You just said the Indian ceasefire and then the invitation to Gen. Musharraf were dynamic but delayed moves. Do you think that made the difference?

Obviously, I think that poor Hindustan Times photographer would not have died in an explosion in Residency Road last year had Atal Behari Vajpayee made the statement that he had no reservation in solving the Kashmir dispute through a dialogue in a democratic set-up a little earlier. It was a delayed statement. The blast had taken place a couple of days earlier. But it is still not too late.

The two nations should think about what they are doing and what could be the possible solutions. Even if India had agreed at the time that Pakistan would be brought into the parleys at any later stage, things would have been different.

I still say, it is not too late. Hizbul commander Dar has said they are ready to cooperate if there is meaningful deliberation. He said they would opt out of violence, support the dialogue and help



People's Political Front chairman Fazal Haq Qureshi: Dialogue the only option for India and Pakistan.

solve the dispute between the two countries.

If Dar feels that is a meaningful move, why doesn't he come overground and help in the peace process?

No, that's not right as the exercise has still not taken some shape. Once some good results emerge and there is something promising, it will definitely invite what you say. That will be a message not only for the Hizbul Mujahideen but everyone who is interested in getting the Kashmir issue resolved. It would be a message to everyone on how to behave.

The last time when I talked to you, you said the post-Agra summit period would be the turning point in Kashmir politics and its future. You said it would indicate how our next morning

would be and how we tread to continue the journey. What do you say now?

My People's Political Front is still hopeful. Both leaders (Mr Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf) will meet this month also, so we are hopeful. Tough posturing will not help. India and Pakistan have to handle the Kashmir issue delicately. International pressure is building on both countries. There has to be some solution to the Kashmir dispute. I do not see any other option before the two countries but dialogue. War would be too devastating for both. We are not disappointed with the happenings in Agra.

Do you think the Indo-Pakistani talks can succeed without any third-party mediation?

If you are implying the Hurriyat's role, I think it does not have any role in Indo-Pak summits which can succeed without any third party mediation - be it APHC or anyone else. Though the representative character of the Hurriyat has been established, I feel the summits can take place without anybody's mediation in a cordial atmosphere.

Coming back to the previous question, as you had also played the role of an interlocutor, do you think that Mr Pant is moving along the right track?

I had related myself to the entire subcontinent as a whole. I had not put myself in a limited sphere or boundary. At that time, I had said that I would do every thing possible to bring India and Pakistan closer so that they can solve the pending dispute. But I see a difference now. Whatever Mr Pant's mission is, I don't doubt his bona fides or his integrity.

He is a good interlocutor as I was, but one thing is clear, as he is part of the establishment, his emphasis is on the Indian stand, Indian thought. Being a part

of the government, he has his limitations. Even if he wants to come out of it, he cannot. We, on the other hand had kept ourselves quite open. We were as close to Pakistan as to India.

Being Kashmiri, in a way I was equidistant from both countries. In a way, I feel Pant *saheb*, with all his might, intellect and experience would like to give the net profit to India. So I see a difference in the interlocutor's role.

People have been talking about various solutions - buffer state, independent Kashmir, conversion of the LoC into a permanent border and so on. What is your view?

I think it is safe-playing. I cannot conceive the idea of acceding to Pakistan. Accession with India is already being defied by the people of Kashmir for obvious reasons. My PPF is not in favour of an independent Kashmir. This solution is also not acceptable to China. The PPF has suggested a possible solution - the granting of semi-sovereign status to Jammu and Kashmir by the two sovereign states. India and Pakistan can manage defence, foreign affairs and communication between themselves in keeping with international laws and address the problem once and for all.

Do you think it is practicable?

Why not. Let us think about British India and the state of Jammu and Kashmir as it was before 1947. It had the same kind of arrangement. We had home rule, we had our own militia, we had a special relationship with the British. Now that British India has been replaced by India and Pakistan, Kashmir is their baby. It's their headache how to make arrangements and solve this problem.

Personally, I feel that it is not a big problem for both countries to jointly manage foreign affairs, communication and defence. We share the boundaries with India and Pakistan. They can easily manage the borders from their respective sides with international guarantees that there won't be any aggression towards Kashmir.

(The author is The Statesman's Jammu-based correspondent.)

6 Armymen killed in Udhampur blast

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, SEPT. 9. Six Army personnel were killed and another injured in yet another devastating landmine blast in the Udhampur district today. A seven-year old girl, five militants and two soldiers were killed in other militancy-related incidents.

Police sources in Udhampur said that militants detonated the landmine at Mahore, near Angrala, when the vehicle in which the Armymen were travelling was passing through.

The blast was so powerful that the vehicle was completely damaged and thrown into a deep gorge nearby. Six Armymen died on the spot and another was injured, the sources said. The injured soldier was later airlifted to Udhampur for treatment.

The blast took place around 8 km. from Sangaldan where a similar blast on Saturday claimed the lives of six BSF men, including a Commandant.

A massive combing operation has been launched by security forces to nab the militants responsible for the blast. Reports said that militants had sneaked into the area in large numbers and the security forces were on the defensive.

Civilians die

Two civilians were killed and 15 injured in Kupwara town this evening. Police sources said that militants hurled a grenade towards a BSF patrol.

The BSF retaliated and in the crossfire, Mr. Khurshid Ahmed Tantray and Mohammad Ramzan

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were killed. Fifteen other injured were admitted to hospital; later four of the seriously injured were shifted to Srinagar.

Even as the police said in Srinagar that Mr. Khurshid Ahmed was a militant and was killed in an encounter, officials in Kupwara said he was a civilian from Rohama Rafiabad. The grenade explosion damaged 13 shops, reports said.

Late in the evening, an improvised explosive device fitted in a bicycle went off near a BSF vehicle in the Bemina locality here. It exploded with a big bang, injuring four BSF jawans and six civilians.

The condition of two BSF men and two civilians is reported to be critical. A number shops were also damaged in the explosion.

In an encounter at Super Naghama in Handwara, a jawan and two militants were killed, police said. Two militants of the Lashkar-e-Taiba were killed in an encounter with security forces in the central district of Badgam.

According to a police spokesman, a jawan and a militant were killed in a fierce gunbattle in Larnu Kupwara.

Rocket kills girl

A seven-year old girl, Choti, was killed when militants fired a rocket towards security forces at Rampura in Kupwara on Saturday. The rocket missed its target and hit a house. The girl, who was inside the house, died on the spot.

Seven Army personnel were also injured in the attack and the condition of some is stated to be critical. People have protested against the killing of the child.

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'Pak. keeping militancy boiling': Page 13

6 BSF men, schoolgirl killed in J&K blasts

By Our Special Correspondent

SRINAGAR, SEPT. 8. Militants struck in a big way in Jammu and Kashmir today, detonating landmines in three separate places, in which six BSF personnel and a schoolgirl were killed and a dozen others injured.

Security forces averted more casualties, when they detected and defused three more mines. An Army man was injured when defusing one of them.

Reports said that a BSF vehicle carrying the Commandant of the 161 battalion, Mr. S.S. Dahia, was blown up by a powerful landmine planted by militants on the Gool-Ramban road in Udhampur district.

The officer was on his way to Gool. Reports said that as the bullet-proof vehicle was passing through the village of Dhumkund, militants detonated the mine. The Commandant and his five guards were killed on the spot. Senior police and paramilitary officers rushed to the spot and launched a massive search operation.

The Hizb-ul-Mujahideen claimed responsibility for the blast claiming a heavier toll. Police sources said more mines planted by militants at Amar Cheshma, Samroli and Chenani, were defused by the bomb disposal squad. The Army man was injured while defusing the one at Chenani.

In the second landmine blast, in South Kashmir, militants targeted a State Road Transport Corporation bus, carrying students from a local school on an excursion to Pahalgam. The bus hit the landmine at Paibugh near Mattan.

An eight-year-old girl was killed instantaneously in the blast. Thirteen children suffered injuries.



Two school girls, who were among those injured in the landmine blast near Mattan, being treated in Srinagar. — AP

The IGP, Kashmir, Dr. Ashok Bhan, said three seriously injured students were shifted to the Srinagar Hospital.

This has been the third blast targeting school children since August 31 in the Kashmir Valley. He called it an act of cowardice.

In the third landmine blast near Arampora on the Baramulla-Kupwara road, atleast seven Army men were injured. Militants also opened fire after the blast, police sources said.

UNI, PTI report:

The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, today expressed shock over the death of the schoolgirl in the landmine blast. He regretted that the militants had not even spared innocent school-goers on a picnic.

7 army men injured

Seven Army personnel were injured in an ambush by militants in Kashmir where one person was

killed and five exfiltrators were arrested since Friday night, official sources said today.

A group of heavily-armed militants hurled grenades and opened fire on an army convoy on the Sopore-Kupwara road injuring seven soldiers, the sources said. The troops fired back and laid a cordon around the area to nab the militants involved in the ambush.

The militants also triggered an IED explosion on the Srinagar-Gulmarg road immediately after the lethal device was detected by the security forces, the sources said adding no casualty was reported.

In Baramulla a grenade was hurled by militants on a security vehicle early today, but none was hurt, the sources said.

Meanwhile, five youths who were being herded to the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir for arms training in Kupwara were arrested yesterday.

THE HINDU
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9 SEP 2001

J&K opposes legal shield for forces

HT Correspondent
Jammu, September 6

FAROOQ ABDULLAH'S Government is not prepared to endorse any legal shield for security forces fighting terrorists.

His Home Minister, Khaleed Najeed Suharwardy, has made it clear that the Union home ministry's proposal for legal immunity for security personnel to pre-empt rights abuse charges, was unacceptable.

Almost at the same time, the Union Home Minister was in a meeting of police chiefs in Delhi, dwelling on the need for introducing legislation to protect security personnel from indictment in abuse cases.

Suharwardy told reporters that the "The Centre can do what it likes, but as far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, accountability cannot be waived off."

He pointed out that his State enjoyed special status under Article 370, so laws enacted by Parliament need not be applied to Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our State is governed by Article 370 and here no one can be given powers to do anything with impunity," the Jammu and Kashmir Home Minister said.

Advani's proposal yesterday



Bodies of four Harkat-ul-Mujahideen militants, including foreign mercenaries, who were killed in an encounter with the Army, in the Kokernag area of Anantnag district on Thursday.

contained repeated references to Kashmir.

He referred to Pakistan's proxy war and its obsession with

Kashmir. It was quite clear that when he was speaking of the need for legal immunity for forces fighting terror, he had the

Jammu and Kashmir situation in mind. He said that in an open war, security have the freedom to act

against the enemy. But in a proxy war like the one going on in Jammu and Kashmir, they do not enjoy the same freedom.

against the enemy. But in a proxy war like the one going on in Jammu and Kashmir, they do not enjoy the same freedom.

APP PHOTO

Gilani under house arrest

Rashid Ahmad
Srinagar, August 29

FORMER ALL Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) chairman and senior Jamaat-e-Islami leader Syed Ali Gilani was placed under house arrest by the police and prevented from attending the amalgam's crucial general council meeting on Wednesday.

Sources said a police team swooped on Gilani's Hyderpora residence on Airport Road early in the morning and asked Gilani not to leave his house. The police action came hours ahead of the meeting of 23-member general council at APHC headquarters in Srinagar. "I don't know why I am not being allowed to move out," Gilani said. However, a senior functionary of his office told the *Hindustan Times* that restrictions on his movement were linked with the general council meeting.

He said the general council was meeting today after a long gap and some important issues were likely to be discussed. "The Government did not want Gilani to prevail upon in the meeting," he alleged.

Gilani is regarded as a formidable hardline senior leader in All Party Hurriyat Conference. While his views are being opposed by a major section of amalgam leadership in the seven-member executive council which is the apex decision-making body, Gilani, however, has good support in general council.

Shakeel Bakhshi of Islamic Students League and Masarat



SYED ALI GILANI

Alam of Muslim league, who are the ardent supporters of Gilani's views in the general council, are already in jails. Mohammad Yousuf Mujahideen, another active associate of Gilani has also been detained under Public Safety Act.

Abdul Gani Lone, Yasin Malik and Molvi Omer Farooq, who are out of town, were not present in the meeting. The meeting was presided by chairman Professor Abdul Gani Butt began at 11.30 am. A senior functionary of the amalgam said the meeting was called to discuss the grave political situation arisen after Jammu was declared as a disturbed area and the subsequent increase in atrocities by security forces.

He said the upcoming New York meeting of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and General Parvez Musharraf would also come up for discussion in the meeting.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
30 AUG 2004

MY STATEMENT WAS MISUNDERSTOOD: FAROOQ

'Talks soon on autonomy'

9.8.83 By Shujaat Bukhari 10/1/83
SRINAGAR, AUG. 28. The ruling National Conference (NC) will soon start negotiations with the Centre on greater autonomy for the State, the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, said here today. He would also meet the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and said his party's support to the NDA continued.

Dr. Abdullah told reporters that the Centre's interlocutor on Kashmir, Mr. K.C. Pant, would convene a meeting to discuss the autonomy issue. Asked whether the autonomy resolution passed last year by the State Assembly would form the basis for the dialogue, Dr. Abdullah said "we will discuss all aspects of the issue". He would also meet Mr. Vajpayee even as he has made it clear that he was misunderstood on the statement on elections. "I am going to Delhi, but I do not think it can materialise before meeting the National Development Council."

Dr. Abdullah said that as of now he had no differences with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). "The NDA convener, Mr. George Fernandes, spoke to me before the meeting and I told him that I cannot attend it because of the demise of my Cabinet colleague," he said adding: "I conveyed to him how I felt about the statements made by Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Advani". The central leadership should not make mistakes by giving such statements. "They should strengthen my hands in fighting the war here."

Some Hurriyat Conference leaders were ready to participate in elections. That was why, he said, the central leadership had issued statements of "free

and fair" elections to appease them. "I will be the happiest person if they (Hurriyat leaders) fight the elections and let us see for whom the people vote," he said. At the same time, the Chief Minister said he did not deny that elections were rigged before 1977. "In 1983 the entire India was against me, but I got elected with a clear majority. In 1987, the Muslim United Front fought elections on religious slogans."

Curfew in Poonch

By Our Special Correspondent

SRINAGAR, AUG. 28. The Jammu and Kashmir Government has imposed an indefinite curfew in Poonch town following violent protests against the killing of two Hindu priests and five members of a Muslim family. They were among 20 persons killed in a fresh wave of violence across the State.

Police said that a group of militants abducted two priests, Mahatma Narotam Dass Piyari and Mahatma Devi Dass, from the Mata Kalika temple at Dundak, near Surankot, in Poonch district late on Monday night. They were taken a little distance away and beheaded. The militants then fled. In the afternoon, a group of unidentified gunmen again descended on the area and kidnapped Haji Ghulam Hussain Shah and his family, when they were on way to Marhote village in Surankot. All the five members of the family, Haji Hussain Shah, his wife Hajra Bi, two children and a woman were killed by the abductors. Police said militants were behind these killings.

THE HINDU

29 AUG 1983

Relatives mourn the death of a Kashmiri youth, allegedly killed by police in custody, on Tuesday in Srinagar.

Custody deaths set Srinagar aflame

Rashid Ahmad
Srinagar, August 28

WITHIN 24 hours of Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah's warning to security forces that custody killings are unacceptable, the Special Operation Group (SOG) of Jammu and Kashmir Police has been charged with killing two youths after taking them into custody.

Parts of Srinagar witnessed stone-pelting and demonstrations in protest against the killings on Tuesday. Groups of agitated youths took out processions in Baba Demb, Nawpora, Khayam Chowk and adjoining localities and held demonstrations. They raised slogans

against the police and blocked traffic.

Relatives of a slain youth, Fayaz Ahmad Dharma, and local residents said the SOG picked him up from a house in Khayam Chowk at 6.45 pm on Monday and shot him dead minutes after near a hotel in the locality.

They said Fayaz was a businessman who had a jewellery shop at Goa. He had reportedly come a fortnight back to meet his parents.

But a police spokesman said Fayaz was a militant and was killed in an encounter with an SOG-CRPF team. The Nishat quarter of Srinagar witnessed demonstrations over the killing of a Government employee,

Parvez Ahmad Shah, by the SOG.

Even as the police said he was a militant and was killed in an encounter at Syedpora in Harwan, locals alleged the power department employee was dragged out of a bus in full public view outside Nishat. They said he was on way to his office on Monday morning when he was arrested.

The Jamaat-e-Islami said Shah was an unarmed civilian and a member of the organisation. In a written statement, the Jamaat decried his killing as a "cold-blooded murder".

The northern township of Sopore was also paralysed by protests. Hundreds of residents held demonstrations and staged

a dharna outside the local police station. They demanded that the whereabouts of a youth, Feroz Ahmad Najar, be revealed. He was allegedly picked up by the security forces on August 25 and has been missing since.

Lawyers in Srinagar also observed a strike today in protest against the arrest of one of their colleagues, Noor Mohammad, who was reportedly arrested on Monday at Badgam.

Massive protests were held at Arat in Badgam over the killing of a Hizbul commander, Bashir Ahmad Malla alias, Zubair. Three militants, including a joint commander of Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and Al Badr-e-Mujahideen, was killed in Kupwara.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 AUG 2001

Seven cops killed in Lashkar attack

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Aug. 24. - Seven policemen were killed in a Lashkar-e-Taiyaba *fidayeen* attack on a police station in Poonch district late last night.

The Lashkar-e-Taiyaba chief spokesman telephoned **The Statesman** early today from an unidentified destination. Two of its *fidayeen* members - Abu Da-

wood and Abu Shahid - stormed the police station and gunned down seven policemen. The two ultras escaped unhurt, the spokesman said.

The IG, Jammu zone, Mr Radha Vinod Raju, said two militants dressed in Army uniform attacked the police station. Most of the officers were out on patrol.

The Poonch town has been cordoned off. The Army and the police have launched a joint operation in the town and its outskirts to nab the militants. A red alert has been sounded in Jammu.

Six of those killed were identified as Mohammad Bashir, Farhaad Ahmed, Garu Ram, Mo-

hammad Safi, Dharma Vir Singh and Mohd Rashid.

In another incident, two soldiers were killed and two injured in an encounter with militants on Thursday at Supwal, 30 km south of Jammu. Security forces were conducting searches in the forest areas near Supwal when they came under heavy fire from

militants. The attack is seen as a major security lapse as the Lashkar-e-

■ AK Rifles for Central forces in J&K: page 8

Taiyaba and other militant outfits had recently threatened to escalate attacks on security forces and police in J&K. Orders have been issued to beef up security around police stations in Jammu.

Farooq warning: Dr Farooq Abdullah today said his government would not tolerate human rights violations in the state, reports UNI from Srinagar.

Hurriyat: India's "refusal" to resolve the Kashmir issue had become a hurdle in its securing a permanent seat in the Security Council, Mirwaiz Maulvi Umer Farooq said today, adds PTI.

THE STATESMAN

'I don't think the Agra summit failed'

HAVING acquired the "Nelson Mandela of Kashmir" sobriquet for having spent 22 years of his life in jails, Shabir Shah, the 47-year-old chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party, is the only separatist leader who has responded positively to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's peace initiative. This "Prisoner of Conscience", as declared by Amnesty International, was also issued death threats by some militant groups for participating in the peace process. Ignoring these and allegations of "selling out", Shah is moving ahead with his resolve to get the Kashmir dispute resolved through dialogue.

From Anantnag district in south Kashmir, Shah was first arrested when he was just 14. He speaks to **KAVITA SURI** of his proposed visit to Pakistan to facilitate a resolution of the Kashmir issue. Excerpts:

Post-Agra, what strategy are you going to adopt to facilitate India and Pakistan resolving the Kashmir issue?

We have a firm belief in evolving a lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the wishes of the people through peaceful means. We are going to tour both India and Pakistan in the first week of September to explore the possibilities of making the Islamabad summit a success. Even if the Indian government will not allow me visa to go to Pakistan, I am not going to make it a prestige issue like a few other separatist leaders and will continue my work in India. Besides, we have decided at the executive body meeting of our party that whenever there is a fresh proposal from the government of India, we are going to respond to it.

After all, we have made a human investment of over 100,000 people in this freedom movement. We want the issue to be resolved peacefully. We also have great expectations from the forthcoming New York meet and then the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit in Kathmandu and we hope they (Vajpayee and Pervez Musharraf) will meet and talk there. Though the two could not reach any joint declaration in Agra, we hope they can come out with an Islamabad declaration. A beginning has to be made. Besides, my party is going to organise an international conference in Srinagar in the near future on the Kashmir issue. We are trying to evolve an opinion on the issue.

Rumours are rife that you are going to join a parallel forum to the All Party Hurriyat Conference which is being set up by a few separatist leaders in Kashmir soon.

I don't believe in group or forum politics. Everybody knows that the APHC has got international recognition through Pakistan. How can Pakistan disown them as it has its own compulsions? I do realise that but I am not bothered whether they carry me on Pakistan Television or

invite me to a tea party. I had told Hurriyat that they should make an organisational structure and give the body a shape and take it to the grassroot level. As each one of us has "azadi" or freedom as our slogan, what is the fun of rowing our respective boats? I wanted that there should have been one body and thus no confusion at all. I was ready for the merger of all units from Kashmir to Lakhanpur had Hurriyat responded to my suggestions. And I would not have demanded any post in the executive body or otherwise.

Does that mean these rumours are baseless?

See, all of us could have come together on some common minimum programme if we have to fight elections. But as there is no such thing, these rumours are not true. But if there is one organisation, one leader and one slogan, I am ready to surrender.

How did the Hurriyat respond to your suggestions?

They initially agreed but later, when it was not implemented, I left the APHC.

Everyone says you've been nursing the dream of becoming chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir. Will you participate in the forthcoming assembly elections?

Elections would be a futile exercise. If New Delhi thinks that by shifting the power from Farooq Abdullah to someone else it can solve the Kashmir dispute, then it is totally wrong. Even in 1975, we saw Shiekh Abdullah making an accord, but what happened thereafter? Our youth picked up guns in 1988. Might can never be right.

Post-Agra, what is your observation of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir?

I think the unilateral ceasefire fizzled out because some people played spoilsport as they feared their importance would be reduced to zero. But I also don't think that the Agra summit failed. The problem has been pending for the past 53 years. How can you expect miracles to occur in just two days? From the very beginning, we knew there would be some understanding between the two nations. The two leaders who started as strangers got to at least know each other better after six hours.

But what were the shortcomings?

Well, there were always a few compulsions. You have to have some accountability before one million people. The same is true of General Musharraf, who said he would change history. There definitely were a few difficulties but I think there will be some solution in the near future. At least the acknowledgement by both countries about the issue is a significant development. Wasn't it an achievement that India declared a ceasefire, then invited General Musharraf and sent KC Pant for an



unconditional dialogue on Kashmir? The real credit for this goes to our freedom fighters who forced the Indian government to acknowledge that it had to talk on Kashmir.

I was also in jails for 22 years but nobody listened to us.

But your life was threatened by the Al Umer Mujahideen if you continued with the dialogue. Besides, many Kashmiri separatists accused you of a sellout.

Well, there are always threats. Many people in the government are also responsible for the grenade and other attacks on me, my party workers and my office in Kashmir for the past few months. The Mujahideen never attacked me. It's not that I have some liaison with them. Some people who are enjoying five-star culture aren't happy with the present situation. They think that if the Kashmir issue is resolved they will have to wind up their money-minting shops. They are bound to create hurdles in the peace process. Despite the threats, I move forward. I never did sell out. After all, I'm not a power-hungry politician. I want to see

taking. We are also human beings full of weaknesses. Thousands of people attend my meetings throughout the state. If Hurriyat says so, it is our misfortune.

Do you think your party contributed significantly in melting the ice between India and Pakistan which ultimately resulted in the Agra summit?

Yes, everybody knows about the role played by the JKDFP in the peace process over the past few months. Even the media reported that the JKDFP had scored a point. One has to understand that the talks cannot be tripartite straightaway. You have to create an atmosphere for that. After creating such an atmosphere, one can set up some working groups to discuss complicated issues, discussions can be held with the Pakistan or Indian Foreign Office till some agreement is reached over Kashmir. It should be first bilateral, then trilateral — between us, India and Pakistan and then Pakistan and us, then all the three parties. After all, it is the question of one million Indians and 200 million Pakistanis.

Besides, the JKDFP believes India and Pakistan will have to play a leading role in global development as leaders of South Asia jointly ensure that their people do not lag behind as members of the world community.

But at the same time you criticised the withdrawal of the ceasefire.

Yes, even though the ceasefire did not exist on the ground, it should not have been called off. But I have always appreciated Atalji's move of shunning the Indian stand that India would not talk to Pakistan until that country stopped aiding and abetting cross-border terrorism. It was a daring step and showed Vajpayeeji's farsightedness.

In your informal talks with KC Pant, who had come to your house in Srinagar, you reportedly told him to lift the Disturbed Areas Act from Kashmir Valley. But it has now been extended to Jammu.

Pant and I had a closed-door meeting in Srinagar and I told him an atmosphere had to be created to restore the confidence of the Kashmiri masses. I told him the boys lodged in the jails for the past 12 years who now had no cases against them should be set free as they were under illegal detention. I told him the Disturbed Areas Act should be lifted from Kashmir Valley, the off and on searches in houses should also be

stopped so that the people got the feel that the government of India was serious about its business. The custodial killings should also end. History has it that we Kashmiris are always scared of violence. Unfortunately, this dreaded Act has now been extended to Jammu also. The application of draconian laws will not help solve the problem but will, instead, subject the people of Jammu to harassment and deny them the limited freedom they enjoy as compared to Kashmir. This Act will further be used to distance them from each other on communal lines, which can have diastrophic consequences.

What is your party's view on trifurcation?

We have always made our views clear on this issue. Those who favour the trifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir are neither their own friends nor friends of India. We have already witnessed a division on communal lines in 1947. What else do we want to see now?

I have repeatedly told these people who are demanding Union Territory status or separate statehood for Jammu to let us solve the bigger issue (azadi) first and then if they presented solid arguments in favour of their demands, we could ponder the issue. In fact, I had started a people-to-people dialogue to address such grievances. But the main issue is Kashmir over which India and Pakistan have fought three wars. We need to resolve it first.

You have also condemned the recent acid attacks on women in Kashmir by a lesser known outfit, the Lashkar-e-Jabbar.

Well, Islam never allows the use of force. I don't think the Mujahideen have done it. Islam doesn't allow such cruel acts as throwing acid on women. They (the militant groups) would never be able to force their wishes on the people of Kashmir as *zabr* (force) and *zyadati* (excesses) are not allowed in Islam and this move will create differences among the people. Such an attempt to Talibanise Kashmir was started in 1991-92 when the Allah Tigers and the Dukhtaran-e-Millat issued a dress code for women. But their efforts failed.

I fear there is the hand of government agencies behind it. I think if they had to do it, they could have first motivated the women through published literature on its importance. But using force is totally wrong.

(The author is The Statesman's Jammu-based correspondent.)

THE STATESMAN

23 AUG 2001

Shells rain along LoC, 6 ultras killed

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & AGENCIES



BSF recruits at a passing out parade at a training centre in Srinagar on Saturday. — AP/PTI

JAMMU, Aug. 18. — Six Pakistan-backed infiltrators have been killed by security forces along the LoC in J&K's Poonch and Rajouri districts that came under heavy Pakistani shelling for the past two days.

Elsewhere in the valley, 10 ultras, including a Hizbul Mujahideen commander, have been killed since last night.

Defence officers said troops at a security post in Noushera, Rajouri, saw some armed militants moving in the dark on the Indian side of the LoC. After being challenged, the militants fired from sophisticated weapons, prompting the troops to retaliate. Three ultras died on the spot, but the rest managed to escape. The dead were Lashkar-e-Taiyaba members.

In Poonch, about 30 armed militants tried to raid a forward post around 5.45 a.m. The Army challenged them and in the ensuing gunbattle, three militants were killed and six injured.

The ultras fled to the other side of the LoC under the cover of Pakistani firing. Two bodies had been recovered. The third was lying close to the LoC and the troops couldn't reach the spot

J&K POPULATION CONTROL

JAMMU, Aug. 18. — The J&K government has decided to formulate a policy to check population growth, after reports revealed that the state's population growth rate is among the highest in the country. District action plans will be prepared within a month, as a prelude to the policy initiative. Chief secretary Mr Ashok Jaitely took a decision to this effect after convening a high level meeting to take stock of the data revealed by the census operations conducted after 20 years in the state.

Census reports said the state registered less than one per cent decline in the decadal population growth rate since 1981-91. Against 30.34 per cent decadal growth rate during 1981-91, it is now 29.04 per cent. The average decadal population growth rate for the country is 21.34 per cent.

Bid to revive the art of papier mache

JAMMU, Aug. 18. — The J&K govt wants to revive the papier mache craft. A modern paper pulp-moulding plant is being set up at Srinagar at a cost of Rs 35.50 lakh under the Centre's critical infrastructural balance scheme to provide latest facilities to the artisans associated with the craft. — SNS

"encouraging achievements" towards that end. "It's easy to win an open war, but the results in proxy war are rather delayed," Mr LK Advani said in Lucknow.

He said the Centre would ensure free and fair Assembly polls, scheduled late next year, in the state. Were not the earlier polls free and fair? He said all the polls, barring the one held during Morarji Desai's prime ministership, had been described as "not free and fair".

Farooq: The J&K chief minister has appealed to Kashmiri pandits to return home, saying the valley was incomplete without them. "The government will ensure every assistance for your safe rehabilitation in the valley," Dr Farooq Abdullah said in an address to Kashmiri pandit migrants at Batal Balian camp, Udhampur, yesterday.

He also urged the pandits to form a temple management committee on the pattern of the Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committees, for the upkeep of the temples in the valley.

As for the demand for dividing the state into three parts, he said it was in line with Jinnah's two-nation theory. "The sub-continent is facing the consequences of ill-conceived partition even now and we can't afford another partition."

Residents observed a hartal today to protest against the killing.

A civilian was killed and another hurt in an encounter between the Army and militants at Kantpora, Kupwara, last night. Some houses have been damaged in the gunfire.

Advani: The Union home minister today iterated the Centre's resolve to wipe out terrorism in J&K and claimed the past three months saw

assault rifle, a pistol and some ammunition were found on Bilal.

A Hizbul spokesman, however, said the two were arrested from Pohru, Badgam, yesterday and later killed in a "fake encounter".

The local people too alleged that jawns brought the militants in a gypsy and later killed them near a migrant's house. They said the two had been arrested a week ago.

because of heavy firing by Pakistani troops. The ultras had left behind two AK-rifles, 14 magazines and five hand grenades.

Pakistani troops have shelled several places in Poonch and Rajouri districts. The shelling started on Thursday and continued through-out yesterday. Altogether, 130 mortar shells, 15 artillery rounds, 12 smoke devices and 70 rounds of small weapons

landed on Indian soil on Thursday night. The forward posts that were targeted included the ones at Sabzian, Noushera, Bhimbergali, Kerni, Mendhar, Krishna Gati, Balakote and Gurez.

There was, however, no loss of life or damage to property. Pakistani rangers shelled border outposts and civilian areas along the international border in Ranbir Singh Pora, Samba, Hira Nagar and

Akhnoor sub-sectors. The shelling started yesterday and continued till this morning. One person was injured. The BSF returned the fire.

An official said Hizbul commander, Roshan Khayal alias Bilal Sangeen, and a Pakistani militant were killed at Badstah Nagar, Srinagar, in an encounter with security forces last night. An AK

Politico-military mismatch in J&K

By V. R. Raghavan

The operational response against terrorism needs to be part of a larger political process. Military measures should supplement the political and not be a substitute.

40-12/178

THE APPLICATION of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1990, (SPA), beyond the Jhelum valley demonstrates the mismatch in the political and military policies of the Government. The massacres in Doda and the bomb blast in Jammu railway station were serious incidents. Such incidents had occurred in the past, but the Government had not sought to impose the SPA. What grounds justified the grant of the SPA's sweeping powers this time remain unclear. This is particularly disquieting in the light of the Government's assertion in Parliament that the security forces had the upper hand against the militants. The fact remains, however, that its introduction has been seen, not entirely without justification, as an admission of policies pursued thus far having failed. It is, therefore, time to examine the strategic underpinnings of the policy being pursued from Delhi.

The SPA's application in more areas is indicative of increased emphasis being placed by the Government on a military response. There is, however, no corresponding thrust on the political front. In fact, the critically important political dimension has received a serious setback. The announcement by the Government in Parliament, about its plans to substitute greater autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir with special powers is a substantial strategic U-turn, whose ramifications will be serious and far reaching. The grant of special powers to security forces has, however, done little to enhance the credibility of the policies. The shift from the political initiatives of the previous two years to a decidedly military thrust is evidence of either loss of confidence in political leadership, or, of an abiding but misplaced faith in the efficacy of a militarist approach.

During the last two years a series of political initiatives on Jammu and Kashmir were initiated from Delhi. There was considerable preparatory work involved. The release of political leaders from detention, the encouragement to and continuing of the ceasefires for nearly six months, the opening of dialogue channels with a number of political groups of varied beliefs, and above all the commencement of a peace momentum had raised hopes in and outside India. It would not be incorrect to say that the BJP-led Government had dem-

onstrated greater strategic savvy on Jammu and Kashmir than was evident in the preceding decade. There was a clearly perceptible shift towards political discourse from the largely military framework of managing the conflict. The debate on autonomy was unlike anything seen in a long while. It opened up the much needed space in which options and alternatives could be discussed rationally. The BJP-led Government and the Prime Minister were seen to be capable of seizing opportunities and of bold measures.

The invitation to General Pervez Musharraf was undeniably a part of the peace process imaginatively begun in Jammu and Kashmir. That the Agra summit failed to come up to expectations was not a complete surprise, other than in the mileage seemingly gained by Pakistan's military leader. The meetings nevertheless showed to both sides the limits of each others ability to seek peace. It would also have shown, given the better understanding of what each side was willing to do, the outlines of a future political strategy. That so soon after the Agra summit the policy has so emphatically shifted from the political to military dimension would seem to indicate a strategic shift in Delhi. Therein lie possibilities of adverse outcomes both in the short and in the long term.

The Doda killings and Jammu shootings were incidents of the kind seen in earlier years. However, incidents caused by militant activity cannot be the determinants of policy. Unfortunately, this has been the policy pattern in Jammu and Kashmir because of a misunderstanding of the relative importance to be given to political and military dimensions of policy. Sound political initiatives and effective governance involve the people in countering the militants. This allows the security forces time and resources to conduct aggressive operations against militants. In the absence of political involvement of the people, security forces are compelled to be defensive. The need to guard and protect everything brings about a massive deploy-

ment all over the state. This inevitably hampers civilian life and before long alienates the population. In the absence of political activity, the security presence seems oppressive. Policy then gets determined by shooting incidents and military measures, instead of a comprehensive strategic outlook where politics retains primacy.

In the absence of a pro-active political strategy, the Government is forced into a policy of ever increasing military measures. It deploys more and more forces, and uses the logic of military measures to answer criticism of political failures. It falls back on claiming success based on the indices of killings. The Government's dilemma is seen in its Parliamentary replies, where it is reduced to claiming success on the basis of numbers of militants killed each month. That it claims success on the basis of 233 militants killed in July compared to 217 in June this year is proof of marginal military results becoming alibis for the absence of political gains. That an Indian Government can be reduced to using body counts as proof of success is a sad reminder of its inability to distinguish between the easy but fallacious and the difficult but correct priorities. Choosing the easy and expedient military course has led to ruinous consequences in other democracies. In fact, the choice is fraught with risks of political leadership misleading the people.

In the last major carnage in the Doda area, the Government talked of a new military grid, of unified command, of military advisors to the Chief Minister, of pro-active tactics. In the recent Doda massacre, it has again played with words and talked of a directed unified command, modified dynamic deployment, and new tactics. It has moved in additional forces, which will only change the density of security forces without improving security. Military measures will improve military security but can do little to improve human security consisting of political stability, accountable governance, participatory politics and economic empowerment. The application

of the SPA in multi-ethnic segments of Jammu and Kashmir is an unimaginative military response with the potential of wider political consequences. The credibility of the Government's claims to a strategic understanding of the situation cannot be improved by this measure, without a meaningful political content.

The challenge in Jammu and Kashmir will ultimately have to be met through Indian political initiatives. The international reality is that no major power is capable of or even interested in a particular outcome to the imbroglio. It would be presumptuous to believe that any major power would force an outcome on either India or Pakistan. They will do everything to ensure that the two new nuclear weapons states will not go to war. Short of a war that can involve nuclear risks, a continuing sub-optimal military conflict in Jammu and Kashmir is entirely an Indian challenge to meet. The way to meet that political challenge is not by repeated recourse to military measures or even by applying the SPA across the State. The SPA is a special tool to be employed selectively and for limited purpose. It should not be made a permanent measure applied over decades. The SPA cannot be an instrument of governance without the population concluding that the political leadership prefers to govern through the security forces. It is an indictment eminently avoidable by a democracy.

The Indian Government has recently stated that it is up to Pakistan to choose the kind of relationship it wants with India. This is an unexceptionable formulation. It is also, however, true that India needs to choose the kind of relationship it wishes to have with the people of Jammu and Kashmir. State-sponsored terrorism in the cloak of jihad, or camouflaged as a freedom struggle, requires a firm response. It requires that the militant is given no quarter, and those who use the gun against innocents receive the full measure of an armed response from the Indian state. This operational response against terrorism needs, however, to part of a larger political process. Military measures should supplement the political and not be a substitute. The politico-military mismatch in Jammu and Kashmir needs to be remedied speedily.

THE HINDU

17 AUG 2001

Centre is ready to put autonomy on the agenda, says Farooq

Violence rocks J&K, militants gun down five in Udhampur

Times News Network & Agencies
NEW DELHI: In a change of stand, the Centre has decided to hold a dialogue with the Jammu and Kashmir government on the issue of granting autonomy to the state, chief minister Farooq Abdullah said on Wednesday.

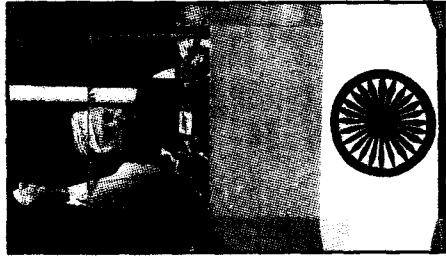
Mr Abdullah told a private TV channel in an interview in Srinagar that the Centre was considering the state's demand for autonomy and was willing to discuss it.

"The autonomy resolution passed by the assembly is under consideration and is going to be discussed on behalf of the (central) government with us and others," Mr Abdullah said. The change in the Centre's stand comes after Union home

minister L.K. Advani had said on the floor of parliament that the Centre was not willing to give any autonomy to the state but would consider giving "special powers" to it along with other states.

Although the chief minister refused to name who from the Centre would hold talks with the state government, the channel quoted political sources as saying that the parleys were to be held by the Centre's interlocutor on Kashmir, K.C. Pant.

The chief minister also set all speculation at rest and rejected the suggestion that a fresh autonomy proposal was being placed before the Centre. "The Centre is considering the same proposal that I had put before it," Mr Abdullah said.



Times News Network & Agencies
JAMMUSRINAGAR: Striking militants raided a remote village in Udhampur on Tuesday night, gunned down five members of the majority community and wounded a girl.

Two Muslim residents, who tried to remove the bullet-riddled bodies on Wednesday morning, were killed when the explosives wired to one of the bodies went off, official sources said.

They said militants descended on Thandi Behak meadow in Sahar village and sprayed bullets on the

villagers who had gone there a few days ago to celebrate the national flag, official sources said.

In a statement, the spokesman of the outfit claimed that two of its activists carried out a 'fidayeen' (suicide) attack and inflicted heavy casualties on the security forces. Security forces sealed the entire township to flush out the militants responsible for the attack.

In another incident, Anantnag deputy commissioner G.A. Peer had a narrow escape on Wednesday when an IED, planted by militants, went off soon after his motorcade passed through Mattan town, some 64 km from Srinagar, official sources said.

Militants kill 7 in Udhampur

By Our Special Correspondent

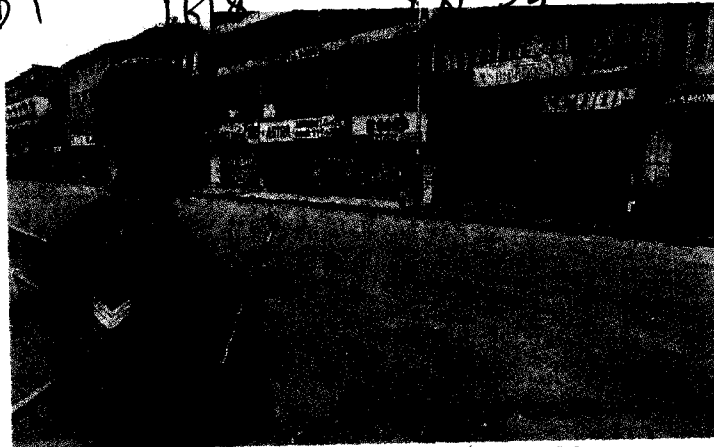
SRINAGAR, AUG. 15. Militants killed seven villagers in a remote village of Udhampur district on Tuesday night, even as Jammu and Kashmir was under a security blanket in view of the Independence Day celebrations.

A group of militants entered Angrala village, around 390 km. from Srinagar, late on Tuesday night and fired upon some villagers who were on their way to Sarh village after celebrating Janmash-tami. The Udhampur SP, Mr. Deepak Kumar, told *The Hindu* over phone that five of the dead were Hindus and three women.

Bodies booby-trapped?

When the bodies were being retrieved, a bomb, presumably wired to the bodies, went off and two persons were killed, Mr. Kumar said. Those dead and injured were Muslims who had assembled to remove the bodies.

A police party, led by the Reasi SP, Mr. Satish Khandare, has left for the village to take stock of the situation. Police sources said that security forces deployed in the area had started combing operations to nab the militants.



A jawan keeping vigil in a deserted street in Srinagar on Wednesday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

The Governor, Mr. G.C. Saxena, and the Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, expressed shock over the killings and blamed Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism in the State. The Hizb-ul Mujahideen chief commander, Abdul Majid Dar, also condemned the killings.

Eight militants killed

In other incidents elsewhere in the State, 13 persons, including eight militants, two civilians and three security personnel, were

killed and 30 injured. The day went off peacefully in Srinagar with a curfew-like situation prevailing in the city.

In Handwara township of north Kashmir, militants fired a rifle grenade towards a school where the Army had organised Independence Day celebrations. The explosion caused injuries to at least 21 people, including children. Police sources said four Army, three BSF and seven police personnel were also injured.

Pakistan uses Kashmiris for political survival: Farooq

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

THREE NEW MINISTERS IN J&K

JAMMU, Aug. 16. - The J&Kashmir chief minister has charged the Pakistani leaders of using blood of the Kashmiris for their political sustenance.

"They want to build castles on the graves of the Kashmiris," Dr Farooq Abdullah said.

While addressing the Independence Day celebration, he said that despite engineering mayhem, Pakistan could never change the LoC.

Urging people to fight terrorism unto the last, Dr Abdullah said: "The Kashmiris are Indians, and not Pakistanis, and have been at the receiving end of the Pak terrorism for the last 12 years.

"Whenever a Kashmiri gets Pak bullet, the blood spills for India. Dissect our hearts and you will find India inscribed on it."

Referring to the miseries of the Kashmiris, he said that hey had sprinkled acid on women for not using veil. In fact, under the camouflage of veil, militants want to further their dirty game plan to target innocent civilians.

In the name of so-called freedom, they are killing innocents, coercing people and newspapers to toe their line, and above all, defaming the fair name of Islam, he said.

"We don't want dismemberment of Pakistan, as one never nurtures ill-will against the neighbour," he said. It was in this backdrop that President Pervez Musharraf was invited for the summit, but this great

JAMMU, Aug. 16. - Three ministers of state have been inducted into the J&K council of ministers.

They are Mr Khalid Najib Suharwardhy, Syed Mushtaq Ahmed Shah Bukhari and Choudhry Mohammad Hussain. Mr Suharwardhy represents Doda constituency, Mr Bukhari, Surankote and Mr Hussain Darhal constituency in Jammu region.

Dr Farooq Abdullah has said he has expanded the ministry to give representation to unrepresented districts of Rajouri and Poonch. In view of ailing health of the minister for social welfare, Mr Bashir Ahmed Kitchloo, more representation has been given to Doda district.

With this fourth expansion of the ministry since it came to power in October, 1996, the number of ministers has risen to 26, including 14 Cabinet ministers along with the chief minister and 12 ministers of state.

While Mr Hussain served as a minister in the 80s, Mr Suharwardhy and Mr Bukhari are new entrants.

Floating restaurant on Dal Lake

JAMMU, Aug. 16. - Kongposh - the saffron flower - a floating restaurant, was launched on the Dal Lake yesterday evening.

The Governor, Mr Girish Chandra Saxena, and the chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, boarded the houseboat to formally launch it - first of its kind in the state.

Set up by the J&K Tourism Development Corporation, at a cost of Rs 47 lakhs, the mobile restaurant can accommodate 64 persons.

Stationed at Char Chinar, its special feature will be the Kashmiri cuisine. The floating boat is a step to promote tourism in the state by strengthening infrastructure. - SNS

opportunity fell to Pak stubbornness.

Pakistan, he said, did not respond to the confidence building measures announced by India that included opening of the Rawalpindi Road for the fear of getting exposed because the people living across would see progress achieved in this part

despite the terrorism. It will also help the people here because they will know the pitiable conditions in which "our brethren live across the LoC, be it in Hunza, Gilgit or other northern areas of PoK."

Ridiculing the terrorists' propaganda that there is no religious freedom, and mosques are

closed in Kashmir, he said: "We have greater freedom here than the people across the border."

Dr Abduallah came heavily on disruptive elements that tend to divide people on the regional and religious lines. The challenges posed by such elements have to be met unitedly as division among people will not only

impede development, but also weaken the nation.

The chief minister rejected the idea of division of J&K, and said that if they wanted separate land for the Hindus and the Buddhists, they should be prepared for separate states for the Jains, the Sikhs, the Christians etc. The country cannot

afford any more division on the basis of religion.

About restoration of autonomy to J&K, he allayed the fear that this demand would weaken the ties of the state with rest of the country. "We want India to be strong, as in its strength lays the strength of J&K."

Without naming any party, he

said that some leaders missed no opportunity to defame his government, and glorify elements inimical to peace. They forget that but for the situation created by the National Conference, they would not have been in a position to roam around in villages freely, and to criticise their opponents.

JAMMU & KASHMIR - A GORY DECADE

FROM 1990 TO JULY 2001

MILITANTS KILLED:	13,328
SURRENDERS:	3148
CIVILIANS KILLED:	9319
CIVILIANS INJURED:	13,368
CIVILIANS KILLED IN GRENADE ATTACKS & BLASTS:	1113
INJURED:	9454
GRENADE ATTACKS:	4727
EXPLOSIONS:	4541
CIVILIANS KILLED IN SECURITYMEN-ULTRAS ENCOUNTERS:	946
INJURED:	2893
ABDUCTIONS:	4124
CASUALTIES (POLICE & SECURITY FORCES):	3053

SEIZURES:

22406 rifles of AK Series 47/58/74, 3857 rockets, 697 rocket launchers and 2087 rocket boosters, 42658 grenades/hand-grenades, 474 anti-tank mines, 52 quintals of RDX



Children run past a giant Lashkar-e-Taiyaba banner in Lahore on Wednesday. The writing on the right, apparently addressed to Pakistan, reads: "Don't expose your weaknesses, don't beg for compromises, else in the end you will have to cry. - AP/PTI

Hurriyat leader held for anti-national speech

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Srinagar, Aug. 14: Within a few hours of her asking the people of Kashmir to hoist the Pakistan flag to celebrate the country's Independence Day on Tuesday, Fareeda Behanii, who heads a secessionist outfit, was arrested by the police from her Srinagar house.

The police said that a case of sedition and making other "objectionable anti-national utterances" was registered against the chairperson of the Kashmir Mass Movement, who was interviewed by the Pakistani official electronic media over telephone on Monday evening. Soon after, the interview, which also asked to observe India's Independence day as a "black day" was telecast, a police party went to her Natipora residence on the outskirts of Srinagar to arrest her, police sources said. She was later lodged at an all-women police station at nearby Rambagh, sources added. A Hurriyat Conference handout says that the police picked her up along with her son, Massarat Maqbool from their

Allochi Bagh house here. Ms Fareeda spent several years in Tihar jail on the charge of masterminding serial bomb blasts in Delhi. Soon after her release earlier this year, she was made the chairperson of the Kashmir Mass Movement, a Hurriyat Conference constituent. Recently she went to Pakistan, where she declared Kashmir the jugular vein of that country, at her public appearances.

The conglomerate of the Kashmiri secessionist parties also alleged that a large number of people have also been detained by the police, about three dozen of them at a security force camp set up within a school premise here.

The police confirmed the "preventive arrests" but did not reveal the exact number. Meanwhile, Pakistan flags appeared at some places across the Kashmir Valley early on Tuesday morning, including in a side street of Lal Chowk, the city centre, in the north western town of Baramulla and southern Pulwama, reports said. The police, however, shrugged these off as isolated incidents which had no credence.



TIGHT SECURITY: Border Security Force soldiers with a sniffer dog during a search operation in Srinagar on Tuesday. (Reuters)

Three new ministers in Farooq Cabinet

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Srinagar, Aug. 14: Three new ministers, two of them fresh faces, were inducted into the Farooq Abdullah ministry on Tuesday. Mr Khalid Najib Suharwardhy, Syed Mushtaq Ahmed Shah Bukhari and Choudhry Muhammad Husain were all made ministers of state by Dr Abdullah after they were administered oath of office and secrecy by governor Girish Chander Saxena. With this the number of ministers in the Abdullah ministry has risen to 26. These include 14 Cabinet ministers, including the chief minister, and 12 ministers of state. This is the fourth expansion in the Abdullah ministry that came into power in October 1996.

While Choudhry Muhammad Hussain has served the state as a minister in 1980s, Mr Suharwardhy and Mr Bukhari are the new entrants. Mr Suharwardhy from Doda constituency, Mr Bukhari, Surankote and Parthal constituency in Jammu region.

UP Special Task Force foils Ayodhya blast bid with Lashkar arrests

BY AMITA VERMA

Lucknow, Aug. 14: UP's Special Task Force has foiled the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba's plans to trigger explosions in Ayodhya and Lucknow on the Independence Day by arresting two Lashkar terrorists in a late night swoop in Lucknow's cantonment area. One more Lashkar terrorist

was gunned down in Ayodhya on Tuesday morning after information gathered during the interrogation of the arrested militants.

The two Lashkar militants were arrested late on Monday night from a petrol pump in Lucknow's cantonment area. Over 12 kg of RDX, enough to blow up an entire city, a Chinese Star pistol, 140 cartridges, five detonators, three bat-

teries and other ammunition were recovered from the possession of the two militants, who have been identified as Akaf Hussain and Salim Qamar. While Aliaf Hussain hails from Ambedkar Nagar district, Salim Qamar belongs to Azamgarh. Both were in Saudi Arabia when they came in contact with Lashkar activists and were persuaded to join the outfit.

J&K part of India: Dalai Lama

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

GANGTOK, Aug. 14. - The Dalai Lama has said that he has always accepted Kashmir as an integral part of India.

In a press statement by the Dalai Lama's office in Dharamsala, routed through the Tibetan welfare office here, he has regretted that in spite of the clarifications issued by his officer earlier regarding the comments he made at the Akhil Bharat Rachmatmak Samak conference in Chennai on 5 August, "there is a great deal of speculation from various quarters" about his stand on the status of Kashmir.

He further said that no invita-

tion has been extended to the representatives of the Hurriyat Conference.

"They indicated their interest to visit me at Dharamsala to explain their stand, and I responded in my usual way that they were welcome."

He appreciates the fact that the people of J&K elect their government through a well established democratic process, the Dalai Lama said.

"My main concern is putting an end to the killings... in J&K. I very strongly believe that the issue needs to be resolved through peaceful means, through discussion and dialogue. This I feel is of the utmost importance," he said.

"I have also never considered the issue of Tibet and Kashmir to be similar. I have stated this many times in the past both to Indian leaders as well as in my interviews."

"The legal accession of J&K to the Indian Union could not be (similar to) the forceful occupation of Tibet by the communist Chinese. I merely explained my middle-way of approach to the Tibetan issue as an example of a suitable method for solving such complicated issues, including Kashmir," the Dalai Lama said.

Referring to suggestions from certain quarters that he was "ungrateful to India", the Dalai Lama said: "I would like to

make it clear here that I have in fact never lost an opportunity to express our gratitude to the people and the government of India for their kindness to the Tibetan people.

The Dalai Lama said: "Whether it is about the strong democratic traditions rooted in this country, the importance of India in Asia as well as to the rest of the world, India's right to be a permanent member of the Security Council of the UN, or even India's right to be nuclear power, I have always stood up for India."

"My stand on these important issues during the past 42 years should be seen in its entirety," he said.



Dalai Lama

Forebodings about draconian Acts

IT is official now. With the extension of the Disturbed Areas Act and the Armed Forces Special Powers (J&K) Act, 1990 to the entire Jammu province, the Jammu and Kashmir government has admitted to security failures in the region and also the fact that militancy is no longer restricted to Kashmir Valley.

Not many people in Jammu are happy about the extension of these draconian Acts to the relatively peaceful region as it reminds them of the initial years of militancy when powers were misused by defence forces in Kashmir Valley.

This move to give more teeth to the security forces in Jammu has raised questions in the state's winter capital, also known as the City of Temples.

Will Jammu go the Kashmir way? Will the people here face alienation like the poor Kashmiri masses did in the Valley? Will this step help curb the ever-spreading arc of militancy to areas south of Peer Panjal?

And what about the suppressed anger, frustration, fear and suspicion one sees among the Kashmiris after almost a decade of "empowering" the forces?

It may be too early to respond to all these questions but the people of Jammu have reason to ponder over them. For, they do believe that this step is an indication of the state government's failure to stamp out militancy from Kashmir Valley and also from preventing it spreading to areas of Jammu.

Though Kashmir has virtually become synonymous with the 12-year history of armed insurgency, militancy could not put down strong roots in Jammu.

This is because the province is different from Kashmir

⁵⁻⁹ ^{15/8} ^{9-8 J&K}
The Disturbed Areas Act and the Armed Forces Special Powers (J&K) Act, 1990, failed to stamp out militancy in Kashmir Valley. With their extension to the whole of Jammu, the security forces have now been given more powers to use or misuse, writes KAVITA SURI. This will further alienate the masses who see the move as an admission of the government's failure to meet fully the enemy's challenges

Valley in terms of topography, the demographic pattern and other related factors. The situation in Jammu is not as sensitive as it was in the Valley where the militants enjoyed some popular support initially.

While Kashmir Valley remained engulfed in insurgency, the Jammu city and its suburbs had by and large remained free from such activity.

Predominantly a Hindu area, Jammu has always risen against terrorism in the past.

This is the reason that despite the undercurrents of tension and terrorist threats which sometimes loomed large over the peace-loving people of the region, militancy could only rear its head with a vengeance in the twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri followed by Doda.

Now barring Ladakh, the entire province is a disturbed area. Earlier, only a 20-km belt on the Line of Control in Poonch and Rajouri came under the purview of these Acts.

But now, the long-pending demand of the security forces operating in Jammu has been met. They have always been brooding that their counterparts in Kashmir Valley had been given special powers while their hands were tied. Armed with these special powers, they can now (mis)use it to any extent.

Besides conducting searches without the permission of the district magistrate or any warrant, they can make seizures, open fire, destroy any



The Kashmiris have suffered too much. Will Jammu be the last battlefield on all fronts?

shelter from where armed attacks are made or likely to be made and stop or pick up anybody on suspicion.

Ask anybody in Kashmir Valley about these dreaded Acts and their faces turn pale. The Kashmiris have suffered too much because of these "draconian" Acts.

As a result of the imposition of these powerful Acts in the Valley, 3,000 people have been missing over the past 11 years.

Once picked up by the forces for interrogation, they never returned home. And their near and dear ones are still

hoping against hope.

Even recently, they constituted the Missing Persons Relatives' Association in Kashmir, thanks to these Acts. Human rights activist Balraj Puri says, "This is simply a collapse of political and administrative affairs in the state," adding that just by giving more powers to somebody one cannot compensate for the lapses on these fronts.

"The vacuum created over the years by the failures of the Central and the state governments can never be filled by giving more powers

to the forces," says Mr Puri.

He has all along been warning that "Jammu will be the last battlefield on all fronts."

The extension of these special Acts to the entire province will not solve the problems.

The real test, he asserts, lies in maintaining India's secular traditions which one witnesses in abundance in Jammu where people from all religions live in harmony unlike Kashmir which is a Muslim-dominated area.

He also feels that the challenge before the govern-

ment would be to maintain Jammu's secular traditions. A majority of the people of Jammu feel that these Acts unless measures are taken to change the 'mindset' of the alienated sections of the people.

Today, more than the external challenges, the Kashmiris are suffering from alienation. This is posing many problems for the state.

The extension of these Acts to the districts of Doda, Udhampur, Kathua and Jammu is being seen as a failure on the part of Farooq Abdullah's government to control the situation.

"To escape both the Centre and the people's wrath, he has made this move," says Indu Jalali, a displaced Kashmiri Pandit management graduate.

Forced to flee the Valley with her parents after a perceived threat to their lives from pan-Islamic fundamentalists in the early 1990s, Indu is among those who believe that the chief minister will use these Acts to the hilt in the forthcoming Assembly election.

"Armed with these Acts, if he could not contain militancy in Kashmir Valley despite the fact that both were promulgated in 1990 itself, how can the head of the Unified Command now think of crushing militancy in Jammu," she asks.

Mr Puri says that even if elections are held in such an atmosphere, the people would not matter and anything

could be manipulated. And the voices that have grown louder in support of their demand for a separate statehood for Jammu, believe that this step is Dr Abdullah's trump card in view of his failure to provide security to the innocent civilians.

They, too, believe that the Acts can be misused by him during the election that he is planning to advance.

"Farooq is playing safe," says Panthers Party MLA Harsh Dev Singh, adding that it is unfortunate that Jammu has been brought under the purview of these Acts.

Law and order is not a problem here, he said, citing that just a few weeks ago, the chief minister himself had said that the law and order situation was perfectly normal.

The JJSF, a powerful students' organisation which supports the separate statehood demand for Jammu, also believes that it is one of the chief minister's ploys to save his government, under fire from Opposition parties and also the Union Minister of Civil Aviation Chaman Lal Gupta.

The Congress and many other parties in the state have once again raised the demand for dismissal of the National Conference government and imposition of President's rule.

Congress chief Mohammed Shafi Qureshi said the NC government was the root cause of the crisis in the state. It should be dismissed and President's rule imposed.

Political observers also feel that it is a clear admission of the fact that the government has been defeated and unable to fully meet the challenges posed by the enemy.

(The author is The Statesman's Jammu-based correspondent.)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 2001

A SIGN OF DESPERATION ^{NO-10}

IN ENLARGING THE coverage of the draconian Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act (1990) and declaring the entire State barring the Ladakh region as a 'disturbed area', the Centre has, in effect, virtually played into the hands of the jihadi groups, whose subversive campaign feeds on people's disaffection vis-a-vis the official establishment. After all, the very objective of the militants in picking on soft civilian targets is to heighten public pressure and force the Government on the backfoot, provoking it to embark upon potentially oppressive responses. This precisely is what the Vajpayee regime has done by investing the security forces with sweeping powers in the matter of conducting searches, making seizures and such other operations which they deem necessary for combating insurgency. For all the seeming reasonableness of the 'special law' in the context of the demonstrated 'striking power' of the externally-sustained militants, its negative impact at the ground level — in areas where it has already been in operation, namely Kashmir Valley and the districts of Rajouri and Poonch — has been such as to render its application counter-productive, what with the unbridled powers vested in the security forces tending to be used as an instrument of torture and an assault on human rights. This indeed has been the case with almost every legislation that gave special powers to law enforcing agencies, ostensibly to deal with extraordinary situations, and the infamous TADA Act is a classic example. That the Government would not be averse to examining the feasibility of a 'TADA-like' anti-terrorist law, as indicated by the Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, is yet another disturbing testimony to the sense of desperation in the ruling establishment.

The other components of the 'new plan of action', formulated against the immediate backdrop of escalation in militant attacks targeting civilians and unfolded by Mr. Advani in Parliament on Thursday, pertained more to the strategy and logistics of anti-insurgency operations, with spe-

cial reference to the Jammu region. Apart from the upgrading of village defence committees and beefing up of security and patrolling of public places like the Jammu railway station, there is going to be a new initiative by the Unified Headquarters for what has been described rather enigmatically as "fresh tactics and modified dynamic deployment (of security personnel)". Moreover, the plan speaks of special intelligence-driven operations by security forces. If this sounds rather strange — as one thought almost the entire range of operations is essentially driven by intelligence — the point about initiating action against the "overground supporters of terrorists" is disquieting, although not unusual, for the reason that it will lend itself easily to harassment of the innocent. The excessive reliance on deploying additional battalions and counter-insurgency units betrays a lack of strategic clarity in the sense that the other and more critical dimensions of the challenge of militancy encountered in Jammu and Kashmir have not been appropriately factored in, if at all.

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The much-hyped Jammu-specific strategy — the 'highpoint' of which is the extension of the unacceptably rigorous 1990 Act — and Mr. Advani's rhetorical claim of unqualified success for anti-insurgency operations elsewhere in the State may have served, at best, as a formal reaffirmation of the Government's 'resolve' to counter cross-border terrorism. But they do not answer the specifications of the 'confidence building measures' that the people of Jammu and Kashmir, who stand severely alienated, crave. If anything, the stress on militaristic counter-insurgency approaches in preference to — if not to the virtual exclusion of — political concerns that lie at the root of people's alienation is bound to send a wrong signal. In fact, there is the real risk of the people getting disaffected all the more, thanks to the excesses the security forces are likely to commit under the 'special powers' dispensation.

Ladakhis raise questions over accession

KAVITA SURI
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

LEH, Aug. 10. — After the "greater autonomy" issue, Jammu and Kashmir faces another controversy — the Instrument of Accession that Maharaja Hari Singh signed with New Delhi in October 1947.

The Ladakh Buddhist Association, set up in 1939, has hired some legal experts to determine whether Ladakh was included in the IoA.

"What we know is that the Maharaja had acceded the state of Jammu and Kashmir to the Indian Union. Nowhere was Ladakh mentioned. Perhaps, the accession was of Jammu and Kashmir and not Ladakh," said the LBA president,

Mr Tsering Samphel.

Before the accession, Hari Singh used the term "Jammu and Kashmir and Tibet High" in official documents to describe the entire state. Tibet High referred to Ladakh, Gilgit and surrounding areas.

"Since Tibet High was not mentioned in the IoA, how do we know whether we were included in the accession?" Mr Samphel said.

And if the lawyers "who are studying the historic document minutely" opine that the Ladakhis were left out, "we'll have to reframe our strategies to decide our future," he said.

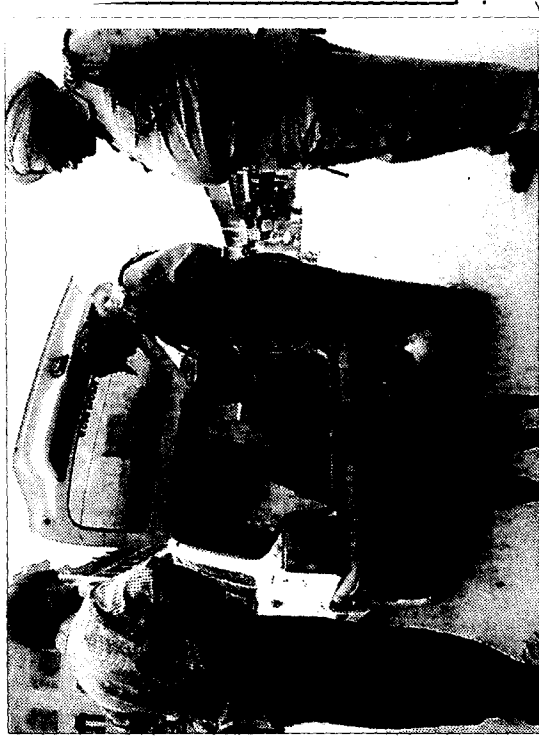
However, Prof Rekha Choudhary, head of Jammu University's political science department, termed Mr Samphel's ar-

guments as "stupid". "If the word 'Ladakh' was not included in the Instrument of Accession, it doesn't mean Ladakhis were left out."

She explained the state has two administrative regions — Jammu and Kashmir — and that Ladakh is part of Kashmir. Whatever the argument, the accession is final and irrevocable, she said.

She claimed that LBA members, who were "basically extremists", are making "useless claims" that wouldn't stand in the court.

A human right activist, Mr Balraj Puri, too dismissed the LBA's arguments, but admitted that Hari Singh used to refer to the Ladakh region as Tibet High.



BSF officers check a vehicle at Lal Chowk in Srinagar on Friday. — PTI

THE STATESMAN

11 AUG 2001

New anti-terrorist law likely

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Centre not against more autonomy for J&K: Advani

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 9. — The Centre could bring in a legislation to replace the erstwhile Terrorist And Disruptive Activities Act to tackle militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr LK Advani said in the Rajya Sabha today.

The Union home minister was replying to a discussion on killing of innocent civilians in Jammu recently. The Opposition walked out towards the end of his reply.

Mr Advani said there were some links between the spurt of violence in the region and deliberations of the Agra summit.

Never before had a Pakistan leader officially admitted to giving assistance to the militant groups in Kashmir, he said. General Pervez Musharraf had referred to India's support to Mukti Vahini in Bangladesh and rationalised the brutal killing of innocent men, women and children as a freedom struggle.

The Centre could also consider greater autonomy for J&K provided the state government dropped the "pre-1953" clause from its charter of demands.

Mr Advani said he had told Dr Farooq Abdullah that the Centre would cooperate with him in giving greater autonomy to certain areas, if his government dropped the pre-1953 clause from the demand.

He was replying to a specific question by the National Conference member, Mr Sharif Ud din Shiraq.

The militants, Mr Advani said, were carrying out these attacks to tire out the security forces and thereby blunt the present thrust and momentum of counter-terrorism operations in J&K.



Policemen try to put out flames during protests against recent killings by militants. In Jammu on Thursday. — AP/PTI

(The J&K Cabinet today passed a resolution declaring four districts of Jammu province as "disturbed" and sent it to the Governor for his approval," Dr Farooq Abdullah said, adds PTI from Srinagar)

The Centre yesterday declared Doda, Jammu, Udhampur and Khatua as disturbed areas as per the provisions of the Armed Forces (J&K) Special Powers Act, 1990. Mr Advani said he had wanted to declare Doda a disturbed area immediately after he assumed office in 1998. But the state chief minister had expressed his reservations.

The Centre could make declarations on its own but it did not want to go against the wishes of the state government, he said.

Seeking the support of members to restore peace in the region, Mr Advani said: "The Unified Headquarters has been directed to initiate fresh tactics and modified dynamic deployments and ensure that people in

ACID THROWN ON WOMEN

SRINAGAR, Aug. 9. — Lashkar-e-Taiyaba militants threw acid on two women for not wearing veil and putting make-up on their faces in Khanyal near Srinagar two days ago.

Gaziyla and Rubia, who are teachers in a HS School, were attacked while they were returning home around 8 p.m after an excursion. — PTI

affected areas, especially in Doda-Kishtwar, feel reassured and confident."

Special Intelligence driven security force operations will be considered in accordance with the ground situation, Mr Advani said. Measures will be taken to upgrade security arrangements at the Jammu Railway Station, Mr Advani said.

"We are fighting a proxy war of multiple dimensions unleashed by an inimical neighbouring country which has had no qualms in rationalising the brutal killing of innocent men, women and children as a freedom struggle." The Centre was

determined to thwart the nefarious designs of the terrorists and their mentors across the border, he said.

'Prof Gupta's statement unfortunate': The J&K government has reacted sharply to the Union minister of state for civil aviation, Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta's statement blaming the Unified Headquarters for the massacre in Atholi, a report from Jammu said.

The state home minister, Mr Mushtaq Ahmed Lone, has termed the statement "most unfortunate." This will demoralise the security forces who are fighting a proxy war in the state.

The security forces are deployed by the Core Group of the UHQ headed by the concerned Corps Commanders.

The process of deployment involves experience, knowledge of the terrains and great professionalism. To say that the UHQ is virtually inviting militants to strike in minority inhabited areas is preposterous, Mr Lone said.

Curfew lifted in Jammu: Curfew was lifted from Jammu city today. Night curfew will continue in Kishtwar and Baderwah towns. Police lathicharged and fired teargas shells at protesters who were pelting stones at them at City Chowk.

Foreign secys to meet: Indian and Pakistani foreign secretaries will meet in Colombo tomorrow, adds PTI. On the possible outcome of the meeting, Mrs Chokila Aiyer said: "Let us wait and see."

■ More reports on page 8

THE STATESMAN

10 AUG 2001

Pak avoids Kashmir at UN meet

By SHEIKH MANZOOR AHMED

Geneva, Aug. 8: For the first time in 13 years, Pakistan did not launch a scathing attack on India on the Kashmir issue at a meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights, reflecting change in its approach to seek resolution of the problem through bilateral dialogue.

Official representatives of Pakistan, who always utilised the forum to rake up Jammu and Kashmir issue in one or other form, this time chose to focus mainly on the Agra Summit.

The issue found mention only when Pakistan permanent repre-

9/18
sentative Munir Akram in his statement stated "that the dispute continues to block progress towards normalisation of relations between the two countries."

Contrary to this, Pakistan backed non-governmental organisations were more aggressive in their presentations against India, accusing the security forces of alleged human rights violation.

There was no occasion in the past when Pakistan missed any opportunity to criticise the Indian government on the Kashmir issue.

Every now and then the Indian and the Pakistani delegates used to clash on the issue. But the situation was different during the current

9/8/88
session. The Pakistani delegates also preferred not to take right of reply when many NGOs expressed concern over Islamabad's support to *Jehadi* groups to spread terrorism. While Mr Akram said the Agra Summit did not fail although it remained inconclusive, the NGOs vociferously criticised the Indian government. One of the representatives of the Pakistan occupied Kashmir based Hurriyat Conference Mir Tahir Masood urged the commission to direct the International Criminal Court to take "cognisance of the existing situation of armed conflict, where forces were trying to crush the peoples struggle." (UNI)

INDIAN EXPRESS

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FOUR DISTRICTS WILL BE DECLARED DISTURBED: FAROOQ

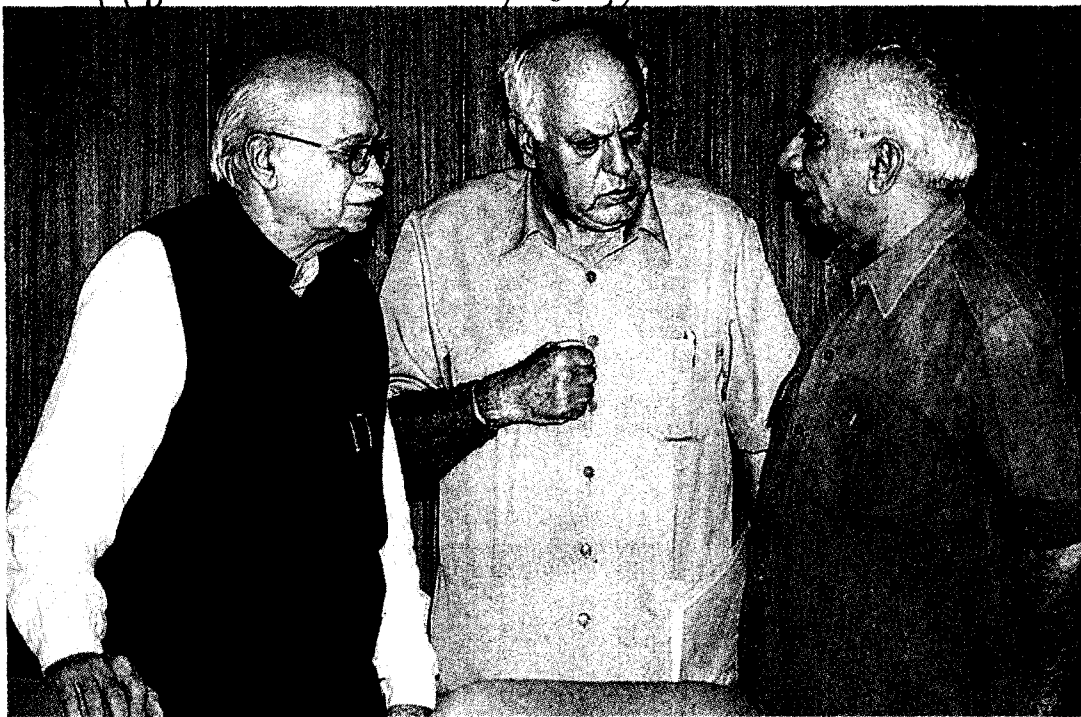
Centre to announce CBMs for J&K

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, AUG. 8. The Centre today decided to put in place a new set of measures which would build confidence among the citizens in Jammu and Kashmir, especially in the wake of a series of attacks by jihadi groups against the civilian population. The exact nature of these measures is likely to be announced in the Lok Sabha tomorrow by the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani. But initial indications are that contrary to expectations that the high-level meeting convened here today would produce a definite shift in the Government's strategy vis-a-vis the militancy, the conclave failed to produce any qualitatively different decision.

The meeting was presided over by Mr. Advani. The Defence Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, the Railway Minister, Mr. Nitish Kumar, the Jammu and Kashmir Governor, Mr. G. C. Saxena, the J&K Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr. I. D. Swami, and senior officials such as the Union Home Secretary, the Defence Secretary, the Intelligence Bureau Director, and the Director-General of Military Operations participated.

The meeting discussed a number of suggestions — whether more forces would be needed or whether a redeployment of the current security forces would do; whether the arms confiscated from the militants could be made available to police; how to strengthen the Village Defence Councils and whether arms such as self-loading rifles could be provided to these village-level committees; how to provide extra security for



The Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, the Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, and the Defence Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, at a meeting to discuss the J&K issue in New Delhi on Wednesday. — Photo: R.V. Moorthy.

the railway stations; whether floodlights were needed in key places, etc. Dr. Abdullah expressed a desire to declare a number of districts as "disturbed" under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (which empowers the security forces to operate more freely, without procedural constraints). The Chief Minister was, however, informed that it was a decision for the State Government to take, and that the Governor was the competent authority to do so. Dr. Abdullah, who was under the impression that he needed the

Centre's consent, had to be corrected by Mr. Saxena that he (the Governor), indeed, had the power to make the declaration of any part of the State being "disturbed".

After the meeting, the Chief Minister said the Jammu, Doda, Udhampur and Kathua districts would be declared as "disturbed".

On his part, Mr. Jaswant Singh, who kept his counsel for most of the time, is believed to have assured the meeting the cooperation of the armed forces. With an

exaggerated show of deference, he said the Chief Minister simply had to indicate his preference for a redeployment of forces and the "orders" would be issued.

The review meeting took place in the context of the post-Agra spurt in militant activities. Even though the security forces have been going after the militants, the apparent decision of the jihadi groups to target civilians has changed the mood. With each massacre of civilians by the jihadis, the Vajpayee Government has come under tremendous pressure

from within the Sangh Parivar, the BJP as well as the from the Opposition to "do something".

The meeting was primarily seen as the Home Minister's individual enterprise rather than a collective initiative of the Government. The Prime Minister's National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, was conspicuous by his absence. Neither Mr. K. C. Pant, the Centre's designated interlocutor on Kashmir nor the Chief of the Army Staff put in an appearance. The very nature of the meeting indicated that only cosmetic changes could be decided upon.

Curfew extended to Udhampur

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, AUG. 8. As the entire Jammu region continued to be tense in the wake of yesterday's militant attack on the Jammu railway station, authorities today extended the indefinite curfew proclaimed in Jammu to Udhampur. The Army was deployed in the minority areas and, in Rajouri, police opened fire to disperse a mob protesting the militant incident. In Doda and Bhandarwah, curfew was reimposed.

Though the situation in Jammu is under control, there is palpable tension and the Army has been pressed into service to prevent any backlash in the Muslim-majority areas of Talab Khatikan and Gujjar Nagar.

In Udhampur town, a procession was taken out in the morning but the authorities immediately imposed an indefinite curfew. The situation took a violent turn in the Rajouri district headquarters where people from the minority community took to the streets and began attacking the areas of the majority community. Police stopped them, yet the mob damaged the office of the tehsildar. After resorting to lathicharge and bursting teargas shells, police opened fire to disperse the mob.

Toll is 11

With another wounded passenger dying of injuries in hospital today, the toll in the railway station shootout has gone up to 11. The condition of at least nine injured is said to be critical. The deceased include four security personnel, three men and two women. Train services have resumed and the security arrangements have been further tightened in and around the station. Mr. I. D. Swami, Union Minister, arrived in Jammu to take stock of the situation.

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Advani must go, says Congress

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, AUG. 8. The sudden spurt in terrorist attacks, particularly the massacre at the Jammu railway station, found its echo in Parliament today as the angry Opposition went for the Government's jugular.

The killings were very much on everybody's mind as the two Houses met this morning. The Government had a hard time trying to pacify the agitated members. Significantly, unlike in the past, the Opposition had worked out its strategy — reportedly finalised at an early morning meeting between the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, and the CPI(M) leader, Mr. Somnath Chatterjee.

In the Lok Sabha, almost the entire Opposition joined hands to put the Government on the mat and later walked out protesting against the handling of the situation. While in the Rajya Sabha, the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, had to bear the brunt of the Opposition attack accusing him and his Ministry of having failed to protect the lives of innocent people in J&K.

The Congress upped the ante outside the House as well by demanding Mr. Advani's resignation. "The Home Minister should put in

his papers as not only has he repeatedly failed in his job but has also been an administrative disaster," said the Congress spokesperson, Mr. Jaipal Reddy. The party maintained that it had been forced to ask for the Minister's head after observing great restraint as the repeated massacres in J&K had exposed Mr. Advani's "chronic incapacity as an administrator".

Raising the issue in the Lok Sabha, Mr. Jaipal Reddy said the Government had been forewarned about the likely spurt in terrorist activities after the Agra summit yet it had done little in this regard. He said the killings at the Jammu railway station was "outrageous and obnoxious and the country could not remain a mute spectator". Accusing the Government of lowering its guard Mr. Reddy said, "no government in the history of the nation has failed so miserably in maintaining law and order".

Soon, almost the entire Opposition was on its feet as the members took the Government to task. Mr. Somnath Chatterjee said the Government had totally failed and was speaking in different voices. He referred, in particular, to the reported statement of Mr. Chaman Lal Gupta, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, blaming Dr. Farooq Abdullah for the killings. An embarrassed Mr. Advani later clarified that

those were not the Government's views and praised the J&K Chief Minister for his role in fighting terrorism.

Mr. Advani sought to calm down the members saying he shared their sense of anguish and pain. "This mood reflects the pain and agony of the country," he said. He informed the House that he had convened a high-level meeting of the Chief Minister, the Governor, heads of paramilitary and all those involved with security responsibilities in the State to evolve a comprehensive strategy. He promised to come out with a detailed statement during a discussion on the issue tomorrow.

Even in the Rajya Sabha the Opposition joined forces to take the Government to task. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee (Congress), said despite warnings the Government had done precious little. He said the Home Minister had promised strong action after the Doda killings but what followed was 'extra killings' and the country could not become immune to such killings. He was supported by Mr. Nilotpal Basu, CPI(M), who criticised the Government for its failure to come out with a statement after his visit to the Kishtwar region where killings had taken place earlier.

Centre may have to push Doda plan

H BULA DEVI
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug 7. - The Centre may need to push its way to make the Jammu and Kashmir government agree to revive its earlier proposal for setting up a cantonment in Doda district of Kishtwar region.

Fifteen villagers were mercilessly killed by mercenaries in a Doda village on the intervening night of 3-4 August. It is quite likely that more such killings of innocent people will take place in the future unless measures are taken to choke the infiltration routes.

Mr LK Advani has called a high-level meeting tomorrow to be by the external affairs and defence minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, and the J&K chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah. The minister of State for home, Mr ID Swami, who visited the massacre area will submit his report of the situation there.

The terrain is such that it is said to be the easiest route for ultras to infiltrate. The mercenaries generally infiltrate through the Poonch-Rajouri sector; the route becomes active specially in winter.

As an easy access, the mercenaries after infiltrating through the Poonch-Rajouri sector, walk through Doda. The only way to keep Doda villagers, where either the Hindu population is in a majority or in an equal number, silent about the mercenaries' activities is to terrorise them.

Kashmiri Hindus have fled the valley; now, maybe the Hindu population of Doda will go away now.

At least, this is how senior officials interpret the situation: the mercenaries want to terrorise Hindus of Doda so that they too migrate.

No amount of redeployment of troops as a temporary measure can help redeem the situation.

There is a school of thought that the Centre should pursue and revive its earlier proposal of setting up a cantonment in Doda. The proposal was mooted about a decade back.

It never got implemented because of the state government's reluctance.

A reason for the state government's reluctance is said to be the unwillingness to part with a huge chunk of land that it will have to in case it agrees to a cantonment.

As troop movement in the area is a tedious job, there is also a line of thinking that the unified command could perhaps give more focus to the troops' mobility in the region, instead of redeploying some more forces.

The Doda terrain is so vast that the only way to intercept infiltration is to have helicopters to move the troops from one corner to another. But for this, steps have to be taken so that helicopters remain at the troops' disposal. Construction of border roads can also be a way to increase the mobility of troops.

THE STATESMAN

8 AUG 1952

■ Militants fire at Army jawans and civilians ■ More strikes feared before Independence Day

10 killed in Jammu station attack

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Aug. 7. - At least 10 people were killed and over 50 injured when Pakistan-backed militants fired indiscriminately in Jammu railway station around 8.15 tonight. Unconfirmed reports said the death toll could be higher.

The incident occurred when three trains - the Shalimar Express, Summer Special and Jhelum Express - were to leave the station.

Eyewitnesses said three militants in Army combat uniform appeared from nowhere on platform number 1 and fired from their AK-56 rifles on Army jawans and civilians.

"I saw bodies fall on the ground," said one survivor, adding that the militants got down from the incoming Malwa

Express which was slowing down on the platform and fired for 5-10 minutes. They also used hand grenades. Four of these were seized.

The SSP of the control room in Jammu, Mr Subhash Raina, said three militants fired on the Army jawans and civilians. The jawans and policemen present retaliated, killing one Nisaar Ahmed, son of Abdul Ganai of Acchabal, Kashmir. One militant received bullet injuries on his leg but managed to flee with his accomplice. Mr Raina, however, said the death toll was eight.

The SSP said there was much confusion and the number of casualties couldn't be ascertained correctly.

However, seven bodies were brought to the Government Medical College, Jammu, in the

THREE LASHKAR MILITANTS SHOT

JAMMU, Aug. 7. - The security forces today claimed killing three Pakistani militants, who were behind the Atholi massacre, in two gunbattles today.

An Army spokesman said the militants behind Friday night's massacre had split into small groups and escaped to the hinterlands. Security forces killed one of them (Abu Ghulam, Lashkar-e-Taiyaba's district commander) in an encounter in Atholi forests. Two other Lashkar militants were killed in the forests south of Thatri, near Atholi.

The IGP, Jammu, said the forces came across a militant hideout where Ghulam had taken shelter. Asked to surrender, the militant fired. He was shot in retaliatory firing. - SNS

■ Details on page 8

presence of this correspondent late tonight. One jawan's body was taken to the military hospital. Eighteen injured people were admitted to GMC Hospital. A huge crowd which had gathered at the hospital shouted slogans against the

state government for failing to protect civilians. The administration admitted some of the injured in other hospitals of the city, including the KHN Charitable Hospital, to escape the wrath of the people.

Farooq blames Pak: Mr

Farooq Abdullah tonight blamed Pakistan for the sudden spurt in militancy in the state, adds PTI from Srinagar.

"Militants having their base in Pakistan are trying to wreak havoc in Jammu and Kashmir by shedding the blood of innocent people," the J&K chief minister said while reacting to the attack.

He said the militants, who claim to be followers of Islam, should know that this religion preaches only love, not hatred.

The chief minister dared the militants to try such things against security forces.

"The cowards will never do such things, because Pakistan has only taught them to clean their guns on innocent civilians," he said, adding that he would visit Jammu tomorrow.

"I will call a meeting of officials to review the law and

order situation," he said. Pakistan-sponsored terrorist attacks in J&K are anticipated at least till Independence Day, officials said, according to a report from New Delhi.

Mr LK Advani has summoned a meeting with Mr Jaswant Singh and Mr Abdullah to review the situation after tonight's incident.

The attack is being seen as a reflection of Pakistan's frustration for having returned empty handed from Agra.

"Can you think of any softer target than this? They (terrorists) are killing innocents indiscriminately. Only a couple of days back, 15 people were killed in Doda," an official said.

India has been carefully

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JAMMU

(Continued from page 1)

reading the statements that have been emanating from Pakistan which went on a propaganda spree against India before the Agra summit. There have even been reports that violence by *jehadis* has "weakened" India and that the action of *jehadis* "forced" India to invite Gen. Pervez Musharraf to the negotiating table.

The reports even said that the Army was tired of fighting the *jehadis* in J&K.

Rail traffic restored: Rail traffic to Jammu station was restored soon after the incident after a disruption of 20 minutes, a Northern Railway spokesman said, adds PTI from Delhi.

The Shalimar Express left at its scheduled time of 8.50 p.m.

An inquiry booth has been set up at Ferozepur and its phone numbers are 01632-44327 and 01632-47491. A booth has also been set up in Jammu and its telephone number is 0191-474757.

The NR spokesman said a team of Railway officials, would leave for Jammu soon to oversee relief operations.

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Jammu remains shut to protest Doda killing

Few Muslim shops attacked, Central team flies in for assessment

BY YUSUF JAMEEL

Srinagar, Aug. 6: Jammu and its neighbouring townships observed a complete shutdown on Monday in protest against the killing of Hindu villagers in a series of attacks by unidentified gunmen in the mountainous Doda district last week.

In the latest massacre, as many as 13 nomadic cattle-grazers were shot dead along the Shrotidhar pasture on Friday night. Eight people had been gunned down in the region last month. Shops and other businesses in Jammu, the winter capital of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the garrison town of Udhampur, Doda, Ranbirsingh Pora, Rajouri and Kathua remained closed for the day. Transport services stayed off the road as well. However, private vehicles did ply in most areas. At a couple of places in the city of Jammu, including New Plot, City Chowk and Kachi Chawni, agitated crowds took to

the streets and burnt used car tyres to vent their anger. Kishtwar and neighbouring Bhaderwah townships continued to reel under curfew for the third consecutive day on Monday. Tension mounted at both these places, which have an almost equal Hindu-Muslim population, following the massacre at Shrotidhar. In Kishtwar and Atholi, the closest to Shrotidhar, some Muslim shops and houses were attacked by mobs before the imposition of security restrictions that heightened the tension.

The call for the Jammu bandh had been issued by the BJP. Several regional outfits had endorsed it, accusing the security forces and the administration of failure in protecting the life and property of the minority community. The seven-member group of BJP legislators threatened to resign en masse unless the entire Doda district and Poonch and Rajouri, the twin districts bordering Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, were declared

disturbed areas. Meanwhile, Union minister of state for home I.D. Swami, accompanied by special secretary, home (Jammu and Kashmir affairs), Ashok Bhandari, flew in to Kishtwar and Atholi for an on-the-spot assessment of the situation in the hills where the gunmen have struck with complete impunity over the past few weeks, targeting mainly members of the minority Hindu community. At both these places the people were angry over the "apathy" of the authorities towards the members of the minority community. They were also agitated over the fact that home minister L.K. Advani chose not to visit them and confronted Mr Swarni on this and other issues.

The authorities have blamed the massacres on what they call are foreign mercenaries, belonging to Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and other militant outfits, and their Kashmiri corroborators. But these outfits have strongly denied their involvement and in turn accused the

Indian security and intelligence agencies of engineering the bloodshed "to defame our struggle for freedom and Islamic salvation." The two-member team reviewed the security situation with senior state and security officials at the Jammu airport. The team will submit a report to Mr Advani on its return to New Delhi, official sources said. It was Mr Swami's second visit to the region in less than 10 days. During his earlier visit to Kishtwar, soon after eight Hindus were killed by gunmen at three different places in the area, he had ordered stricter measures to prevent a reoccurrence of such bloody incidents. But then came the massacre of 13 people on Friday night, causing embarrassment to the Centre as well as the state government.

The incidents, their aftermath and the overall security situation will be discussed at a specially convened meeting by the Union home minister in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Deal firmly with divisive forces: Sonia

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, AUG. 5. The killing of 15 Hindus of Shrunthi Dhar village in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir by militants is being seen by political parties as an attempt to give a communal colour to the problems in the State as also to trigger an exodus of Hindus from Doda.

Expressing outrage, the Congress president, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, has called upon the Central and State Governments to "demonstrate their commitment, resolve, determination and capacity to combat the nefarious designs of those forces whose aim is to destroy the secular heritage and pluralistic ethos of Jammu and Kashmir." The country expected "concrete steps and initiatives by

the Government to put an end to these repeated assaults on human lives," she said.

The massacre has also led to demands that the State be put under President's rule. This has come not only from the Shiv Sena, but also from the Bharatiya Janata Party's Jammu unit which has found fault with the Farooq Abdullah Government.

The BJP preferred to see the massacre as a proof of "growing frustration" of terrorists. The party general secretary, Mr. Narendra Modi, said, "they have been unsuccessful on all fronts. They neither have the courage to come to the negotiating table, nor are they able to deal with the security forces. By attacking soft targets the terrorists want to create fear

and panic and increase social tensions."

The CPI general secretary, Mr. A.B. Bardhan, described the killing as gruesome "carried out in a planned manner" to "deliberately give a communal colour" to the problem in Jammu and Kashmir. Referring to the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf's description of violence in Kashmir as part of the freedom struggle of Kashmiris, he said: "it was time Pakistan opened its eyes to the grim reality of the senseless violence which cannot be called freedom struggle." He regretted that the Government had "no idea how to proceed with the negotiations" (with Pakistan), "nor had it a plan to deal effectively with militancy and terrorism."

The CPI(M) politburo said:

"this is the second attack in the last fortnight in the same area. It is strange that following the first incident proper security arrangements have not been made. Reports about the latest incident suggest that even the information about the massacre had to be conveyed to the authorities by one of the survivors."

The Janata Dal (United) spokesperson, Mr. Mohan Prakash, called for "effective steps by the Government."

The president of the Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind, Maulana Asad Madani, said the killing was an un-Islamic act of cowardice which had "nothing to do 'jihad' or any other Islamic practice." Those who carried out the massacre were plain criminals and should be dealt with as such.

THE HINDU

- 6 AUG 2001

'WHAT IS GOING ON IN KASHMIR IS TERRORISM'

Peace process will continue, says Vajpayee

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, AUG. 5. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today assured a group of 300 Muslim clergy, academics, lawyers and others that the peace process initiated by him "would continue." He asked them to create public opinion that what was going on in Kashmir was not "jihad" but gross acts of terrorism in which hundreds of innocent lives were being lost.

Mr. Vajpayee is understood to have said that the SAARC meeting in Colombo would offer an opportunity to Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan to meet on the sidelines. He said that despite all odds, efforts to establish peace would continue as the peoples of the two countries wanted peace.

The group, led by two Ministers, Mr. Shah Nawaz Husain and Mr. Omar Abdullah, had gone to the Prime Minister's residence to congratulate him on the steps taken by him towards establishing peace in the sub-continent.

Mr. Vajpayee said that even as

External Affairs Minister in 1977, he had tried to establish friendly ties with Pakistan. He had picked up the threads again when he became Prime Minister and the Lahore Declaration was the result. At Lahore, Pakistan had condemned terrorism in all its manifestations, but unfortunately at Agra — the invitation for the summit had been extended despite Kargil — the Pakistan President, General Pervez Musharraf, refused to acknowledge terrorist activities in Kashmir. "By no stretch of imagination can the violence being witnessed against innocent people in Kashmir be described as freedom struggle," he is reported to have told them.

Mr. Abdullah is understood to have said that while the Jammu and Kashmir Government has been fighting militants and creating public opinion against terrorists posing as "jehadis", a similar attempt should be made throughout the country. Muslim intellectuals, particularly, can help to create the understanding that what is happening in Kash-

mir is no freedom struggle or "jihad" but the brutal murder of innocent people. The issue of doubts being raised about activities in "madrasas" also came up. Mr. Vajpayee noted that Muslims should not pay heed to rumours and there was no question of generally blaming "madrasas" for harbouring or encouraging terrorist elements.

We'll crush it with heavy hand: Advani

ALIGARH, AUG. 5. In a blunt message to Pakistan, the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, today said it would not tolerate cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and would crush it with a heavy hand.

Describing terrorism in the State as the "biggest problem facing the Vajpayee Government", Mr. Advani said here that killing of innocent people could never be termed as "freedom struggle" as has been done by "the leader of the neighbouring country".

Condemning the killings in Doda in the last few days, Mr. Advani said "which Government will tolerate it? Which nation will tolerate it?"

"If you have to fight freedom struggle, fight it with security forces. Killing innocent people after kidnapping them amounts to spreading terror only," he said addressing a gathering after unveiling statue of freedom fighter, Mohan Lal Gautam, here. "If somebody thinks like that, it should be clear to him that it will be crushed".

On the Agra summit, Mr. Advani said the main reason for non-agreement between India and Pakistan was Gen. Musharraf's public statement on television describing cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir as "freedom struggle". "At that time, it was clear that there could be no agreement in Agra".

'Dawood back in Pak.'

The underworld don, Dawood Ibrahim, prime accused in the 1993 Bombay blasts case, had left Pakistan during Gen. Musharraf's visit to India last month and returned soon thereafter.

Mr. Advani said when he met the Pakistani military ruler, he had demanded that the underworld don, who was living in Pakistan, be handed over to India. Gen. Musharraf had denied that Dawood was in Pakistan, he recalled, and said, "we have information that Dawood left Pakistan on July 12 and returned on July 19".

Mr. Advani said he told Gen. Musharraf that India wanted an extradition treaty with Pakistan as it would be beneficial. "He said why not, why not," the Home Minister said. — PTI

Doda victims cremated amid tension

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, AUG. 5. The indefinite curfew, imposed in Kishtwar town of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, was today extended to Baderwah township as a precautionary measure. The bodies of all the 15 persons gunned down by militants in Ludheer village of Doda district on Friday night were cremated amid tension today.

Official sources in Doda told *The Hindu* over phone that curfew was imposed in Baderwah, "to prevent any communal backlash." The situation in the district though tense was well under control, they added. The families of the victims initially refused to cremate the bodies demanding that the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, attend the

funeral. However, the district administration prevailed and the cremation took place amid tension. Angry mourners raised slogans against the State Government, attacking it for failing to protect the citizens. Last night, some youth pelted stones on the shops of the majority community in Atholi. The Governor, Mr. G. C. Saxena, and the Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta, visited the affected area yesterday.

Meanwhile, the State police has decided to recruit 750 special police officers to strengthen security in vulnerable places. The Director-General of Police, Mr. A. K. Suri, said re-deployment of security forces, as ordered by the Governor, would be done in a phased manner to ensure the security of the people.

THE HINDU

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Pak. condemns killings

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, AUG. 4. Islamabad and the Pakistan-based militant outfits have denied their involvement in the massacre of the Hindus in Kishtwar and alleged that the killings have been carried out by the "Indian agencies" to defame the militants. A press statement from the Pakistan Foreign Office said today the Government of Pakistan condemned all such acts of terrorism. It added that the latest incident appeared to be aimed at "discrediting the Kashmiri freedom movement."

The Hizb-ul-Mujahideen chief, Syed Salahuddin, said in a press statement that "Indian agents" were behind the killings, carried out to divert international attention from police firing and custodial deaths in the State.

"The motive is to divert attention from the custodial killings and other deaths occurring ceaselessly in the Valley. I want to draw the attention of the world to the Chattisinghpura massacre and other such killings... We do not kill innocent civilians. Our war is against the Indian forces and it will continue as long as they do not quit the soil of Kashmir." "Secondly, India is out to give a communal colour to our liberation struggle, because it has failed to suppress the will of the Kashmiris for freedom despite use of brute force," Salahuddin said.

"They (Indians) are disappointed after their failure to rein in the activities of the mujahideen. And the killings of innocent civilians is the outcome of that frustration."

In its reaction, the Lashkar-e-Taiba also condemned the massacre and dismissed the allegation that the outfit was behind it. "Our religion does not permit killing of civilians whether they are Christians, Hindus, Sikhs or from any other religion. It is an act of Indian forces to defame the freedom fighters in Kashmir," the Lashkar spokesman, Mr. Abu Osama, said.

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IT IS LASHKAR'S HANDIWORK, SAYS J&K GOVT.

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15 Hindus killed in Doda

578

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, AUG. 4. In a shocking incident, 15 Hindus were massacred by a group of unidentified gunmen in a remote village of Doda district in Jammu and Kashmir on Friday night. Four persons were injured and four others escaped unhurt in the suspected militant attack.

While the State Government has blamed the Pakistan-based outfit, Lashkar-e-Taiba, for the killings, the LeT denied the charge and demanded an impartial probe into the incident.

Reports said a group of about 12 armed gunmen descended on village Ludheer (Padder) in Kishtwar tehsil and kidnapped 23 villagers at gun-point. They were taken to the Sharotidhar meadows nearby, lined up and shot. Fifteen of them died on the spot.

The J&K Minister of State for Home and Law, Mr. Mushtaq Lone, said the security forces had launched a manhunt to nab the militants.

Sources told *The Hindu* that the incident was reported by the village *numberdar*, after which a police party rushed to the spot and removed the injured to hospital. While two of the injured, Mr. Chaplot Singh and Mr. Diler Raj, were airlifted to the Jammu Medical College Hospital, Mr. Mahinder Singh and Mr. Mahinder Lal are in a local hospital.



A villager who was among the four injured in Doda being treated at a hospital in Jammu on Saturday. He was one of the 23 villagers who were abducted by militants. — AP

The deceased, identified so far, are Panna Lal, Balwant Singh, Jyoti Ram, Desh Raj, Surinder Singh, Des Raj, Puran Lal, Bal Krishan, Madan Lal, Ram Nath and Mool Raj. Three brothers, Chanchal Singh, Gouri Lal and Raj Nath were also among the dead.

Unofficial reports said that curfew had been imposed in Kishtwar town but the authorities maintained that only "strict restrictions" had been imposed. The Governor, Mr. G. C. Saxena, the Union Minister of

State for Civil Aviation, Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta, and the IGP, Jammu, Mr. R. V. Raju, visited the area. Mr. Saxena condemned the incident. He assured the people that security would be tightened and village defence committees strengthened.

'Barbaric' says Farooq

The J&K Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, condemning the "barbaric incident," said a magisterial inquiry had been ordered and security lapses, if any, would

be looked into. The militants were picking on soft targets at the behest of their "mentors across the border," he said.

While the Government said the LeT and "its mercenaries gunned down the innocent villagers," the outfit spokesman, Mr. Abu Osama, denied the involvement of his men. "We do not believe in killing innocent people whatever faith or ideology they belong to" he told *The Hindu* over phone.

The All-Party Hurriyat Conference chairman, Prof. Abdul Gani Bhat, expressed profound grief over the incident and demanded an impartial probe.

"We cannot remain silent over this incident and it should be probed by any impartial agency," he said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front spokesman, Mr. Tahir Ahmed Mir, also condemned the killing and said his party was ready to cooperate with any impartial inquiry.

Mirwaiz, Lone condemn killings

In Chennai, the former Hurriyat chairman, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, and the senior leader, Prof. Abdul Gani Lone, condemned the killings. The Mirwaiz said "it is a sad incident and condemnable." The two leaders are in the city on a two-day trip to attend a seminar on South Asia peace.

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THE HINDU

Meeting next week to review J&K situation

By Harish Khare

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NEW DELHI, AUG. 4. The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr. I.D. Swamy, and the Special Secretary in the Ministry, Mr. Ashok Bhandari, will leave for Jammu tomorrow, weather permitting. The two are to get a first-hand account of the killing of 15 Hindus in the Kishtwar region of Doda district. The Jammu and Kashmir Governor and the Director-General of Police have already visited the massacre site and conveyed their preliminary impressions to the Centre.

Reacting to the massacre, the Home Minister, Mr. Advani, who is away in Mumbai, has announced that he would be calling a meeting on Wednesday to take stock of the situation in the State. The Defence Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, would also attend the meeting.

Apart from the dismay at the loss of human life, officials here are not surprised that the militants should have kidnapped and then killed as many as 15 Hindus yesterday in the Kishtwar region of Doda district. Nor are they prepared to say that the Kishtwar killing would be the last of such incidents.

The latest violence is seen as part of the rejoined standoff between the militants and the security forces ever since the Centre called off its "unilateral ceasefire" in the last week of May. Once the ceasefire was declared over, the security agencies stepped up their operations against the militants; the idea was to send out a message to Pakistan that India was not coming to the negotiation table at Agra from a position of weakness.

In June and July the security forces claim to have

killed more than 210 terrorists; the figure for July — 250, including 150 in the Valley, — is cited as the highest-ever for a month.

Consequently, various jihadi groups found themselves under pressure from the security forces, and were constrained to retaliate. After Agra, there was no need for restraint. Hence, the series of attacks on the minorities.

The security officials see a shrewd thinking behind the killing, especially of the minorities. The idea, according to them, seems to be that the Centre should be forced either to beef up its military presence by sending in more troops and to risk, in the process, adverse international attention; or, to redeploy the existing forces and thereby dilute the existing concentration from the Valley where the militants have been effectively checkmated; or, to instigate the exodus of Hindus from Doda district.

These developments "on the ground" are seen as part of Pakistan's preparation for the next round of the Vajpayee-Musharraf interaction, tentatively scheduled for September in New York. The renewed violence is being seen as Pakistan's way of enhancing its bargaining position at the negotiating table.

However, the officials said that the 'jihadi' groups could be expected to attack the minorities in vulnerable areas. The ISI and other patrons of these groups, according to the official thinking, want to tilt the scales of debate within Kashmir in favour of the Jamat-e-Islami and its kind. A section of the separatist leadership feels that the people of Kashmir are suffering from a violence fatigue and would not be averse to any kind of honourable "settlement"; the 'jihadis' want to use violence to discredit this moderate leadership and its views.

No fresh talks with Hurriyat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & Agencies

NEW DELHI, Aug. 3. - The Centre today ruled out a fresh offer of talks to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, but said doors were open for the conglomerate to respond and initiate a dialogue process.

"No, we are not going to issue a fresh invitation to the Hurriyat Conference as they are yet to respond to our earlier offer," Mr KC Pant told reporters here.

However, he said the Centre would try to pick up the threads again.

Mr Pant's remark comes following a statement by three Hurriyat leaders that they were ready to consider on merit any fresh proposal for talks from the Centre.

Earlier, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Jamaat-e-Islami separatist leader and member of the APHC executive committee, sought Mr Jaswant Singh's "co-operation" for the release of his travel documents to facilitate his visit to Saudi Arabia.

In a letter to Mr Singh, he had apparently mentioned an invitation he had received

from Makkah-al-Mukarramah-based Rabitah al-alam al-Ifلامي (Muslim World League). The letter was reportedly submitted in the end of July.

The Jamaat leader, a member of the constituent council of the League, is to attend the fourth General Islamic Conference, to be held in Saudi Arabia on 8 September.

Annexing the invitation with the letter, he said: "I request your co-operation to issue travel documents in my favour to enable me to attend the conference."

The League, an NGO, has certain objectives which include dissemination of teachings of Islam. Mr Geelani is the third South Asian Muslim to become a member of the constituent council after the Islamic scholar, late Abdul Hassan Ali Nadvi, popularly known as Ali Mian, and Syed Abul Aala Maudadi, founder of Jamaat-e-Islami.

The council has members from countries like Nigeria, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Syria, Ivory Coast and Thailand.

14 killed in J&K: Fourteen people, including eight militants and two women, were

killed and nine injured in Jammu and Kashmir since last night, adds PTI from Srinagar. A huge cache of arms and ammunition, including 103 kgs of RDX, had also been seized.

An official spokesman said two Hizbul Mujahideen militants were today killed and two passers-by injured when a landmine they were planting in Tral town of Pulwama district exploded prematurely. The injured have been admitted to a hospital.

Meanwhile, Army seized 103 kgs of RDX along with a huge cache of arms and ammunition by smashing two underground militant hideouts and arrested three suspected militants in Kupwara and Bara-mulla districts since last night.

Four unidentified militants were killed in an encounter with a joint search party of Army and special operations group of local police at Dudwan-Malyal Forest in Kupwara district, he said.

He said two more Hizbul Mujahideen militants were shot by the security forces in an encounter at Kankote Gali in Poonch in Jammu early today.



A Kashmiri cheers slogans in Srinagar on Friday while others carry the body of a boy, killed in a firing in Magam. - AP/PTI

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Firing on J&K protest kills boy

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, August 3

A 12-YEAR-OLD boy was killed and six people hurt when army personnel fired as a procession taken out to protest the killing of a leading Hizbul Mujahideen commander, Mustafa Khan, turned violent.

A group among the marchers resorted to stone pelting after the security forces fired a few rounds in air to disperse them. At least seven people were hit by bullets fired by the troops and were rushed to a hospital where the boy succumbed to his injuries.

Mustafa was killed along with two of his close associates in an encounter with security forces at a shrine at Gaoigam on July 30. Thousands had joined his funeral procession the next day and a complete strike continued in Magam belt for the fourth day today. Today was the last day of the mourning.

Meanwhile, the Hizbul today received another jolt when one of its top commanders was killed while planting an improvised explosive device. Elsewhere in the Valley, three militants were killed.

Hizb 'battalion commander' Sharief-u-Din alias Zahid and colleague Ali Mohammad Sheikh, alias, Danish were planting an IED at a culvert near Lurgam when it exploded, killing the two men on the spot.

Police sources said Zahid was among the pioneers of the armed struggle. He is the third militant leader to die after Mustafa in the past 15 days.

In Tral, militants hurled a grenade at a BSF patrol, which missed its target. Five persons were injured in the blast and the gunbattle that followed. Wit-



Neighbours grieve as they prepare to receive the body of a 12-year-old boy who died when security forces fired on a protest march in Magam, 30 km from Srinagar, on Friday.

nesses alleged that three persons, including two women, were injured in the shootout. Later, one person identified as Glulam Nabi Bhat succumbed to injuries.

A girl, Jameela, was gunned down by militants in Batpora

village of Bhijbehara in South Kashmir.

In the same district, another girl was injured when militants fired at her. Police officials said the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba was behind the attack. "The attacks are a result of the recent warn-

ing issued by Lashkar asking girls to observe Islamic dress code," a police officer said.

Two unidentified militants were killed in Farkiyani Gali in the frontier district of Kupwara when they tried to sneak into the Indian territory, police said.

Bid on Amarnath Yatra foiled, 2 Hizb men killed

Jammu, August 3

SECURITY FORCES today foiled an attempt by militants to target Amarnath Yatra pilgrims in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, killing two Hizbul Mujahideen ultras in a fierce encounter.

Security forces, on specific information that a group of four heavily armed militants were planning to attack the pilgrims on a 25-km road stretch between Poonch town and Mandi, launched an operation last night.

The security forces noticed a group of four terrorists approaching the road around 2.30 am today, he said, adding when the forces challenged them, the ultras replied with heavy firing from automatic weapons.

The security forces retaliated and in the exchange of fire, two of them were killed on the spot while two of their associates escaped. Later, during search operations, the security forces recovered one AK-47 rifle with three magazines, one Chinese pistol with one magazine, one revolver, 11 rpg rockets, 20 UGBL grenades and 12 hand grenades.

Security has been beefed up in the area and a hunt is on to track down the militants, the spokesman said.

The "Charri Mubarak", (the holy mace of Lord Shiva) was taken out from Dashnami Akhara in Poonch yesterday and brought to the Budha Amarnath shrine by devotees today. It has been kept at the shrine for Puja and darshan will be performed tomorrow on Shravan Purnima, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 AUG 2001

No two-way talks with Delhi: Gilani

Rashid Ahmad
Srinagar, August 3

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FORMER CHAIRMAN of All Party Hurriyat Conference and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Syed Ali Gilani has ruled out any bilateral dialogue with New Delhi or with any of its interlocutors, including K C Pant, saying, "Our (Hurriyat's) constitution does not provide for it."

In an exclusive interview with *Hindustan Times*, Gilani said "no solution or arrangement within Indian constitution, in the way of internal autonomy or changing the line of control (LOC) into international border" was acceptable. "I am not opposed to talks", the firebrand Jamaat leader said, "but these must be meaningful and all the three parties to the dispute — India, Pakistan and Kashmiri representatives — must be involved."

Gilani was kept under house arrest on Friday. A large posse of policemen has been deployed on his Hyderpora residence and his movements have been strictly restricted. An officer leading the police party refused to divulge the cause of the house arrest, saying, "We have been told not to allow him (Gilani) to come out of his house, and I am just obeying the order." However Gilani told *Hindustan Times* that he was scheduled to attend the Fateh ceremony of the three Hizbul Mujahideen militants, who were killed in an encounter at Goigam on Monday, and it is to prevent this that he was placed under house arrest.

When reminded of his recent statement that Hurriyat would consider a dialogue offer if New

CENTRE HAS NO PLANS TO INVITE HURRIYAT: PANT

THE CENTRE on Friday rejected issuing any fresh invitation to the Hurriyat Conference for talks but said doors were open for the 23-party conglomerate to "respond and initiate a dialogue with the Government".

"No, we are not going to issue any fresh invitation to Hurriyat Conference as they are yet to respond to our earlier offer," Centre's interlocutor on Kashmir K C Pant told reporters in New Delhi.

His comments come close on the heels of three senior Hurriyat leaders — Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Abdul Gani Lone and Mirwaiz Umer Farooq — saying it was ready to consider any "fresh proposal" for talks from the Centre.

HTC, New Delhi

Delhi made it, he said, "When I say Hurriyat executive will decide, that in itself means that everything will be done in accordance with the constitution... Our constitution neither provides for any bilateral dialogue nor for any solution within Indian constitution," Gilani said.

"How can we accept a solution that ignores the sacrifices of lakhs of Kashmiris," he asked, claiming that "over 2.5 lakh people" had laid their lives in Jammu in 1947. "Thousands others died during Shaikh Mohamad Abdullah's freedom struggle, and about 100,000 have sacrificed their lives in the past 12 years," Gilani said.

For NC, autonomy is the best solution for Kashmir

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Aug 2. - The only way to pull J&K out of the present turmoil is to restore its autonomy, says the National Conference. The party considers it "the best possible solution among many options."

Speaking to The Statesman, the J&K works minister, Mr Ali Mohammed Sagar, said Kashmir had two facets - external and internal. Since Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf couldn't solve the external problem, the best thing was to grant greater au-

tonomy to the state. "Though the Centre had rejected the autonomy resolution passed by the Assembly, it will have to rethink... because autonomy is the only solution..." the NC leader said. Greater autonomy will solve the internal problems of the state.

"After all, why can't the Centre restore all the rights and facilities that we enjoyed till 1953?" he said.

"Let the Centre give autonomy to any state it wants, but it has to be restored to J&K to uphold the honour and dignity of its people," he said. J&K is not like

any other state, for it has acceded to India on certain conditions and enjoys a special status.

"When Dr Farooq Abdullah refused to participate in 1995 general elections unless autonomy was restored to the state, he was assured by Mr Narasimha Rao, then the Prime Minister, that the sky was the limit for Kashmiris," Mr Sagar said. But the Centre didn't keep its promise.

Asserting the readiness even of some separatist groups to settle for autonomy, Mr Sagar said that they were now talking of a peaceful solution and have

expressed their willingness to talk to the Prime Minister. "Some of them are even ready to contest elections."

Referring to the suffering of the people because of the turmoil, he said they are now yearning for peace.

The state, he said, is facing a war like situation and in such circumstances the security forces do sometimes overreact at some places when they are targeted by the militants. He, however, called upon them to exercise maximum restraint, specially in case of the civilians. The minister also cautioned

people not to get swayed by the propaganda of the anti-national elements who are bent upon disturbing peace in the State.

Mr Sagar lashed out at the detractors of the NC government and accused them of resorting to its unfound criticism without any concrete welfare programme for the people in mind. Despite facing various odds, the government is making strenuous efforts to extend basic amenities to the people in each and every corner of the state, he said. "Its achievements speak for themselves and do not need anybody's certificate because people know what

we have done for them."

Mr Sagar demanded that the government reconstructed the infrastructure destroyed during militancy to a great extent. Besides reconstructing hundreds of school buildings, bridges and hospitals, several villages were provided roads and safe potable water in the last four years.

"Out of the 315 damaged bridges of the state, we have reconstructed 216. So far, 550 damaged or gutted school buildings have been renovated and reconstructed, and 2500 culverts constructed," he said.

THE STATESMAN.

3 AUG 2001

J&K police under pressure to free 24 Pak-backed ultras

KAVITA SURI
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

LEH, Aug 2. - Pressure is mounting on J&K police from within to release 24 Pakistan-backed terrorists, arrested in Turtuk sector of Nubra Valley during the Kargil conflict in 1999.

The militants were planning to recapture Turtuk but were arrested with huge arms and ammunition. Except for the arrests, Leh is a relatively militancy-free zone.

The 24 militants are in judicial custody in Leh Jail. But some state government officials, sympathetic towards the militants, have been pressuring the police to release them.

Senior Leh police officers told **The Statesman** that their release would dampen the morale of police, for the ultras had plans to capture the entire area for Pakistan.

Till 1971, Turtuk was part of Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. The Shyok river passing through this region dissects Turtuk from PoK.

"During Operation Vijay, the arrested ultras had kept arms at very strategic locations," a senior police officer said. How could they let go such dangerous people, even under pressure of senior government officials?

Need for VDCs: To thwart militant attacks, Leh and Kargil districts have set up village defence committees following Jammu region's example. The Leh SP, Mr Shiv Darshan Singh Jamwal, said Zanskar, Khalsi, Lingshet and Pang areas in Leh district have strong VDCs, some of which have 24 members.

The VDCs are well equipped and their members have been given proper training to combat ultras, said Mr

POONCH, RAJOURI TARGETS OF MILITANTS

NEW DELHI, Aug. 2. - Militants in Jammu and Kashmir are now targeting Poonch and Rajouri. Around 220 militants were killed in June and 230 in July. Of them, 165 were killed in Poonch and Rajouri.

Thirty-two attempts to cross the Line of Control and enter India have been foiled. Army officials have intercepted radio messages of militants. Its learnt their morale is very low and they have sent messages mentioning heavy casualties on their sides.

Many militants enter India through the Kirmi and Betar Nullahs from the Kopra area. They receive training at camps in Alhabad and North Kahuta in Pakistan. - SNS

Jamwal. The Kargil SP, Mr Namgyal, too has two to three VDCs on his side.

The need for VDCs in these areas was felt primarily because some parts of Doda (a highly militancy-prone district) - like Padder - touches Ladakh on one side. Padder block touches Kargil and Himachal Pradesh's

es Kargil and Himachal Pradesh's said the Leh SP.



Pilgrims return to Nunwan base camp on Thursday after visiting Amarnath. Chhari Mubarak, the mace of Shiva, has reached Sheshnag, the last halt before Amarnath. - API/PTI

Shabir arrested, Gilani stopped short of Doda

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, August 1

DEMOCRATIC FREEDOM Party (DFP) chief Shabir Ahmad Shah and his 50 supporters were arrested while trying to organise a protest demonstration today.

Police also prevented former Hurriyat chairman and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Syed Ali Gilani and Hurriyat executive member Sheikh Abdul Aziz from visiting the Doda region.

Sources said over 100 DFP supporters and leaders gathered outside Shah's house at Rawalpura at 11 am. They were holding photographs of those allegedly killed in police custody. The slogan-shouting supporters also held placards demanding a halt to the "custodial killings".

As Shah came out of his house and led the protestors towards the main road, police — already present on the scene — arrested Shah and 50 members of his party. The other protestors, however, dispersed peacefully.

Meanwhile, Gilani said the police prevented him and Aziz from visiting Doda. Gilani said he left Srinagar for Doda yesterday after leading funeral prayers of three Hizbul militants at Goigam in Budgam.

Gilani said as he reached Batote, police stopped him and took him into custody. He said he was locked in Qazigund police station with Shaikh Aziz, who too was sent back from Batatote.

Gilani criticised "police high-



AP PHOTO

Shabir Shah taken into custody during a demonstration in Srinagar on Wednesday.

handedness" and said Doda was a part of Jammu and Kashmir, and he had every right to visit the district.

The former Hurriyat chairman said he had sought written permission from the district authorities in Doda in advance. He alleged that Doda was the bastion of repression of Government forces and he was prevented so that people should not know about the security forces' atrocities in the remote region.

He said curbing the political activities has exposed the face of authorities here. "They (authorities) are trumpeting every now and then that they are democrats," he said.

ABDULLAH HINTS AT EARLY ELECTION

EXPRESSING DISPLEASURE over continued opposition by "vested interests" to the autonomy resolution passed by the J&K Assembly, Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday hinted at early polls. "If need arises, my Government will again go to the people and seek a fresh mandate," he said. "I was elected to the post of Chief Minister not to hatch eggs but on my party's manifesto which promised greater autonomy to the State... If the Centre is unwilling to even hold talks then I think it is time to go back to the people," he said.

PTI, New Delhi

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Hurriyat on tour to 'prove a point'

H BULA DEVI
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

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NEW DELHI, Aug 1. - The All Party Hurriyat Conference leaders are on a tour of the country, trying to put across their viewpoint on how peace in Kashmir can bring about peace in the subcontinent.

Recently, representatives of the APHC were in Kolkata. Now they are heading for Chennai, where they will share the dais with Dalai Lama, the Governors of Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh and several chief ministers. Former chairmen of APHC Abdul Gani Lone and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq will be speaking at a three-day South Asian Peace conference, organised by Akhil Bharat Rachnatmak Samaj, beginning on 4 August.

Even though Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf gave them a patient hearing at the high commissioner's tea party despite much opposition from the government, it is learnt that the leaders are stung by the President's approach of not bestowing them the status of sole representative of the people of



Hurriyat members at Mujahideen commander Mustafa Khan's funeral in Srinagar on Wednesday. He was killed in an encounter with security forces in Badgam on Tuesday. - AP/PTI

Jammu and Kashmir as claimed by the leaders themselves.

According to sources, the representatives are now in the process of introspection be-

cause, on the one hand, they have antagonised the government to the hilt and on the other they did not get what they were expecting from the Pakistan President.

Apparently, enough indications have also been given from the other side of the border that routine bandh calls in the region would not suffice if the Hurriyat really wants to succeed in its goal.

Finding itself in a total jam, the leaders are now once again trying to pursue opening up channels with the Centre so that talks could begin.

Although a section of the government, which doubted the Hurriyat's claim, has to a large extent been proved correct by Musharraf's one-to-one talks with them, the government also perhaps cannot shut its doors on their face. It has to keep the channel open through its interlocutor, Mr KC Pant.

The former premier of Pakistan, Ms Benazir Bhutto, made this point subtly in a recent interview to a TV channel. She indicated that by sidelining the Hurriyat, militant groups will become stronger.

THE STATESMAN

AUG 2001

Post Agra, terror returns to stalk Valley Pandits

Rashid Ahmad
Srinagar, July 31

FEAR LURKS at every corner for them. Every unfamiliar person is a suspect, and they scarcely speak to strangers. Kashmiri Pandits, who have stayed back in the valley are a terrified lot.

And after the Agra summit their terror has only risen.

The failure of the summit was nothing sudden or dramatic to them. "It was rather drearily familiar," said Bansil Lal of a Pulwama village.

What has shocked them is that the spirit with which talks commenced could not be held together to the end. The final scene, when General Musharraf's cavalcade left Agra for Islamabad in the dead of the night looked to them "like a vindictive villain coming out of his rival's den with a requital vow".

"That very moment I felt God had signed some more death warrants," said Kumar Wanchoo, son of a renowned Kashmir Pandit leader and human rights activist H N Wanchoo, who was murdered by terrorists in 1993.

The Pandits feel the Sheshnag incident, which left 13 persons, including two police officers, six



AP PHOTO
Relatives of Kashmiri militant Ghulam Mustafa Khan wail during his last rites in Goigam village on Tuesday. The Indian Army gunned down Mustafa and two of his associates inside a shrine on Monday.

Amar Nath Yatris and four local porters dead, and the carnage at Kishwar, as a natural corollary to Agra flop.

Their greatest fear now is that death will come with much more ferocity. "Not only us, even the

However, a miniscule section of the community, estimated between 15,000 and 17,000, stayed back.

Barring two incidents of mass carnage, one at Wandhama in Ganderbal where 23 members of

the community were brutally murdered and the other at Sangrampora Budgam where seven Pandits were massacred, the community, by and large, felt composed.

"But that is not the case now," said Makhhan Lal a retired schoolteacher in south Kashmir. "I have never been so afraid as I am now". He opposes migration. "Migration is no solution to the problem", he asserted. "How long shall we keep migrating."

They are surprised that when everybody from Srinagar to Delhi and Islamabad wanted and talked of peace the summit still fizzled out. As Kundan Lal of Baramullah put it, the Pandits are groping about "Who and what came in the way".

A common impression among the Pandits is that Governments at Delhi and Islamabad would never be in a position to resolve the issue.

The two Governments have their own compulsions, which would never allow the leaders to come down from their established positions, they say.

They think it time that the solution came from the people. "Let the issue be referred to people of the State," says Ashok Kumar, a schoolteacher.