

# Jaswant's amendment rejected

By Neena Vyas

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**NEW DELHI, JULY 29.** The attempt by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, to tone down the resolution on the Agra summit met with stiff resistance from the Bharatiya Janata Party's national executive committee yesterday, with the result that an amendment suggested by him was rejected.

The mood of the members of the executive was so strong against Pakistan and its Pakistan President, General Pervez Musharraf, that Mr. Jaswant Singh could not have his way. It seems that Mr. Singh wanted a sentence added at the end of the resolution to say that the party hoped Pakistan would respond positively to the need for peace. But several members would not have it, pointing out that it would negate the strongly-worded resolution which criticised the "jehadi" mentality of the Pakistan establishment and stated that the Government should draw "appropriate conclusions" if Pakistan continued to adopt a "negative posture". After the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Union Home Minister, L. K. Advani, intervened, the Jaswant Singh suggestion was dropped.

The members were also critical of the "unilateral" confidence building measures announced by India

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ahead of the summit and wanted clarifications whether these would be implemented (as announced by Mr. Jaswant Singh at his Agra press conference). Mr. Singh was virtually forced to concede that there could not be unilateral implementation of establishing more entry points for visiting Pakistanis.

In fact, the very announcement that India was willing to establish more check-points for Pakistanis wishing to travel to this country (including one on the Rajasthan-Pakistan border) was criticised by the former Rajasthan Chief Minister, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, who said if it was done "Rajasthan would become another Kashmir".

Other members charged that the summit had allowed General Musharraf to come here, walk all over his guests, insult them in every possible way and walk away.

There was also some anger against the media. "The Pakistani media came prepared to fly the Pakistani flag, but the Indian media did not keep in mind the national concerns," one executive member lamented later, saying that this too was mentioned at the executive committee meeting.

## OMAR FOR M.E.A.

J & K  
S. S. S. Smart tactical move

**I**N deploying Omar Abdullah as Jaswant Singh's junior in the External Affairs Ministry the Prime Minister has made the first tactical move on the post-Agra chess board. It may not be a promotion in the usual sense because Abdullah remains a minister of state, but in context, it does amount to giving him some special responsibilities. In moving Abdullah to South Block a strong message has been sent out that an elected representative of Jammu and Kashmir will not be confined to the fringes of government. It backs up Jaswant Singh's line that "J&K is at the core of Indian nationhood." Since it is the MEA which plays the lead role in dealing with the larger issues of the state, it could serve as a confidence building measure with some sections of the people there. A direct Kashmiri-input will be visibly available for policy-formulation.

It is in the international sphere that the new minister's role could prove most productive. Nobody could have better credentials than a Muslim from J&K to debunk the propaganda of religion being an issue and under attack there. His lineage too would be respected when he speaks of the state having decisively opted to link itself with India. In his comparatively brief tenure as a minister he has displayed the capacity to do his homework, present a convincing case in the legislature. In some ways it is an onerous burden that has been placed on his shoulders and he would have to strive hard to deliver. It would also be imperative that he now seeks to develop a strong political base and get larger sections of Kashmiri society to recognise him as one of their key representatives.

There would also be need for other tactical initiatives in the wake of the Agra stalemate. The attacks on the Amarnath Yatris and massacres in Doda confirm that the militants are now bent upon raising violence to levels as high as possible. The security forces will have to crack down hard and yet not revive the practices that earned them the resentment of the local populace. The cauldron cannot be permitted to reach boiling point once again.

THE STATESMAN

# Advani trying to disrupt Indo-Pak peace talks: CPM

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**New Delhi, July 26:** The CPI(M) on Thursday charged Union home minister L.K. Advani with playing in the hands of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and attempting to disrupt peace process between India and Pakistan by making provocative statements and ruling out discussion on the question of autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir.

"The question of autonomy to Kashmir cannot be clubbed with the issue of Centre-state relations and giving greater powers to the states within India's federal Constitution. The special status to Kashmir must be accepted. Any attempt to try and negate this will only fuel greater dissatisfaction and bolster extremist activities," CPI(M) general secretary Harkishan Singh Surjeet said here.

"The whole country is interested to allay the fears of the people of Kashmir and restore to them the promises on which Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India. Article 370 of the Constitution was specially drafted for this purpose," he

said, adding "that there has been a continuous erosion of Article 370 which has led to a degree of dissatisfaction amongst the people of the state which was utilised by the extremist forces and our country's enemies."

He recalled that former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao had stated on the question of granting autonomy that "the sky is the limit" and that the Sheikh Abdullah-Indira Gandhi Accord of 1975 recognised erosion of implementation of the provisions of Article 370 and committed to correct them.

He demanded that the Centre must engage in wide-ranging consultations to grant greater autonomy to the state and ensure effective implementation of the provisions under Article 370 of the Constitution.

He said the Vajpayee-led government cannot be allowed to "play into the hands" of extremists by outrightly rejecting any discussions on the question of autonomy.

He alleged that the Union home minister was toeing the RSS line on trifurcation of Kashmir.

THE ASIAN AGE

## ME A on US views

■ Continued from Page 1

state for South Asia Christina Rocca, who was in New Delhi on a two-day visit. An MEA spokesperson said Ms Rocca had clarified during her India visit that the Bush administration was not taking a position on the agenda of discussions between India and Pakistan.

The spokesperson said India's position on Kashmir is well known and has been conveyed to the US administration on several occasions. The official said India was capable of defending its position.

The official said the US had told India it is not taking a position on the agenda of Indo-Pak discussions or involving itself in negotiations between the two nations unless asked by both sides. This was clarified by Ms Rocca, who met external affairs minister Jaswant Singh and Mr Brajesh Mishra, Prime Minister's principal secretary, and MEA officials.

The spokesperson was asked about a remark by President Bush bracketing Kashmir with Kosovo and comments by US secretary of state Colin Powell that Washington will do everything it can to lend its "good offices" to the improvement of relations between India and Pakistan and the difficult outstanding issues, whether it is Kashmir or nuclear issues.

New Delhi said it had noted the recent comments made at the political level in the US government concerning Indo-Pak relations. India said the two nations share the belief that tensions in South Asia must be resolved by the countries in South Asia through peaceful means.

## Views don't need to match US: MEA

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, July 26: US President George W. Bush's statement linking Jammu and Kashmir with Kosovo has put the Indian foreign office in a peculiar position. The MEA on Thursday issued a guarded response, saying New Delhi's views on Kashmir need not coincide with that of Washington.

Mr Bush, addressing US troops in Kosovo, had said the US would work with Nato allies to promote freedom and tolerance from Kosovo to Kashmir and from the Middle East to Northern Ireland.

The MEA downplayed the statement, saying it was satisfied with the US position as reiterated by assistant secretary of

■ Turn to Page 2

THE HINDU

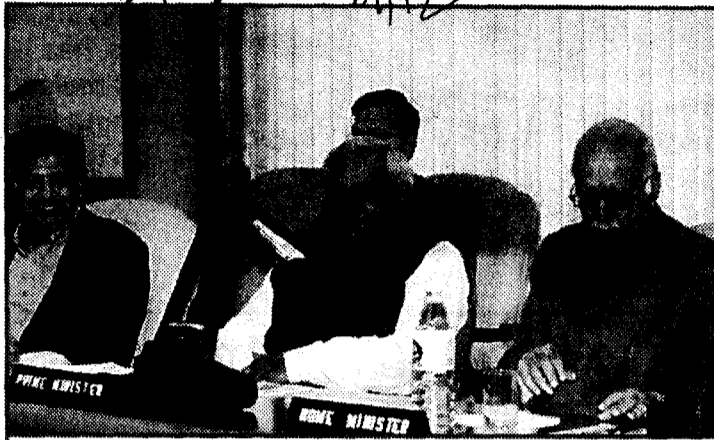
# Govt vetoes aggressive policy

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 30 DECEMBER

**W**HILE STEPPING up the military mobilisation against Pakistan, the Vajpayee government, on Sunday, firmed up support for its actions against Pakistan. The government got all the Opposition parties sign on the "no means will be spared" strategy that it has used against Pakistan. At a meeting with the Opposition parties here on Sunday to enhance the country's leverage by stressing unanimous support for the government's aggressive diplomacy, the government managed to secure an unambiguous nod from all its domestic rivals.

Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, again ruled out the possibility of holding talks with General Musharraf on the sidelines of the forthcoming SAARC summit in Kathmandu, though he left the door open for a possible meeting between the two foreign ministers. The success of the "mission co-option" was obvious when the Opposition parties agreed to the suggestion to be part of the high-level delegations to be despatched soon to foreign capitals for lining up support. The initiative of the government showed its sensitivity to possible costs of any impression of division at a critical juncture.

The government told the Opposition that it wanted to utilise the SAARC summit to force Pakistan to take a clear stand against ter-



**TURBULENT TIMES: Prime Minister Vajpayee presides over an all-party meet on the worsening Indo-Pak relations in New Delhi on Sunday. — AFP**

rorism. India plans to move a strong anti-terrorism resolution which will, echoing resolution 1373 of the United Nations, seek to shut out the scope for promotion of cross-border terrorism with the help of any alibi — freedom struggle or jihad. Briefing Opposition leaders of the plan, Mr Jaswant Singh sounded confident that the proposed resolution may put Pakistan in a tight spot leaving it with the options of either giving up its support for terrorism or face isolation by appearing an inconsistent partner in the fight against terrorism.

The Opposition supported the government's decision to serve Pakistan with a list of terrorists and criminals like Dawood Ibrahim whom it will like Islamabad to hand

over. The list containing specific names will reduce the scope for excuses by Pakistan. The meeting saw an agreement over the need for special efforts to secure the support of the Islamic countries. The need to concentrate on this particular bloc is felt in view of the tilt of the Organisation of Islamic Countries as well as some individual Arab nations towards Pakistan. Some of the participants felt that India, just like the US, should take the precaution of ensuring that its fight against Pakistan is not seen through the "civilizational" prism.

Mr Vajpayee suggested that one of the delegations should be led by the leader of opposition, Ms Sonia Gandhi. Chances are that the government, conscious of BJP's por-

trayal as a Hindu outfit, may want the proposed delegation to Islamic nations to be led by an opposition leader. Emerging from the meeting, participants from the opposition side stressed that they will like the government to exhaust all possible diplomatic options before moving on to other trajectory. They said that the military option didn't come up for discussion. Former finance minister, Mr Manmohan Singh, said: "The general feeling is that maximum scope should be given to diplomatic efforts." This is not very different from what the government and the BJP itself have been saying, and, at the same time leaves the government with enough leeway to explore non-diplomatic means if they become unavoidable.

There was consensus that mobilisation undertaken by India was defensive, and that it was a victim of on-going proxy war, not the aggressor. For the government, Left's support for its actions must be gratifying in view of the carping criticism from the two Communist parties. It was only on Saturday that the Prime Minister gave vent to his anguish over the Left's attacks at the meeting of the BJP national executive. Mr Vajpayee said, citing the instances of the Communist responses to the Quit India Movement of 1942 and Chinese aggression in 1962, that the Left had always been out of line with the national mood. However, he made an effort to reach out to all.

A SHOT IN THE ARM FOR TWO LEADERS

# Opp supports diplomatic war

**Border tension  
obstacle to  
crackdown:  
Musharraf**

Agencies

State Information Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 30. — The government and the Opposition today reached a consensus at an all-party meeting that the Centre should step up diplomatic offensive against Pakistan. Both sides agreed that the country should wait for the results of the offensive before considering military option.

Assured of the Opposition's support, the government would begin a fresh diplomatic offensive against Pakistan by demanding extradition of several criminals wanted in India, but safe on the other side of the border. The meeting also endorsed Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's suggestion to send all-party delegations to foreign capitals to secure international support for India.

Speaking to reporters after the two-hour meeting at the Prime Minister's residence, Mr Pramod Mahajan said diplomatic offensive would be the first priority for the Centre. The build-up of troops along the border "was a 200 per cent defensive deployment" and India was more "aggrieved than aggressive," Mr Mahajan asserted.

"The government does not want war. No sane person will go for war. But if it's thrust upon us, then we'll face it unitedly," the parliamentary affairs minister said. This was the opinion of all leaders who attended the meeting, he said. Pakistan has not given enough proof to show that it's acting against terrorism after the 13 December attack, he added.

The meeting, Mr Mahajan said, was "highly constructive" and there was an "excellent show of unity."

Opposition leaders unanimously backed such steps as recalling the Indian high commissioner from Pakistan. They argued that the country should give a fitting reply if war is thrust on it.

Some of the Opposition leaders wanted to know about the

country's military preparations. They were assured that the country was fully prepared to face any eventuality. However, Mr Mahajan said, the military steps were not discussed in the meeting.

The government and the Opposition agreed to send delegations led by important leaders to different countries to plead India's case. Opposition leaders would participate in this mission and even lead some of the teams, Mr Mahajan said. They would begin their work by the second week of January. However, the list of places to be visited and the list of team members are yet to

## George skips meeting

NEW DELHI, Dec. 30. — Mr George Fernandes was conspicuous by his absence at the meeting. He was asked to skip the meeting to avoid fresh controversy. Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee told the Opposition leaders that he didn't compel the defence minister to attend the meeting since some of them might have reservations about him. "If I had insisted, Mr Fernandes would have cancelled his programme and come for the meeting." Mr Fernandes is in Rajasthan visiting troops along the Indo-Pak border. — SNS

be finalised, Mr Mahajan said. The focus would be on the European Union countries, Russia, China and a few others.

India would send a list of "criminals wanted" to Pakistan. Mr Mahajan didn't say how many names would be there on the list and when it would be given to Pakistan. Some names under consideration include Dawood Ibrahim and Masood Azhar.

An Opposition leader, present at the meeting, said Mr Jaswant Singh told the leaders that

Pakistan has arrested 90 persons in connection with terrorist activities, but India has not been provided with any details. Strong measures were needed against the criminals, he said. The minister also felt that Americans are now showing more understanding of the Indian situation.

Mr Mahajan said Mr Vajpayee told the Opposition that terrorism would be discussed at the Saarc conference at Kathmandu early next year. Asked if Mr Singh was likely to meet Mr Abdul Sattar, he said no decision has yet been taken in this regard.

Many suggested that Mrs Sonia Gandhi should be present at the Saarc session. The Centre felt that there was no room for the move according to the rules, but the government has no problems in principle. Mr AB Bardhan and Miss Mamata Banerjee asked for a stronger focus on terrorism at the Saarc meeting.

Briefing party leaders, the Prime Minister said by attacking Parliament, the terrorists had crossed the *lakshmanrekha*. Mr Vajpayee, in his opening remarks, said he had spoken to several world leaders after the attack and the global opinion seemed to be that Pakistan could be pressurised to stop sponsoring cross-border terrorism.

Mr LK Advani and Mr Yashwant Sinha attended the meeting. Among the Opposition leaders present were Mr Manmohan Singh, Mr HS Surjeet, Mr P Sangma, Mr Raghuvansh Prasad Singh and Mr RG Yadav. Mr Yerran Naidu and Ms Mayawati could not attend the meeting.

The Cabinet Committee on Security will meet tomorrow to discuss the present crisis and take stock of the diplomatic offensive against Pakistan.

Mr George Fernandes, visiting the border areas, today said there was no "war-like situation" adds UNI.

Photograph on page 2  
More reports on page 3

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 30. — General Pervez Musharraf today said Indian military build-up along the border "acted as an obstacle" to crack down on extremists.

He was speaking to the media here after presiding over an all-party meeting.

At the meeting, political parties rallied behind the military regime and assured the President of "full support".

Asked about his planned crackdown on the militant organisations, Gen Musharraf said: "I want to eradicate militancy, extremism and intolerance from Pakistani society. I would like to eradicate all terrorism from the soil of Pakistan."

He said: "The tension created by India on our borders in fact is creating obstacles and hurdles and it is slowing down the process that I wanted to follow myself for Pakistan."

The Musharraf government for the first time established official contact with former Prime Minister Mrs Benazir Bhutto and invited her Pakistan People's Party to the meeting.

PPP sources said Pakistan's consul-general in Dubai, Mr Amanullah Larik, called on Mrs Bhutto and delivered an official invitation to her party.

The PPP vice-chairperson, Mr Mukdhum Fahim, was authorised to attend the meeting but failed to make it because of non-availability of flights, the sources said.

About dialogue with India, he said: "If Prime Minister (Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee) does not want the dialogue, I am not at all keen about it. I am for dialogue and I keep on saying this and he keeps on rejecting which gives me the feeling that I am begging India."

Gen Musharraf will fly to Nepal via China for the Saarc summit in Kathmandu, officials said.

The Pakistani foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, said the "most worrying signal" for Pakistan was that India had started moving its forces from peacetime locations not only from the west but also from the east for military action which could be "extremely dangerous."

THE STATESMAN

31 DEC 2001

# New Delhi tones down war cry, eyes Saarc meet

By Siddharth Varadarajan  
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: After several days of heated rhetoric and tough diplomatic measures, the Vajpayee government has indicated that a meeting between external affairs minister Jaswant Singh and his Pakistani counterpart, Abdul Sattar, could take place at the sidelines of next week's Saarc summit in Kathmandu.

Insisting that the situation between India and Pakistan "is not as bad as it appears", a senior official told *The Times of India* that everyone was determined the Saarc summit would proceed as planned. "There will be sideline bilaterals, though not at the top," he said. "But barring some major catastrophe, which is not hard to imagine given our relationship and history, Mr Singh and Mr Sattar will most probably meet in Kathmandu."

The possibility of a Jaswant-Sattar meeting was also discussed in a telephone conversation the external affairs minister had with U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell on Friday. According to official sources, Mr Powell called "to feel the pulse" and to assure India that the U.S. was asking Pakistan to take action against terrorist groups based on its soil.

During his telephone call, Mr Powell apparently asked Mr Singh whether the Saarc summit could go ahead without contentious issues arising. "We said yes, it could and would," the official noted.

While appreciating India's concerns—and the "minimal nature" of the diplomatic sanctions it has taken

so far—Mr Powell said the U.S. "did not want India to create a situation where Gen Musharraf is seen as acting under coercion". Gen Musharraf had assured the U.S. he would act, Mr Powell apparently told Mr Singh, "but there must be no humiliation involved". He also communicated U.S. concern that the military build-up on the Indo-Pak border could weaken the hunt for Osama bin Laden by forcing Pakistan to redeploy troops away from its frontier with Afghanistan and constrain American air- and sea-based operations.

On the probability of Pakistan acting against the LeT and Jaish terrorist outfits, Mr Singh said that the Musharraf government had deliberately allowed Jaish chief Masood Azhar to go underground. He added that the idea of the Lashkar and Jaish offices shutting down in Pakistan only to be reopened in Pakistan-occupied

Kashmir proved Islamabad was not being sincere. Mr Powell said the U.S. had its compulsions, that it needed Pakistan's support, but that it would continue to exert pressure.

Mr Singh is also said to have communicated India's concern that Washington's excessive focus on Arab Al Qaida members might actually be allowing the anti-Indian jihadi groups to regroup. "Pakistan is not arresting any of the Pakistani Al Qaida or Taliban members when they leave Afghanistan and the U.S. is also not insisting they be handed over. Basically, terrorists are being transferred from west to east," the official said.

**¶ Barring some major catastrophe, Jaswant Singh and Abdul Sattar will most probably meet in Kathmandu ¶**

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# New Delhi steps up diplomatic offensive

NEW DELHI: Stepping up its diplomatic offensive against Pakistan, India on Thursday night decided to scale down by half the staff strength of the high commissions in both the countries and banned Pakistani flights over Indian airspace from January 1, accusing Islamabad of not doing enough to curb cross-border terrorism.

The cabinet committee on security (CCS) meeting chaired by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee also decided that the staff and families of the Pakistani mission here would not be allowed to move beyond the municipal limits of Delhi.

Both the missions in New Delhi and Islamabad have a sanctioned strength of 110 personnel, excluding families. The scaling-down decision will be implemented in 48 hours.

Thursday night's decisions came on top of the recall of Indian high commissioner Vijay K. Nambiar after Pakistan

was accused of not taking comprehensive action on the Indian demand for proceeding against Pakistan-based terrorist outfits Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkar-e-Toiba for their involvement in the audacious December 13 attack on parliament.

About the possibility of a war between the two countries, external affairs minister Jaswant Singh told mediapersons, "There is no need for anyone to worry. We are fully prepared. Whatever

Pakistan has done has been only cosmetic and to dupe the international community."

The two-day deadline for scaling down of the missions will begin at 6 am on Friday.

Last week, the Indian government had also decided to cancel bus and rail links between the two

of duping the international community with half-measures, non-measures and fictitious incidents, Mr Singh said, "This is not acceptable."

Maintaining that Pakistan's steps against the Lashkar and the Jaish were inadequate, he said, "Terrorism cannot simply be justified on any grounds or any name. It must be eradicated fully."

Mr Singh said Pakistan needed to show by its actions that it had seriously joined the coalition against terrorism. "If you have joined the international coalition against terrorism, please act in accordance with what you stated as your objective in joining the coalition," he said.

"The totality of rejection by the entire cross-section of our country's opinion about Pakistan's continued sponsorship of cross-border terrorism and promotion of terrorism as an instrument of state policy has not been

appreciated by Islamabad," he added. Mr Singh said he would not speculate as to what other options remained. "Let us not speculate," he said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan on Thursday vowed to respond to India's diplomatic sanctions in a "tit-for-tat manner", saying it would also downgrade embassy representation and ban Indian planes from its airspace. (Agencies)

► See Edit: Pakistan Smokecreen, Page 8



BSF troopers on a patrol near the Line of Control in the Ramgarh sector in Kashmir on Thursday.

countries from January 1.

On the restriction imposed on the movement of Pakistani staff in Delhi, Mr Singh said, "This is particularly important in the context of recent events of the Pakistan high commission being involved in espionage as well as direct dealings with terrorist organisations."

About the possibility of air strikes on Pakistan, Mr Singh said he would not discuss military matters in public. Accusing Islamabad

THE TIMES OF INDIA

29 DEC 2001



# Delhi will ask Islamabad to slash mission staff by 40%

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, December 25

MOVES ARE afoot to direct the Pakistan High Commission to slash its staff strength by as much as 40 per cent. Hinting this, a Union Home Ministry official said: "This is being done as it is suspected that most of the staff members in the Pakistan High Commission are ISI agents and stay here with diplomatic immunity."

The Home Ministry, according to sources, is believed to have conveyed this to the Ministry of External Affairs. Some of the High Commission staffers made several trips to areas such as

Western UP, which have large Muslim populations. "Since the personnel enjoy diplomatic immunity, their movements can't be questioned," said an official.

This year alone, three Pakistani diplomats have been arrested on charges of spying. All of them were then declared persona non grata and sent back.

It has also come to light that young recruits are incited by these ISI agents to launch a jihad against India. Probably realising that many Indian Muslims have relatives in Pakistan, locals in Western UP are believed to be lured by the promise of granting Pakistani visas liberally in case they opt to

join the jihad.

Ajay Kumar, the Parliament staffer arrested recently on charges of spying for Pakistan, revealed that he also used to frequently visit Karena near Muz-zafarnagar in Western UP.

"Karena is a Muslim-dominated area. Kumar used to frequently visit the place," sources said, adding that they are now in the process of identifying his contacts there.

Sources revealed that Karena had earned a notorious reputation as "mini-Pakistan" for the large number of conduits in cases of arms-smuggling, fake passports and currency from this region.

## Nambiar returns

Recalled Indian Ambassador to Pakistan Vijay Nambiar said today that the enormity of the action of calling him back did not seem to have registered in "the required quarters in Pakistan". He was speaking to reporters at the IGI airport this evening after landing in the Capital.

He described his recall as "a signal meant to convey the seriousness of the present situation to Pakistan and to establish the gravity vis-a-vis the December 13 terrorist attack on India's Parliament".

Nambiar said, "if this does not register in the required

quarters it could result in a serious deterioration in the present situation. Then, we will have to review the situation and take further steps, both diplomatic as well as other alternatives measures". He did not elaborate.

India downgraded its Mission and recalled its ambassador after the Parliament attack.

Nambiar said though Pakistan was talking about taking steps to rein in outfits like the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and Jaish-e-Mohammad the steps taken so far did not seem sufficiently credible.

He said the important question now was whether Pakistan's steps matched India's requirements. "As of now they do not."

## PAKISTAN ARRESTS JAISH CHIEF

MAULANA MASOOD Azhar, chief of Jaish-e-Mohammad, was arrested on Tuesday by the provincial government of Punjab in Pakistan for making provocative speeches and disturbing law and order, the news agency APP said. The arrest came hours after police had released Azhar from house arrest, made on Sunday for questioning. *Ausaf*, an Islamabad-based daily, said Masood had been warned during his release that he must tone down his anti-India rhetoric and activities.

Meanwhile, it was revealed that the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba had withdrawn Rs 4 billion from its bank accounts after the September 11 attack. A highly-placed source said that Lashkar withdrew the money from bank accounts in Pakistan and elsewhere in the world. When the US froze bank accounts of the Lashkar, there was no "significant" amount in those accounts.

PTI/IANS, Islamabad

# PM spoke to Sonia before recalling Nambiar: Cong.

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 24. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, had taken the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, into confidence, on the recall of the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Vijay Nambiar. According to Congress sources, Mr. Vajpayee spoke to Ms. Gandhi on December 21 before announcing the decision to recall Mr Nambiar.

The Prime Minister's initiative in taking Ms. Gandhi into confidence before taking such an important step is an indication of the unity and solidarity in the country's political leadership on the question of fighting Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.

The entire Opposition led by Ms. Gandhi had pledged its support to the Government following

the suicide attack on Parliament.

In her speech during the debate in the Lok Sabha on the situation arising out of the terrorist strike, Ms. Gandhi had said that her party "will back the Government". She also emphasised the need for the nation "to stand together in solidarity and the need of the hour was for political parties to rise above political and partisan considerations".

While the Government had consulted Ms. Gandhi, it appears to have kept the other Opposition parties out of the loop. The CPI(M) general secretary, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, was critical of the Government for not taking the Opposition parties into confidence before recalling Mr. Nambiar.

THE HINDU

25 11 2001

# India in a spot as Pak plays it cool

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, December 22

PAKISTAN'S REFUSAL to do a tit-for-tat downscaling of its Mission in India represents a diplomatic complication for India. External Affairs Ministry sources today said if Islamabad does not recall High Commissioner Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, New Delhi may deal with his number two, Jail Abbas Jilani.

"There is no precedence by which India can act," an official said. If General Pervez Musharraf does not recall Qazi as his Foreign Office says, India will ignore his presence. Unless of course, New Delhi decides to ask the Pakistan Government to recall some of its diplomats posted here in confirmation of its downscaled status.

Though sources say a list of 67 officials have been drawn up for withdrawal of privileges, the implementation of this step would depend on Pakistan's response to the international pressure to rein in Lashkar-e-Tayyeba. Sources said the next few days would be crucial as Musharraf is presently in China and some concrete steps may be taken on the diplomatic front only after his return.

Jilani, the Deputy Chief of Mission, is the official in touch with South Block. He was called by Foreign Secretary Chokila Iyer yesterday and handed over a letter asking his Government to take possession of the five dead terrorists who carried out the December 13 raid on Parliament.

## Feasibility study

THE GOVERNMENT has directed the Army and the RAW to prepare a blueprint of the "risks and challenges" the country could encounter in the event of a strike across the LoC at terrorist camps in PoK. Though Army deployment along the international border and the LoC has been increased substantially, there is no proposal yet to take out PoK terrorist camps. Officials said the move to gear up the Army and make Intelligence agencies proactive, especially in picking up Intelligence across the border, is based on a proposal by Jaswant Singh. *HTC, New Delhi*

On a day-to-day level, the Joint Secretary manning the Pakistan desk of the MEA will be in touch with him.

Meanwhile, Vijay Nambiar, the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad, is understood to be "making arrangements for his return" to India. The Deputy Chief of Mission, Sudhir Vyas, will be in charge till diplomatic relations return to normal.

New Delhi's tough posture was evident yet again today when the MEA spokesperson said India would not be satisfied with mere freezing of the bank accounts of Lashkar as reported in the media. "There is no room for prevarication here. The LeT is a terrorist group against which we want comprehensive action, including the arrest of its leaders."

Commenting on today's developments, which includes a fresh statement from President Bush asking Pakistan to take steps against LeT and other terrorist groups, she said: "This is precisely what we have called upon Pakistan to do. The international community will judge the

response by what concrete steps Pakistan takes."

## Next target: Illegal Pak migrants

After recalling the envoy and snapping bus and rail links with Pakistan, India would now set its eyes on 'tracing and deporting' Pakistani nationals staying illegally in the country, according to Union Minister of State for Home C Vidyasagar Rao.

All the States have been asked to expedite the process of 'identifying, arresting and deporting' illegal immigrants, he told reporters here today.

Out of over 13,000 Pakistanis overstaying in India, about 2,000 had 'gone underground and were not traceable' and the State governments had been alerted to go after them in the wake of the December 13 attack, he said.

In another initiative to effectively monitor the foreigners' flow into the country, all the 65 designated immigration checkpoints were being brought under the control of Union Home Ministry, Rao said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

23 DEC 2001

# Govt leaves Left out in the cold

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Dec. 22. — The Left is truly left out and has reasons to feel snubbed by the government, especially, the Prime Minister. Therefore, the new found "Opposition unity" was clearly lacking in the Opposition response to the government decision to recall the Indian High Commissioner from Islamabad and stop the rail and bus services to Lahore.

While the Left was quick to criticise the decision and accuse the government of keeping the Opposition in the dark, the Congress, the main Opposition party, was resoundingly silent in matching the anger of its foe-turned-friend Leftists.

In fact, all that Mr Natwar Singh, party's in-charge of external affairs, said yesterday and again repeated today was that the Congress had extended a broad-based support to the

23/12  
government in the national interest and that it was up to the government to take the appropriate steps to deal with the situation.

There is reason for the Congress not to join the criticism of the Left and share its sense of snubbing. According to sources, the PM had a telephonic talk with Mrs Sonia Gandhi yesterday afternoon, well in advance of the government announcing the diplomatic offensive. When **The Statesman** contacted Mr Natwar Singh today he confirmed that "the Prime Minister had 'informed' Mrs Gandhi yesterday at 1.30 pm about the government decision.

The sources say, Mr Vajpayee, in keeping with the well established norms, did take the Opposition leader into confidence about the imminent moves.

However, neither the Prime Minister nor anybody else in the government

J.P. Kaur  
bothered to formally inform the Left, thereby snubbing its much-projected ego of being the third largest bloc in Parliament.

This is the second time this week the Prime Minister is adopting a pick-and-choose attitude towards the Opposition in general and giving special attention to boost the sense of importance of Mrs Gandhi in particular.

On the eve of the parliamentary discussions on the terrorist attack on Parliament, the Prime Minister again had a telephonic conversation with Mrs Gandhi and soon her colleague Dr Manmohan Singh met Mr Vajpayee. The behind the scene agreement to conduct a peaceful discussion in both the Houses and the government agreement not to introduce the Poto Bill and keep Mr Fernades away from the Lok Sabha during the discussion was the result of the Vajpayee-Gandhi talks.

THE STATESMAN

22

# Delhi ups the ante, recalls envoy to Pak

## Times News Network

NEW DELHI: In a clear attempt to step up diplomatic pressure on Pakistan following the December 13 attack, India has recalled its high commissioner to Islamabad and announced the termination of the bus and train services between the two countries.

External affairs ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said here on Friday that this was being done because of Pakistan's continued promotion of cross-border terrorism and its lack of response to India's demand for action against the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad.

To buttress its claim of Islamabad's involvement in the attack on parliament, the MEA also called in Pakistani deputy high commissioner Jalil Abbas Gilani and said India was prepared to give Pakistan the bodies of the five terrorists who had participated in the attack. New Delhi insists the five were Pakistani nationals. Although this raises the pitch of Indo-

## Cabinet reviews security scenario

### Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Even as some strike formations of the army moved closer to the Indo-Pak border and defensive positions were being shored up, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met again on Friday to discuss various diplomatic and military options available in the fight against cross-border terrorism.

The CCS meeting was followed by a lengthy meeting of the top army brass—including the chief, vice-chief, director-general of military operations and other senior officers—in the operations room at South Block to discuss different strategies.

Pak hostility to a higher level, the recall of Indian high commissioner Vijay Nambiar from Islamabad is only the lowest rung in a ladder of diplomatic escalation that New Delhi can resort to. Pakistan's high commissioner has not been asked to leave, and there is no talk as yet of severing diplomatic ties. Citing the *démarche* made by India earlier this week, Ms Rao referred to the steps required and mandated by international law and said that in view of the complete lack of concern by Pakistan and its continued promotion of cross-border terrorism, the government of India had decided to recall its high commissioner in Islamabad.

It was further decided that the services of the Samjhauta Express and the Delhi-Lahore bus services be terminated from January 1. She explained that the extended time was being given to enable citizens of the two countries who had travelled recently using these services to return home.

When contacted, Pakistani diplomats



RALLYING ROUND

Students demonstrate for peace between India and Pakistan at a rally in Lahore on Friday.

expressed surprise at the steps taken by the Indian government. None of these measures had been taken by India even

during the height of the Kargil conflict. The Indian government's steps were announced even as U.S. President George W. Bush described Pakistan as a victim of terrorist acts, along with India, while designating the Lashkar-e-Toiba as a terrorist organisation whose assets were to be blocked.

In response to questions, Ms Rao said the government welcomed the U.S. designation of the LeT as a terrorist organisation. However, she refrained from commenting on Mr Bush's remarks, saying, "I don't want to comment on the views expressed by one country about another." Later she said the government had taken note of these views and that they had not escaped notice, but added that they had to be seen in a holistic way.

The LeT, she said, was a terrorist organisation which received support and sustenance from, and basically operated out of Pakistan. Its sole agenda appeared to be directed against India, she said.

## India advocates co-operation on ABM Treaty

51-7 J.P. Kur  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Dec. 14. — India has requested the USA and Russia to take a co-operative approach and sort out differences over the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. (511)

The reaction has come following the USA's formal notice of withdrawal from the treaty to Russia. The USA is pursuing its National Missile Defence programme.

It's feared that USA's withdrawal from the ABM Treaty could force Russia, and crucially, China, to build more intercontinental nuclear-tipped missiles.

More Chinese missiles are a cause of concern for India, say experts.

In its reaction today, India said, "We have consistently advocated a cooperative approach and not taking recourse to unilateralism." But the Indian spokesperson did not say whether the US action was an example of "unilateralism". India had earlier welcomed the US decision to work towards the NMD but appeared to have clarified its stance later.

"We particularly welcome the reaffirmation by Russia and the USA to substantially reduce their strategic offensive nuclear weapons. These cuts will contribute very significantly towards nuclear disarmament," the spokesperson added.

It is well-known that Russia may not have the technology for such a system. In absence of such technology, Russia, and possibly China, might build more missiles to ensure parity. The increase in the Chinese nuclear force could be a source of worry to India.

The USA, on its part, has spoken of sharing the NMD technology.

THE STATESMAN

15 DEC 2001

# India plays China card to woo Japanese investments

Times News Network

TOKYO: India on Monday brought the "China card" into play to step up its efforts to seek a slice of the huge Japanese surplus.



A.B. Vajpayee

Like in Osaka, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee focused on the "mutual gains" theme, saying "there is convergence between Japan's investment surplus and India's development needs".

"We could create innovative ways of channelling your large-scale and long-gestation investments with prospects of higher returns than they earn today," Mr Vajpayee said.

Addressing a meeting of top business executives, Mr Vajpayee acknowledged the problems and bottlenecks that foreign investors face in India but he promised "prompt corrective measures".

He said that the momentum in the bilateral ties should be utilised to "flag off a few signature projects that are jointly funded, mutually beneficial, and are ambitious enough to symbolise our resolve to forge a global partnership in the new century".

While interacting with top Japanese business and industry executives, disinvestment minister Arun Shourie tapped into the growing Japanese unease over China's muscle-flexing, saying that "Japan can serve itself better by factoring the ambitious dragon in its investment decisions".

"You shouldn't be feeding what on your apprehensions could be a security problem one day. You have to ask yourself while you are investing money whether you are creating a potential problem," he

told a gathering comprising the heads of leading Japanese banks, as well as heavy industries, FMCG and automobile bigwigs.

Nodding heads and smiling faces showed the message had reached home. An encouraged Mr Shourie said: "You are not strengthening a potential rival when you invest in India."

Suspicion of China remains the sub-text of the quest for stronger strategic bilateral ties and the prime mover for the upgrading the efforts, already under way, to ensure the safety of energy assets and ocean routes.

When Mr Shourie invoked them this morning to seek Japanese funds, he underscored once again the shift in the way India conducts itself while seeking funds. The traditional coyness has been replaced by a forthrightness and aggression that is generally associated with the East Asian Tigers.

Aware of the Japanese cynicism—articulated strongly by the chairman of the Indo-Japan Business Cooperation Committee and a former chairman of the Honda Motors, N. Kawamoto—the Prime Minister and his colleagues promised prompt corrective measures.

Japanese suggestions have been asked with the assurance that they would be given due consideration.

The attitudinal shift was clearly displayed in the Prime Minister's address to the business meeting hosted by six of the most prestigious economic and industrial organisations.

He frankly acknowledged the problems and bottlenecks that foreign investors face in India, impressing upon his audience the sincerity.

Mr Vajpayee told his audience "great problems are accomplished when we focus not on dif-

iculties alone, but on their solutions through joint action. They are accomplished by fixing our sights on future benefits to be realised, not only on the past problems".

When Toru Hoshimoto, chairman of Fuji Bank, explained that Japan's preference for the "low-wage" China essentially reflected survival concerns in an age of cut-throat competition, an Mr Shourie said that the jobs here can be saved also by the use of Japanese technological lead for generating hydel-power and developing bamboo-based industries in the Indian north-east, and by capitalising on India's concerns over emission.

Other big names attending the business meeting included N. Yamaguchi, chairman of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry and chief of Asahi Kasei Corporation, Nasu, chairman of the Economic Federation and advisor to the Tokyo Electric Power Company, Toriumi, chairman of Marubeni Corporation, and the Sumitomo Shoji boss, Miyahara.

"As part of this restructuring exercise, your economy could gain significantly by relocating design, development and manufacturing units of your large and medium companies to India, wherever our country offers comparative advantages. Here, I can hardly overemphasise the advantage of operating in a country of one billion consumers and an economy that is among the fastest growing in the world," Mr Shourie said.

According to him, the Japanese could benefit by tapping India's large and well-trained pool of knowledge workers through joint R&D in biotechnology, bio-informatics, embedded software, optics, new materials, and new energy technologies."

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## India rules out role in Afghan's 'internal affairs'

NEW DELHI, DEC. 9. India tonight ruled out any role in the "internal affairs" of Afghanistan and hoped that Pakistan would not repeat its past policies of supporting regimes such as the Taliban which exported terrorism. *S. P. Singh*

"India never interferes with the internal affairs of any country. New Delhi would like to strengthen its bilateral relations with Afghanistan and help in the reconstruction process besides strengthening economic relations," India's Special Envoy on Afghanistan, Mr. Satinder Lambah, told 'Star News'. — PTI

37

10 01 2001



# Delhi on Kabul honeymoon

Udayan Nambodiri  
New Delhi, December 9

INDIA, SINCE 1996 a non-entity where Afghanistan was concerned, is now being asked to attend every forum where the reconstruction and revival of the nation is debated. Later this month, New Delhi's special envoy for the country, S K Lambah, will attend the second meeting of donor nations in Brussels.

The earlier meeting, held at Washington on November 20, was the first of a series where developed nations and a few developing ones, including India, were invited. The Brussels meet will also prepare the ground for the first ministerial meeting of the donor group to be held in Tokyo in January.

The coming week may also see two important developments. First, the Indian mission, now functioning as a liaison office in Kabul under Gautam Mukhopadhyay, will be converted into a full-fledged embassy. Second, Ariana Afghan Airlines may announce the resumption of flights on the Amritsar-Kabul sector.

However, India is not keen on participating in the multinational force that was agreed to be deployed in Afghanistan in last week's Bonn meeting. Britain and Germany have already pledged units for this UN-mandated force.

"Normally India does not involve itself in non peacekeeping missions. The forces to be deployed in Afghanistan will not be working under a UN flag.



AJAY AGGARWAL/HT

NEW DEAL: Afghanistan interim government's Interior Minister Yunus Qanooni in New Delhi on Saturday.

Besides, an understanding has been reached not to take the help of neighbouring countries," a senior official said.

In its future dealings with Afghanistan, India would like to erase all perceptions that it is in any kind of race for influence with Pakistan. "Our approach is a non-hyphenated one," the diplomat said. "India had played an important role in Afghanistan's early modernisation and is keen to assist the

country find its own feet again."

Though Pakistan finds itself painted in a corner at the moment, New Delhi is realistic about the future of Kabul-Islamabad ties. Being neighbours with a long border between them and many unsettled problems, it will not be in any Kabul regime's interest to ignore Pakistan for long. In fact, outgoing President Burhanuddin Rabbani has already met with a Pakistani delegation in Dubai.

## Indian cops to tutor Afghans

Karimnagar (AP), December 9

INDIA WILL soon send a team of senior police officials to Kabul to help set up an efficient policing system there.

Union Home Minister LK Advani said this after inaugurating a private medical institute promoted by the relatives of his cabinet colleague, Ch. Vidyasagar Rao here on Sunday.

India has pledged full support to reconstruction efforts in the war-torn country. "We are willing to help in all possible ways in the reconstruction of Afghanistan," Advani said.

Recalling his recent meeting with the Home Minister of Afghanistan's interim regime, Yunus Qanooni in New Delhi, Advani said India had assured the visiting dignitary that all possible assistance would be given in reconstruction of the war-ravaged country.

The Afghan Minister had sought India's help in setting up an effective police organisation in his country, for which a team of senior Indian police officials with wide experience in the field would be sent to Afghanistan for necessary co-ordination. "The dislodging of the Taliban regime last week marked a major milestone in the history of Afghanistan.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

11 01 DEC 2001

# Delhi weighs response to W Asia crisis

Udayan Nambodiri  
New Delhi, December 4

A NERVOUS India claims it is "monitoring" developments in West Asia and has no choice but grumble over US President George Bush's justification of Israel's attacks. Meanwhile, Pakistan and China have condemned Israel's action which amounts to unilateral walkout from the Middle East peace process.

India is yet to come out with a response on the two-day-old crisis even though the head of a Government, Yasser Arafat, has

been personally targeted in Israeli bombings. External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh is learnt to be embarrassed over the developments, particularly since he had publicised his advice to his counterpart in Jerusalem, Shimon Peres, to "exercise restraint" during their telephonic talk yesterday.

A few hours after that call, Israeli helicopters attacked Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat's headquarters on the Gaza Strip. Today, a fresh attack was made on his Ramallah office in the West Bank. Jaswant

is learnt to be keen to telephone Arafat shortly, but the Government is not yet clear on what to tell him.

The Government is learnt to be uneasy about expressing sympathy with the Palestinian people at a juncture when Washington has backed the Israeli action. This is incidentally the first time in the last two years since the Vajpayee Government took office that Israeli aggression has been openly supported by the US.

In the Clinton era, there were supports from elements of the

Government while officially the US government asked Israel to stay in line with the Mid-East peace process.

The fact that the bombings are coinciding with the Parliamentary session has exacerbated the Government's position. Jaswant Singh enjoys the backing of most of the BJP leaders who are on Israel's side, but the Opposition is sure to go for the Government's jugular if it discards Arafat, an old ally.

The Congress has urged the Government to make a statement in conformity with its "time hon-

oured" tradition of backing the Palestinian cause. Party spokesman Jaipal Reddy today said that while his party condemned Sunday's suicide attacks, it was concerned at the "premeditated and brutal attacks by Israeli forces".

Reddy recalled that since the days of Mahatma Gandhi, India has been sympathetic towards the Palestinian cause. An attempt on the life of Arafat, according to him, was bound to weaken the Palestinian leader's position as he was all for the peace process.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 DEC 2001

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# Decks cleared for Indian role in Afghanistan

22/11

By Atul Aneja

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 22.** In preparing for a prominent role in post-conflict Afghanistan, the Indian diplomatic team that visited Kabul on Wednesday met the Northern Alliance military commander, Gen. Mohammad Fahim, besides the President, Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Gen. Fahim, earlier the intelligence chief, emerged the Northern Alliance's new military head after the assassination of Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud on September 9 at Khwaja Bahauddin in northern Afghanistan.

The Indian delegation led by the Government's special envoy, Mr. S. K. Lambah, met Mr. Rabbani for half-an-hour. The team then held separate discussions with Gen. Fahim and the interim Interior Minister, Mr. Yonus Quanooni, for an hour.

Talks were also held with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, who will be the Alliance's lead player in the intra-Afghan conference in Germany. The medical unit that accompanied the delegation has already initiated steps to revive the Indira Gandhi Hospital for Women and Children in Kabul.

The Indian embassy building is intact, the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said this evening, but added that there was some damage to the Ambassador's residence.

"The visit was very useful. It enabled us to meet Afghan leaders and get a firsthand information about the situation," Mr. S.K. Lambah told reporters after his return.

The presence of a "diplomatic liaison cell" in Kabul is seen here as a far-reaching event. By opening it, India has overridden the Taliban attempt to mar-

ginalise it from Afghanistan, sources said. India's diplomatic presence, which virtually ended when the Taliban seized Kabul in September 1996, is also seen here as a blow to Islamabad's attempt at acquiring a "strategic depth" against it in Afghanistan, the sources added.

Apart from India, Iran and Russia — the other two principal supporters of the Northern Alliance — have established a diplomatic niche in Afghanistan. The Russians are also expected to establish a consulate in the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, not far from Afghanistan's Central Asian border with Uzbekistan.

India is now keenly observing the outcome of the standoff at Kunduz. According to an assessment here, around 1,000 Pakistanis of the estimated 4,000 Taliban forces, with a large international component, are now encircled in Kunduz.

Their capture or killing can have a negative fallout in Islamabad. That explains the advocacy of the Pakistani President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, for facilitating the surrender of some persons "previously aligned with the Taliban," sources said.

The sources acknowledged that some of the most battle-hardened Taliban soldiers are concentrated in Kunduz. The Taliban took the decision to group in Kunduz to prevent the advance of the Alliance towards Kabul.

It hoped to drive a wedge along the land route to Mazar-e-Sharif which passes through the city. So long as Mazar-e-Sharif eluded capture, the Taliban assumed that the Alliance would find a land corridor for advancing towards Kabul difficult to access.

But with the U.S. ensuring supplies for the Northern Alliance from the air, the Taliban could prevent the fall of neither Mazar-e-Sharif nor Kabul.

THE HINDU

11/22/96

# India makes veiled attack on P-5 members on troop contribution

By Dharam Shourie

NEW YORK: India, which has so far participated in 35 out of 58 U.N. peacekeeping missions, made a veiled attack on the five permanent (P-5) members of the Security Council for not contributing enough troops for peace duties in strife-torn areas.

India's representative Y.K. Sinha said at a meeting of the special political committee on peacekeeping operations that most of the countries entrusted with the responsibility for maintenance of peace and security were not contributing troops for peacekeeping missions.

The council has to shed its "myopic vision" and contribute

"meaningfully" towards strengthening the peacekeeping process, he said. U.S., UK, Russia, China and France are the five P-5 countries.

More than 58,000 Indian peacekeepers have participated in various operations, including in some of the most difficult missions in Africa, and over 100 Indians have laid down their lives for the cause of the world peace. In forthright remarks, Mr Sinha said the UN peacekeeping efforts should not be subverted by "false doctrines, wasted and narrow ends and diverted to serve other agendas." Mere strengthening of the UN department of peacekeeping would not suffice if the "crucial lessons of the

past are ignored," he added.

The P-5 countries should at least support a culture of consultations with troop contributing countries which contribute meaningfully to the decision-making process that has a direct impact on the lives of troops serving the UN, Mr Sinha said. He warned that this "anomaly" could lead to disenchantment of troop contributors and leave the council "little else but the holding of most pointless thematic debates."

Demanding strengthening of meaningful consultations, Mr Sinha criticised the permanent members for continuing to "block and frustrate" the will of the majority. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

23 NOV 2007

# A voyage and the elusive vision — II

By P. S. Suryanarayana

10-10 M/U  
**I**MAGE POLITICS is not the real answer to the difficulty that Official India encounters in acquiring a strategic vision and a roving focus to keep pace with the U.S.-led campaign against global terrorism. Yet, the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, should have served India's cause better by raising its public profile during his 10-day foreign tour that concluded by November 14. It is not that Pakistan may have eclipsed India. It is more a question of how India can influence the major powers.

Some of the gains that India has made are easy to identify. A top American official tends to regard New Delhi as "a natural ally" while the United States President, Mr. George W. Bush, praises India's "fantastic ability to grow" in the context of its "greatest export" being nothing less than its "brainpower". The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, is determined to act in concert with India to combat international terror, including the rising menace of the esoteric nuclear terrorism. The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, is cognisant of India's prime relevance to the global community's anti-terror agenda.

More significantly, the U.S. has now expressed a firm desire to begin a "new strategic framework dialogue" with India in the context of America's missile defence plans. Nuclear energy and the civil space sector have also been identified for the U.S.-India linkages of the future. The potentially beneficial bilateralism of this order is not to be made light of, given the often-skewed U.S.-India contacts of the past. Prior to Mr. Vajpayee's latest talks in Washington, the U.S. had substantively acknowledged India's credentials as an emerging global power that could be expected to act responsibly with regard to the nuclear weapons in its arsenal. Interestingly, the latest U.S.-India accord speaks of an expansion of cooperation in regard to New Delhi's "export controls" in this sensitive sphere. This need not be considered, however, as a dissonant note. There is nothing in the formulation to indicate a definitive American vote of no-confidence in India's behaviour which is generally regarded to be quite impeccable. The political sweep of the latest U.S.-India statement raises the possibility of

mutually beneficial interactions on transfer of America's dual-use technology in civil-military spheres as well. In all, an impressive story of bilateral diplomacy.

India seems to have found no fault lines at all in its relationship with Russia as exemplified by their latest joint statement on strategic issues and the Moscow Declaration on international terrorism. The buzz word is to fight globalised terror with particular reference to its emerging nuclear dimension. A robust emphasis of this kind on a direct confrontation with the terrorists at large makes for some contrast with the U.S.-India accent on a more subtle form of waging this battle through a

But the ongoing international campaign against terror, with particular reference to Afghanistan as the fissionable nucleus of terror, also figured. Moreover, Britain is known to have had a historical association with the genesis of the Kashmir dispute. So, Mr. Blair has made clear that Pakistan's tactical collaboration with the West in the current anti-terror movement will not produce any British tilt, one way or the other, in regard to the Kashmir question. In any case, the British leg of Mr. Vajpayee's tour was by and large overshadowed by his diplomatic endeavours in Washington and Moscow.

Mr. Vajpayee was specifically invited by

***Mr. Vajpayee should have served India's cause better by raising its public profile during his foreign tour... It is not that Pakistan may have eclipsed India. It is more a question of how India can influence the major powers.***

joint initiative against cyber terrorism.

An equally salient commonality concerning the Indo-Russian ties and the U.S.-India equation pertains to the new promise of cooperation in the nuclear energy sector. A signature tune is that of the Indo-Russian accord on the Koodankulam project. In a sense, Russia's willingness to help India set up an updated nuclear energy plant at Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu can be seen as a friendly gesture that goes beyond the cold logic of strategic considerations. Being addressed without real costs to India is its traditional opposition to the idea of allowing all its nuclear power plants and projects to be brought under the "fullscope safeguards" of the International Atomic Energy Agency. To this extent, India may find that its moral credentials as a power possessing nuclear weapons may also be suitably advanced with Russia's indirect assistance. With the U.S., too, agreeing to collaborate with New Delhi in the nuclear energy sector, the chances are that the Indo-Russian model as regards the Koodankulam project will come under U.S. scrutiny.

The vibrance of bilateralism marked the meeting between Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Tony Blair in London on November 12.

the leaders of these three countries in the context of the snowballing terrorism issue and for the additional reason of a rotating bilateral summitry in the case of Russia. Yet, India has hardly gained any realistic support for its demand that it should have a definitive say over the future of Afghanistan as a terror-free zone. Even Russia has not openly backed India's claims to join the U.N.-sponsored 'six-plus-two mechanism' as regards Afghanistan. The 'mechanism' consists of all the geographical neighbours of Afghanistan, inclusive of Pakistan and China, besides the U.S. and Russia in their capacities as the former interventionists in the Afghan affairs. The U.S., too, has not conceded India's legitimate claims for a say over Afghanistan which lies in New Delhi's geopolitical neighbourhood.

With the Taliban-Osama axis coming under a possibly decisive siege by the U.S. and its military ally (Britain) at this moment, India's handicap can hardly be exaggerated. This, more than the transparent manner in which Pakistan overshadowed India in the international media arena during Mr. Vajpayee's presence in New York for two days from November 10, should be of greater concern

to New Delhi at this time. In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Vajpayee attacked Pakistan in a familiar but veiled manner. Pakistan's President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, utilised his subsequent turn at the podium to portray Kashmir as a "root" cause of terrorism and offered to formalise with India a nuclear test ban treaty. The pundits on the Indian side have of course lost no time to point out the futility of such bilateral gambits in a globalised world.

Gen. Musharraf has, on the other hand, succeeded in riding the crest of a media wave in the proximity of Mr. Vajpayee in New York. Political punditry has it, of course, that Gen. Musharraf's gain may prove to be illusory. It is said that the incremental decimation of the Taliban as at this moment might only complicate his own calculus of having a Pakistan-friendly regime in Afghanistan in the anticipated context of the Taliban's final fall. But the bottomline, which Official India can hardly ignore, is that Gen. Musharraf has been working hard to convince the international community that Pakistan must be an intrinsic part of a solution to the terrorism issue without being seen as a painful component of the problem itself.

On a different plane, Mr. Bush is beginning to apply a doctrinaire approach in regard to international terror, somewhat in the manner of George Kennan who enunciated the old thesis about the containment of communism. India, therefore, has little option but to trim its sails to the winds from the U.S. that might caress instead of toppling those who, in New Delhi's perspective, are no genuine heroes of the anti-terror movement. This does not mean that Official India cannot bat on a sticky wicket. What India surely needs is a strategic vision that should focus not only on the ideal of a terror-free world but also on the more important aspects of realpolitik in the campaign against terror. Proverbially, New Delhi must learn to run with the hare and hunt with the hound. While India deserves a place in the inner circles of the larger anti-terror coalition, the American idea of job-specific sub-alliances or sliding/floating squads must suit New Delhi.

(Concluded)

THE HINDU

21 NOV 2001

# A voyage and the elusive vision — I

By P. S. Suryanarayana

19-10 20/11  
**D**OES AMERICA need a foreign policy? The poser, popularised by Dr. Henry Kissinger, reflects the present status of the U.S. as the sole superpower. Regardless of the perceptions of this wily 'guru' of strategic wisdom, the U.S. now finds itself in a state of siege which it hopes to overcome. In contrast, India's dilemma today is whether it can at all fashion a foreign policy to cope with the terror-stricken world. The requisite vision continues to elude the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The Prime Minister's grand tactical voyage at this time to the seats of international power — the post-Soviet Kremlin in Moscow, the White House in Washington, the United Nations headquarters in New York and 10, Downing Street in London — has not reduced the burdens of his quest. Indeed, Official India is still groping to join the major powers and secure a definitive role to reshape the terror-traumatised world order. However, the reasons of his failure go beyond New Delhi's ineptitude which arguably is only of moderate intensity. Moreover, India has had no hand in creating the present complex environment on the world stage. But, at this moment, Mr. Vajpayee not only lacks the fortuitous Midas touch but also the fortitude and raw energy needed to turn adversity into a golden opportunity.

Public diplomacy is an essential ingredient of the new-style pursuit of foreign policy goals around the world, and the Prime Minister hardly tried his hand at it during his 10-day swing across four time-zones that ended by November 14. Behind the scenes, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, and the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, have certainly recognised India's potential skills for a global role. Yet, India has not been co-opted by either of these two powers as a dynamic ally, as distinct from an ideological partner or an amiable friend, in the ongoing fight against international terrorism.

The defenders of India's low-profile status, seen by them as a low-risk affair of genuine pragmatism, say New Delhi is not really out of the reckoning in the global arena as a result. They cite the sentimental effusiveness of the joint statements issued at the end of Mr. Vajpayee's talks in

Moscow on November 6 and in Washington on November 9. This, however, is either a classic example of missing the wood for the trees or a simple case of making a virtue of the modest bargain. In fact, the Vajpayee administration cannot be happy at being seen by the international community as a crucial but secondary adjunct to the U.S.-led anti-terror coalition. Pakistan, on the other hand, occupies a conspicuous corner of the coalition as a flamboyant convert to America's latest cause. This is so despite the fact that Washington's ire remains directed against

second fiddle to Washington. It is in this larger context that Mr. Vajpayee's latest talks in Moscow as also Washington and London must be evaluated. With India engaging China as also France and Germany besides Japan on separate tracks, the picture of New Delhi's new activism is officially claimed to be complete. Yet, the nodal relevance of the U.S.-U.K.-Russian interactions to the current anti-terror campaign enhances the importance of the outcome of Mr. Vajpayee's talks with their leaders.

Since the completion of these talks, the

***India must have a strategic vision, focussed entirely on its national interest as also its global concerns, in the campaign against terror.***

the Taliban, Islamabad's original protegee in terror-infested Afghanistan, and against Osama bin Laden, the universally reviled evil-tyrant of terror. Now, ironies are not unknown to history, but Official India should have something to answer for this one.

It bears repetition that India could, as a ranking U.S. official told this journalist, choose its own role within the anti-terror squad. To sustain the present boost-phase of the coalition's multi-modal political missile against terror, the U.S. is said to be sensitive to the wishes of its associates. However, a logical question is whether Pakistan has exercised an autonomous say over the role it plays within the anti-terror coalition and whether the U.S. has not at all suggested or demanded that Islamabad take a particular course. The answer, even if it borders on a U.S.-indicated role for Pakistan, does not make the going easier for India.

Now, Francis Fukuyama may not have pleased everyone by outlining "the end of history" as far back as 1989. Yet, the Bush administration is convinced that the apocalypse-like terrorist offensive against America on September 11 this year has marked the beginning of a new history in mankind's civilisational march. India cannot afford to stay out of this march, although New Delhi does not have to play

free fall of the Taliban inside Afghanistan may have already given India a fresh opportunity to try and play a more definitive role than at present. The new context for any such possible role is America's notion of creating sliding coalitions or cascading alliances, each somewhat different from the earlier one, in a possibly long battle against terror on multiple fronts. Yet, the fundamental requirement is that India must have a strategic vision, focussed entirely on its national interest as also its global concerns, in the campaign against terror.

The breezy informality of Mr. Vajpayee's talks with Mr. Putin, famous for protocol, was such that the Russian leader shook hands with this correspondent, among others, before the start of the delegation-level talks on November 6. It was a soft handshake by a 'strong' leader. And the soft tone of the Indo-Russian declarations can still be regarded as the silken frill of their toughness of purpose in engaging the U.S. on the terror issue. Russia, in regard to Chechnya, and in fact India, with reference to Jammu and Kashmir, feel strongly about Washington's relative neglect of the terror-related concerns of the other countries at this stage.

The first phase of a promised American agenda with a global canvas may have much to do with Washington's Osama-

centric fury. However, Russia and India still appear interested in exploring the possibility of not only acting jointly without reference to America but also joining hands with the U.S. wherever necessary. The anti-terror notion of a viable strategic triangle, which might connect the Kremlin and the White House with New Delhi, is overshadowed by the Indo-Russian accent in the Moscow Declaration of November 6 on the centrality of the United Nations as also international law. Matching America in using the prism of its own self-interest to identify terror, the Indo-Russian declaration has condemned opportunistic ideas of self-determination. India and Russia are of the view that "violent actions being perpetrated under the slogan of self-determination (in Kashmir and Chechnya), in reality, represent acts of terrorism which in most cases have strong international links." India and Russia are aware, too, of the need for a "struggle" against "new challenges in international terrorism".

When Moscow and New Delhi have taken their collective cause directly to the American court in respect of their joint statement of November 6 on strategic issues. The stated goal of India and Russia is to develop "a multi-polar world based on a new cooperative security order." The nuanced shades that might distinguish such a "cooperative security order" from Mr. Bush's own vision of a "new" globalised "strategic framework" are left as much to the imagination as to some hard bargaining. Mr. Putin and Mr. Vajpayee have also expressed "support to preserving (the) existing arms control and disarmament agreements including the (Soviet-American) Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty (of 1972)." By mid-November, though, Mr. Putin and Mr. Bush have now agreed to soft-pedal their differences over the ABM issue concerning the permissibility of missile defences. Where then is the Russian commitment to "preserving" the ABM Treaty? In view of such lightning-quick developments on the international political scene at this moment, India should not only acquire a strategic vision for reshaping the terrorised global order but also learn how to shift the focus as needed.

THE HINDU

20 NOV 2001

# India to play active role on Afghan govt, says Vajpayee

9. P. P. M. 18/11

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

50-10

NEW DELHI, Nov. 17. - Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee today said India supported the war against terrorism believing that the defeat of the Taliban and the Al-Qaida in Afghanistan was in its "own vital national interest". India would play an "active" role in establishment of a post-Taliban regime.

All murderous groups, wherever they may be, must be declared terrorist organisations by civilised nations.

"Their sources of funding have to be plugged. Countries giving safe sanctuaries or any other kind of support to them must be imposed with sanctions", Prime Minister Mr Vajpayee said.

"We are satisfied the war in Afghanistan is now showing all signs of coming to an early and successful conclusion. The Taliban are on the run from city after city in Afghanistan," he told the day-long chief ministers' conference on internal security organised by the home ministry.

The Prime Minister said the UN was trying to put in place a stable, broad-based and representative administration in that country. "India will play an active and positive role in this endeavour."

He said the audacious nature of the terrorist attacks on 11 September made it inescapable for the USA to launch, within the framework of an international coalition, an offensive on Al-Qaida and the Taliban.

"We in India support this war not only out of a sense of solidarity with the international resolve, but also because of our firm belief that the defeat of the Taliban and dismantling of the Al-Qaida network is in our own vital national interest".

In an obvious reference to Pakistan and Afghanistan, Mr Vajpayee said New Delhi has always insisted that some of India's neighbours had made export of terrorism and religious extremism an "important instrument" of their state policy.

During his recent visit to Russia, the USA and the UK, India's principled stand on terrorism and religious extremism was "highly appreciated", he said.

Major nations around the world have acknowledged - some of them for the first time - that there cannot be double standards in identifying and tackling terrorism".

"The self-evident truth that terrorism and killing of innocent people cannot be justified on any political, ideological or religious grounds has now become evident even to those who earlier preferred to ignore it or to rationalise it", the Prime Minister said.

THE STATESMAN

18 NOV 2002

1998 Review  
51-6

## RIDICULED BY US

### Vajpayee's shuttle diplomacy

UNLIKE Pakistan, India is not a frontline state in so far as America's war in Afghanistan is concerned. What was the need for Atal Behari Vajpayee to rush to Washington, only to be humiliated by American leaders and the media. The State Department, in its annual report for 2001, has referred to Vajpayee as "leader of the BJP who is associated with the RSS which has affiliation with Hindu extremist organisations which have been implicated in violence and discrimination against Christians and Muslims." In a nutshell, Vajpayee, is a fascist communalist. In the Holocaust Memorial in Los Angeles, LK Advani's photograph has already been hung next to Adolf Hitler's for his role in Babari Masjid demolition. To the average American, Hindu fundamentalism is akin to Muslim fundamentalism. Had not the Hindus killed nearly 1,000 Muslims in Mumbai in the 1992-93 communal riots? Exactly one year and four days before the terrorist attack on New York and Washington on 11 September, Vajpayee, in an address to the American Congress, warned of the danger of a spillover of terrorism on American soil. Though he was given a standing ovation, no heed was paid to his warning. Again in the aftermath of 11 September, Vajpayee offered the USA all facilities to mount an attack on Afghanistan. President Bush ignored the offer. India cannot possibly side with Afghanistan, Pakistan or the *jehadis*. This gives the country an opportunity to view the Afghan war with more detachment than others. By waiting in Washington for three days for a 20-minute audience with Bush, Vajpayee has reduced India to a craven supporter of America's war on terrorism, which fails to recognise terrorist attacks from the same quarters against India in Kashmir.

In sharp contrast, Bush travelled to New York from Washington to give a red-carpet welcome to Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf. At the dinner hosted by Kofi Annan in honour of the visiting heads of states, Musharraf was seated at the head table along with Bush whereas Vajpayee was allotted a table with the hoi polloi. It is just as well Vajpayee skipped the dinner. By and large, the American media ignored Vajpayee's presence. Musharraf made it to the front page of the prestigious *New York Times*. Considered an untouchable by the West at the time he overthrew the elected government of Nawaz Sharif in Pakistan in a bloodless *coup d'etat*, General Musharraf has suddenly become the 'good boy' of the Americans, a brave, courageous and credible leader of the Islamic world. He has even been compared to Kamal Ataturk. Vajpayee's steadfast refusal to negotiate with Musharraf has been attributed to his being a prisoner of the RSS ideology, as the US State Department's annual report reveals. He should have realised, before undertaking his three-nation tour, that he was representing a proud nation of one billion people rather than the BJP.

THE STATESMAN

17 NOV 2001



# PM just listened as Bush talked

Vir Sanghvi  
New York, November 10

SIX DAYS into his three-nation trip, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is beginning to seem like a man totally at peace with himself. The old Vajpayee wit is back — he held an audience of NRIs spellbound in Washington DC on Thursday — and his confidence levels are high.

Vajpayee is the first Indian Prime Minister to fly directly from Washington to Moscow. Moreover, he is the first Indian leader to have had successful meetings with the heads of both the Russian and American governments.

In Washington, Vajpayee also became the first Indian Prime Minister to find that he had nothing to ask for and no explaining to do at his meeting with the President of the United States. Instead, it was President George W. Bush who did all the talking and explaining.

Vajpayee had made a tactical decision not to raise Pakistan during his talks with Bush. He did not need to. Bush spent almost all of the meeting explaining America's Afghanistan strategy and candidly conceding that the US faced a task of mammoth proportions. The US needed India's support, he said.

Just as Vajpayee did not mention Pakistan, Bush did not mention Kashmir. Unusually, for a meeting between a US President and an Indian Prime Minister, there were no calls for restraint and no suggestion that it was time to talk to Pakistan

over Kashmir.

Bush's reticence on the subject of Kashmir may have been prompted by India's anger at what it perceives as unnecessary interference. For instance, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is still paying the price for his remarks about the Kashmir assembly bombing.

After expressing regrets, Annan gratuitously added that such incidents made it imperative to solve the Kashmir dispute.

India has responded with cold anger. Vajpayee's programme on Saturday included meetings with the Presidents of Iran and Cyprus and the Prime Minister of Mauritius. But no formal meeting was scheduled with Annan who was told that Vajpayee might say hello to him when he visited the UN. The Secretary General's office was upset but Vajpayee's staff remained implacable.

While some observers have worried about the reception that President Musharraf received in New York, Vajpayee says he is not worried. The Americans may need Pakistan at present but they know that Musharraf is an unreliable ally. So while Musharraf pays a heavy domestic price for his new-found importance, India will sit back and watch.

After all, the Prime Minister has been assured that ties between Washington and New Delhi are of a long-term nature and do not depend on any crisis. And Vajpayee is confident enough to wait.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

11 NOV 2001

# PM calls for ground war in Afghanistan

Q F Pashay  
GK-1  
8/11

By Dileep Padgaonkar  
Times News Network

MOSCOW: It was in a distinctly upbeat mood that Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee concluded his visit to Russia on Wednesday. Addressing a news conference before leaving for Washington, a visibly satisfied Mr Vajpayee announced that India and Russia had taken "important decisions in the security area". He said, however, it would not be appropriate at this stage to say anything about the substance of these decisions.

Mr Vajpayee's remarks revealed that on critical issues such as international terrorism, the situation in Afghanistan, Kashmir and talks with Pakistan, India and Russia had reached a much greater degree of understanding than was evident from the joint statement issued by the two sides on Tuesday.

The PM said President Vladimir Putin had agreed that the 6+2 mechanism, set up to deal with the situation in Afghanistan, needed to be expanded to include India. The Russian President, Mr Vajpayee added, would raise the matter with other world leaders.

Mr Vajpayee said that to be effective, the bombings in Afghanistan, which India endorsed, needed to be supplemented with the engagement of ground troops. He said India was prepared to extend tangible cooperation to the United States but that so far, the latter had not asked for any cooperation, even in areas

which had been identified.

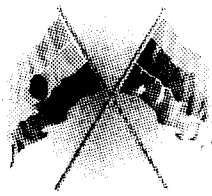
Mr Vajpayee said India and Russia had both agreed that the fight against terrorism could not be conducted on the basis of "double standards". According to a statement released before the news conference, both sides rejected any justification for terrorism. "Partial solutions, based on short-term political considerations, can only aggravate the problem in the long-run," the statement added.

In this context, the PM revealed that Mr Putin had endorsed the Indian stand that talks with Pakistan could not be resumed unless they created a conducive atmosphere in which to hold them.

Mr Vajpayee said India and Russia had agreed to diversify their trade relations. They were exploring ways in which the release of the Rupee Repayment Fund would be used, for example to modernise the Indian Iron and Steel Company which, in turn, would generate greater demand for capital equipment from Russia.

His remarks appeared to be laying the ground for talks with President George W. Bush in Washington. Meanwhile, according to Indian officials who spoke to TNN, Enron has been mounting a vigorous lobbying effort. This could introduce a jarring note in the Vajpayee-Bush talks, not least because India is determined to strongly counter the Enron offensive.

► See Edit: Kremlin Connexion, Page 10



# India and the U.S.-Russian alliance

By C. Raja Mohan

9.8 PM  
110-10  
8/11

**T**HE PRIME Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, begins his engagements in Washington today on the eve of a historic breakthrough in U.S.-Russian relations. When Mr. Vajpayee departs from the United States at the end of the week, the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, will arrive in Washington to proclaim a new alliance with America. Mr. Vajpayee must make the best of this serendipitous moment by extending strong Indian support to the emerging Russo-American alliance against international terrorism and the agreement between the two for a new strategic framework to manage nuclear weapons and missile defences.

When the American and Russian leaders meet in Washington and on Mr. George W. Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, during November 12-15, they are likely to announce a grand bargain that begins a process of integrating Russia into the West. Even as Mr. Vajpayee was signing declarations in Moscow earlier this week, American and Russian negotiators were hard at work giving final touches to a package of agreements that address their differences on missile defences and create the basis for a new partnership between the Cold War rivals.

The grand bargain between Washington and Moscow is being structured at two levels. The first is about nuclear weapons and missile defences. Russia and the U.S. are expected to announce unilateral reductions in their nuclear arsenals by about two-thirds. From about 6,000 nuclear weapons each, the two nations will come down to around 2,000 weapons apiece over a period of time. There will be no extended negotiations to produce an arms control treaty of the old kind; instead the unilateral but reciprocal reductions will be based on the assumption that the present arsenals are obscenely large and serve no purpose.

On the difficult question of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972, the two sides have found a way to finesse their differences. The U.S. is no longer insisting on unilaterally scrapping the treaty, which it has called "a relic of the Cold War". Instead it is willing to move more slowly towards a deployment of missile defences. At the same time, the Russians have come

*India, which shares the values of the European Enlightenment, must necessarily position itself along with the U.S. and Russia in coping with the new global challenges.*

round to accepting that at least "in part" the ABM Treaty reflects old thinking. Russia now may be ready to modify the ABM Treaty to allow some new testing of missile defences by the U.S. Both sides get what they want. For Russia the ABM Treaty is preserved albeit in a modified form. The negotiated changes would let the U.S. proceed ahead with the tests immediately on the agenda.

Philosophically, both sides are in agreement that nuclear deterrence can no longer be based on offensive weapons alone, and that the introduction of defences is now technologically feasible and doctrinally necessary. In that sense the agreement vindicates the Indian assessment, reflected in its enthusiastic support to the Bush proposals last May, that a "defensive transition" in nuclear doctrine is "inevitable". India also hoped that the transition would not be unilateral and managed through talks between the U.S. and Russia. The Putin-Bush deal on moving towards missile defences puts Mr. Vajpayee in the happy situation of reiterating the Indian endorsement of the new strategic framework.

This is one of the core political goals of the Bush administration, and Mr. Vajpayee will be right in claiming that India is in tune now with all the four aspects of the strategic framework: radical nuclear force reductions, strengthening non-proliferation regime, counter-proliferation and missile defences. In endorsing missile defences and nuclear cuts envisaged by the two great powers, Mr. Vajpayee can also demand a larger Indian role in managing the global nuclear non-proliferation regime by becoming a member of the various export control mechanisms such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group. He can also proclaim Indian interest in a cooperative counter-proliferation strategy that hopes to deal with the emerging threat of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of

terrorists and other non-state actors.

Beyond missile defences, the U.S. and Russia are on the verge of unveiling a political partnership in the context of the war against international terrorism and beyond. Immediately after the September 11 attacks, Mr. Putin announced Russian empathy to America and stood his military forces down, when America's went on high alert. He followed it up with an offer of direct military cooperation as well as a signal to the Central Asian states to give bases to the U.S. in its military campaign against the Taliban. With the war against international terrorism bound to last many years, Russia brings many assets to the table — its geographic proximity to West and Central Asia,

## WORLD VIEW

its role as a major oil producer in stabilising the international energy markets at a time when uncertainty looms large over the Gulf and its intelligence resources on extremists and terrorist groups operating near its southern borders. In return, the U.S. is offering a place of honour for Russia at the top table of world affairs and clearing the ground for its integration into the Western economic and political structures. These have been goals pursued by post-Soviet Russian leaders for a decade. Mr. Putin is now all set to realise them. For the U.S., Russia has finally been transformed from an evil empire to a strategic ally. The Bush administration instinctively understood it needed the Russian cooperation to move forward on missile defences. After September 11, the imperatives of the war against terrorism has made Russia the most valuable new ally for the U.S.

Washington is also making moves to lift long-standing restrictions against economic cooperation with Moscow. It is likely to remove Russia from the ambit of the notorious Jackson-Vainik amendment that limited trade cooperation, offer most favoured nation (MFN) status on a permanent basis, and facilitate Russian entry in-

to the World Trade Organisation. As the Russian economy takes off under Mr. Putin, American corporations are bullish on the Russian market and are pushing for a normalisation of relations with Moscow. The U.S. and Russia did cooperate in defeating fascism in Europe in the middle of the last century. But that cooperation dissolved into an enduring Cold War. The attempts at a *modus vivendi* after the collapse of the Soviet Union faltered over the last decade. But now the two great powers are poised to clinch a framework for political alliance and economic cooperation.

As he deals with Washington at this historic moment, Mr. Vajpayee might be tempted to focus on a number of issues at the top of his mind — the role of Pakistan in the international coalition against terrorism, the much-sought-after phase two in the current American war that will focus on terrorism in Kashmir, the future political arrangements in Kabul and the Indian role in shaping them. Mr. Vajpayee would do well to put aside these tactical questions that pale into insignificance in the light of the plans by Messrs. Bush and Putin to transform the global political landscape. The Bush-Putin deal will overcome the last historic rift within the Euro-Atlantic world, and unite that part for the first time since the modern European state system emerged. It brings all the major powers of the Euro-Atlantic world on the same side to confront new threats to international security.

India, which shares the values of the European Enlightenment, must necessarily position itself along with the U.S. and Russia in coping with the new global challenges. As extremist and pre-modern ideas wedded to violence and intolerance challenge the Enlightenment project, India must stand shoulder to shoulder with Washington, Moscow and the entire Euro-Atlantic world to defeat the forces of regression. The current war against international terrorism is in essence a war of ideas. And that is what Mr. Vajpayee must focus on in Washington. India's immediate security concerns can be handled by New Delhi on its own and as part of the transformation of great power relations and the neighbourhood that is under way. They do not require any extra emphasis by Mr. Vajpayee in Washington.

THE HINDU

8 NOV 2001

# Opp to PM: Talk to Pervez but not in NY

9-f 10/30/97 SF-1 2/1/10

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 30. — The all-party meeting today endorsed Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's decision not to meet General Pervez Musharraf on the sides of the UN General Assembly session in New York next month.

In Islamabad, Gen. Musharraf said he wouldn't beg India for a dialogue, adds Reuters. He said he wasn't deterred by India's decision not to hold a summit in New York. "I've always been willing..., but if Mr Vajpayee doesn't want to meet me, I'm the last person willing to meet him."

After the all-party meeting, some Opposition parties, however, said the doors to talks with Pakistan should be kept open.

Mrs Sonia Gandhi said: "We welcome dialogue and don't support the view that doors should be closed. The interest of our nation must be taken care of." The Congress asked the government to take steps to help avoid a war of civilisations. And the USA should be asked to recognise cross-border terrorism in J&K.

The CPI-M leader, Mr Somnath Chatterjee, said: "We told Mr Vajpayee that he should meet Gen. Musharraf, else how would he solve the problem...?" Left leaders said none of them had objected to Mr Vajpayee's decision and told him that there should be no talks with Pakistan till it took steps to de-escalate violence in Kashmir.

Mr Vajpayee said India didn't want the Taliban in a future Afghan government and had conveyed it to all those who mattered.

THE STATESMAN

3 1 OCT 2001

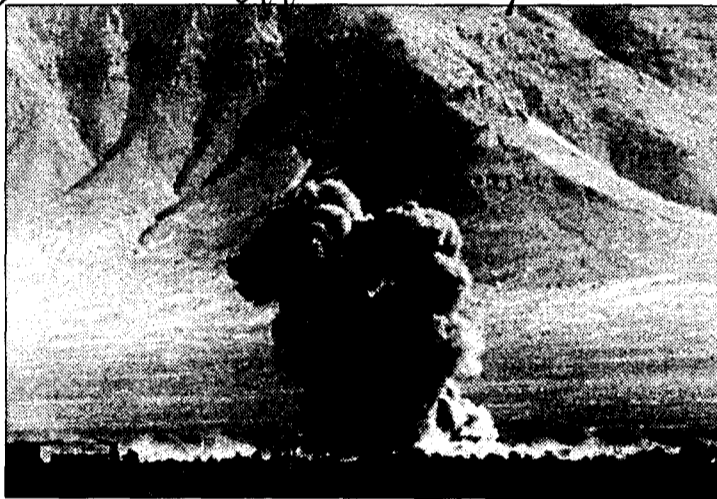
# India also wants to script Afghan future

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 30 OCTOBER

INDIA HAS made a strong pitch to be an important part of an international set-up to determine the future of a post-Taliban Afghanistan. In a letter to 12 heads of governments written on October 27, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee said: "We support the suggestion of a group comprising the G-8 and the neighbourhood of Afghanistan, including India, with the participation of the United Nations. We believe such a mechanism will be far more representative and effective than the other forums which exist today."

India's determined diplomacy in this respect is significant because none of the major international groups involved in Afghanistan have an Indian presence.

The most prominent of them, the six-plus-two framework, has been largely ineffective in the last



**Plumes of smoke rise over Bagram airport after US jets bomb Taliban positions north of Kabul. — Reuters**

few years in making any difference in Afghanistan. With Pakistan refusing to countenance an Indian presence and the US and Iran not exactly hitting it off, the forum had dwindled to a non-

functioning body.

Mr Vajpayee's letter was sent to the Prime Ministers of UK, Germany, Italy and Japan and the Presidents of US, Russia, China, France, Iran, Uzbekistan,

Tajikistan and Turkmenistan — countries which as members of the G-8 or the neighbourhood have a strong stake in the future of Afghanistan.

It was recently that India said the future of Afghanistan affected India's national interests. It set up joint working groups on Afghanistan with a number of key countries, like the US, Russia and Iran, all of which are members of the six-plus-two network.

But without a significant rearrangement of the international framework, India's role will remain confined to bilateral lobbying with the member states, while Pakistan remains a full-fledged member of the body.

With a general recognition of Pakistan's role in the creation of the Taliban, there's shrinking support for active Pakistani role in the post-Taliban set-up, especially from the central Asian countries like Russia and Iran.

*The Economic Times*

31 OCT 2001

VK  
ALL-PARTY CONCERN OVER CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

# Taliban should have no role, says PM

H.D.  
31/10

9 - Sonia

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 30.** The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said India was making strenuous efforts to promote a broadbased post-conflict government in Afghanistan in which the Taliban did not have any role.

At a meeting with leaders of political parties here today, Mr. Vajpayee said he had written to heads of 12 countries on October 27 conveying to them New Delhi's priorities vis-a-vis Afghanistan in a post-conflict dispensation.

The Opposition expressed concern over casualties to innocent civilians and aid workers. The Congress urged the Government to be vigilant and prevent communal flareups in the country while the move by the Vajpayee Government to bring in a new anti-terrorist law, the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO), came under sharp attack.

Briefing correspondents, the Union Minister, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, said the Prime Minister informed the Opposition leaders that India was of the firm opinion that the Taliban should have no place in a future government since there was nothing like moderate or hardline Taliban and it was difficult to distinguish them as such.

Mr. Vajpayee said that while no one could say with certainty as to how long the war in Afghanistan would continue, the present operations had destroyed the Taliban's air power but not much damage appeared to have been inflicted on its ground strength.

On humanitarian grounds, India has already pledged 10 lakh tonnes of wheat and medicines and more could be given as per requirement. The only uncertainty was whether or not it was reaching those in need of it.

Mr. Mahajan said the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, told the leaders that the Government was in agreement with the Opposition's strong views that the war was not to be

seen as a clash of civilisation or religion much less against Islam or Muslims. Similarly, he said, the Government shared the concern that innocent civilians and aid workers were harmed in the course of these attacks.

Mr. Jaswant Singh told the meeting that India had conveyed New Delhi's views to the United States and Britain urging them to exercise utmost care in carrying out the attacks.

The External Affairs Minister also clarified that India was in touch with not just the big nations but countries within the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth, Africa and Asia. He admitted that while this may not have received wide publicity, India was also in regular touch

with the U.N. Secretary-General and his special envoy in Afghanistan.

In his conclusive remarks, the Prime Minister expressed concern over the sporadic incidents of violence in Malegoan and other areas, stating that these were warning signals. He appealed to all States to take preventive action and nip any such activity in the bud.

Mr. Mahajan said the Opposition did raise the issue of Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, while there was no reference either on the possibility of a meeting between Mr. Vajpayee and the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, or to the safety of nuclear weapons there.

## POTO draconian: Sonia

By Javed M. Ansari

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 30.** It wasn't exactly smooth sailing for the Government at the all-party meeting. It got a taste of what was in store on the new anti-terrorism bill with almost all the Opposition parties attacking it.

The Congress party drew the Government's attention to the effect the bombing and the civilian casualties were having on the people. "We have for weeks been witnessing the terrible pictures of civilians and children suffering, and of Red Cross installations being hit... these are causing great concern and anguish amongst the people, especially the minorities," said the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi. She also pointed out that in the Islamic world the current campaign in Afghanistan was being viewed as a campaign against Muslims, and called for special efforts to explain the reality to the people.

On whether the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, should meet Gen. Musharraf, Ms. Gandhi said her party had welcomed the dialogue and that the door of negotiations should always be left open. "But we have made it clear that whenever the dialogue takes place, the interest of the nation must be kept foremost in mind." Ms. Gandhi also indicated that her party would oppose the Government move to enact the new anti-terrorist law. "We are totally opposed to it, its draconian ordinance. Aren't the laws that we have sufficient?" she asked.

The CPI(M) described today's all-party meeting as an "exercise in tokenism" and minced no words in criticising it. "This was merely an exercise in tokenism," said Mr. Somnath Chatterjee. Mr. Chatterjee said the Government had little to offer and that the Opposition was more forthcoming than the Government.

Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav of the SP said he had told the Prime Minister that destroying Afghanistan would not bring about an end to terrorism. His party supported the fight against terrorism, but it had to be fought worldwide, including in Kashmir.

THE HINDU

31/10

## Probe Pak help to Taliban, <sup>5/17</sup> <sub>20/10</sub> India tells USA

NEW DELHI, Oct. 19. — India today asked the USA to probe Pakistan's role in encouraging the Taliban and other fundamentalist forces who have targeted democratic countries.

"New Delhi is of firm opinion that people who've been part of the problem can't be part of the solution," the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Omar Abdullah, told the American ambassador, Mr Robert Blackwill.

India, Mr Abdullah said, was aware that Pakistan's help was required in the anti-Taliban campaign, but "the world shouldn't ignore our concerns."

**DGMO:** India is awaiting a response from Pakistan on the proposal for a visit by the director general of military operations to Islamabad, a foreign ministry spokesperson said. The proposal was part of the confidence building measures India had put forward before the Agra summit.

— PTI/UNI

THE STATESMAN

20 OCT 2001

# Terrorism is the issue, says Cong.

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 17. The Congress today reiterated the national view on the Kashmir issue by making it clear to the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, "that cross-border terrorism from Pakistan and not Kashmir was the central issue between the two countries". The party's view was put across forcefully at a 40-minute meeting between Gen. Powell and the Congress leaders, this morning.

Gen. Powell who drove down to the Leader of the Opposition's 10 Janpath residence this morning with members of his delegation, met Ms. Sonia Gandhi and senior leaders of her party — Dr. Manmohan Singh, Mr. Natwar Singh and Mr. Pranab Mukherjee. According to party sources, apart from the Kashmir issue, the two sides discussed a number of issues ranging from the strong feelings on the conflict in the Islamic world, and the future set-up in Afghanistan. Ms. Sonia Gandhi also raised the issue of loss of civilian lives and the need to make humanitarian aid to the people.

On the issue of Kashmir, Ms. Sonia Gandhi

reportedly told Gen. Powell at the outset that his remarks on the issue had caused great concern in the country. She pointed out that there was a consensus in the country and the core issue was not Kashmir but the cross-border terrorism from Pakistan. Gen. Powell, suggested that the media had chosen to highlight just one word of the lengthy statement that he had made.

He also told the Congress leaders that the U.S. did not intend to leave the people of Afghanistan "to the wolves". He said that Washington wanted a democratic and a fully representative arrangement to replace the Taliban regime. He indicated that the former King, Mr. Zahir Shah as well as moderate elements from amongst the Taliban would also have a role to play.

Gen. Powell reportedly told the Congress leaders that his country was aware of the strong feelings in the Islamic world and was doing everything possible to ensure that civilian casualties were avoided and the military campaign was as short as possible. The Congress leaders pointed out to him that India also had a huge Muslim population and

the conflict in its neighbourhood was a cause for great concern to it.

In a separate development, former External Affairs Minister, Mr. Natwar Singh has taken exception to Mr. Jaswant Singh describing India as a natural ally of the U.S., and has accused him of trying to ingratiate himself with the U.S. "I must remind him that we are a non-aligned country and not a natural ally of a member of the NATO" he said. Mr. Natwar Singh said that Mr. Jaswant Singh "must remember that he is the Foreign Minister of India and not some subordinate in the service of the erstwhile state of Jodhpur".

He also chided the Foreign Minister for his remarks that the country did not share a hyphenated relationship with Pakistan. Gen. Powell by first visiting Pakistan and then India has proved that they have put the two countries in the same basket and Mr. Jaswant Singh should know it, said Mr. Natwar Singh. "All these high-falutin words deceive no one except the Foreign Minister and exposes his superficiality in dealing with serious matters".

THE HINDU

13 OCT 2001



# Cabinet discussion on crossing LoC puts Jaswant in a spot

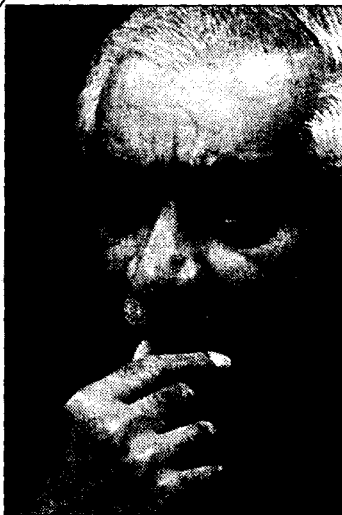
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Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 11 OCTOBER

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS minister Jaswant Singh suddenly looked aurally challenged when confronted with an inconvenient query from Cabinet colleague Nitish Kumar.

The occasion was a meeting held on Wednesday to brief Union ministers about the steps taken by India in the wake of the September 11 attacks, exactly a month ago, and discuss a strategy to settle the problem of jihadi terrorism.

During the course of the briefing, which lasted two hours, Mr Kumar came up with a question that had the external affairs minister, who also doubles up as defence minister, stumped for a moment.

"Wherever we go, people ask us why we don't cross the line of control (LoC) to solve the problem of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism," said the railways minister. "I haven't heard the question," replied Mr Singh.



Jaswant: Embarrassed

His response was identical when Mr Kumar tried to help him by repeating his question.

Mr Singh's response illustrates the pressures on the Vajpayee government to strike at the very root

of terrorism. It is now reliably learnt that the idea that the option of crossing the LoC should be kept on the menu is favoured by many in the light of the endless bloodletting by jihadis in J&K.

It moved up in the "what all could be done" list around October 1, when Jaish-e-Mohammed attacked the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly, killing 40 people, most of them civilians.

It also featured at a meeting of the Cabinet committee on security. Some of those present reportedly suggested that the option of crossing the LoC should be considered as one of the ways to put an end to the jihadi-sponsored violence that has engulfed the state for over a decade.

The government doesn't want to commit itself on the issue at this juncture, when the US is urging restraint in South Asia — a factor that has forced Pakistan to go through the motion of swearing by peace and bilateral cooperation.

# Sonia-PM meeting on Afghanistan fails to bring about thaw <sup>of PM's</sup>

By Anita Katyal  
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Vajpayee's meeting with Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday evening to discuss the unfolding international scenario and India's role following developments in Afghanistan hinted at a closer understanding between the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government and the main opposition party.

However, this popular belief was promptly belied following the last-minute cancellation of the special meeting of the National Development Council (NDC), slated to be held in Bangalore on October 24 and 25.

This decision has kicked off a controversy with government sources suggesting that Karnataka chief minister S.M. Krishna apparently called-off the meeting at the behest of his party leader Sonia Gandhi who did not approve of the proximity between the Congress-ruled state governments and the NDA government. The Congress party denies this vehemently, saying the meeting was called off as it coincided with the Dasara festivities.

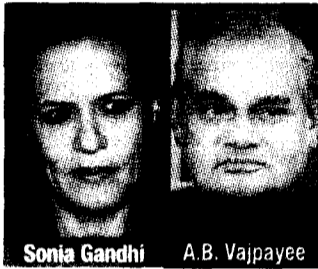
Confirming the meeting between Mr Vajpayee and Ms Gandhi, government sources said it was held at the PM's initiative as it was felt it was necessary to brief the leader of the opposition about the fast-paced developments as these involve national security.

It was stated that a series of developments had taken place since the PM last meet opposition leaders. British PM Tony Blair had come on a flying visit to India while Mr Vajpayee had telephonic conver-

sations with the Russian head Vladimir Putin and Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf. In addition, U.S. president George Bush had also called up Mr Vajpayee before the attacks on Afghanistan. All this figured in Mr Vajpayee's 30-minute talk with Ms Gandhi, government sources said, stating that the PM felt that such one-to-one meetings were more useful instead of large all-party meetings.

While this unshceduled meeting between Mr Vajpayee and Ms Gandhi set the political grapevine abuzz about a closer understanding between the two leaders, Mr Krishna's cancellation of the NDC meeting suggested otherwise. Government sources said the decision to hold an "informal Davos-like meeting" of CMs outside Delhi was mooted at the September 1 NDC meeting. Mr Krishna, it was stated, agreed to host the meeting. The dates were fixed, preparations got underway and the CMs were even asked to identify issues for discussion but Mr Krishna suddenly cried off.

When contacted, Congress spokesperson S.Jaipal Reddy said he had spoken to Mr Krishna on Wednesday who reiterated that he had asked the Centre to reschedule the meeting as the dates coincided with the Dasara festivities. He denied that party president Ms Gandhi had asked him to call off the meeting. Sources said it is not just this programme which was called off but Chhattisgarh chief minister Ajit Jogi, who had invited the PM for a function at Raipur on November 1, has also backed off following Ms Gandhi's show of disapproval.



Sonia Gandhi

A.B. Vajpayee

THE HINDU

12 OCT 2001

# Re-engaging Pakistan

By C. Raja Mohan

*Despite the bitterness that lingers after Agra, India would be short-sighted in not taking the opportunity to re-engage Pakistan at this critical moment.*

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**A**BOUT THREE weeks ago the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, in defending his decision to support American military action against Afghanistan, called on India to lay off Pakistan. But this week, he picked up the phone to talk to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, with apparently a conciliatory message. What is going on? Gen. Musharraf's call surely came at the urging of the United States and Britain, which are deeply concerned at the mounting Indo-Pakistan tensions after the October 1 terrorist attack in Srinagar. But the more important question is whether Gen. Musharraf's call opens the door for reviving the peace process between India and Pakistan.

The visit of the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, in the next few days to the subcontinent and the prospect of an early visit to Pakistan by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, reflect the rapidly shifting terrain of the relations between India, Pakistan and the U.S. since the attacks on New York and Washington a month ago. The transformation of this triangular relationship could be one of the most likely consequences of the American war against international terrorism. For India, this may be an important opportunity to set in motion a process that could nudge Pakistan in a positive direction with assistance from the global community.

India's own political mood since the September 11 terrorist attacks has tended to oscillate between extremes. Its initial expectation was that Pakistan, as an important sponsor of international terrorism, will finally face the wrath of the international community. But the coalition rediscovered the importance of Pakistan in the battle to isolate the Taliban. This generated deep political discomfort in New Delhi that Islamabad may gain at its expense in the new international context. The terrorist outrage against the Assembly in Srinagar earlier this month appeared to confirm India's worst suspicions that Pakistan will now be emboldened to step up its cross-border violence. When Mr. Vajpayee threatened that India was losing its patience with Pakistan and would be compelled to respond to Islamabad's provocations, the international community woke up.

The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, decided to come to India after his dash to Pakistan, in a bid to calm the nerves in New Delhi and step up the pressure on Islamabad to exercise restraint. Since then, Gen. Musharraf has sacked the chief of the Inter-Services-Intelligence (ISI), Lt. Gen. Mahmoud Ahmad, known to be in league with the jihadis, and superseded two others who were his close allies in ousting the civilian government of Mr. Nawaz Sharif two years ago. Under pressure from the U.S., Gen. Musharraf has also begun to crack down on extremist groups in Pakistan organising street protests.

In his telephonic talk with Mr. Vajpayee on Monday, Gen. Musharraf, at least verbally, condemned the terrorist attack in Srinagar, promised cooperation in confronting international terrorism and called for renewed diplomatic engagement. India will have a right to be sceptical about Gen. Musharraf's intentions. After the approach he unveiled during his visit to Delhi and Agra in July, caution and distrust of his commitment to peace with India may be natural in New Delhi.

After all, twice in the last three years Mr. Vajpayee had reached out to Pakistan in travelling to Lahore and in inviting Gen. Musharraf for the Agra summit. India got the war in Kargil within weeks after Mr. Vajpayee returned from Lahore. After Agra, India was left with a sense of being walked all over by Gen. Musharraf. Despite the bitterness that lingers after Agra, India would be short-sighted in not taking the opportunity to re-engage Pakistan at this critical moment.

Why should India engage Pakistan after Lahore and Agra? What is there to suggest that Gen. Musharraf, the perpetrator of Kargil and the offending guest at Agra, can now be seen as a credible interlocutor for India? Cynics would be right to ask these questions. Cynicism can indeed be a healthy antidote to unrealistic policies by governments. But cynicism can never

show the way forward in a difficult situation. Gen. Musharraf's intentions may or may not have changed. But what has certainly changed is the international context after September 11. Gen. Musharraf's compulsions and policy alternatives have altered dramatically following the American war against international terrorism. As he twists in the wind whipped up by the confrontation between the U.S. and the Taliban, Gen. Musharraf's swagger that we saw in New Delhi and Agra has gone.

Many in India have argued that Gen. Musharraf's hand has been strengthened by the international crisis. As the world rushes to embrace Gen. Musharraf, Pakistan is no longer being shunned the way it had been after the military coup of October 1999.

## WORLD VIEW

Following September 11, the U.S. has committed itself to shore up Gen. Musharraf as he gropes to find a way forward for Pakistan in the present crisis. Pessimists in the capital have been tempted to see these two facts as inimical to India. But there is a different way of looking at them.

In gaining American support for his own survival, Gen. Musharraf has had to pay a price in sacrificing the huge strategic investments that the Pakistani establishment has made in Afghanistan over the last two decades. As part of the war against international terrorism, Gen. Musharraf is now being asked to help strangulate his own creation, the Taliban, dismantle the infrastructure for terrorism in Afghanistan, and begin to crack down on the ideological support bases inside Pakistan itself. The U.S. has thrown a vital economic lifeline for Gen. Musharraf. While it promises to bail him out, the U.S. has also acquired a powerful new leverage over Gen. Musharraf. Washington has manoeuvred itself as the most potent influence on Pakistan's internal and external policies.

The diplomatic challenge for India is to ensure that this new leverage of the international community is utilised to push Pakistan in the short term to curb its support for violence in India and over the

long-term towards political moderation, economic modernisation and peace with its neighbours. When Mr. Powell comes here next week, his immediate concerns would be the stability of the international coalition in the present war and the prevention of an escalation of Indo-Pakistan tensions to the nuclear level.

India needs to reaffirm at once its commitment to restraint as well as a refusal to accept further provocations from Pakistan across the border. In other words, India will not initiate moves to destabilise the situation; but it will respond to acts of terrorism with all means at its command. Looking beyond the immediate concerns, India and the U.S. have a common interest in stabilising Pakistan as a moderate Islamic state. Finding ways to think and work together on this objective must be the centre-piece of India's talking points with Gen. Powell. The short-term requirement for moving towards this goal is indeed an end to the sponsorship of terrorism by Pakistan.

In promoting this long-term objective, India needs to express a readiness to re-engage Pakistan. A possible trip by Mr. Jaswant Singh to Islamabad in the coming weeks could help directly reassure Pakistan that India has no desire to fish in its troubled waters. Mr. Singh could also reaffirm India's willingness to begin comprehensive negotiations with Pakistan on all issues, with special political focus on the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, terrorism, and nuclear confidence-building measures. There was a near agreement at Agra in July to discuss these issues at the political level. If Pakistan agrees to immediately turn off the tap of cross-border violence, Mr. Singh should be ready to announce an agreement in Pakistan to begin talks on these subjects as well as others such as trade, Siachen and people-to-people contacts at the official level.

As the stage is set for a crucial round of triangular talks among India, Pakistan and the U.S., the formula for diplomatic success presents itself. Gen. Powell needs to persuade Gen. Musharraf to put down the gun and accept a comprehensive dialogue with India. In return, New Delhi should agree to negotiate seriously on Kashmir as part of a broader normalisation of relations with Islamabad.

THE HINDU

11 OCT 2001

11 OCT 2001

India can nurture relations with the US without having to barter itself away

# Handle with care

By J.N. DIXIT

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**F**OUR DAYS short of a month after the terrorist attacks on America, the US and its allies launched military operations against the Taliban regime of Afghanistan. President Bush, in his speech announcing the commencement of the military operations, indicated that the campaign against terrorism would be a long-term exercise against terrorist organisations, individuals and States and entities which give them support and sanctuary.

There are two dimensions in which India's responses to this evolving anti-terrorist strategy is pertinent: foreign policy and external security dimensions on the one hand, and the internal social and political implications of our responses on the other.

The general reaction to the attacks on America was of condemnation and acknowledgement that decisive action has to be taken against terrorism of all categories. There is a consensus that such action on the part of India should be based on our own experience as a victim. This approach may be logical as far as it goes. But it is the emotional content of our response in domestic political terms which is a matter of concern.

One notices a jingoistic response not only in public but even in government circles. There is an absurd view that Islam and terrorist violence are synonymous and that Muslims generally are inclined towards terrorism. This is an unacceptable proposition, but is finding expression in governmental policies. There is a suspicion in our establishment about Muslim educational institutions which breeds a wrong approach.

The Students' Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) was banned by the government last month. If extremist religious ideological views and related activities by this group necessitated this step, it would be legitimate to ask why the government has not banned the Bajrang Dal and the VHP. How is it that the government has not undertaken a structured, long-term campaign against organisations like the ULFA, the Bodos, and the supporters of the LTTE?

Why is it that India has not been able to take any effective action against Dawood Ibrahim who was responsible for the Bombay blasts and subsequent communal violence? What is the explanation for our government not having taken appropriate action against those who destroyed the Babri masjid?

It is essential that in our political and sociological reactions, we should distinguish between the practitioners of terror and communal violence of all categories and the religious, cultural identities of major communities which constitute the



COME TOGETHER: US Secretary of State Colin Powell and Jaswant Singh in Washington

citizenry of the Indian republic. We must remember that a prejudiced attitude towards Muslims poses a more serious threat to India's territorial integrity than any terrorist violence.

It is time that political leadership of all our parties undertakes a conscious exercise to educate public opinion that India distinguishes between the phenomenon of terrorism/terrorists and the accident of such entities belonging to one community or the other.

The most important point regarding the issue of the external dimensions of our responses is that while high level political consultations have taken place between Prime Minister Vajpayee, Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh and National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra with their counterparts in Russia, England, France and the US, there has been no substantive signal from any of these countries that they will specifically take care of Indian concerns related to Pakistan's subversive activities against the unity and territorial integrity of India.

India has been advised not to take any strong action against Pakistan-sponsored terrorist acts whatever the provocation so that President Musharraf does not change his mind about supporting the American anti-terrorist campaign against Afghanistan. India has also been told in general terms that once the top priority objective of dealing with the Taliban and Osama bin Laden is met, other phenomena of terrorism would be addressed suitably on a long-term basis.

One is not clear what this means. One must also anticipate that the US will have to be responsive to Pakistani demands for

*quid pro quo* on Jammu and Kashmir in the light of the support it has been receiving from Pakistan. My anticipation would be of the US and other major powers telling India to refrain from effective action against Pakistan and to work towards a compromise on the Kashmir issue responsive to the Pakistani points of view to the extent possible. One hopes this speculation will prove to be wrong.

At the end of Tony Blair's visit to New Delhi, Vajpayee stated that India would like a moderate government in Afghanistan consisting of representatives of all ethnic and religious groups constituting the Afghanistan nation. When you compare this statement with policy objectives on the subject articulated by the US and its allies, one again discerns ambiguity in the latter. The aim of the US and its allies seems to remove the Taliban from power and put in place a government under the titular leadership of former King Zahir Shah through the instrumentality of Northern Alliance.

There is no clarity of ideas on the part of western powers as to which Pashtun groups will emerge as an alternative to the Taliban, which is essentially a Pashtun dominated and supported organisation. No government can be stable in Afghanistan without the Pashtuns playing the most important role, they being the majority of the civil society in Afghanistan.

One also anticipates a period of civil war even if a government is established in Afghanistan with the support of western democracies. What should concern us as Indians most is the manner in which our government is handling the

emerging volatile situation. One respects the knowledge and the diplomatic capacities of Jaswant Singh. But one cannot help but conclude that we have been excessive and not calibrated in our interaction with the US at this important juncture in South Asian developments.

There is no doubt that nurturing a close working relationship with the US should be a matter of very high priority in our foreign policy. But it should not be at the cost of ignoring its multi-dimensional strategic and tactical requirements. There is also a need to sustain continuity in the most important ingredients in our foreign policy — that is of India retaining its freedom of options to exercise multifarious choices to meet its national interests. The non-aligned movement might have become irrelevant, but remaining non-aligned in the sense mentioned above remains absolutely relevant.

It is in this context that one asks the following questions: Why is it that no detailed communication on the developments in international terrorism and our responses has gone to our neighbours in South Asia, South-east Asia and to China? Should not a high-level political envoy have visited the capitals of our South Asian neighbours and important countries like Malaysia and Indonesia? Should not there have been a message from Vajpayee to Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji?

If these steps had been taken, why have not they been made public? Again, has there been a focused high-level political briefing from our external affairs minister or minister of state for the Arab and Muslim ambassadors on our recent policy decisions? Did we brief our ambassadors of South-east Asian and African countries? Or is it the view of our government that once you are on the right side of the US and other important western powers, the rest of the world will understand India's position and be supportive of India?

Our foreign minister should also be aware that in segments of Indian public opinion, the feeling is that he is being over-supportive of the US to which American responses have been just courteous and cosmetic. There is also the revival of the memory of him personally escorting the Pakistan-based terrorists — Masood Azhar in particular — to Kandahar whose reward to India was the bombing of a legislative building at Srinagar.

India should not be perceived as playing a secondary supportive role in dealing with a major international crisis, and that also as a supporter whose overtures seem to remain unrequited so far. It is time that we reassert our sense of self. This need not result in any erosion of our nurturing India-US relations.

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# India upbeat after Bush, Putin call

NILOVA ROY CHAUDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 9. - The Prime Minister's talks with Mr George W Bush, Mr Vladimir Putin and General Pervez Musharraf over the telephone have raised India's hopes.

Senior officials said the foreign office is confident that India's views will play a vital role in the post-Taliban dispensation in Afghanistan. At a Cabinet meeting today, Mr Jaswant Singh briefed his colleagues on the details of the conversations. They were also updated on the emerging situation in Afghanistan.

Mr Bush called up Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee to apprise him of the attacks and to tell him that India's concerns vis-a-vis Jaish-e-Mohammed would be addressed with a soon-to-be-announced ban on the outfit. Mr Putin called to discuss the progress of the United Front in which both countries have keen interests.

Mr Omar Farooq, attended a meeting at the Tajikistan capital, Dushanbe, where it was decided that levels of assistance to the Northern Alliance would be raised. Gen Musharraf's call was an acknowledgement that India's opinions carried weight in the region and it would be better to work in harmony.

The Cabinet also discussed the post-Taliban scenario and the nature of government that could emerge if the Taliban falls.

"The best thing for India," an official said, "would be the re-installation of the Burhanuddin Rabbani government in Kabul." India and the UN still recognise the Rabbani government, comprising key mujahideen (anti-Soviet war heroes) figures (including the late Ahmed Shah Masood and Gulbuddin Hekmatayar), as the legitimate government of Afghanistan. India would also be willing to have Zahir Shah as a figurehead of a Pashtun-dominated government, chosen from the traditional Loya Jirgah (conclave of tribal elders), but "would strongly oppose any elements of the Taliban being included."

**Foreign visits:** Mr Jaswant Singh today called his Chinese counterpart, Mr Tang Jiaxuan, over the phone and discussed Sino-Indian cooperation to fight terrorism. Mr Singh's 11-13 October visit to China has been deferred because of the strikes on Afghanistan. The Chinese premier, Mr Zhu Rongji's visit to India in November has been put off and he may come early next year. Pakistan too requested Mr Singh to visit that country "as soon as possible," if the Prime Minister couldn't do so. Gen Pervez Musharraf yesterday renewed his invitation to Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee when they talked over phone. The German Chancellor, Mr Gerhard Schroeder, will visit India later this month and the US secretary of state, Gen Colin Powell, next week.

THE STATESMAN

# Left parties to stage protests

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 8.** The Left parties today reiterated the demand that the BJP-led Government should not take part in the U.S.-sponsored war against Afghanistan.

The parties also decided to hold nationwide protests on October 12 demanding the war be stopped and that a struggle be waged against terrorism in accordance with international laws.

Through a joint statement the parties — CPI-M, CPI, AIFB and the RSP — warned that joining the America-led war would have dangerous consequences for South Asia and also for national sovereignty.

Reiterating that those responsible for the terrorist attacks in U.S. on September 11 should be brought to justice through the United Nations and on the basis of international law, these parties said by launching a full-scale war against Afghanistan, the main sufferers would be the people since the missiles and bombs rained on the country would kill innocent people.

"All democratic and peace-loving people in South Asia are deeply concerned about the casualties of war and the consequences for the region", the statement said.

The Left parties also called for a joint campaign in protest against "this unilateral war launched by America and its NATO allies" and decided to hold nationwide demonstration on Friday.

The signatories to the joint statement included, the general secretaries of four Left parties, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet (CPI-M), Mr. A.B. Bardhan (CPI), Mr.

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Debabrata Biswas (AIFB) and Mr. K. Pankajakshan (RSP).

Meanwhile, the CPI(ML) took the lead in organising 'an anti-war protests' today at different places in the country including Delhi, Patna, Kolkata and Lucknow. The party activists criticised the bombings on Afghanistan and killing of innocent civilians. The party also warned the Vajpayee Government to desist from giving support and legitimacy to the unilateral war launched by the U.S. and Britain.

The Revolutionary Socialists Party (RSP), at its two-day central committee meeting which concluded today, also adopted a resolution on the post-September 11 situation and condemned the stand of the Vajpayee Government on it.

The party observed that the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, had offered all assistance to the U.S.-war designs without even being asked for and "exposed the nation to the ominous designs of imperialist forces without caring for religious demography of India."

## Protect national interest: Cong.

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 8.** The Congress today voiced reservations over the failure of the global coalition to address India's concerns on the issue of cross-border terrorism. It also cautioned the Centre against allowing "India's vital interests to be relegated to the background" in the war against terrorism.

The party said that India's case

against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir had not been presented forcefully by the Vajpayee Government.

However, conscious of not wishing to be seen as trying to conduct a separate foreign policy or taking a position diametrically opposite to that of the Government, it tempered its stand. It said that India was the longest-suffering target of cross-border terrorism and yet the global coalition had not addressed its concerns.

The CWC resolution of September 19, it said, had clearly stated that while a global coalition against terrorism was long overdue, the world community would have to take into account India's concerns and predicament in the face of sustained cross-border terrorism.

The resolution also stated that it did not view the fight against terrorism as a civilizational conflict between Islam and the West.

In a statement issued today as part of its reaction to the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan, the Congress urged the Government to "strive more vigorously, than it has so far done" towards making the world appreciate India's concerns.

It expressed sadness that Afghanistan had once again been pushed into the trauma of war, and regretted that the Taliban had failed to respond to the concerns of the world against wanton terrorism and violence.

Expressing its concern for the people of Afghanistan, it expressed the hope that the conflict would not be an unending tragedy for it.

THE HINDU

# 'Look east' tip for Atal terror fight

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Sept. 27: Opposition leaders today asked the government to "look east" in forging an anti-terror front even as Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee clarified that his government had not given the US any "direct or indirect" assurance on making the country's air bases available for an attack on Afghanistan.

Vajpayee, who met non-NDA leaders to thrash out a national consensus, said: "We have not given any direct or indirect assurance to the US about offering our bases and we should put an end once and for all to such speculation." Leaders of the Congress, the Left parties, ADMK, Telugu Desam, Bahujan Samaj Party, Samajwadi Party and the Rashtriya Janata Dal attended the meeting.

Congress leader K. Natwar Singh and CPI's A.B. Bardhan underlined the need for regrouping non-aligned countries, saying retaliatory action against the September 11 strikes should have the United Nation's sanction. Natwar, head of the AICC cell on foreign affairs, said the government should "look east".

The former external affairs minister said the government should hold talks with neighbouring countries to make common cause against terrorism. The hint was greater involvement with China. Congress president Sonia Gandhi is leaving for Beijing on October 10 on the invitation of Li Peng, number two in the Chinese establishment.

Though Sonia was invited three months ago, her engagements in China assume significance in view of the world situation following the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Sonia was not present at today's meeting as she was visiting Amethi, her constituency.

Vajpayee said he was for an all-party national campaign against terrorism. He said parties should caution people against those trying to equate Islam with terrorism and emphasised the need for communal harmony. Vajpayee said his government was under no illusions about depending on anyone for its battle against terrorism.

Natwar said the government should avoid steps that could go against the country's long-sustained policy of non-alignment. "We are with the government but don't want it to take any step which would run counter to the policy of non-alignment pursued by the country," he said.

Left leaders said the government should activate the United Nations instead of merely becoming a "follower of America".

Bardhan suggested that the government should also have close consultations with neighbouring countries instead of only being in touch with Western countries.

The Opposition leaders said India should not get involved militarily in any US-led action against Afghanistan and strongly felt that the UN and Non-Aligned Movement countries should be galvanised in the current fight against global terrorism.

External affairs minister Jaswant Singh briefed the leaders about Vajpayee's telephonic contacts with US President George W. Bush and British premier Tony Blair. He also told them about interactions with his counterparts from Russia, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, France, the US and Pakistan.

Jaswant gave a detailed account of Delhi's assessment of the internal situation in Pakistan and Afghanistan and the situation that might emerge in the coming two months. He said India and the US were also sharing intelligence.



Workers at Mumbai's Nariman Point look up at a building which was evacuated following a false bomb alarm. (AFP)

## Delhi braces for copycat strikes

FROM SEEMA GUHA

New Delhi, Sept. 27: The search is on for a World Trade Center in India. No, not literally. But since the September 11 strikes in the US, the government is bracing itself for copycat strikes on India's commercial and political nerve centres.

The Cabinet Committee on Security, which has met several times since the attacks, has discussed all aspects of the fallout of the strikes. The government fears that sooner or later there could be similar attempts by terrorists in India.

Though India has long experience in dealing with terrorists — in the Northeast, Punjab and Kashmir — the challenges now are different. "It's a totally different ball game. September 11 has changed everything, not just in India but all over the world," a

senior official said.

The country has to take a fresh look at its security set-up. The threat now stretches far beyond the usual targets to include commercial and political symbols of the country. Indian security agencies have been told to locate these sensitive targets.

Cabinet secretary T.R. Prasad is summoning chief secretaries of states soon to begin discussions on the new security threat. States will be asked to review buildings and areas that could fall under the category of symbols.

Prasad will also tell the officials not to be complacent and dismiss the US strikes as something that happened far away. "The urgency and immediacy is lost on certain state governments," an official said. The object of the series of meetings the Cabinet secretary will hold is to explain the real threat to this country.

Osama bin Laden is alleged to have named the US, Israel and India as the three countries to be targeted by his militants. The veracity of India being on the list cannot be ascertained, but no one wants to take a chance.

Prasad will begin with chief secretaries of northern states and ask them to pull up their socks. Officials realise that the concept of security has changed dramatically and is now an entirely new ball game. India has faced several hijacks, the latest being IC 814 that was flown to Kandahar. In retrospect, it seems to have been an easy deal as the hijackers had placed their demands and were willing to negotiate. In the US, the hijacked planes were used to rip through the WTC and the Pentagon.

Countrywide, traditional security meant protecting "vital installations". These are nuclear

and defence establishments, airports, power stations, major bridges and military airfields. But today, security extends much beyond these parameters. "The Bombay Stock Exchange has to be factored in as a target of attack. Buildings in Mumbai's Dalal Street, the Reserve Bank of India, Rashtrapati Bhavan or Parliament House, all of these are now exposed to a different kind of danger," an official said.

In the days before the US attacks, the most one could expect were car bombs or mines around sensitive areas like Parliament or the residences of the President, the Prime Minister and Cabinet ministers. Protecting these targets from aircraft missiles may be difficult. The government is doing whatever possible, but officials wryly admit that there is no full-proof protection when zealots are bent on suicide missions.

# Brajesh Mishra discusses Afghan crisis with French officials

By Vaiju Naravane

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PARIS, SEPT. 27. The National Security Adviser and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, today spent several hours talking to high-level French diplomats and politicians here. The discussions centred around the aftermath of the September 11 attacks and the Afghanistan situation and what the future holds.

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Earlier, Mr. Mishra arrived here following consultations in Washington.

Indian officials described the meetings here as "very timely because the situation is in a state of flux. There is still no complete clarity about both the military and political aspects. With what is happening in the Security Council, there is a fluid situation. So it was a very timely and frank exchange of views," the Indian Ambassador, Mr. Kanwal Sibal, told *The Hindu*.

Officials said, "the French were keen to know our perceptions and our concerns and how we looked at the impact of what was happening in Afghanistan on the internal situation in Pakistan."

The French were keen on knowing India's reading of the situation in Pakistan, especially the stability of the Government. The two sides exchanged perceptions about the U.S. thinking of the future of Afghanistan, the nature of contacts between the U.S. and Russia, the views of the Northern Alliance, what would an international coalition for Afghanistan imply and related issues, including the current discussions in the U.N. Security Council. Officials said there was a "remarkable similarity of views and a remarkable similarity of questions posed by both sides".

Mr. Christophe Jaffrelot, the Director of CERI, the Centre for Research in International Relations, said terrorism in Kashmir could worsen unless there was "a simultaneous crackdown on the Taliban and the Islamic extremist movements in Pakistan. If they seize this opportunity to flush out the extremists. But that would mean that Gen. Musharraf would not be using his people in Kashmir. Or it would mean an eradication of them by the Americans and that they are not at all likely to do."

He said Kashmir was not seen as an issue of nationality or nationhood yet.

Mr. Mishra met Mr. Gerard Herera, head of the French Foreign Office, but could not meet the Foreign Minister, Mr. Hubert Vedrine, who is not here. Mr.

Mishra also met the French President, Mr. Jaques Chirac's top political advisers and had a working session with Mr. Xavier de Villepin, President of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, who will be here tomorrow will hold talks with his French counterpart and also call on Mr. Chirac. Significantly, he will also meet France's Defence Minister, Mr. Alain Richard. A senior French diplomat told *The Hindu* that Mr. Mishra's visit was "unscheduled but not surprising given the close strategic dialogue that exists between India and France."

The talks between Mr. Herera and Mr. Mishra centred principally on the post-September 11 crisis. Sources said Mr. Mishra apprised the French of the assurances extended by Washington on U.S. support to halt cross-border terrorism in Kashmir, which is likely to increase if Pakistani 'jehadis' lose their hold over Afghanistan.

"We are conscious of the difficult situation in Kashmir. Our perception of terrorism is not different from that of India's, and we have established the special Indo-French working group on terrorism which held its first meeting on September 7 last, just prior to the tragic events in the U.S. So there is no "before and after" 11 September scenario. France has tabled a resolution aimed at curbing terrorists' financial circuits and India and France share the same views."

Asked whether France would continue to sell arms to Pakistan, a regime which has been harbouring terrorists on its soil, the official said: "France has not signed any new contracts for arms sales to Pakistan. We have only delivered equipment which had been paid for and there are no new contracts... We have always had good ties with Pakistan and continue to do so. But our relations with India are particularly warm, dense and close, quite different from our relations with Pakistan. When we say that the Kashmir issue should be resolved within the framework of the Shimla Agreement, the Pakistanis see us as being pro-India. On the question of terrorism in Kashmir we have had discussions with India at various levels. The U.S. assurances to India of increased cooperation over terrorism in Kashmir should not affect our relationship," the diplomat said.

However, top-level Indian officials were more categorical, saying the present pressure being exerted on Pakistan would definitely impact Indo-French relations.

THE HINDU

28 SEP 2001



# No commitment to US: Vajpayee

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 27

WHILE THE Opposition today cautioned the Government against any move opposed to the country's policy of non-alignment, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee gave them a categorical assurance that India had made no commitments to the US and would pursue an independent policy guided solely by its interests.

At a meeting with eight major Opposition parties to discuss the situation arising out of the global war against terrorism, Vajpayee made it clear that his Government had not given any assurance to the US on the use of its air bases for strikes against Afghanistan. He stressed that all such speculation must come to an end immediately.

Vajpayee also made an impassioned plea for an all-party national campaign to create

awareness against terrorism, to educate people against linking terrorism with Islam and to maintain communal harmony in the current situation. The Government is seriously concerned about the country's internal security, particularly the communal situation, in the coming days as trouble brews in the neighbourhood.

Among the prominent parties that attended the meet were the Congress, Samajwadi Party, CPI(M), CPI, BSP, AIADMK, NCP, RJD and the TDP. Manmohan Singh, Madhavrao Scindia and Natwar Singh represented the Congress. Leaders of other parties included Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mayawati, Harkishan Singh Surjeet, A B Bardhan and Sharad Pawar.

While supporting the Government's approach towards the US-led campaign against international terrorism, Opposition leaders urged it not to get involved in any military action



(Top, from left) Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Madhavrao Scindia, K Natwar Singh and Manmohan Singh at an all-party meeting at the Prime Minister's residence in New Delhi on Thursday. Prime Minister A B Vajpayee and Home Minister L K Advani at the meet.

against Afghanistan. Parties such as the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the Left wanted New Delhi to make efforts towards more active involvement of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the UN in the war against global terrorism.

The Opposition leaders also regretted that in his diplomatic initiatives, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh was only visiting Western countries like the UK, US, France and Germany but had no plans to go to any of the NAM nations. China was the

only Eastern nation he proposed to visit, they pointed out. India, being a founder member of NAM, should take the initiative to lead the member nations in the war against terrorism, they said.

Briefing reporters after the meet, Union Minister Pramod Mahajan said Vajpayee agreed to these suggestions. At the meeting, Jaswant Singh, Home Minister L K Advani and Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha briefed the Opposition leaders on the situation prevailing on the foreign, domestic and economic fronts.

Advani struck a note of caution saying that they may witness a spurt in terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir in the coming months and the Government would be on full alert.

The threat of terrorists resorting to the use of lethal chemical and biological weapons, too, could not be ruled out, he said. In this context, a meeting of the chief secretaries and police chiefs of all States had been convened on October 5 to discuss contingency plans to deal with such disaster situations.

ARVIND YADAV/HINDUSTAN TIMES

# India is spreading its diplomatic wings

By Manoj Joshi  
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Despite criticism at home, India is using the September 11 tragedy in the United States to spread its diplomatic wings. Diplomatic observers here say that New Delhi is displaying great maturity and moving in a sure-footed fashion across the diplomatic landscape. Its most recent manifestation is the intense interaction with like-minded countries like Russia and France, as well as the U.S., on the fallout of the terrorist attacks.

French President Jacques Chirac called the Prime Minister last Saturday. On Tuesday, national security adviser Brajesh Mishra will have discussions with his counterpart Gerard Errera in Paris and on Wednesday defence and external affairs minister Jaswant Singh will meet Hubert Vedrine and Alain Richard in the French Capital.

Both Mr Mishra and Mr Singh will be stopping over in Paris, the former returning from discussions with U.S. officials, and the latter en route to Washington where he will

meet, among others, secretary of state Colin Powell.

What is interesting is that while the U.S. remains the premier destination, the road to Washington now goes via Paris rather than London. "This is the outcome of a growing identity of views between India and countries like France and Russia," says a New Delhi-based West European diplomat.

Indian officials maintain that their ties with Britain are equally strong, citing the Prime Minister's conversation with Tony Blair and Jaswant Singh's telephonic discussions with his counterpart Jack Straw. But, they concede, in terms of their world view and security strategy, the British are closely tied to the U.S.

In the current situation, for example, the French, the Russians and the Indians would like the UN to play a greater role than it is playing at present. All three are keenly aware of the economic and military might of the U.S. and seek to maintain good ties with it, but they are also committed to a polycentric world order where no one country is dominant.

## Saudi Minister telephones Jaswant Singh

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, SEPT 23.** As part of the ongoing worldwide consultations that are taking place on the developing situation that is threatening a war in this region, the Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al-Fasal, spoke to External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, for about 10 minutes today.

He is reported to have conveyed to Mr. Singh that India's views and her role in the present situation were "crucial." He suggested, and Mr. Singh agreed, that India and Saudi Arabia keep in constant touch in these difficult circumstances.

The spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry, Ms. Nirupama Rao, later said that there was a "mutuality of views."

In fact, during the last few days, there have been several high-level contacts on telephone between leaders in India and other countries. Significantly, among those who called Mr. Singh was Israel's Foreign Minister, Mr. Shimon Peres.

Over the last one week, high-level consultations have taken place between leaders in India and other countries in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States which is now threatening to engulf this region in a prolonged military conflict.

On Saturday, it was the French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac, who spoke with Mr. Vajpayee after a visit to the United States. Exactly a week ago, the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, exchanged notes with Mr. Vajpayee on the ongoing crisis.

The buzz of diplomatic activity is being seen as an attempt by the U.S.-led Western alliance to take into confidence nations outside the core of this alliance, to avoid giving a religious or even a racist angle to the war that is looming large on the horizon.

From this point of view, consultations with India and some Muslim countries have become significant.

THE HINDU

24 SEP 2001

# India may let jets refuel if US asks: Advani

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
**New Delhi, Sept. 22:** Union home minister L.K. Advani on Saturday said India will consider extending refuelling and other logistics facilities to the United States if Washington requests for the same in its military campaign in Afghanistan.

He, however, hastened to add that there was no likelihood of Indian troops joining the US-led multinational military operations against the Taliban.

"Every country fighting terrorism is India's friend. India has been fighting the menace for many years now and is fully capable of defeating terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. We have already acceded to the US request to give intelligence inputs on the terrorist bases in Afghanistan and Pakistan besides extending moral and diplomatic support to it in its global war against terrorism."

he said. "A precedent had been set during the Gulf war — a conflict India was not directly involved in — about refuelling facilities given to US fighter planes. Although India was not directly involved in the Gulf War in 1991, it had agreed to provide these facilities to US warplanes," Mr Advani said. However, so far, there has not been any such request from the US, he said.

"We will consider any such request for refuelling and other facilities keeping in mind India's sovereignty. India is backing the US as it is directly affected by terrorism," he added.

On the possibilities of resumption of Indo-Pak talks, Mr Advani said there was no scope for it as long as Islamabad continued to aid and abet terrorism in Kashmir and other places within the country.

"The Pakistani leadership was facing a Hobson's choice — on the one hand sup-

porting the US and on the other opposing the Taliban which it had created and kept alive. This could have serious repercussions on Pakistan," he pointed out.

Recalling Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf's description of terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir as freedom fighters during the Agra Summit, he said: "I feel pity for him. At this juncture, he may be leading the anti-jihadi forces in Pakistan."

Asked if India could consider hot pursuit to eliminate terrorist camps across the border taking a cue from the American resolve to fight terrorism globally, Mr Advani said in the coming weeks and months, "a lot could happen in this direction with the US declaring that it would combat international terrorism and its networking."

On Washington's current closeness to Islamabad and whether it means a setback for Indo-US ties, the home minister said the

US had approached Pakistan "purely on geographical considerations and its close links with the Taliban."

On being pointed out that Washington had failed to mention terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, he said: "We are not dependent on the US in our battle against terrorism. Although we will seek the support of Washington and other powers in this regard," Mr Advani agreed that before the September 11 terrorist strikes, the US was guided more by self-interest and had paid little heed to such violence the world over.

"But September 11 could become a turning point. And I feel the US attitude will change. US envoy in India Robert D. Blackwill has assured me that while at present the US was targeting Osama bin Laden and Taliban, it would also focus its attention on international terrorism and its networking in due course," he said.

# Jaswant's wisdom in offering US help questioned

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 20

HERE seems to be considerable unease within the BJP over the Vajpayee government's handling of the Black Tuesday crisis.

The disquiet in the party surfaced at yesterday's informal discussions after the Cabinet meeting with four BJP ministers questioning the government's assessment of US motives and strategy.

The ministers who spoke, and spoke strongly, were Pramod Mahajan, Murli Manohar Joshi, Sushma Swaraj and Jagmohan. Although they refrained from pointing a finger at any one person, implicit in their remarks was the party's feeling that the government, particularly the ministry of external af-

fairs, had jumped the gun by offering military help and logistical assistance to the US without knowing Washington's gameplan.

Mahajan was the first to speak after External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh briefed his Cabinet colleagues. And his tone was sarcastic as he asked whether what the minister said was the government's "wish list" or a studied assessment. Mahajan's comments have been taken seriously within the BJP as he is regarded as being close to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. BJP circles feel that it may be an indication of Vajpayee's disapproval of Singh's media statement suggesting that India would offer its military bases to the US in case there is an air strike against Afghanistan.

A senior minister pointed to the significance of the decision to send National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra instead of Jaswant Singh to Washington for consultations. The same minister remarked that Singh did not talk at all yesterday about his impending visit to the US although there have been reports that he is slated to go at the end of the month. The point that all four ministers are believed to have stressed is whether the government had any assurance that the so-called US war against terrorism is not limited just to getting Osama bin Laden.

There seems to be growing apprehension in the BJP that the US may ignore the terrorism that is afflicting Kashmir, particularly since it has turned to Pakistan, not India, for help after

Tuesday's terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. Party circles feel that India should not get too deeply involved in a war which is driven only by US concerns and does not take into account the global ramifications of terrorism.

Jaswant Singh is believed to have denied at the meeting that the government had made any offer of logistical assistance. He said that the US has not requested it so there was no question of offering it.

The BJP ministers spoke more strongly than the alliance partners who made broad points about being cautious. DMK minister Murasoli Maran was apparently quiet although later in the evening, his leader M Karunanidhi issued a statement in Chennai advising caution.

INDIAN EXPRESS

21 SEP 2001

Q. P. Mohan

# India and U.S.-Pak. ties

#10-13  
21/9

By C. Raja Mohan

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 20.** Like much else in the world after September 11, the triangular relationship among India, Pakistan and the United States may be poised for a significant transformation. But will this change be harmful or helpful to India?

It will be tempting to interpret the reported American plans to resume economic assistance to Pakistan — in return for Gen. Pervez Musharraf's support for U.S. military operations against Afghanistan — as a throw back to the bad old days of American enclavement to Pakistan. But the past may not always be a reliable guide to the future.

Much water has passed under the bridge since the end of the Cold War. Moving away from its earlier tilt towards Pakistan, Washington has set in motion a new engagement with India and Pakistan, with each on its own merits.

Having demanded and got Pakistan to accede to all its demands in the war against international terrorism, the U.S. was bound to signal its commitment to a nation which has once again been com-

pelled to become a front line State. There is no question of the critical importance of Pakistan — its territory is adjacent to the targets in Afghanistan and it has enormous information and intelligence on the Taliban — for the U.S. in dealing with the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks.

Ironically, Pakistan appears to have become, at once, a part of the problem and the solution to America's new security predicament. The infrastructure for terrorism that Pakistan has nurtured over the last two decades in its own territory and in that of Afghanistan makes it a part of the problem. In U.S. eyes, the immediate need to destroy the perpetrators of the tragedy last week makes Pakistan part of the solution as well.

While India acknowledges U.S. concerns of the moment and closely monitors the package of assistance to Pakistan, it is naturally concerned about the potential tension between the tactical goals of the U.S. and its proclaimed strategic interest in combating international terrorism in a comprehensive manner. It is in this context that India has

noted positively the remarks of the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, on Wednesday that there was an opportunity in the present crisis to shake terrorism loose from sponsor States.

India would, however, need some reassurance from the Bush administration that its renewed support to Pakistan would imply no toleration of Islamabad's support to cross-border terrorism, and that nothing will be transferred to Pakistan that will endanger India's security.

At the same time India too needs to reassure the U.S. that it has no desire to complicate the security calculus of Pakistan when it is facing its gravest national crisis. Gen. Musharraf's decision to raise the bogey of the Indian threat on Wednesday must indeed be dismissed, but it would serve India's interests to send signals that will calm the nerves in Washington and Islamabad.

The key to a successful regional coalition against terrorism necessarily involves strong American pressure on Pakistan to turn off the tap of terrorism against India and prevent the redirection of jihadis into Jammu and Kashmir. That will be consistent with Mr.

Bush's assertion that he will consult closely with Islamabad and New Delhi to promote regional stability.

Equally intriguing are the remarks by Mr. Bush that the present crisis may offer an important opportunity to refashion the thinking between India and Pakistan. This statement comes along with a reference to the U.S. interest in reviving the peace process in West Asia.

Before letting skepticism define policy, it may well be worthwhile for India to ponder if there is room for some creative thinking about the future of Indo-Pak. relations at a moment when the geopolitics of the region are being reordered. Having invited Gen. Musharraf to Agra two months ago and having decided to see him again at New York, India may now want to explore along with the U.S. steps that could help stabilise Pakistan.

It is in the interest of both New Delhi and Washington to persuade Islamabad to shed the jehadi culture and move towards political moderation and economic integration with its neighbours.

THE HINDU

# India echoes Iran on terror war

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Sept. 19: Making common cause with Iran, India today said Islam should not be equated with terrorism and the global fight against it not "limited to an individual and any single manifestation alone".

Foreign minister Jaswant Singh spoke with Iranian counterpart Kamal Kharazmi over phone this afternoon on the global situation unfolding after the US strikes. The duo felt the situation called for "effective action which was needed to be based on co-ordinated action and co-operation by the largest possible number of countries".

Iranian ambassador in Delhi M. Moosavi also called on home minister L.K. Advani in North Block to discuss bilateral "co-operation in security related matters". Sources said both countries sought to know the other's perception of the US situation and how it sought to help.

India denied reports that it was preparing to offer its airbases to the US troops and had even identified them in the last Cabinet Committee on Security meeting.

Dubbing the report "totally incorrect", foreign ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said "it was not only ill-timed but also ill-conceived". She claimed India had neither offered airbases nor had the US asked for access to them.

Despite its growing closeness to the US, India values its rela-

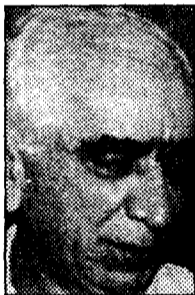
tions with Iran, which continues to be America's bete noire. Over the years, the BJP government has made special efforts to mend and strengthen ties with Tehran and the common Taliban threat has speeded up the process. Iran and India, along with Russia, are the main backers of the Northern Alliance, the only opposition to the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The upswing in Indo-Iranian relations was reflected in the Tehran Declaration signed this April during Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's visit to that country. In the declaration, both countries condemned "terrorism in all its forms" and decided to coordinate their efforts to fight the men-

ace. Iran is also an important provider of India's energy requirements and the seat of Shia Islam. Its geographical location in the Persian Gulf also makes it strategically important.

But the foreign ministry spokesperson sought to suggest that Jaswant's phone conversation with the Iranian leader was part of the consultation process begun by India in the recent past. Delhi has also been consulting the US, Russia and the UK in the last few days.

India's attempt appears to be to consult with major world players to evolve a consensus on tackling global terrorism. By consulting countries in the Islamic and Arab world, India is also trying to tell the domestic audience that it is not only trying to enlist the support of the West but also that of its traditional friends.



Jaswant

20 SEP 2001

# Govt, BJP launch damage-control exercise

## STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 19. — The NDA government and the BJP today launched a damage-control exercise on the adverse impact of reports about divisions in the Union Cabinet on the likely role India should play if the USA asked for support to launch its war against terrorism. The government's managers were reportedly worried that such reports would send wrong signals to the world.

The Prime Minister's Office denied reports that some ministers had expressed reservations over the direction of India's foreign policy in the context of terrorist strikes in the USA. The BJP president, Mr. Jana Krishnamurthy, is slated to address the press tomorrow to present a united stand of the party.

"There was no difference of opinion. No one had reservations about the foreign policy," a PMO spokesman said. He said that after the main Cabinet meeting, the terrorist attacks were in-

formally discussed for 90 minutes. The issue was not part of the meeting's agenda. "The foreign minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, briefed his colleagues about the developments and took queries in an attempt to explain India's position," the spokesman said.

Reports said Mr. Singh was pushed to a corner at the meeting for offering full support to the USA if it attacks Afghanistan. Some senior ministers were reported to have expressed reservations over the efficacy of the foreign policy in turning the crisis to India's advantage.

Some Cabinet ministers did raise the issue that India should not be seen as kowtowing to the USA. One of them even said that if the USA could demand Osama bin Laden "dead or alive", India could do the same with Dawood Ibrahim whose involvement in the 1993 serial blasts in Mumbai has been established.

Sources said there is a general feeling that Mr. Singh's initial statement created the problem. But he denied his

## DELHI'S DENIAL

NEW DELHI, Sept. 19. — India today dismissed as "totally incorrect" reports that three Air Force bases had been offered to the USA for launching attacks on Afghanistan.

The foreign ministry spokesman said: "The report is... incorrect... ill-timed and ill-conceived. No bases have been offered."

The government's denial was in response to a newspaper report that India had conveyed to the USA operational cooperation for launching retaliatory strikes on Afghanistan. The report suggested that three Air bases — Avantipora (J&K), Adampur (Punjab) and Jamnagar (Gujarat) — and port facilities in the Western sector had been kept ready. — SNS

statement in various platforms such as the all-party meeting and the "informal Cabinet meeting". Things should settle after this, a PMO source

said.

Continuing with the headline that evolved yesterday's meeting, the communications minister, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, today cautioned the US ambassador, Mr. Robert Blackwill, when the latter met him, against seeking cooperation from Pakistan in the global war against terrorism. He said Islamabad itself was sponsoring it.

If the USA was serious about fighting terrorism, it should also take into account the fact that it was cooperating with a country sponsoring terrorism in the region, Mr. Mahajan told Mr. Blackwill. This is the same statement that senior BJP leader, Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, made while talking of US double standards.

Mr. Mahajan said Mr. Blackwill told him that Pakistan had not talked of any conditions or referred to Kashmir while extending its support to the USA to fight terrorism. The ambassador also said the USA had not sought "any help" from India till now.

The government's efforts to sober

down the NDA allies don't seem to be succeeding as the Janata Dal-United today decided to join the Samata Party and DMK in opposing the government and said it should not give unconditional support to the USA.

The JD-U spokesperson, Mr. Mohan Prakash, suggested that instead of allowing the USA to take up the leadership of a united fight against international terrorism, India and other victims of terrorism should jointly take the initiative. The terrorist attacks in the USA had vindicated the Prime Minister's concern, emphatically expressed at the Agra summit, about the dangers of international terrorism, he said.

Mr. Prakash also demanded that it be made mandatory that nations that support terrorists or allow them to set up camps on their soil should not be included in the global alliance. Also, nations that sell arms and financially help terrorist outfits should be barred from entering into any joint efforts against global terrorism.



9 of 10  
20/9 5:18  
**MEA: Remarks**

**unwarranted**

**NEW DELHI, Sept. 19.** — The foreign ministry tonight expressed disappointment at Gen. Musharraf's "unwarranted" remarks on India. It said the emphasis now should be on a unifocal approach to terrorism and not on Indo-Pak ties.

India's ambassador to the USA, Mr Lalit Mansingh, told CNN tonight: "I thought some of his (Musharraf's) remarks about India were unwarranted. We've no hostility... towards Islam. We've more Muslims than Pakistan has. Islam is part of our legacy and culture." Does India have any interest in Afghanistan? He said: "We've interest in Afghanistan which is our neighbour and has historic... links with India." — SNS

**THE STATESMAN**

# Fears over U.S.-Pak. 'deal' allayed

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 18. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today secured the Union Cabinet's endorsement of the Government stand so far on the changed situation after last week's terrorist attacks in the United States, but not before the Cabinet sought and got some explanations.

Both Mr. Vajpayee and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, found themselves having to satisfy Cabinet colleagues who were exercised over the reported American willingness to listen to Pakistan's demands.

This was the first opportunity the Cabinet had to discuss the September 11 attacks. The meeting began with Mr. Vajpayee and the Cabinet observing two minutes' silence, as part of a nation-

wide observance of a "solidarity day against terrorism".

Mr. Jaswant Singh, who first gave a 30-minute overview, is learnt to have told the somewhat animated Cabinet colleagues that so far there had been no specific request from the U.S. (Later in the evening, the Prime Minister also told reporters that "no specific requests" for assistance had been

made by the U.S. but dismissed as "hypothetical" another question whether India was prepared to give "all assistance" as and when the American requests came in.)

Many Cabinet Ministers wanted a clarification on the veracity of reports that Pakistan had imposed certain pre-conditions. Both Mr. Singh and Mr. L.K. Advani, Home Minister (who had received the

American Ambassador only on Monday) asserted that on the authority of most responsible American quarters it could be presumed that no deal had been cut between the U.S. and Pakistan.

The Cabinet was informed that in the first phase the American focus would be on Osama bin Laden and it was perhaps inevitable that Pakistan was better equipped — because of geography and intelligence assets — to be a better partner. The second phase would witness a more sustained drive against terrorists in general and their networks, and the Americans were keen on involving India in this task. These explanations notwithstanding, the many Cabinet members remained uncomfortable with the alleged American winking at Pakistan's past record in aiding and abetting terrorism.

## 19/9 India, Russia worried

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, SEPT. 18. India and Russia share concerns that any impending U.S. strike against terrorist bases in Afghanistan may have negative regional consequences. "We have complete understanding of (the) consequences for our countries from any military action against the Taliban," the National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, said after his talks with senior Russian officials. "Russia is concerned that the U.S. strikes may destabilise the situation in Central Asia, whereas India is worried about their impact on South Asia," Mr. Mishra said.

THE HINDU

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2001

89-12 ✓ **SEEKING AN ACTIVE ROLE** 129

INDIA'S LONG QUEST for a meaningful role in world affairs seems to have acquired a sharper and more relevant focus in the context of the current international turbulence over the terrorist attacks in the U.S. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has committed India to "waging peace" by acting in concert with the U.S. in a planned fight against international terrorism. This is probably inevitable, given India's own painful experience with externally sponsored terrorism. It is also a welcome sign of political maturity that India's major parties rallied behind the Prime Minister at a meeting convened in New Delhi on Saturday to discuss the country's options in the incrementally volatile international situation. In many ways, the airborne terrorists, who caused a virtual meltdown of America's 'capitalist' towers, have consigned the existing global 'order' to a new melting pot of ideas and action plans. As a state braving waves of terrorist violence, credible indeed is India's profound indignation over the humanitarian catastrophe that a band of anti-U.S. barbarians caused in New York last week. A roll-call of victims, still very difficult to compile for logistical reasons, will cover not just Americans but also several other nationals including presumably a very high number of Indo-Americans as also non-resident Indians. Obviously, this emotive reason is in itself a powerful but not the sole justification for New Delhi's political inclination to play a significantly active role alongside the U.S. in the international war being planned against the identifiable hotbeds of fanatical terrorism that has acquired a globalised reach.

Strictly speaking, the Vajpayee administration has certainly been found wanting in articulating the right reasons for a dramatic shift in India's foreign policy. It is an error of judgment to openly or tacitly portray the present international crisis as an opportunity for India in realpolitik gamesmanship. For India, an arguable 'strategic card' is to bank on America's military

might to try and silence the guns of Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism during the course of a possibly total 'war' on the motley votaries of terror. The Prime Minister could barely conceal such expectations as he took the nation into confidence in a televised address about his new U.S.-supportive initiative. So, it is of paramount importance that India should consistently and emphatically seek to protect its overall strategic autonomy as also its independent foreign policy while joining hands with the U.S. in the long unpredictable battle against the scourge of international terror.

A caveat of this magnitude is in tune with India's present stature in global politics. In the first few decades after independence, India had found itself alone, if not entirely alienated, in its moral crusade over such issues as global-scale nuclear and conventional disarmament. Some truly amazing contradictions of the Cold War politics of the time accounted for that harsh reality. With the present-day worldwide strategic environment becoming more hospitable to India's enlightened interest in fighting terror, New Delhi should not miss the chance to make its moral presence felt. So, there is not much ground for the shrill voices that are being raised in some political quarters in India to suggest that New Delhi should not join forces with the U.S. whatever be the cause. To say this is not to ignore two prime challenges that a U.S.-friendly India will face. First, the economic consequences of a possible war on terror must be addressed without panic. In any case, India cannot afford to be a 'soft' state by staying on the sidelines. The second and equally important consideration is to study how best New Delhi can cooperate with the U.S. military forces without exposing India to the consequential dangers and risks. With Russia as also China and other major powers still mulling over America's compulsions, the critical mass of a possible international coalition against terror is still only in the making.

THE HINDU

# Push from Central Asia

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Sept. 16: The key to India's role in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington may lie in a meeting in the remote Central Asian city of Dushanbe on Thursday, at which India was represented by Omar Abdullah, the minister of state for external affairs.

The meeting brought together India, Russia, Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan's anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, which suffered a body blow yesterday in the death of its charismatic leader, Ahmad Shah Masood.

The line-up in Dushanbe on Thursday may ultimately prove to be the most crucial element in a resolution of the problem of terrorism in Afghanistan. While America's military machine may deliver a heavy physical blow to Afghanistan with Pakistan's help, its impact will merely be symbolic and telegenic unless the Bush administration can co-opt the states which met in Dushanbe.

Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have borders with Afghanistan, while Russian troops still patrol Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan. Twenty-five per cent of Afghans are Tajiks, 15 per cent are Hazaras who look up to Iran and 6 per cent are Uzbeks. If these ethnic groups, now opposed to the

Taliban, decide to support the mullahs of Kandahar, American military might cannot get the better of either the Taliban or Osama bin Laden.

Already, Pashtun tribal chiefs in Afghanistan, whose support for the Taliban has hitherto been lukewarm and divided, resolved this weekend to support the Islamic militia in the event of an American attack.

## Jaswant for US

Foreign and defence minister Jaswant Singh will leave for Washington in the next few days for consultations with the Bush administration. (See Page 5)

President George W. Bush spoke to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who promised him "fullest cooperation".

This precisely was the advice the White House and the state department received during the weekend from another Central Asian state, which did not attend the Dushanbe meeting but shares the concerns of those who gathered in Tajikistan's capital.

Altymbek Sarsenbayev, national security adviser to Kazakhstan's President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, told the Americans here that a global alliance for

bringing peace to Afghanistan, elections for a government of national unity and an end to the influx of arms alone can uproot bin Laden and permanently close the camps that turn out international terrorists.

"If bin Laden is punished and the war in Afghanistan is not stopped, another bin Laden will appear," the Kazakh official was quoted as saying.

India's presence in Dushanbe was significant for other reasons as well: it points to a crucial acknowledgement of New Delhi's role in the growing crisis.

Hitherto, the Central Asian countries had kept India out of their regional conclaves on Afghanistan, despite the willingness of Russia and Iran to include New Delhi.

Secondly, notwithstanding South Block's denials, India has provided "all types of assistance" to the late Masood in his fight against the Taliban. Although such assistance declined drastically since 1996, the Russians and the Iranjans have been urging India to step up help for Masood.

National security adviser Brajesh Mishra arrived in Moscow on Sunday in an airdash reminiscent of close, speedy and intense Indo-Soviet consultations during much of the first 50 years of independent India's foreign policy.

THE TELEGRAPH

17 SEP 2001

# India building a 'concert of democracies'

BY GAUTAM DATT

**New Delhi, Sept. 16:** India is working towards formulating a "concert of democracies" to strike at the root of international terrorism and feels that military operation against Afghanistan should not be the first option before the United States.

Top government sources indicated that New Delhi will pursue a rigorous consultation process with the international community to fight terrorism as it has been doing in the past.

The feeling in New Delhi is that the "war against terrorism is 'our' fight and US has just joined it."

The process of this consultation has already begun. External affairs minister Jaswant Singh spoke to his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov on Sunday. He is also preparing to visit US soon for a dialogue on the issue with Washington. Mr Singh was scheduled to visit New York along with

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to attend the UN General Assembly meeting. The visit was cancelled following the terrorist strike against the US. He is expected to convey to the US that the war against terrorism is not going to be a single attack against a nation. It would take a long-drawn battle to wipe out the menace, feels New Delhi.

India believes that if military action against Afghanistan is not preceded by intense preparation, it may prove to be counter-productive.

Some of the steps being proposed by India before the military strikes include setting up of a concert of democracies which would be armed with a UN mandate to attack the menace.

It would mean the expansion of the comprehensive convention of terrorism, which is expected to come up before the UN.

The second step would be to strengthen the international legal framework against international terrorism. The third step in the

chain would be an emphasis on greater intelligence sharing. Top government sources said if the US addresses the issue only militarily, then hundreds of Osamas could come up. New Delhi wants that terrorism should be completely wiped out.

Indian officials were clear that Pakistan could not have a place in the proposed "concert of democracy," but China can be included.

India has maintained that Pakistan had adopted terrorism as a state policy and needed to be kept away from the process.

The officials said Pakistan had not offered to cooperate with the US in fight against terrorism, but was forced to comply with the "wish list" handed over by Washington. The Indian officials said the US has broadly made four demands to Pakistan.

The US wanted Pakistan to seal its border with Afghanistan, access to intelligence about Taliban, cut fuel supply lines and block the convoy of trucks from Pakistan to

Afghanistan which were the lifelines for the Taliban regime. The US has also asked Pakistan to freeze the bank accounts of the Taliban militia. The US has also demanded access to the Pakistani airspace and airfields. Officials in New Delhi say they had been warning of Talibanisation of Pakistan.

There is a view that Pakistan has been Talibanised to a greater extent. New Delhi is also not giving much credence to Pakistan's proposed cooperation with the US to fight against Afghanistan.

The Indian official believe that Pakistan foreign minister Abdul Sattar's statements in the last two days tell a different story.

As part of India's consultation with democratic nations on the issue, British Prime Minister Tony Blair has written a letter to Prime Minister Vajpayee to discuss terrorism and its various aspects. The officials said that there was a consensus in the ruling coalition to offer full co-operation to the US in fight against terrorism.

# No compromise on sovereignty: Opp

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 17

THE NON-CONGRESS Opposition parties are categorically opposed to Indian territory being used for any US military action in the event of an imminent attack on Afghanistan. The People's Front has likened any such Indian assistance to the "surrender of country's sovereignty".

This staunch opposition to any Indian 'logistic support' to the US forces was clearly evident from a statement issued by the Peoples' Front yesterday. It said, "While resolutely opposing terrorism and working for its elimination, we oppose any effort by the Government of India to provide facilities or to

participate in any war efforts unilaterally declared by the US. India cannot and should not forfeit its sovereignty and independent position."

This statement comparing any Indian move to give logistic support to a sell-out to the US was made after a meeting of all the People's Front constituents at the residence of former Prime Minister VP Singh. The meeting was attended by former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda, CPM general secretary Harkishen Singh Surjeet and senior CPI leader AB Bardhan.

Former Prime Minister VP Singh said India was opposed to terrorism but the Government should not surrender "its basic sovereignty" by agreeing to give logistic support in terms of land

bases and airports. However, he saw no problem in sharing intelligence information for nabbing the terrorists.

Singh said the Government should proceed on this sensitive issue on the basis of national consensus. "It is unfortunate that Jaswant Singh first made a statement agreeing to give all kind of support to the US and then the PM called an all-party meeting. It should have been the other way round."

He also cautioned that neither in the US nor in India should there be any build-up against the Muslims. "Action, if any, should be culprit-specific. There should be a distinction between terrorists and the entire Arab or Muslim people."

Samajwadi Party leader

Mulayam Singh Yadav said the US should first agree to acknowledge terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. Only then should India offer its "unconditional and unstinted" support to Washington for its possible military action against Afghanistan.

Yadav charged the Vajpayee Government with inept handling of the situation following terrorist attacks in the US saying, "India has shown itself as a politically immature nation by offering unconditional and unstinted support to Washington even without being asked for it."

IUML leader GM Banatwala also urged the Indian Government to act with caution and avoid "hasty and ill-advised decisions."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

18 SEP 2001

# Proceed with caution: Opposition

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J. F. Perkins  
ND-1  
By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 15.** The Vajpayee Government today received the total backing of political parties across the spectrum in its effort to counter terrorism in the wake of the recent attacks in the U.S. However, the Opposition suggested that the Government exercise caution in dealing with the situation as national security was involved. Mr. Vajpayee assured the leaders that whatever decisions the Government took would be in the "national interest."

At the two-hour meeting, chaired by the Prime Minister, the leaders were informed that there was no formal request from the U.S. for the use of Indian bases to carry out military strikes in the region. He refrained from elaborating in view of the "sensitive nature" of the issue.

The Opposition was united on offering base facilities to the U.S. But the CPI(M) said in a written statement that it strongly opposed

the Government's move to offer logistical facilities and participate in the proposed U.S. military action. "We have reiterated this position clearly again in the meeting."

The meeting began with the leaders observing a two-minute silence in the memory of those killed in the attacks in New York and Washington. It also decided to commemorate September 18 as the National Solidarity Day against terrorism and observe a two-min-

ute silence at 10.30 a.m. on that day.

## 'Keep live contact'

Later, briefing correspondents, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, said the Prime Minister had urged the leaders to maintain "live contact" with him and other leaders, instead of forming their opinion on India's stand on the basis of media reports.

## Security tightened at airports

By Gargi Parsai

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 15.** Security at all major and sensitive airports in the country has been tightened as a precaution against any fallout of U.S. action against suspected terrorists. India's Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) has deployed additional security forces, commandos, sniffer dogs and advanced anti-hijacking and anti-sabotage equipment.

Intelligence agencies have virtually taken over the airports where the threat perception is high. Air-India has been advised to take extra security measures for flights bound for New York. AI operates a daily flight to New York via London, but has curtailed its operation up to London in view of the heightened threat perception.

SEP 15 2001

10 SEP 2001

# Advani offers to help US, Israel fight terrorism

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Sept. 14: Union home minister L.K. Advani who met the ambassadors of the United States and Israel in New Delhi on Friday, reiterated India's offer to cooperate in fighting terrorism.

Mr Advani, who has been advocating a pro-active policy to deal with terrorists, discussed issues related to global terrorism with US ambassador Robert D. Blackwill and Israeli ambassador David Aphek. India has already offered to the US full logistic support including use of its military bases if it launches an attack on Afghanistan. Mr Advani is learnt to have reiterated this offer to Mr Blackwill.

Reports have said that New Delhi has also provided information to the US about the possible locations of terrorist camps in Afghanistan. The US ambassador, who presented his credentials to president K.R. Naryanan on Friday, also met finance minister Yashwant Sinha and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra. The US envoy then met the home minister and apprised him of the events in the US and the progress in the investigations. US officials described the meeting as an establishment of new and unprecedented patterns in relations between India and America.

India, Israel and US have shared a common interest in terrorism too.

The main suspect in the terrorist attack on the US, Osama bin Laden, has been reported to have said recently that his main targets were US, Israel and India.

Good for us in long run: Swadeshis

BY SUGATA NANDI

New Delhi, Sept. 14: The Swadeshi Jagaran Manch expects that the terror attacks on the US will have "beneficial effects for India in the long run." The co-convenor of the Delhi unit of the Manch Ashwani Mahajan said, India would benefit from US pressure on Pakistan.

His logic goes on to say that, "pressure on Pakistan will in the long run reduce terrorist attacks in India. This in turn, will relieve the Indian defence establishment which is involved in anti terrorist activities. In the long run this will bring down our defence expenditure," said Mr Mahajan.

Mr Mahajan said that the attacks may have a positive impact on the global economy. Manch experts say that the US will step up government expenditure in defence, which might help reverse the global economic recession. Explaining the SJM's stand on the US as the biggest economic power, Mr Mahajan said, "The Manch never wants the destruction of any economy. We wish for the prosperity for all Americans along with all the other nations of the world."

THE ASIAN AGE

14 9 2001



# Govt mulls stand, calls all-party meet

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 14

HECTIC DIPLOMATIC talks were under way in the Capital today even as the corridors of power echoed with one question - what role should India play if the US decides to take military action against Tuesday's terrorist attacks?

National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra spoke to his US counterpart, Condoleeza Rice, while Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee called an all-party meeting tomorrow to determine the Indian position.

In an obvious indication of the importance Washington places on India's partnership, Robert Blackwill was formally recognised as the new US ambassador after he presented his credentials to President K R Narayanan today. Blackwill, who has met External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh twice since Tuesday's tragedy, has postponed his trip to home base.

But Washington has not yet approached India with any request for logistical or operational support for carrying out strikes against terrorist bases in South Asia.

15/9  
The Indian foreign office today denied reports that Jaswant Singh had said India's response would be "affirmative" if asked for such assistance.

"Our response would be based on the nature of any request made by the US Government. That is a little down the road. Till now no such talk has come up in our discussions," MEA spokesman Nirupama Rao said.

"The Prime Minister has said that India is ready to co-operate in the investigations and to strengthen the partnership with the US in leading international efforts to ensure that terrorism never succeeds again," Rao said.

She said India is for a "resolute, co-ordinated and global response against international terrorism".

Officials also rebutted reports that India had given "operational" support to the US during the Gulf War. A senior official said India had refused to be part of the multinational military force against Iraq in 1991. Though a few US military planes had landed in Mumbai airport for refuelling, New Delhi had later withdrawn even this facility lest it be interpreted as a sign of its support to the US.

## CPM warns against joint military action

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 14

THE CPI(M) today warned the Vajpayee Government against involving India in any US military action to fight terrorist activities.

A CPI(M) Politburo statement said such an involvement would carry serious implications for India's security interests.

Criticising the NDA regime for acting as the US's "junior partner", the statement said the Government can respond to "any lawful request" from the US to provide any relevant information on terrorist activities in the US. "But to involve India in any US military action is unacceptable and will be strongly opposed by all patriotic Indians," it said.

The CPI(M) said the BJP-led regime has already informed the US that it is willing to offer logistical support in India and its military and infrastructural resources for the proposed US military action against Afghanistan.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 SEP 2001

# India may help US with military strikes if asked

AA-3  
15/9

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

*S.F. P. min*  
New Delhi, Sept. 14: A day after external affairs and defence minister Jaswant Singh talked about providing Indian military facilities to the US if it launches strikes against Afghanistan, the MEA on Friday clarified that the extent of Indian cooperation will depend on the nature of request from the US.

The official said that there had been no specific request of assistance from the US so far. In fact, the only two persons India had contacted since Tuesday, the day of tragedy, was the US ambassador in New Delhi Robert D. Blackwill and the US national security advisor Condoleeza Rice.

Even though India has expressed that it is more than willing to offer "any assistance" to the US, including providing logistic support

which meant more than mere refuelling facilities for its military aircraft, the specific request from the US administration has yet to come.

US secretary of state Colin Powell has spoken to European and the Chinese leadership. But the MEA said that the fact that India was not contacted by the US did not undermine New Delhi's role in the entire episode.

The officials said that Mr Blackwill held an hour-long meeting with Mr Jaswant Singh on Thursday evening and national security advisor Brajesh Mishra had a conversation with Ms Rice on the telephone.

The officials said that the US ambassador appreciated the prompt response by the Indian government to increase security of the American embassy in New

Delhi. "India is no way out of the picture," said the MEA official.

In an interview to a newspaper, Mr Jaswant Singh had said that India would allow US forces to use its facilities if it launches military strikes against Afghanistan in retaliation for terror attacks in New York and Washington.

India would agree to provide logistical help or a staging ground for a US military operation, Mr Singh had said, adding, "There have been contacts at all political, executive and operational levels about this."

He had refused to divulge more details saying it was a sensitive matter.

He had said that the matter was discussed at the Cabinet committee on security which met for the second time on Thursday after the terrorist strike on the US.

THE ASIAN AGE

15 SEP 2001

# PM may focus on policy shift in address

NILOVA ROY CHAUDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 13. - The Prime Minister today held a meeting with the Opposition leader, Mrs Sonia Gandhi, to consult and brief her on the Centre's position on international terrorism following the terrorist strikes in the USA.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's meeting with Mrs Gandhi and Dr Manmohan Singh this evening, arranged at a short notice after the Cabinet Committee on Security met to "review the situation", indicates a slight but definite shift in policy that will be the focus of his address to the nation tomorrow.

The Prime Minister is expected to prepare Indians for the country's participation in the "global cooperation against terrorism" that the US President, Mr George W Bush, has advocated to weed out perpetrators of terror.

11/9 "India has long asked for a global initiative against terrorism" a PMO official said, and Mr Vajpayee would reiterate India's active cooperation "in the investigations into this crime and to strengthen the Indo-US partnership in leading international efforts to ensure that terrorism never succeeds again," as he told President Mr Bush in a letter.

India has, in the past, hesitated from fully cooperating with the USA, and during the Gulf War, denied their aircraft even refuelling facilities on Indian soil.

A considerable portion of the bureaucracy and the defence establishment is now keen to move from a 'non-aligned' status to more 'active' involvement against terrorism, and are of the view that India's cause would be best served by being an active part of a global initiative to combat terrorism that

has emerged as the greatest threat to democracies.

This could involve, besides intelligence-sharing, cooperation at the military level. A senior Army officer said: "The defence services have no problem in allowing refuelling and other facilities" against such a task force against terrorism.

"We have to be pragmatic and grab the chance that has presented itself," a senior official said and added: "This could be the turning point in our campaign against cross-border terrorism, and I think we will take it."

The Prime Minister is also expected to address the possible economic fallout of Tuesday's horrific attacks, which are likely to be manageable, given India's marginal presence in the global economy. Adequate crude oil reserves would cushion the short term spurt in international prices and is unlikely to have a long-term impact.



Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee

The crux of the message will be on the the menace of international terrorism that India as a democracy is subjected to.

"If we miss out this time, then, as always, we will meditate, cogitate and vegetate," a senior official said.

# Govt. discusses fallout of attacks

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 13. The Government is closely monitoring the signals coming from the U.S. administration to assess the fallout of Tuesday's terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on countries in the region, including Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The repercussions of the attacks in the U.S. came up for discussion during the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security, which met this afternoon. This meeting, among others, was attended by the Foreign Secretary, Ms. Chokila Iyer, and the Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal A.Y. Tipnis.

In assessing the situation in the region, influential sections within the Government are of the view that the fallout of these events on Pakistan and Afghanistan will depend on whether or not, these strikes are traced to the Saudi fugitive Osama bin Laden.

In case Osama bin Laden's hand is established, it will not only have serious implications on Afghanistan, where he is based, but it may also contribute in weakening Pakistan in the future.

The U.S., in case Osama bin Laden is implicated, is certain to mount pressure on Islamabad to clamp down on the latter's support base which exists both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, sources in the Government say. Specifically, the Taliban, which protects

Osama bin Laden, traces its roots in Pakistan. It is widely known that the Taliban has been promoted by Maulana Fazlur Rahman's Jamaat-e-Ulema-i-Islam (JUI), with the backing of the former Pakistan Prime Minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, and her Interior Minister, General Naseerullah Babar.

Sources, however, point out that Pakistan's decision to endorse a crackdown on the JUI is likely to boomerang. A clampdown, for instance, will inflame passions among the well-armed cadres supporting the JUI which straddle the porous border of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The JUI, which is close to the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, demonstrated its clout by drawing nearly half-a-million members of the Deobandi school of Islam, to which it belongs, for a conference in Taro Jaba near Peshawar recently.

In other words, Pakistan may be risking the possibility of unbridled civil strife in case it launches a crackdown on the JUI. The U.S. pressures on Islamabad are also likely to severely strain the Pakistani military establishment, which has been exposed to extremist Islamic trends for quite some time now.

On the contrary, in case Pakistan defies the U.S. or complies with it only partially, it will risk the fury of the latter's military force. Sources point out that there is little "middle ground" in the situation in which Pakistan finds itself now. Reports from Washington

suggest that the Bush administration wants Pakistan to quickly make up its mind on which side of the fence does it really belong.

Osama bin Laden's involvement in the attacks will certainly bring the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to the firing line. The U.S. show of strength against the Taliban, sources say, is likely to enhance the importance of the Northern Alliance under the leadership of Commander Ahmad Shah Masood, in a possible new, but more representative political arrangement in Afghanistan in the future.

The U.S. involvement in the region, is also likely to have a fallout on Kashmir. The opinion is divided, but there is an influential section in the Government, which believes that the pre-occupation of the Jehadis with the U.S. may help lower the temperature in Jammu and Kashmir.

On the diplomatic side, the dominant view in South Block, after the attacks, is to make a concerted effort to raise India's profile in a global campaign against international terrorism. Active identification with the U.S. administration's counter-terrorism drive may prove helpful, it is felt. Sources point out that India is keen to contribute in finding solutions to issues of global concern such as international terrorism and democracy. Such a contribution, many in South Block opine, will help in raising India's international stature considerably.

THE HINDU

14 SEP 2001

STRIKES IN U.S. / PM'S NEW YORK VISIT UNCERTAIN

# India shocked, condemns attacks

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 11.** India today expressed its shock over the coordinated terrorist strikes in the U.S. and described them as a "dastardly crime."

Speaking to reporters after a special meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, said that India offered its "deepest condolences" to the people, the Government and President of the U.S.

India stood by the U.S. and the rest of the international community in its drive to defeat international terrorism, he said.

The terrorist violence in the U.S. has cast a shadow on the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's proposed visit to New York for the U.N. General Assembly session later this month. The UNGA session, Mr. Singh observed, could not begin today because of the terrorist strikes. "I am not in position to say whether the scheduled meeting would be held," he said. According to the Minister, the Prime Minister was planning to get in touch with the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, soon.

Mr. Jaswant said that he had spoken to the U.S. ambassador to India, Mr. Robert Blackwill, and assured him that additional security

will be provided to U.S. citizens and properties in India. The Lt. Governor of Delhi, Mr. Vijai Kapur, had been requested to get in touch with the U.S. ambassador and oversee the necessary security arrangements, he said.

All the members of the Indian mission in New York and the Consulate General there were safe, he said. Mr. Singh pointed out that he had been personally in touch with the Indian embassy in Washington and its other establishments in New York.

Earlier in the evening, Mr. Singh met the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, to consider the fallout of the attacks. He observed that the events in the U.S. would change the complexion of international relations. Analysts here point out that the attacks could have serious repercussions on Pakistan and the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, if the terrorist group led by Saudi fugitive Osama bin Laden was implicated in the strikes. India's track record, by contrast, in countering international terrorism targeting the U.S. has been fairly good. The Delhi police, for instance, had recently arrested a Sudanese national who was allegedly masterminding a terrorist strike on the U.S. embassy.

Mr. Advani pointed out that terrorism had to be combated on an international scale, adding that, India, which had been a target of

menace has been urging collective action against extremists.

Reacting to the attacks, the U.S. has decided to close its embassy for a day on Wednesday. The American centres in New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata would also remain closed tomorrow.

In an advisory issued late this evening, the U.S. embassy said that while it had not received any specific threat to its security, American citizens were advised to exercise "all possible caution" while travelling out of their homes.

Sections of the diplomatic community in the capital have reacted sharply to the targeting of symbols of American commercial and military power in New York and Washington. The Palestinian Ambassador to India, Mr. Khalid El Sheikh, has deplored the attacks and described them as "unbelievable." He rejected allegations of the possible involvement of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) in the crime.

The attacks in the U.S. are expected to have a much larger global impact. Apart from a showdown with the terrorists, today's events are likely to encourage the U.S. to push through its proposal on the National Missile Defence (NMD).

## U.S. embassy closed today

By Our Staff Reporter

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 11.** The U.S. embassy here has decided to keep its premises — along with U.S. consulates elsewhere in the country — closed to the public this Wednesday, September 12, in the wake of terrorist attacks on vital installations across the U.S.

A communique issued by the U.S. embassy late on Tuesday evening said American Centers in New Delhi, Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata will also remain closed on September 12.

A U.S. embassy spokesperson said the embassy had not received any specific threat to the security of American citizens in India. But the embassy has advised all American citizens living or visiting India to exercise all possible precautions and remain alert about their surroundings when travelling outside their homes. But those who require urgent consular assistance can contact the American Citizen Services at (011)4198000 in New Delhi and other consulates.

The spokesperson said further information would be shared as and when available.

J. F. P. 10-13

# FOREIGN POLICY

## Vajpayee Needs To Achieve A Consensus

By PRAKASH NANDA

FEW words in Indian polity are bandied about as much as "consensus". All political groups recognise that the approval ratings of consensus on any issue, particularly if it relates to foreign policy, approach 100 per cent. Yet translating rhetorical support for consensus — the Americans call it bipartisanship — into practice can be extremely difficult. As a matter of fact, India's foreign policy has been quite partisan. Except on issues like supporting the freedom movement of countries in Asia and Africa, initiating action in the United Nations against apartheid and supporting the principle of non-alignment in international affairs until the end of the Cold war, consensus eluded vital foreign policy issues. What should be India's approaches towards China, Pakistan and the United States have always been debating points, the same with the country's nuclear policy.

One need not be a supporter of the Vajpayee government in the post-Agra summit phase to take the wind out of the sails of the opposition parties, particularly the Congress, when they say that the present regime has broken the national consensus that always prevailed on foreign policy matters before 1998.

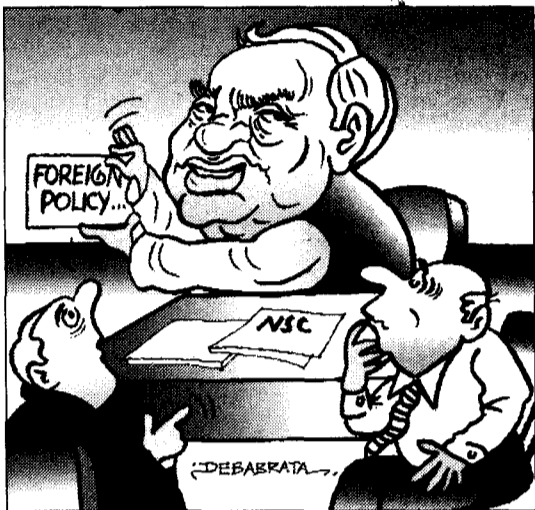
### DRAWBACK

The Congress theory is partially correct in the sense that it did not support the Pokhran explosion in 1998. Even during the Kargil conflict in 1999, the Congress — and the Left parties — tried to gain political mileage by accusing the government of having let down its guard on the frontier. The same has been the attitude of the opposition to the entry of foreign insurance companies and to the Uruguay Round obligations on intellectual property rights. Viewed thus, sensitive foreign policy and other strategic decisions made by the Vajpayee government have not been the products of national consensus.

However, this should not mean that when the Congress was ruling the country, all decisions emanated from national consensus. Jawaharlal Nehru did not seek the opposition's advice before taking the Kashmir issue to the UN. Indira Gandhi did not go for parliamentary debate before conducting India's first nuclear explosion in 1974. Rajiv Gandhi never consulted the opposition parties before sending the India Peace Keeping Force to Sri Lanka. In fact, under Congress governments, all the major treaties that India had entered into with others — the Indo-Bhutanese treaty of 1949, the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement of 1950, the Indo-Nepalese Treaty of 1951, The India-China Agreement of 1954, the Tashkent Agreement of 1965, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971, the Shimla Agreement of 1972 and the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987 — were never discussed either with the opposition parties or debated in Parliament in advance.

All this is not to suggest that there should not be consensus in foreign policy. On the contrary, foreign policy always has more force and punch when the

nation speaks with one voice. When the government works with the opposition, the country earns greater respect and effectiveness abroad. This is precisely the reason why since the 1980s every American President has worked towards a consensus in US foreign policy based on three main pillars: democracy, free trade, and open markets. Similarly, there is a movement afoot in Russia towards developing a national con-



sensus on four principal elements of the country's future foreign policy — a "strategic alliance" with the West, engagement with China, dealing with neighbouring countries and traditional allies such as India, and maintaining "a semblance" of "superpower partnership" with the United States.

As an aspiring great power, India must witness a similar effort towards a national consensus. This is all the more so when the nation is under a coalition government. Unlike most of his Congress predecessors, Vajpayee does not have a commanding parliamentary majority to ignore the voice of the opposition in foreign policy matters. Nor is it in the national interest in this age of complex global affairs to persist with the Nehruvian legacy of a highly narrow base of foreign policy making process. Indeed, one of the main drawbacks of the Vajpayee regime is that, contrary to its poll promises, it has not done anything significant to expand the foreign policy making base. The result is that a group of few individuals is dictating foreign policies. This point needs a little elaboration.

### NO DEBATE

During the Nehru era, India's foreign policy making process was entirely dominated by the Nehru's charisma and personality, although at times, he was helped by the likes of KM Pannikar, KPS Menon (while dealing with the then Soviet union and China), Girija Shankar Vajpayee and Krishna Menon (in matters pertaining to the United Kingdom and the United States). This trend of the Prime Minister and some of his or her trusted ministers and bureaucrats monopolising the making the foreign policy without any proper institutional frameworks was further legitimised by Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. Rajiv had said that public debates on foreign policy did not serve any useful purpose as it was a highly specialised subject.

The Vajpayee government is precisely carrying on with this legacy. Although it established the so-called National Security Council and created a new post of national security adviser, there is hardly any evidence

that it is working the way it was intended. Press reports suggest that it has not been convened more than five times in the last four years. In a way, under Vajpayee the foreign policy making base has become narrower than what it was even during the Congress regimes. Under Congress rule, there was at least a semblance of cohesion within the narrow foreign policy-making teams. Besides, thanks to the Congress party's overwhelming majority in Parliament and its essentially undemocratic organisational structure, there was hardly any challenge to this narrow group. The result was that this group could claim to be representing the national mood.

However, this is not the case with the Vajpayee government. For instance, the NSC has been more in news for the supposed rivalry between the external affairs minister and NSA, who also happens to be the principal secretary to the Prime Minister. There have been occasions such as India's decision to give "guarded support" to the Bush Administration's missile defence programme, when the Prime Minister's Office did not know the Ministry of External Affairs' reactions to Washington's move.

### IMPOSITION

Similarly, take the case of the composition of the cabinet committee on political affairs which approves the important foreign policy decisions. With the departure of George Fernandes as defence minister, all its members belong to the BJP. The result is that many a time the Government takes important decision relevant to the country's foreign policy and strategic goals that do not have the knowledge, let alone approval, of the ruling NDA. It is not surprising, thus, why National Conference was unhappy when Vajpayee declared unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir last year. Shiv Sena's reservations on talks with Pakistan may also be seen in this context. Of course, the cabinet as a whole, and thus the NDA, endorses subsequently the CCPA's decisions. But the point is that such decisions are virtually imposed on the coalition.

If this is the situation within the ruling coalition, then the opposition parties do have a cause in stressing the importance of consensus. It is time for Vajpayee to rally the nation behind him by developing a better framework for his foreign policy. He must articulate his goals and explain how he intends to achieve them. On complex issues, he must not hesitate to seek the advice of the non-BJP allies and the opposition parties. The best way to do this is to strengthen the already existing committee systems in Parliament.

Like the bipartisan task forces in the US, "the Standing Committee on External Affairs" of the Parliament, which was formed in 1992, must be encouraged to suggest directions to the government from time to time. The opposition parties will thus be forced to go beyond rhetoric and present concrete policy prescriptions. And it is through such a transparent process that national consensus on important foreign policy issues will emerge.

The author is a National Fellow with the Indian Council of Historical Research.

THE STATESMAN

## Agni Diplomacy <sup>11-10-2001</sup>

If there is one universal message of human history in the last century or more, it is that regimes which are driven by a totalising millenarian vision cause the polity and society over which they preside incalculable harm. This is true as much of dispensations which believed in the Marxist utopia (or any of its purported variants) as of those on the other end of the political spectrum. Given their indifference to the complexities of real history, however, it is perhaps too much to expect the principal constituent of the current coalition at the Centre to heed this grim pointer from the past. Clearly, the BJP and its affiliate organisations — despite the severe restrictions imposed on them by the imperatives of coalition politics — are straining at the leash to wreak their own blueprint of social-cultural engineering on Indian society and polity. From education and history to culture and national identity, the party has carried out an unsubtle warfare of 'saffronisation' which falls well outside the ambit of the so-called National Agenda of Governance — an agenda which all NDA coalition partners had solemnly agreed to uphold at the time of assumption of political office. The latest in the series is an unprecedented institutional 'experiment': The appointment, on purely ideological grounds, of a certain B K Agnihotri as advisor to the Indian ambassador in Washington. Officially designated "ambassador at large", Mr Agnihotri has been given the rank of an ambassador. *J. P. Singh*

First, the obvious questions: How will another power centre in the Indian embassy help the cause of our foreign policy in what is arguably the most important capital of the world? Would it not adversely affect the authority, not to mention the morale, of the official ambassador, Naresh Chandra? How is the US administration meant to deal with a diplomatic mission which has not one but two heads? In case of a conflict of opinion, which is inevitable, who will be India's official spokesperson in Washington? The government's stand that Mr Agnihotri will look after the interests of the NRIs is equally baffling. After all, isn't that a part of the official ambassador's brief? Or is the NRI community to be treated as divisible, with Mr Agnihotri looking after sections that are partial to the Hindutva movement? Then there is the little question of Mr Agnihotri's credentials. It is well known that he is a leading light of an influential NRI lobby called "The Overseas Friends of the BJP". He has had a long association with the sangh parivar too. But does that equip him to handle a sensitive diplomatic assignment? The short answer is, it doesn't. Not that it matters to the powers that be. Riled by the welter of criticism the move evoked amongst opposition members in Parliament on Friday, Pramod Mahajan quipped: "It is not a crime to be an RSS member". In his defensive zeal, Mr Mahajan completely missed the point. The question he should have asked himself was: Does a mere membership of the parivar entitle one to an important foreign policy assignment? Mr Mahajan's disingenuous claim that Mr Agnihotri holds a political, not a governmental post, is hardly deserving of a serious response. Since when have foreign policy matters in India become a domain of petty ideological intrigues rather than a bipartisan national concern?

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 3 SEP 2001

# MEA gets specialist security advisers

Saurabh Shukla  
New Delhi, September 1

AMID THE controversy shrouding the role of the 'advisers' in the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry has now brought in specialists to augment its Disarmament and International Security (DISA) Division.

These specialists will help settle its co-ordination problems on International security related matters with the MoD and organisations like the DRDO besides the three services, sources say.

The appointments of Brigadier P S Yadav, who has been appointed Director, Military Affairs in the ministry, and that of Senior Scientist, Anil Kumar who has been brought in from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) as Director Science and Technology were announced through a brief official note circulated last week, though the officials had joined in the beginning of August.

Insiders say while Yadav who was earlier with the College of Combat at Mhow will advise on security related issues in the division and will play an important role on military component of these issues. The other specialist Kumar is an expert in solid-state physics. He will advise on nuclear and technology related matters in the division.

The two specialists will help the MEA on the disarmament and security dialogue that India has with many countries and may overcome the problems faced by the Centre, which will be resuming its defence co-operation with the US. There is already a security dialogue in place with countries like China, France, UK and Germany.

Insiders say that there was often a problem as the Defence establishment wanted their representation at some of these forums.

Now, these specialists will play a key role in co-ordinating with the services and defence organisations to shape an effective strategy at some of these multilateral and bilateral forums.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

SEP 2001



# Opposition slams Govt. over Agnihotri appointment

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, AUG. 30.** The Opposition today staged a walk-out in the Lok Sabha in protest against the Government's refusal to review its decision to appoint Mr. B.K. Agnihotri, an RSS activist, as adviser in the Indian Embassy in Washington, with the rank of an Ambassador.

Mr. Agnihotri's appointment was the subject of an animated discussion with the Opposition members, led by Mr. Somnath Chatterjee CPI(M), training their guns on the Government, accusing it of trying to change the well-established national consensus on External Affairs by appointing persons with RSS background.

Terming the appointment as totally "illegal and one that would weaken the position of the existing U.S. Ambassador", the Opposition charged the Government with attempting to propagate its "Hindutva" agenda by appointing Mr. Agnihotri, an RSS leader and member of an organisation "the Overseas friends of BJP".

The Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, rejected the Opposition demand for reviewing the appointment. "Being a member of the RSS is neither a crime nor a disqualification, if the Prime Minister, the Home Minister or myself can hold our positions despite being members of the

RSS so can Mr. Agnihotri," he said. At this point, the Opposition parties staged a walk-out.

Earlier, raising the issue during zero hour, Mr. Chatterjee said the Government had created an extraordinary situation by appointing an RSS functionary as an Ambassador-at-large, to look after the interests of the Non-Resident Indians. He wanted the Government to clarify Mr. Agnihotri's role when there was already an Ambassador in Washington.

Mr. Madhavrao Scindia (Congress) said the Government had created an atmosphere of suspicion by appointing Mr. Agnihotri. The Government was undoing the national consensus that existed on issues of foreign affairs by such appointments. He had received several messages from NRIs protesting the appointment and read out a letter from Mr. Surinder Malhotra, president of the Indian National Overseas Congress, protesting the appointment.

The former Prime Minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, took Mr. Mahajan to task for justifying Mr. Agnihotri's appointment. "If the Government wants to propagate 'hindutva' in this manner, I don't know where the country is headed to". He called upon the Government to take the nation and Parliament into confidence and explain the need for the appointment. He said either the Prime Minister or the External Affairs Minister should make a statement in the House on the issue.

THE HINDU

31 August

# Musharraf had not come prepared for Agra: Jaswant

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 10. - Days after Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee described General Pervez Musharraf as "naive," the external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, suggested the Pakistani President had come unprepared to Agra, leading a delegation which didn't know what was required of it.

The Pakistani President apparently made a few more mistakes. He didn't realise the dividing line between "military directness and military simplicity," that the issues to be resolved were complex and involved the sentiments of the entire nation which couldn't only be addressed as legalistic issues and that Jammu and Kashmir is not a territorial dispute and the stumbling block between cordial relations of the two countries but a consequence of the mentality which can be dealt with if Pakistan corrects its approach in the two-nation theory.

The caravan of peace, which started at Lahore and stopped briefly at Agra will, however, continue, Mr Singh said. But he pointed out that fu-

ture discussions with Pakistan will take the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration as the foundation. What the two sides achieved at Agra was "some understanding" without reaching at an agreement. And an understanding can be "selectively interpreted".

The Pakistani President spoke extempore at the plenary session of the Agra summit, with some help from "ad hoc pencil notes", Mr Jaswant Singh told the Rajya Sabha. Later in the afternoon when Indian diplomats invited their Pakistani counterparts for discussions, the Pakistani diplomats declined to meet as they didn't have any "clear instructions" from the President. They didn't even have a draft document while India had prepared several, depending on how the talks go, Mr Singh said, intervening in a discussion on the Agra summit to defend the government.

The Opposition had accused the government of inviting Pakistan for talks under US pressure and going to Agra without "studied application of

■ See MUSHARRAF: page 8

THE STATESMAN

11 AUG 2001

P. T. O.

5-8  
(Continued from page 1)

## MUSHARRAF

mind and long-term vision", conceptual clarity and preparation, allegations which the minister strongly refuted. He later spelt out the chronology of events during the summit to make his point.

Mr Singh said he believed that the Pakistani team didn't know what was required of it. India suggested after the plenary session that a two-three line joint statement be issued and that the officials start working on a joint statement or declaration without wasting time. The Pakistani team was, however, not ready for this and finally came for the discussions at 11 p.m., working on the draft till 4.30 in the morning.

Officials from both sides produced a document with six "square brackets" where there were differences. The two heads of state met again at 10.30 a.m. on 16 July when General Musharraf wanted to engage in the exercise of working on the

document with Mr Vajpayee. "I thought this isn't the way to go about it and told him that you leave it to us". Mr Abdul Sattar and Mr Singh next started working towards eliminating the square brackets. As per diplomatic practices, Mr Singh indicated even a foreign minister should not be doing this but played along.

In course of this exercise, the two reformulated one square bracket but wanted to seek clearance before going ahead; Mr Sattar from his President and Mr Singh from the Cabinet Committee on Security. Asked if he was satisfied with the change, Mr Singh said he wanted to consult the CCS as he was not convinced. But Mr Sattar had made clear he couldn't go further than this, saying even with what they had drafted, Gen Musharraf will say, "What have you come back with". The CCS was unanimous in its opinion that the draft document was not agreeable. To a clarification, Mr

11/8  
Singh said he didn't put his initials on the draft document "as lawyers do", though he did make changes since the language at some places was "awkward".

He denied that Gen Musharraf was invited under US pressure, saying Mr Kapil Sibal had made this deduction on the basis of the White House spokesperson revealing the dates before India did. Washington, he explained, had heard of the dates from Mr Sattar, who was in the USA around the same time. India had considered two sets of dates for the summit, 7-9 and 14-16 July. The first date was rejected as doctors had advised Mr Vajpayee against straining himself after the knee operation and the second, communicated to Pakistan on 16 June. Pakistan confirmed the date to India on 18 June. Mr Sattar must have communicated these dates to US dignitaries he was meeting there, which referred to this day before India did due to the time difference.

HD-13  
8/8

## Govt. reacts sharply to Dalai Lama's statement

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9-f. 10/15

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, AUG. 7.** Reacting sharply to the observations by the Dalai Lama, India today asserted that Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of the country.

Responding to a question on the Dalai Lama's recent remarks at a peace conference in Chennai where he advocated a "middle path" for the resolution of the Kashmir issue, the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), said that Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India. She added that the Tibetan spiritual leader knows fully well, "India's commitment to human rights, democracy and our constant pursuit of peace." The Dalai Lama had observed at the conference that for lasting peace, the "local aspirations" of the people in any trouble-torn region cannot be ignored.

The spokesperson, in response to another question clarified that the Dalai Lama was enjoying the status of a Tibetan refugee. There were no restric-

tions to his movement in the country after security considerations had been taken into account.

In a related development, the BJP president, Mr. Jana Krishnamurthy, today said that there was no question of India and Pakistan adopting a "middle path" in Jammu and Kashmir. He also took exception to any parallel being drawn between the Tibetan movement and the Kashmir issue.

### Dalai Lama clarifies

The Dalai Lama today clarified that he recognised Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India and had never questioned the legal status of the border state. In a statement, the Dalai Lama said that he fully appreciated that the people of Jammu and Kashmir democratically elected their own Government. He, however, pointed out that he was opposed to the killings in Jammu and Kashmir. "I very strongly believe that the issue needs to be resolved through peaceful means, through discussions and dialogue."

THE HINDU

8 AUG 2001

# Disappointing, says Congress

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, AUG. 7. The Congress today expressed dissatisfaction with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's statement on the Agra summit. "His remarks were disappointing, there was nothing substantive, and the nation is none the wiser," said Mr. Natwar Singh, CWC member and head of the AICC's Foreign Affairs Department.

The Government's explanation of the events that took place in Agra appeared to have left Mr. Singh unimpressed. He criticised the Government's attitude during the run-up to the summit and the explanations offered now. "The attempts by Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Jaswant Singh to sell the idea that they had an agenda and were well-prepared has convinced nobody," the Congress leader said.

The former External Affairs Minister also sought to join issue with Mr. Vajpayee for suggesting that none of the Opposition parties had suggested calling off the talks if Pakistan

did not agree to an agenda. "He called us for consultations merely 36 hours before the General was to arrive and to say now that we were wrong in not suggesting that the talks be called off is extraordinary," he said.

The CWC member also did not buy the Government's explanation that it had prepared itself thoroughly for the summit.

"The fact of the matter is that they were totally unprepared and now they are blaming others for it." He conceded that his party had supported the idea of talks but it did not mean the Government should go unprepared.

The absence of a well-prepared agenda had allowed Gen. Musharraf to get away, Mr. Singh said and felt the Government should have pinned down Pakistan on cross-border terrorism, the nuclear issue and CBMs.

He also did not agree with the Government that the talks had fallen through because of Pakistan's insistence on Kashmir being the core issue. "This is an afterthought and a case

of being wise after the event." On the External Affairs Minister's suggestion that the preparation for the Agra summit was better than for previous meetings, he said, "how much does he know of the past, Rajiv Gandhi prepared for a year before he went to China."

The Congress leader was not satisfied with the Prime Minister and Mr. Jaswant Singh conceding that there had been a media mismanagement, saying "that's not good enough."

The Prime Minister should have invited the Pakistani mediapersons for a breakfast meeting and then televised it over Doordarshan, he felt.

He was also not convinced by Mr. Jaswant Singh's interpretation of the events and made it clear that the latter's statement in the Lok Sabha yesterday "had skirted all the major issues. It was a long-winded explanation for a series of failures of substance and management at Agra."

## PM turns the tables on Cong. MP

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, AUG. 7. The Prime Minister's reply to the debate in the Lok Sabha today on the Agra summit was not even half as long-winded as that of the External Affairs Minister. Speaking extempore, a visibly relaxed Mr. Vajpayee made his point without being aggressive either to Pakistan or to the Opposition.

The proceedings began on a testy note with the Congress Deputy Leader, Mr. Madhavrao Scindia, joining issue with Mr. Jaswant Singh.

The Congress leader denied the latter's remark yesterday that he (Mr. Scindia) had during his speech subjected him to abuse.

Speaking just before the

Prime Minister's speech, Mr. Scindia clarified that he had never abused a member during his career as a parliamentarian and it was never his intention to abuse Mr. Singh. "I am pained that the Minister used that word. I never have and will never abuse a member."

He also referred to remarks about his background pointing out that he had the privilege of having been elected an MP nine times and did not need to get into Parliament through the Rajya Sabha, a remark he later withdrew.

Reading from the official record of the debate, Mr. Scindia said that all he had said was "the Government raved and ranted about cross-border terrorism, yet it sent the honourable Foreign Minister to escort

terrorists to their freedom in Kandahar, we hung our heads in utter disbelief." He urged the Speaker to look up the records and ensure that the charges made against him were corrected.

The Prime Minister, during his speech, had some light-hearted exchanges with the Opposition and even while pulling the Congress MP, Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyer's leg.

Mr. Vajpayee referred to the latter's remarks that the Government was inexperienced in handling important matters such as the summit and could perhaps do with some help from people like him (Mr. Aiyer) who had some experience in the matter having handled such issues earlier.

Turning to the Congress

benches, Mr. Vajpayee said, "Mr. Aiyer was right, we do not have much experience in such matters and should ourselves avail of his experience, but his own party doesn't seem to have too much faith in his abilities."

"I look forward to benefiting from an exchange of views with him, I have admired the way he performed as Consul-General in Karachi, but what do I do, because everytime I invite the Congress for consultations he is not included in the delegation. When his own party doesn't consult him how can he complain that I do not avail myself of his experience?"

Even the Congress benches had a hearty laugh and Mr. Aiyer, normally never at a loss for words, shared the joke.

THE HINDU  
- 8 AUG 2001

# Delhi wary as Russia takes China turn

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Aug. 5: For the first time in decades, India's "time-tested" relationship with Russia is being put to test. The country which is making this happen is China, till recently Delhi's "potential threat number one".

The Treaty of Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China was signed last month and almost went unnoticed as the Agra summit hogged the limelight. But the frowns in South Block are now quite visible.

Alarmists in the Indian establishment point to a provision in the treaty that makes it imperative for Russia to come to China's aid if it is ever under attack from any other country and calls for an arrangement where Moscow and Beijing will work together to get rid of the aggressor.

"In case of a situation, which one contracting side thinks can threaten peace, break peace or infringe on its security interests, as well as in case of a threat of aggression against one of the con-

tracting sides, the contracting sides shall immediately enter into contact with each other and hold consultations with the aim of removing the threat," says article 9 of the treaty.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao tried to play down the implications of the provision, noting that India's friendship and strategic partnership treaties with Russia provide for close cooperation in all spheres, including defence and military. She described the Sino-Russian agreement as an attempt to normalise relations, while arguing that it should in no way be seen as a threat to India, which is too big a market for Moscow to upset.

More than 70 per cent of India's military hardware is from Russia. The two sides have had regular interactions at different levels and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is scheduled to visit Russia in November.

There are other provisions in the Sino-Russian agreement, too, that have caused worries here. If the Kashmir tangle continues to be a source of instability, Russia and China will together try to

create a situation which will provide stability.

The treaty says: "The contracting sides shall do their best to strengthen stability, establish an atmosphere of mutual understanding, trust and cooperation in regions adjacent to their territories and facilitate efforts to create in these regions multilateral mechanisms of collaboration on questions of security and cooperation that would correspond to their realities."

On the face of it, the treaty is aimed at the West, particularly the US. With the George W. Bush administration trying to steamroll opposing opinions on key international issues, such as the missile defence system being put in place by it, political rivals Russia and China are trying to tell the Americans that they have each other to fall back on.

The two sides shall make "joint efforts to maintain global strategic balance and stability and shall energetically promote compliance with the fundamental agreements that ensure the maintenance of strategic stability," the treaty says.

THE

- 6 AUG 2001

# Vajpayee finds UN role for Omar

HT-1  
9/8

**HT Correspondent**  
New Delhi, August 3

OMAR ABDULLAH, the new Minister of State for External Affairs, may stand in for his senior, Jaswant Singh, in the Premier's delegation to the UN General Assembly next month. Sources in the Ministry of External Affairs said his presence is expected to send a strong signal to the world community that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India.

Omar, the National Conference's minister in the Vajpayee Government, represents the aspirations of the Kashmiris in the Indian State. When he presents New Delhi's formulations on the pending issue with Pakistan, it would carry a certain conviction that a non-Kashmiri possibly cannot match. Moreover, the occasion would symbolise the happy graduation of the Abdullah family to national politics. The 31-year-old Omar would be presented to the world community as an embodiment of the harmony between his father, Farooq Abdullah's regime in Srinagar and the one in New Delhi.

Omar accompanied Vajpayee on his Malaysia tour earlier this year. As the Minister of State for Commerce till July, he gained considerable experience in trade and economic issues. That may come in handy when India gets

into the act of forming its own stand on the global debate for the review of the WTO.

Last month, just ahead of the reshuffle, Omar was sent by Vajpayee as special envoy to Libya to probe ways of re-establishing full diplomatic links with Tripoli. Though Omar did not manage to meet Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi, Vajpayee was happy with his performance with key ministers there to reward him with the foreign office spot along with which came the charge of the Gulf region.

That is a region with which India has entered into serious diplomatic engagement of late. Jaswant's January trip to Saudi Arabia was the first by an Indian External Affairs Minister in over two decades. For Omar, the biggest challenge would be winning over the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Arguably, Omar would also be an international spokesman of the Indian Kashmiris. It would be his job to sell New Delhi's message that a big section of Kashmiris are happy being Indians. However, all this will call for much internal diplomatic skills as well, for the National Conference, though with only four MPs, is no ordinary member of the NDA. A dispute between the NC and BJP is not quite the same as the ones Vajpayee would have with, say, the Shiv Sena.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 AUG 2001

# India and the great powers

By C. Raja Mohan

*Simultaneous and multi-directional engagement would stand India in good stead and prepare it for any radical shifts in great power relations.*

119-10  
2/8

IF INDIA can overcome the political hangover from Agra, it will find itself in the middle of some remarkable developments on the world scene. In the last couple of weeks, when India was hosting Gen. Pervez Musharraf and coming to terms with the outcome of the talks with Pakistan, a diplomatic play that could reorder relations among the United States, Russia and China entered a critical moment. It is a game that could significantly transform India's security environment in the coming years.

High level political contacts marked an important phase in every set of bilateral relations among Washington, Moscow and Beijing in the last few days. When India was busy at Agra, the President of China, Mr. Jiang Zemin, travelled to Moscow and signed a new treaty of friendship and cooperation with Russia. Soon after, the American President, Mr. George Bush, met his Russian counterpart, Mr. Vladimir Putin, on the margins of the G-8 summit at Genoa, Italy, and announced an agreement to work out a new bilateral strategic framework. And within days, the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, went to Beijing to smooth the ruffled ties with China.

Any one of these developments on its own would be seen as having a direct bearing on India. Taken together the three developments introduce an unprecedented dynamism to the Indian security environment. But given our renewed pre-occupation with Pakistan and a raging domestic political battle over "who lost Agra", none of the potentially dramatic changes in great power relations has got the deserved attention in India.

The Sino-Russian relationship has been one of the principal determinants of India's security environment. Adversaries for nearly three decades from the late 1950s to the late 1980s, Russia and China are returning to a relationship that has all the rhetorical trappings of an alliance. Apprehensive about the unchecked power of the U.S. in the post-Cold War world, Russia and China are beginning to hold hands.

Like everyone else in the world, India too will be in two minds in judging how far the Sino-Russian romance will go. Ide-

ologues on the left will be cheering for such an alliance, and will want India to join Russia and China in a grand alliance against the dominant power, the U.S. But the centrists in the Indian strategic community have grown up with the certitude of Sino-Russian rivalry or at least wariness, and are afraid that an alliance between the two giants to its north will constrain India's geopolitical space and weaken the value of the Indo-Russian relationship.

A careful Indian assessment might come up with scenarios that point to the continuing uncertainty in Sino-Russian relations. The realists would suggest that despite the common desire to limit American power, Russia and China will find it difficult to return to an alliance of the type the world saw between the two communist states in the 1950s. As neighbours, they have a history of mistrust and will always be wary of the other's potential to make trouble. Moscow, from its own long-term interests, might want to be somewhat careful in adding to the rising power of China. Beijing, in turn, would always worry about the pro-Western impulses in Russia that could tug it towards the U.S. and Europe.

But the biggest obstacle to a substantive Sino-Russian alliance may be the U.S. itself. There are strong compulsions in both Moscow and Beijing to explore and sustain a cooperative relationship with Washington. Russia and China are certainly concerned about the current American dominance over world affairs and the strong tendency in Washington towards unilateralism. While seeking greater space for themselves, Russia and China also know the dangers of confronting the U.S., which remains the principal source of capital and modern technology for both. No wonder that both Moscow and Beijing are in the middle of some sophisticated diplomatic engagement with

Washington. The unfolding dynamic of the U.S.-Russian relationship is perhaps the most important among the great power relations. For the first time since the two nations briefly allied with each other in the middle of the last century to defeat fascism, America and Russia are exploring the prospects of a new partnership. The Bush Administration, which came to power a few months ago with all its Cold War anti-Russian instincts intact, is now proclaiming that Russia is no longer an enemy and that Mr. Putin may be a trustworthy partner.

The U.S. plans for missile defence which appeared to sharpen U.S.-Russian tensions a few weeks ago now look amenable to a broad strategic understanding between Washington and Moscow. Determined to pursue the missile defence programme, the Bush Administration is reaching out to Moscow and offering a deal — significant cuts in the existing nuclear arsenals in return for an eventual modification of the ABM treaty. The Russians have not said "yes"; but they have not said "no" either. All indications are that pragmatic Putin is not averse to a deal; and that he will bargain very hard.

The U.S. is also broadly hinting that it might consider Russian participation in the technological development of future missile defences as well as a more cooperative economic relationship. While there remains a shadow between the potential and reality of a new partnership between Washington and Moscow, it never looked more probable than today. And when it does happen, a Russo-American partnership is likely to radically alter the rules of the nuclear game as well as the nature of Eurasian geopolitics.

A U.S.-Russian understanding would clearly put China at a disadvantage; but the expansive commercial relationship between the U.S. and China is likely to mitigate the dangers of a new Cold War

confrontation between Washington and Beijing. While the trade between Russia and America is barely \$ 10 billions and that between Russia and China is even less, the two-way trade between America and China is about \$120 billions.

Corporate America's high stakes in China have already helped end the summer of discontent between Washington and Beijing. American companies have exerted pressure on the Bush Administration to tone down its adversarial attitude towards China. The visit by Gen. Powell to Beijing is being widely interpreted as a return to "business as usual" between the two nations. Gen. Powell has consciously dropped the recent references to China as a "strategic competitor". The explanation: the Sino-U.S. relationship is too complex to be captured by a single cliché.

That should disappoint all those in India who thought the Bush Administration was sending out invitations for the long-awaited containment party against China. To be sure, the Bush Administration remains deeply divided about China, and policy makers in Beijing are worried about a potential military alliance between India and America. But ties between the U.S. and China appear to be returning to a more predictable trend of engagement that defined their relations in the last couple of decades. If India is looking for geopolitical clarity to define its national security strategy, it may not find it any time soon. Instead, New Delhi should stay with some basic principles in pursuing its foreign policy objectives.

First, it should strive for an open-ended engagement with all the great powers of the world. Second, the foundation of such an engagement must be economic cooperation. Currently India's commercial ties with all the great powers are way below potential and need to be upgraded quickly. Third, India needs to consolidate the traditional ties with Moscow, rapidly expand strategic cooperation with the U.S., and strive hard to resolve the accumulated bilateral problems with China and build political trust with the northern neighbour. Simultaneous and multi-directional engagement would stand India in good stead and prepare it for any radical shifts in great power relations.

THE HINDU