

# Simi calls Govt a terrorist

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 29

THE STUDENTS Islamic Movement of India today said the ban imposed on the organisation was a "blatant example of State terrorism". It said the arrest of the Simi cadres on false charges was a gross violation of democratic norms, which the country professes to practice.

The Simi secretary general Safdar H Nagori alleged that the ban has been imposed with a political motive to inflame communal passions before the UP Assembly elections. He alleged that the crackdown on Simi activists throughout the country was masterminded by the Sangh Parivar.

"Our organisation has been banned because of our opposition to the US terrorism and efforts to build Ram Mandir at the disputed site in Ayodhya," Nagori said. "Ban or no ban, the Simi won't stop what it's doing now," he emphasised.

Nagori, who escaped arrest even after the police raided and sealed the Zakir Nagar office of the Simi, said the younger generation of the Muslims were lapping up the ideas propagated by the organisation. "Our offices may be locked, but no one can stop our activities in the country in accordance with the religious injunctions," Nagori said.

Asked about the charges that the Simi was fanning communal trouble and was in league with



terrorist organisations, Nagori said: "We have never violated the teachings of Koran. Whatever we do is in concurrence with the teachings of Islam". He, however, advised the Simi cadres to be restrained and not do anything at this moment which could defame the organisation by the Government.

Describing the Lucknow

demonstration—which claimed four lives—as peaceful, Nagori blamed the police for firing on unarmed Muslims. "If someone is opposed to the Government in a democratic set-up, you cannot fire at them," he said, adding, "opposition to Government policy is a part of democracy and no one can put limits to it".

Simi sources said the strategy

of the organisation in the aftermath of the ban was worked out before the arrests. Work was allotted to the important members and their role assigned. More than a hundred Simi workers and sympathisers had gathered in the organisation's headquarters to discuss their strategy in the wake of the crackdown.

REUTERS

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 29. - Russia sent a memo to the UN Security Council providing information on bases and facilities used Osama bin Laden and his associates in Afghanistan.

The memo, dated 9 March 9 2001, did not say when each item was noted or whether each facility was still in use when the memo was written. Following is the list of 55 camps, offices and residences - part of the "terrorist infrastructure of Osama Bin Laden".

- A headquarters (150 men) in the Bagh-e-Bala restaurant in Kabul.
■ A centre with 300 men ... in the building complex of the former Academy of Social Science in Afshar district, Kabul.
■ A headquarters in the Hotel Spingar in Jalalabad.
■ A centre in the former headquarters of a sub-unit of the 25th division in Zhawar district of Khost.
■ A centre in the home of the Ismaili leader, Said Mansur Naderi, in the Kayan ravine in Baghlan.
■ A camp in the Kishlak-Jadid settlement near Kandahar airport.
■ A centre in the Al-Farukiya madrasah in Khost.
■ A centre in the headquarters of the former Afghan ministry of internal affairs regiment in the Sardeh-e Ghazni water reservoir region in

Ghazni.

- A camp in the Ghaziabad farm in Nangarhar.
■ A base in the Hadda farm near Jalalabad.
■ A camp with 30 men under the command of Asadullah in a two-storey building in Zuhira village, north of Jalalabad.
■ A centre on the former barracks of the Shamsabad regiment near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in Nangarhar.
■ A centre in the Registan settlement not far from Helmand in the caves next to the Hajje-Sahib mausoleum.
■ Valla brigade near Kandahar on the Argandaba side.
■ A new aerodrome built 20 km south of Kandahar airport.
■ A centre in the Bogran settlement in Helmand.
■ An underground centre is being built near Spinbuldak (Shinwar district, Kandahar).
■ A camp near Hajagi water reservoir (Helmand).
■ A centre in the Rishkor settlement (Kabul) under the command of Riyaz Basra (600 men).
■ The barracks of the former Rishkor division serve as a base for a

Osama's terrorist infrastructure

RUSSIA'S MEMO TO SECURITY COUNCIL



A file photograph obtained from a Pakistani photographer on condition of anonymity. - AP/PTI

- A centre near Kilagi in Baghlan.
■ Underground depots in the southeastern part of Mess-e-Aynak.
■ Darwolat base, where about 500 men are being trained.
■ A centre in Asadabad in Kunjar province.
■ A centre in Sad-Kanar as-Saraj in Laghman province.
■ A training centre in Chahar-Asyaba (former headquarters of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar) in Kabul.
■ A headquarters in the Chaun district of Kandahar.
■ A base of nationals from Arab countries in the Kala-e-Moradbak settlement (Shekardar district of Kabul).
■ There are 1,000 Chechens and

- under the command of Abulhasan, north of Kabul.
■ A centre in the Band-e-Asiyab hills in the Shekardar district of Kabul.
■ An underground headquarters in the Shekardar district in the Haruti heights.
■ A training centre for fighters in the Usankot settlement in Shekardar.
■ Arab advisers, Sheikh Abulhasan and Sheikh Abudaud, are active in Kunduz.
■ The eighth division of the Taliban under Mohammad Tarek, a Sudanese, includes Pakistanis, Afghans, Chechens and Tajiks.
■ Headquarters of the former 53rd division of Abdul Dostum in Sheberghan in Jowzjan province.
■ A military training centre for the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (northwest of Mazar-I-Sharif).
■ Three hundred Chechens receive military training in the barracks of the former 18th division (in Hairatan).
■ About 200 Chechens in the Kucha-e-Hazaraha quarter (Kart-e-Saidabad district of Mazar-I-Sharif).
■ There are 1,000 Chechens and

- other nationalities in Horasan district of Mazar-I-Sharif.
■ Takhir Yuldashev has his representation in Hairatan (Balkh province), next to the barracks of the former 70th division.
■ Djuma Namangani has 470 men in the Gortepe district of Kunduz.
■ The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan has a base under the command of Azar on the road to Koleshta.
■ The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan has a headquarters (15 men) opposite Fifth Street in the Wazir Akbar Khan district of Kabul.
■ Takhir Yuldashev has an office near the bridge not far from Mesgeri, Mazar-i-Sharif.
■ Takhir Yuldashev has a residence on 15th Street in the Wazir Akbar Khan district of Kabul.
■ Takhir Yuldashev is both Osama's deputy and the commander of a regiment made up of Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmens. The regimental headquarters is in Jelofantai (Jalalabad).
■ A training centre for Chechens in the Hakrez district of Kandahar.
■ A Chechen training centre (400 men) near the Red Cross hospital in the Daku settlement (Mirbachakot district of Kandahar).
■ Takhir Yuldashev and Djuma Namangani have 1300 fighters (500 Pakistanis, 600 Chechens) stationed at Hairatan in Balkh.

# Poll-wary Opp criticises Simi ban

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## STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 29. - Some Opposition parties have criticised the ban on Students Islamic Movement of India and electoral compulsions seem to be the main reason.

The parties are not defending the activities of the Simi. But, they say, the Bajrang Dal should also have been banned to do away with accusations of communal motives that are seeping in.

The ban is likely to be ratified by the tribunal and here the Simi would have a chance to clear its position. It's doubtful if the Centre's move will effectively curb "activities which are prejudicial to the security of the country and have potential of disturbing peace and communal harmony".

The outfit had a sizeable presence in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh and was fast spreading to other states. Alarmed by its activities, seven state governments had sought banning of

the outfit. The Opposition parties have sharply criticised the government over the timing of the move. The ban came into effect from Tuesday and 375 Simi members have been arrested throughout the country since then.

With elections round the corner, political parties in UP have been vociferous in taking sides. Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav claimed victimisation of members of neo-youth Muslim outfits. He raised the issue even before the ban was formally announced and demanded a fresh inquiry into the matter.

The party said the ban should have been ordered after getting a consensus from all parties and not at the government's discretion.

The Left parties, BSP and Congress toed the SP line for fear of alienating minorities in the UP Assembly elections. The Madhya Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Digvijay Singh, welcomed the move but sought a similar ban on the Bajrang Dal. Home ministry officials said they had been carefully watching the

outfit's activities for the past few months and the move to ban it was initiated in October. The Centre had to present its case before a tribunal headed by a sitting High Court judge and preparation of a fool-proof case against the organisation took some time.

They said Simi had links with the Hijbul Mujahideen, ISI, the Palestinian organisation Hamas and other pan-Islamic outfits. There could also be a possible link with Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaida. The Simi members had pasted posters and distributed pamphlets supporting Osama. They also indulged in subversive activities and fomented communal riots in different parts of the country.

The home secretary, Mr. Kamal Pande, said the ministry had received some material about the outfit's activities. The text revealed many facets of its anti-national activities which include extending clandestine support to "jihad" in Kashmir and advocating secessionism from India.

## SANTOSH SINGH STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 29. - The Students Islamic Movement of India has been propagating its ideology since its inception in 1977 in disguise of a character-building exercise for students, especially Muslims.

Besides having a large number of students from All-India Muslim University, Jamia Millia Islamia and universities in Maharashtra, Kerala and Punjab, SIMI also had a "Shahin force" for "shaping up" minds of adolescents.

A booklet "SIMI - Sangharsh yatra ke pachhis varsh (1977-2002)" brought out in anticipation of its silver jubilee function next year has outlined the objectives of Simi, though in a veiled fashion.

A portion of the booklet said Simi did not believe in the theory of nationalism, which according to the organisation, is the biggest deterrent to Khilafat caus-

ing violence, terrorism and insecurity and undermining the welfare of minority communities.

The banned organisation, which started primarily with a view to defying Macaulay's system, celebrated Afghan Diwas on 11 January, 1980, to protest "illegal" usurping of Afghanistan by Russia and started weekly and monthly training camps for "character-building" in 1983. Simi propagated its ideology in the name of education awareness campaigns in Maharashtra, UP, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. The organisation also published books on "career guidance" for students. It ran coaching classes and cautioned students against the cyber revolution.

The general secretary of Simi, Mr. Safdar Nagori, who has now gone underground, said in a press release that America, the "killer of four lakh people," has been conspiring to destroy Afghanistan and the ban on Simi is "judicious."

Unabashedly lauding Osama Bin Laden as the quintessential "Mujahid" and portraying Maulana Masood Azhar as Mahmood Ghazni, it eulogised the "valour of death-defying Mujahideen" in Kargil and ab-

solved Pakistan of any involvement in that conflict.

After Pokhran II, it condemned the nuclear tests as being directed against Islamic world but justifying Pakistan's nuclear tests. It in-

dulged in subversive propaganda against the concept of secularism, nationalism, democracy and instigated riots in a bid to win over the Muslims to hard-line fundamentalism, the home secretary said.

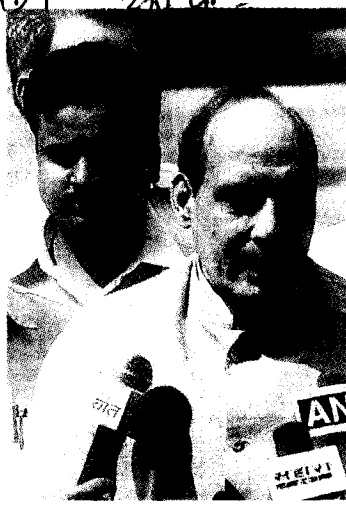
# Crackdown on SIMI continues

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 29.** In the continuing nationwide crackdown on the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), 122 activists were arrested on the second day today, taking the total number of arrests to 362.

Highly-placed sources in the Home Ministry said the maximum number of arrests took place in the non-BJP ruled State of Maharashtra, which topped the chart with 103. Forty-five persons were arrested in West Bengal and Rajasthan. In Kerala, 31 activists were arrested, while in Tamil Nadu, the number was 20. The number of arrests in Madhya Pradesh was 24. No one was arrested in Bihar. And, in the BJP-ruled States of Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, there were 92 and eight arrests.

Sources said the activities of SIMI had been under "close watch" for the past one year and the first move was made in October last when the Union Cabinet was informed about SIMI being on the watch-list. The ban being imposed in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist strikes in the U.S. was "purely coincidental." The entire material and evidence against the organisation would be placed before a tribunal, comprising a sitting judge of a High Court,



**The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Rajnath Singh, talking to mediapersons after meeting the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, in New Delhi on Saturday. — PTI**

to determine the validity of the ban.

## 'Ban has no communal overtones'

Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Rajnath Singh, and three of his Ministers, called on the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and apprised him of the situation in the State, particularly Lucknow, which witnessed riots following the ban. Later, he told correspondents that the ban on SIMI did not mean that a particular community was being targeted.

Another Minister, Mr. Lalji Tandon, blamed the Samajwadi Party for the violence and charged that

its activists had instigated the attacks against police in Lucknow. He claimed that barring the incident, there was neither sympathy nor support for SIMI. Even Congress-ruled States like Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh had endorsed the decision to ban activities of SIMI.

On the suggestion of the Congress Chief Ministers to impose a similar ban on the Bajrang Dal, Mr. Tandon said there was no comparison between SIMI and the Bajrang Dal. SIMI had links with international terrorist organisations and if not checked, the situation could become worse, he alleged. Denying that the Centre had taken the decision with an eye on the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, Mr. Tandon said national interest was the only consideration.

The delegation, which also included the State Finance Minister, Mr. Harish Chander Srivastava, and Mr. Hukum Singh, sought financial assistance to implement various development programmes in the State, held up due to the non-release of Central funds. It asked the Centre to release Rs. 1800 crores for various schemes and clear the foodgrains stock so that space could be created before arrivals started in October. The Union Food and Civil Supplies Minister, Mr. Shanta Kumar, is scheduled to visit Lucknow on October 4, to attend to the problem.

The Union Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, and Mr. Shanta Kumar were present during the meeting.

## Advani rules out ban on Bajrang Dal

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 29.** The Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, tonight ruled out a ban on the Bajrang Dal and said the Government had declared SIMI unlawful only after gathering adequate evidence.

On the demand by the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Digvijay Singh, to ban the Bajrang Dal, Mr. Advani said in an interview to the Doordarshan "nobody has so far come with any evidence suggesting that it is involved in terrorist and anti-national activities or has engineered bomb blasts or secessionist movement."

"The Central Government persisted with the opinion that the decision to ban the organisation would be taken only when the Government is in a position to produce solid proof before the tribunal," he said. It was a coincidence that the ban on SIMI came in the wake of the September 11 attacks.

As part of toning up internal security, the Centre had convened a meeting of the Chief Secretaries and the Directors-General of Police of all the States on October 5. Mr. Vajpayee would also possibly call a meeting of the Chief Ministers to discuss the issue. — PTI

## Opposition should have been consulted: Farooq

By Shujaat Bukhari

**SRINAGAR SEPT. 29.** The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, today regretted that the Centre had not taken the Opposition into confidence while deciding to ban the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI).

The State Assembly witnessed noisy scenes over the issue.

Initiating a discussion during zero hour, the Shia leader, Moulvi Iftikhar Ansari, expressed shock over the raids on the world-famous Darul Uloom at Deoband. "If the campaign to defame Muslims, branding them as terrorists, continues, it will disintegrate India," he said, adding that Deoband had played a great role in the freedom struggle denouncing the two-nation theory.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah said terrorism was not acceptable

but the Centre should have consulted the Opposition before banning the SIMI.

Geelani assails ban

Describing the ban on SIMI as a "ban on Islam", the former Hurriyat Conference chairman, Syed Ali Geelani, alleged that the sole purpose was to "target Islam".

Addressing a press conference here, Mr. Geelani admitted he had close association with SIMI and had attended a number of congregations organised by it. SIMI was not an underground organisation and had nothing to do with subversion.

Mr. Geelani said the RSS and the Bajrang Dal were known communal organisations and have been running training camps, but they had not been banned. "I support the SIMI activities and there is no justification in banning this organisation," he said.

THE HINDU

30 SEP 2001

# First step in defence reform

FROM SUJAN DUTTA

**New Delhi, Sept. 28:** A chief of integrated defence staff (CIDS) takes over for the first time next week in what is the first in a series of reforms being initiated in higher defence management.

The CIDS will be a tri-service command and there is still some ambiguity over its status. The first CIDS will be Lt Gen. Pankaj Joshi, currently general officer commanding-in-chief, central command, a three-star general. Each of the three chiefs of services are four-star generals.

The CIDS will report to the chairman of the chiefs of staff committee who is usually the seniormost of the three service chiefs. Currently the chairman is Admiral Sushil Kumar of the navy.

"The integrated defence headquarters is currently in the process of being set up. We are delegating

28/9  
powers to it. As envisaged by the Cabinet Committee on Security, the brief of the CIDS will be to integrate the functions of the three services with the ministry of defence," said a senior defence ministry official.

The creation of the post of CIDS comes in the wake of the recommendation of the Group of Ministers led by home minister L.K. Advani to appoint a chief of defence staff (CDS). But the three services and policy-makers in the Centre are not fully convinced that the post needs to be created.

Differences persist not only on the need for such a post but also on who from among the services should be CDS. Among other issues, the services have not fully resolved with whom the command and control system of nuclear weaponry should lie. It is possible that the creation of the CIDS post is a compromise

pending a decision on appointing a CDS.

The defence ministry official said over the months much of the services' activity will be integrated. Among the first will be the integration of the intelligence agencies of the army, the navy and the air force.

The first experiment in integrating the services takes off in the Andaman and Nicobar Command which will be operationalised as a unified theatre command on October 8.

Vice-Admiral Arun Prakash will be the first commander-in-chief. Like the CIDS, he, too will report to the chairman, chiefs of staff committee.

Increased Chinese naval activity in the Bay of Bengal over the past few years and the route to the Pacific have been among the considerations that has led to the creation of the unified command in the Andamans.

As commander-in-chief, Arun Prakash will have command of all army, navy, air force and coast guard forces allocated to the islands. His deputy (chief of staff) will be a major general from the army.

The present force in the islands include the navy's flotilla comprising fast attack craft and amphibious ships and a coast guard patrol vessel. The army has an infantry brigade in the Islands. The air force has a helicopter squadron.

Maritime aircraft of the navy and the coast guard operate from Port Blair, Car Nicobar, Campbell Bay and Dighlipur.

In another development, Lt Gen. N.C. Vij, currently commanding the southern command, will take over as the next vice-chief of army staff.

He takes over from Lt Gen. Vijay Oberoi who retires on September 30.

THE TELEGRAPH

29 SEP 2001

# India can now procure weapon-locating radars

By Pranab Dhal Samanta

DEOLALI (Nasik), SEPT. 28. With the U.S. lifting sanctions, India has a better choice of weapon-locating radars for the Army, an equipment that was missed during the Kargil conflict.

According to officials at the School of Artillery here (nearly 80 per cent of the casualties in Kargil resulted from enemy artillery fire. Since the Army could not operate beyond the Line of Control, it was impossible to physically ascertain the exact location of Pakistani guns.

In such situations, officials say, weapon-locating radars play an important role. By picking up the trajectory of an incoming artillery shell, these radars can locate the point of its origin. This automatically-generated data, sources say, would make it possible for Indian artillery guns to respond within seconds and destroy or neutralise enemy guns.

The only radar available with India is the British-made Cymbeline. This, however, is a mortar-locating radar that can only detect shells fired at a high angle. Moreover, the system failed to make any significant impact during the Kargil conflict.

It is learnt that India was looking to purchase the American ANTPQ 36/37 weapon-locating radar system before the nuclear tests in 1998. However, this was withheld following the imposition of sanctions after the tests. Subsequently, efforts to acquire such a system intensified after the high rate of casualties in Kargil.

Following the U.S. sanctions, India was forced to look at the dated Ukrainian IL-220 system. With hardly any choice at hand, the Army began considering ways of improvising it to meet the Indian needs. The urgency to procure such a system for the Army was further fuelled by the fact that Pakistan already has a few U.S.-made ANTPQ 36/37 radars.

Now with the lifting of sanctions, officials say India could go



The mortar-locating radar, Cymbeline, on display at the Deolali training range. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

for the best weapon-locating radar system said to be available with the U.S. (The latest being the upgraded ANTPQ-47 radar system that can detect guns firing from a distance of more than 30 km.) Germany has brought out a similar system called Cobra. This, too, could now become available for trial for the Indian Army.

There is, however, another school of thought that is advocating a rethink on the purchase of these radar systems. According to a senior official, the use of radars can be a hazard as some countries

have developed anti-radiation missiles that pick the radiations emitted by radars and home in on them. Others argue that these missiles are yet to acquire high levels of proficiency.

While concurring with the possibility of acquiring the best possible weapon-locating radar, the Commandant of the School of Artillery, Lt. Gen. Avtar Singh, said,

“Though such hopes have been raised, one will have to wait and see how the lifting of sanctions will translate on the ground. It is too soon to say anything now.”

THE HINDU

# Madrasas next on hit list

7-17-8 N/S HFI 23/9  
Home Ministry suggests ban on illegal religious schools in five States, including West Bengal

Chandan Nandy  
New Delhi, September 28

AFTER THE country-wide ban on the Students' Islamic Movement of India (Simi), the Centre is all set to crack down on illegal madrasas in several States, including Uttar Pradesh, that serve as networks for ISI-backed terrorist groups.

This was decided at a meeting to review the internal security situation in the backdrop of the September 11 terrorist strikes in the United States and its possible fallout in the country. Chaired by Home Minister LK Advani and attended by Home Secretary Kamal Pande, IB Director KP Singh and other top officials of the ministry's internal security division, the meeting finalised a plan for immediate action on the religious schools, which have mushroomed in UP, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Bihar and West Bengal, which share borders with Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

According to sources who participated in today's meeting, of particular concern are the seminaries that have come up over the past six years along the Indo-Nepal border. The prime focus of the Centre's attention is on UP, Bihar and West Bengal, all of which share borders with Nepal.

The investigation into the activities of Simi had brought to light that several "foreign elements" would cross over into Indian territory and clandestinely meet Simi leaders and activists.

Another decision taken at today's meeting was to order a fresh study on the number of madrasas functioning along the Indo-Pak, India-Nepal and Indo-Bangla borders. The study would

## SIMI CHIEF HELD IN NATION-WIDE RAIDS

SIMI PRESIDENT Shahid Badr Salhi and 250 of the organisation's leaders were arrested after nationwide raids on Friday. A number of the radical outfit's offices were sealed. The police are looking for Safdar Nagori, secretary-general of Simi.

Badr and three other office-bearers, Sayeef Nachan, Mohammed Khalid and Irfan were nabbed in a pre-dawn swoop from the Simi headquarters at Zakir Nagar in South Delhi. They were held under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act.

Reports of raids on Simi offices and arrests came in from Kerala, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh

HTC, New Delhi

be carried out by the IB. Even State Governments will be directed to cooperate with the IB to prepare a comprehensive list.

Sources said that once the survey is over, the security agencies will single out the "suspect" madrasas which provide shelter to terrorists, fundamentalist and "anti-national" elements and Pakistani ISI agents. The IB already possesses an exhaustive list of madrasas along a 10-km border stretch which, according to officials, have become centres for anti-national activities.

"Some of these seminaries were found to have been used to store caches of weapons besides being convenient shelters for the

Pak ISI, Kashmir terrorists, fundamentalist elements visiting India from Gulf countries," a senior official said.

The next step would be to choke the flow of funds to organisations in India which utilise foreign donations to construct madrasas. The Home Ministry is already engaged in the task of amending the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act which will make it mandatory on the part of organisations to declare the funds received by them.

## Simi arrests in State

A DAY after Kolkata Police rounded up eight Simi activists from Ekbalpur, Darga Road in Beniapukur and Lenin Sarani, 19 supporters of the proscribed outfit were arrested from Malda, Murshidabad and Dakshin Dinajpur today.

Two other Simi supporters were picked up from Burdwan and eight from North 24-Parganas. Among the eight was Naimul Haque, a schoolteacher from Rajarhat. At the end of the day, the number of arrests stood at 32, DIG (Hq) Narayan Ghosh said.

Sleuths and intelligence agencies are now focusing on flushing out more activists of this banned outfit from Murshidabad. The concern springs from the fact that on September 24 Simi members held a closed-door meeting in this sensitive town to express support for Osama bin Laden.

Intelligence officials are now working on the recorded speeches delivered at this conclave to pin point the agencies which had thrown their weight behind Simi in Murshidabad.



Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, dressed in a traditional Muslim cap and shawl, proceeds to attend a meeting with community leaders at his residence on Friday.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 SEP 2001



# Nationwide swoop on SIMI

HD-1 23/9  
By Vinay Kumar J-D 8 R below

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 28.** Within a day of the nationwide ban being slapped on the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), as many as 240 activists of the outfit were arrested in several States and their premises were sealed by the police even as the Home Ministry asserted that it had sufficient evidence of SIMI's links with Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda group.

At a press conference here this evening, the Union Home Secretary, Mr. Kamal Pande, sought to dispel an impression that there was any immediate provocation for banning the SIMI.

"We have been examining SIMI's activities over the past several months and gathered sufficient evidence of its links with other militant groups and pan-Islamic outfits. The ban is not confined to just one issue of it having links with Al-Qaeda outfit of Osama bin Laden," he said.

He said the Home Ministry had been receiving reports from several State Governments and other agencies about the activities and statements of the SIMI which were detrimental to the maintenance of communal harmony. They caused hurt to the religious sentiments of communities and questioned the very territorial integrity of the country as well.

The crackdown on SIMI activists which began on Thursday evening led to 90 arrests being made in Uttar Pradesh, 35 in West Bengal, four each in Delhi and Kerala and five in Andhra Pradesh. Arrests were also made in Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan and a large number of video and audio cassettes and propaganda material was seized, he said.

Mr. Pande said the SIMI had been publishing material and their activists making speeches which were anti-national and propagated secessionism. The organisation was also found instigating riots in a bid to win over the Muslims to its hard-line fundamentalist and anti-national approach.

Giving details of SIMI's links with other militant groups, Mr. Pande said that organisations such as the Muslim Students' Union, a pro-Hamas group of Palestine students in India and Pakistan, enjoyed a close rapport with the SIMI and the Hamas chief was a frequent invitee to its conferences. It was also working for establishing an international Islamic order. Most recently, SIMI activists were found distributing pro-Taliban leaflets and pamphlets in Delhi and other cities.

The SIMI organised protests against the alleged burning of copy of the Holy Koran in Delhi in March this year and its units gave wide publicity to the issue through the Internet. Also, posters and pamphlets were distributed in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Karnataka. It printed provocative posters in Ah-

medabad last month and issued press releases which caused communal tensions.

The SIMI's links with militancy were noticed as early as 1992. In the recent past, investigation of 14 cases of terrorist violence which had caused 15 deaths and injury to 80 others in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi in 2000-2001 exposed a deep nexus between SIMI and Hizb-ul Mujahideen.

The notification, banning the SIMI for two years, declared it as an unlawful association under Section 3 (1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. In accordance with Section 4 of the Act, the Central Government shall, within 30 days of the publication of the notification, refer it to the Tribunal for the purpose of adjudicating whether or not there is sufficient cause for declaring the association unlawful. The SIMI would also get a chance to appear before the Tribunal which would either confirm or reject the ban within six months.

## Remand for activists

By Our Staff Reporter

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 28.** A Delhi court today remanded four members of the SIMI to judicial custody for 14 days for allegedly continuing with their activity even after they were served with a notice banning the outfit.

The office-bearers of organisation's Delhi unit — Shahid Badar, Saifnachana, Mohammed Khalid and Irfan Khan — were arrested from its headquarters in Zakir Nagar in South Delhi under Section 3 read with Section 10 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 for allegedly refusing to close down their office and stop their activity even after being served with a ban notice.

Seeking bail, counsel for the four submitted that the offence under Section 3 read with Section 10 of the Act was not disclosed because neither the notification had been published in the gazette nor had any tribunal been constituted to decide the legality of the ban on the organisation. But the court rejected their submission saying that the notification had been published in the gazette, and at this stage it was sufficient to reject the bail application.

The four were also slapped with the charge of spreading hatred. In support of the charge, the police said that they had seized a magazine of the organisation titled 'Islamic Movement' which carried an article captioned 'Taliban, Bamiyan and Buddhism'.

The court allowed the argument saying that a reading of the story was enough to show that the article in the magazine had been published with the 'sole aim to hurt and cause ill-will to the followers of Lord Buddha.'

THE HINDU

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# Simi chief held, curfew in Lucknow continues

208N Simi

ST 29/9



Policemen fire to disperse a crowd, protesting against Simi's ban in Lucknow on Thursday. - AP/PTI

## STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & PTI

NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW, Sept. 28. - The Simi's national president, Shahid Badr, and three other activists have been arrested in Delhi, while curfew remains in force in Lucknow though no untoward incident was reported from the state today.

The curfew was imposed after police fired on a mob protesting against the ban on the Muslim students' organisation. Four people died in the police firing. Eighty-six people have been arrested in the state. An FIR has been filed in connection with yesterday's incident.

Para-military forces, including 12 companies of Rapid Action Force, have been deployed in sensitive areas. Schools and colleges in those areas have been closed till Monday. Congress leader Mr Gulam Nabi Azad was not allowed to enter the curfew-bound areas.

The Union home secretary, Mr Kamal Pande, today said the

Simi had links with Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaida group and other militant organisations in the Gulf, West Asia, the USA, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. The leader of the Palestinian militant outfit, Hamas, had "frequently" been in touch with the Simi and had visited India, he said.

"The anti-national and militant postures of Simi are clear-

### ■ Editorial: Godawful, page 6

ly manifest in the speeches of its leaders who have been glorifying pan-Islamic fundamentalism, used derogatory language for deities of other religions and exhorted Muslims for jihad."

Besides Shahid Badr, those arrested in Delhi late last night from the organisation's head office at Zakir Nagar, south Delhi, were Saif Nachan (manager of the Islamic Movement magazine), Mohammed Khalid (assistant manager) and Irfan

Ahmed (office secretary). They have been remanded in 14-day judicial custody.

They have been charged under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and IPC's Section 153-A (promoting communal disharmony). Bhariach police had registered an FIR against Badr for allegedly making an inflammatory speech at a meeting on 16 September.

The Simi office has been sealed and some literature, documents and computer floppies were seized. There was tension in the area as the news spread.

A resident said the leaders "knew about the ban and were readying themselves for the arrest. There was no violence from either side."

Asked about Simi's alleged terrorist links, Omar Abdullah, a student, said: "I've been coming to the library in the office for the past five years. There was also a welfare association

■ See SIMI: page 8

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# SIMI:

(Continued from page 1)

where members counselled Muslim students. I never came across anything unlawful".

The joint commissioner of police (southern range), Mr Amod Kanth, chaired a peace meeting at the Jamia Milia Islamia University. The V-C, Prof Shaid Mehndi, and residents of Batla House, Jamia Nagar and Zakir Nagar attended the meeting.

**Andhra Pradesh:** Five Simi leaders were arrested in Andhra Pradesh and produced before the special executive magistrate today, SNS adds from Hyderabad. Among them was the state chief, Akhtar Quereshi. At least 50 active members are operating in the state.

**Bihar:** The Rabri Devi government has virtually ignored the ban on the Simi, SNS adds from Patna. The group's two offices at Phulwari Sharief were open today. "We're functioning as usual," said the Patna secretary, Mr Reyaz-ul-Haque said. Mr Laloo Prasad Yadav slammed the Centre for "singling out" the Simi. "If the Centre wants to go against fundamentalist groups, it should first gather concrete evidence against all such group."

**Kerala:** Muslim organisations and a few human rights groups have joined hands against the ban even as police raided the Simi office at Kozhikode and arrested about 30 activists across the state, SNS adds from Thiruvananthapuram.

The Islamic Youth Centre director, Prof P Koya, said the ban was aimed at silencing the Muslim voice against the USA. He challenged anyone to prove that the Simi was involved in Kanpur riots. The ban demonstrated India's surrender to the USA, he said.

**No Simi in J&K militancy:** Simi activists aren't involved in the J&K militancy, the IGP (Kashmir zone), Dr Ashok Bhan, said today, SNS adds from Srinagar. There have been rumours that the group was helping the Hizbul Mujahideen.

**Maharashtra:** Seventeen Simi members, including state unit chief, were held in Maharashtra, SNS adds from Mumbai. Friday prayers in Madanpura, Kurla, Jogeshwari, and Ghatkopar were held under security.

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# 35 Simi activists

## held in state

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA/MALDA, Sept. 28. — Thirty-five members of the Students Islamic Movement of India have been arrested across the state since yesterday. The chief minister today said the government was taking "adequate measures to enforce the ban in the state."

He denied he had requested the Centre to ban the organisation. "I had never approached the Centre on the issue".

Six Simi members have been arrested in Murshidabad and Burdwan districts. Magazines containing provocative articles, urdu posters, compact discs and cassettes containing Osama bin Laden's speeches were seized from them.

Twenty-one Simi activists were arrested in Malda, North and South Dinajpur districts last night. Books and photographs of Osama and incriminating literature and leaflets were seized from them.

The Malda SP, Mr Pankaj Dutta, said the state civil defence minister, Mr Srikumar Mukherjee, had requested the district administration to release some of those arrested. The plea was turned down. "No undue request will be obliged. We're sure those arrested were involved in anti-national activities," he said.

One of those arrested, Samsud Doha, is suspected to be the Simi's "think tank" in North Bengal. Under his leadership, the group had been inciting communal passions against the global initiative to fight terrorism, police said.

Recently, the Simi had held a convention in Malda condemning the US-led campaign against Afghanistan. A collage of newspaper pictures of Osama was hung on the auditorium wall.

Police are probing whether those arrested had any links with the ISI and Hizbul-Mujahideen.

Police have been deployed in some sensitive areas of Malda. Vigil on highways and along the Bangladesh border had been intensified. A red alert has been sounded in Burdwan.

In Purulia, 15 kg of powerful explosives and 50 detonators have been seized from villages close to Jharkhand border. Seven people have been arrested. It couldn't be ascertained whether the arrests were related to the state-wide raids on Simi members.

**Anil's comments:** Mr Anil Biswas said the ban on Simi would be a "justified" step if action was taken for "specific" cases of subversive activities.

**MAN MURDERED FOR DEMANDING**

THE STATESMAN

29 SEP 2001

## BAN ON SIMI SPARKS PROTESTS IN U.P.

# 3 killed in police firing

HD-1 28/9 By J.P. Shukla 2 08 11 11 11

**LUCKNOW, SEPT. 27.** Three persons were killed and two injured when police opened fire on a violent mob protesting against the arrest of three activists of the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) in old Lucknow today. This followed a ban on the organisation by the Centre today.

Authorities hurriedly imposed curfew in four police station areas of the walled city to prevent the escalation of violence.

### Effective for 2 years

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 27.** After dilly-dallying for the past few months, the Centre today banned the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI).

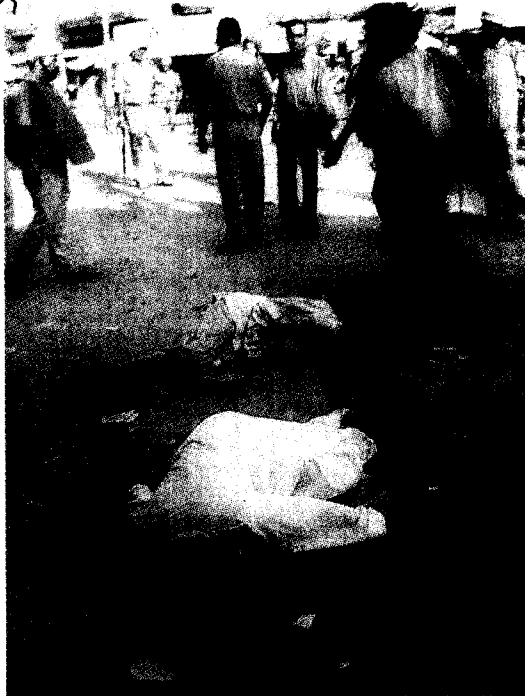
The ban, notified by the Union Home Ministry under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, will remain effective initially for two years. Under the Act, the validity of the ban would have to be determined by a Tribunal. "We had collected information about the organisation. Nature of this organisation had become apparent and preliminary information sent by various State Governments only confirmed its tendencies," the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, told reporters this evening.

When his attention was drawn towards violent protests in Lucknow in the wake of the ban, Mr. Advani said: "The Government will deal with it firmly."

According to the Principal Home Secretary, Mr. Naresh Dayal, police had arrested the SIMI activists on specific charges. While they were being taken to the police station, a mob collected near Akbari Gate area and clashed with the police team. Policemen were subjected to heavy brickbatting and a group of protesters forced shopkeepers to down the shutters.

As the situation went out of control, police resorted to firing in which three persons were killed. The arrested SIMI activists, however, escaped.

The State Additional Director-General of Police (Law and Order) Mr. A.K. Mitra, said that a special police team had started sealing SIMI offices and arresting its office-bearers. The State police headquarters received the official order of the ban in the morning, after which a crackdown on its activists began. Nine SIMI activists were arrested in Allaha-



**Activists of the Students' Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) who were killed when police opened fire in Lucknow on Thursday. — Reuters**

bad, eight in Varanasi, six each in Azamgarh and Faizabad, five in Bhadohi and three each in Lucknow, Mau, Ambedkarnagar, Gorakhpur, Gonda and Fatehpur.

### Digvijay hails ban

PTI reports from New Delhi:

The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Digvijay Singh, welcomed the ban but demanded similar action against the Bajrang Dal saying fundamentalism was reprehensible in any garb.

Mr. Singh alleged that the Dal was "directly responsible for creating institutions like SIMI by instilling fear among the minority community by its acts such as training women to wield arms through Durga Vahini." "Fundamentalism breeds terrorism, which in any form is anti-national," he said.

**PM calls for probe: Page 13**  
**Pan-Islamic links: Page 14**

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# Transparency in arms purchases

By P. R. Chari

STUNG, NO doubt, by the criticism and widespread beliefs that the defence apparatus is a corrupt organisation, following the disclosures in the Tehelka tapes of civil and military officials taking presents, liquor and asking for women, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is getting serious about cleaning up its image. The amounts involved in the incidents of malfeasance revealed by Tehelka are trivial. But this well-publicised expose has greatly eroded the image of the defence establishment and the managers of national security.

The MoD and the armed forces, incidentally, have yet to recover from the battering they took when the Bofors and HDW cases came to light. There are certain consequences of these happenings for the defence apparatus that may not be apparent to outsiders; this is their deleterious effect on lowering the morale of the fighting troops. Their conviction that senior officers and politicians are more concerned with personal aggrandisement than the welfare of the troops and equipping them adequately is growing. This augurs ill for the motivation of troops defending the borders of India. Their cynicism would only increase with the knowledge that the Defence Minister who needed to resign after the Tehelka tapes came to light is now waiting to be re-inducted into the Cabinet; they will also note the delay in disciplinary proceedings being initiated against several of those indicted by the tapes.

It would be naive to expect that corruption can ever be totally eliminated in any system. Individuals manning the MoD and Services Headquarters, however, can easily become corrupt, since the thick blanket of secrecy surrounding these establishments, ostensibly on national security grounds, shields their nefarious activities. Moreover, these individuals also come from the same permissive milieu in the country that has witnessed steady erosion in values over the years. Disconcertingly, India is now classified among the most corrupt countries in the world, along with Indonesia, Vietnam and China, according to the corruption index notified annually by Transparency International. This index is based on the likelihood that a businessman will have to

use bribery to obtain public contracts.

The MoD's seriousness about cleaning up its image can be gauged from its having taken the extraordinary step of consulting Transparency International on how to improve its defence procurement procedures. The MoD's anxieties are understandably related to the huge deals that are in the offing for jet fighters, submarines and tanks. A cloud rising over any of these deals, involving the MoD or the Services in suspected malfeasance, would erode the people's faith complete-

the same equipment. It should also be possible to ensure greater professionalism in the Board by training the incumbents in negotiating techniques. Two more suggestions have been made to improve the functioning of the proposed Board. Its designed structure does not include representatives of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, and lower acquisition organisations in the Services Headquarters are not at present within the Board's span of control. Both these lines of criticism are valid.

***No procedural or organisation reform can be worked if the personnel involved are dishonest. Due care must be taken to vet the officials dealing with procurement matters.***

ly in the defence apparatus and affect the political fortunes of the coalition parties comprising the NDA Government; they might usefully reflect on what happened to the Congress in 1989 following the Bofors case becoming the main election plank of the then Opposition, which is now in the Government.

So, what can be done? It would be useful to enumerate what is being contemplated by the MoD, and what remains to be implemented in this regard. First, the Group of Ministers have recommended the creation of a Defence Procurement Board to undertake procurement activities in a more professional and cost-effective manner. It would preserve the institutional memory, harmonise the requirements of the armed forces and ensure their greater participation in the decision-making process. The Board, headed by the Defence Secretary, would be concerned with only major acquisition and procurement cases; other cases would be handled by the Special Secretary (Procurement). Hopefully, better co-ordination between the MoD and the armed forces would result from these arrangements, as also within the various wings of the MoD and within the three Services. Cases are known where two wings of the MoD have negotiated separately with the same manufacturer for

Second, it seems that Transparency International has advised the MoD to enter an "integrity pact" with the arms manufacturers, in which both sides accept mutual commitments. The Government commits its officials not to demand or accept bribes, and the arms manufacturers commit themselves not to pay or offer bribes and, further, that they would disclose all commissions and payments made by them to anyone, including agents used for the deal. Something like this was attempted in the mid-1980s, when arms manufacturing firms were generally informed that their quotations should not include any cushion for kickbacks, but this initiative was fitful and only had a limited success. The "integrity pact" can work if it is supported by greater openness about the procurement process itself. The Defence Minister has said that details of weapons acquisitions would be posted on the MoD's website, which is a big step forward in the right direction. A further suggestion can be made to ensure the integrity of the defence procurement process, which is to devise regulations for protecting "whistle blowers". Persons within the system are the ones who can provide the most authentic information about corruption, although it must be accepted that some are driven by qualms of conscience, but others by the desire to fulfill their private

agendas. The motives of "whistle blows", therefore, could be suspect, but the veracity of the information provided by them should be the touchstone for its acceptance or rejection.

Third, ensuring greater transparency in the defence procurement processes does not require the banning of representatives, liaison officers or the commission agents of the arms manufacturers. Previous attempts to ban them have failed miserably, as the Tehelka expose revealed. Neither is banning them necessary. This may appear surprising; but they do serve useful purposes to ensure that supply of spares and ancillaries, repairs to equipment and after-sales services are speedily undertaken, and costly defence equipment does not lie idle for long periods of time. What is necessary is to license these agents, and obtain annual reports of their activities, income and expenditure and other relevant information.

These steps, if taken earnestly, would go a long way towards promoting transparency in arms purchases. There are two further matters that need final mention. First, no procedural or organisation reform can be worked if the personnel manning them are dishonest. Due care has to be taken to vet the reputation of officials dealing with procurement matters. There was a time when only officials with a proven integrity were appointed to these sensitive posts. Now, one is not sure whether proven integrity is not, perhaps, a disqualification for making such appointments, looking to the general reputation of the incumbents manning several such posts. Second, the defence sector is not an island in the continent of the Government of India. If such elaborate procedures are being envisaged to provide transparency in defence purchases, should the same systems not apply to other Ministries making large-scale purchases? Maybe the process should start with the MoD and national security management, but it needs to be extended to other Ministries to reform their working systems and procedures. Transparency must become the new mantra for the entire Government.

*(The writer is Director, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi).*

THE HINDU

28 SEP 2001

# Simi ban: A matter of timing

J. D. B. N. S. S. S. S.

HT-7 28/9

Sunita Aron  
Lucknow, September 27

AFTER DITHERING for over an year, the Centre has finally acceded the UP Government's demand to ban Students' Islamic Movement of India (Simi).

The ban, however, comes a week before Simi would hold its silver jubilee celebrations in Azamgarh on October 4. The district administration had banned the celebrations two days back.

Simi's State president Shahid Badra and former president Anis Mohd have reportedly escaped to Bihar after delivering provocative speeches in Bahraich.

Former UP Chief Minister Ram Prakash Gupta had made the first recommendation for a ban on the 25-year-old Simi. However the Centre, caught in the vortex of coalition politics, had told the State Government to prepare a dossier on Simi and its anti-national activities. And till date, the State Government was maintaining the record even as BJP passed resolutions demanding ban on Simi.

Even after Simi's involvement was proved in the Sabarmati train explosion, the State Government avoided discussion on ban though the non-BJP ruled State Madhya Pradesh didn't hesitate from doing so.

Rajnath Singh's only refrain was, "The matter is pending before the Centre. But we will not



AJAY K SINGH/HINDUSTAN TIMES

Policemen take away bodies of men killed in a firing in Lucknow.

allow any anti-national activity in the State." It is another matter that the Government failed to check Simi activists till the Bahraich show where the leaders described Osama bin Laden as a savior of Islam. Books and magazines surreptitiously came in circulation in Kanpur, which of late had become a centre of Simi activities.

The issue of the ban was discussed during recent visits of Union Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani to the State capital.

Notwithstanding the recent pro-Taliban and Osama bin Laden activities of Simi, the question is still being raised about the timings of the Centre's decision. "Why today, when the emotions of the minority com-

munity are already high over the Afghanistan issue." In fact, many among the minority were unhappy with US's role in the entire issue even though they do not have any soft corner for Osama bin Laden.

No doubt questions are being raised about the intent. Though some argue that the ban had come as a preventive step in view of impending US attack on Taliban, others describe it as a "political stunt" aimed at mobilising majority support, especially with elections not very far off. Sources in the State Government, however, justify the ban quoting Intelligence reports that Simi activists would have incited riots in the State if US attacked Afghanistan.

## Left slams Simi ban decision

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 27

MAJOR LEFT parties today described the ban on the Students' Islamic Movement of India (Simi) as unjustified and demanded that the ban should be explained.

CPI(M) Politburo member Prakash Karat said, "The Government should come out with all the information on the basis of which they have taken the decision to ban the Simi."

CPI general secretary A B Bardhan said the ban was not justified. "Banning an organisation is not a solution to the problem. It does not mean that the organisation ceases to function. It only drives its activities underground," he said.

Karat said there were other organisations such as the Bajrang Dal, which are engaged in activities inimical to the country. The CPM strongly condemned the UP Government for the police firing in which three persons were killed in Lucknow.

Bardhan said the organisations connected with terrorism and those spreading communalism whether from the minority or majority community should be dealt with according to normal process of law. Individuals indulging in such acts should also be apprehended. But banning the organisation is no solution.

# Trends show rise in infiltration across LoC

KAVITA SUJRI  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, Sept. 26. - Even though Pakistan has reportedly wound up its terrorist camps in Pakistan occupied Kashmir, there has been no visible change in the ground position in Jammu and Kashmir since the 11 September terrorist strikes in the USA. Rather, the militancy-trends of the past few days show a continuous inflow of militants into the state.

Various security agencies operating in the state have the external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh's statement, with a pinch of salt. He had said that the Taliban supreme leader, Mullah Omar, had asked Kashmiri mili-

tants to join them in Afghanistan in their war against America. They, however, believe that Pakistan would now try to give an indigenous colour to the militancy, thus involving more and more locals.

"We have no evidence of militants going back to help Taliban fight a war against the US," said a top security official on condition of anonymity. In fact, there have been a number of infiltration bids in the valley since 11 September. Only yesterday, four militants belonging to Lashker-e-Toiba were killed in the Nowshera area in north Kashmir, when they were infiltrating from across the Line of Control. Three AK 56 rifles, 6 magazines, 6 pistols, 6 pistol magazines, one 60

mm mortar, one wireless set, one UMG belt and 2 ultra barrel grenade launchers, were recovered.

"This clearly indicates, militants are infiltrating into the valley," said the IGP, Kashmir range, Dr Ashok Kumar Bhan, adding, exfiltrating militants wouldn't have carried so much ammunition and instead would have kept them buried somewhere.

He also said, only a few days ago, a group of infiltrating militants were killed in the Uri sector on the LoC, where the Pakistani army had even shelled heavily to cover the militants' entry.

Though the IGP said, there was a "temporary lull" in the valley, 97 militants were killed by them in the valley goal.

this month (till today). The figure for the last month was 94.

Meanwhile, the Lashker-e-Toiba has denied that its cadres have been asked by the Taliban supreme to join them in their fight against USA. Valley newspapers today carried a statement of the LeT chief spokesman, Mr Abu Osama, terming such reports as anti-jihad propaganda by the Indian army, who were "frustrated and turning mad" because of the increased attacks, including suicide bombings, the statement said. He also called these nefarious attempts to quell the jihad in Kashmir.

He added, the holy war against India would continue till they achieve their goal.

## HARKAT FUNDS FROZEN

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 26. - Pakistan's Central Bank has ordered banks to freeze accounts held by Harkat ul-Mujahideen and Al Rashid Trust, two organisations included in the US terrorism blacklist, a spokesman said today.

The Harkat-ul-Mujahideen today said it wouldn't extend any support to the Taliban against expected US attacks, a report from Peshawar adds. "Until today we are firm on our decision. We as a group won't give any support to the Taliban," a Harkat commander said. - Reuters & AFP

27 SEP 2001

THE STATESMAN



# Centre may enact new law against terrorism

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STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

## US AMBASSADOR MEETS ADVANI

NEW DELHI, Sept. 24. - The Centre may bring an ordinance to deal with terrorism and strengthen the law enforcing agencies.

Sources said the proposed ordinance, Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance 2001, would also empower the Central law enforcing agencies to deal with crimes like terrorism, drug trafficking, assassinations, etc. It would also stress on the need for a greater sense of vigilance among various law enforcing agencies and people.

The Centre would, however, consult the state governments before bringing the ordinance. Sources said given the current international situation, the government urgently needed to review the internal security. Perhaps waiting for the Parliament's winter session would be too late, they said.

Mr LK Advani said the Cen-

NEW DELHI, Sept. 24. - Following the BJP's interaction with the US ambassador, Mr Robert Blackwill, today, senior party leaders appeared confident that Indo-US relations would take a positive turn despite the impression that India was being slighted in the global war against terrorism.

The confidence of the leaders was strengthened after Mr Blackwill reportedly told the BJP president, Mr Jana Krishnamurthy, that he was one of the few who worked for Mr Bush's presidential campaign.

Mr Blackwill tried to brush aside the impression that USA's closeness to Pakistan would affect Indo-US relations and also said that India's relations with the USA should be independent and not contingent on a third country. - SNS

tre would soon discuss with the states the possibility of enacting federal laws to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and also providing protection to security forces, fighting the Pakistan-backed proxy war.

"There are certain crimes and threats, primarily relating to terrorism, which do not affect merely a city or a state even though under the Constitution, law and order is a

state subject. Like in the USA, these crimes should be dealt with at the Central level which could require a federal law to effectively combat terrorism and drug trafficking," he said.

Based on Law Commission's recommendations, the Centre's attempt to bring a legislation replacing Tada had failed last year because of stiff opposition from chief ministers, including some of those

from the states ruled by NDA allies. The issue was subsequently discussed at a meeting of state chief secretaries where the need to have such legislation was broadly approved.

In the changed scenario, officials believe that the state governments which had earlier opposed the need for having an anti-terrorist law would now approve of the Centre's stand. They said during a debate in the Rajya Sabha on the Group of Ministers' report on national security, all major political parties, including the Congress, agreed on the need to have some new legislation and amendments in some of the existing ones.

The home minister said terrorist outfits like Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammad, having links with Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeeda, should be banned. These outfits were on the USA's list of terrorist organisations, but were not on the list of banned terrorist organisations.

THE STATESMAN

# Osama long arm reaches State

Jaideep Mazumdar  
Kolkata, September 24

OSAMA BIN Laden's shadow has now lengthened across India and reached the State's borders. The latest intelligence reports reveal the emergence of two new Islamic radical groups that have close links with the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) that are affiliated to bin Laden's al-Qaida.

The 'Muslim Brotherhood', or the al-Ikhwan al-Muslimoon, and the al-Jihad have moved in to the Indo-Bangladesh border in West Bengal and Assam. "These two terrorist organisations have a specific mission — to provide vital links to the JeM, LeT, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM) and other Pakistan-based groups to coordinate all activities and foment trouble in this region," a source said. Both the new groups have their origins in Egypt.

This information was shared with US officials during a meeting at New Delhi on Thursday night. The top-level meeting was attended by Defence Secretary Yogendra Narain and senior officers of the intelligence outfits. "These outfits are definitely propped by Pakistan, whose interests would be served if violence is stepped up in this region. That would tie down more Indian troops and resources in the eastern theatre, thus leaving the Kashmir and Western sector a bit more vulnerable," explained a military intelligence source.

The two new organisations



OSAMA BIN LADEN

have ensconced themselves in Bangladesh and spread their tentacles to large tracts of Muslim-dominated areas near the Bangladesh border in Assam and West Bengal. "The inputs we have received so far suggest that the two organisations aim to whip up fundamentalism among the Muslim populace and thus strengthen their base in those areas," the source said. "We have received a lot of material they've distributed highlighting the alleged 'oppression' of the Muslims around the world, including Kashmir. Leaflets, booklets and cassettes being distributed by the two organisations, especially the Muslim Brotherhood, contain appeals to 'parents' to 'donate' their sons for the cause of Islam."

All this information was gathered over the past few weeks and, significantly, the Indian intelligence agencies' task was "facili-

tated to a considerable extent" by some security agencies of Bangladesh, the source said. "The entry of these two outfits is bad news for Bangladesh and there is scope for Delhi and Dhaka to step up cooperation to nip this menace in the bud."

The source said the Muslim Brotherhood, which has top-level links with bin Laden's al-Qaida, has the brief not only to breed hatred and fundamentalism, but also to act as coordinator between all the other terrorist organisations operating in the region. The al-Jihad is to recruit terrorists, send them to Pakistan and Afghanistan for arms training, receive them back and send them out on specific missions. "It, of course, hardly needs to be said that the Inter-Services Intelligence is solidly behind all this," he added.

The al-Jihad, which receives funds and logistical support from the Taliban, Sudan and West Asian organisations, has direct links with the HuM, JeM and the LeT. "The LeT encouraged these two outfits to enter this region through its parent organisation, the Pakistan-based Markaz-ul-Dawa-wal-Irshad, which has strong links with Islamic terrorists all over the world, including the Hamas," said the military intelligence officer. "But the al-Jihad is actually fronting for Masood Azhar's JeM, which is an affiliate of the al-Qaida. Osama bin Laden takes personal interest in the affairs of the JeM."

(To be concluded)

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25 SEP 2001

# Be prepared for a US-type situation in India: Advani

BY AMITA VERMA

Lucknow, Sept. 23: Union home minister L.K. Advani on Sunday cautioned that India might come under possible terrorist attacks and the nation should remain prepared to face a USA-type situation in the coming days. "People are not realising the seriousness of the prevailing situation and for most of them, it is like waiting for the climax of a thriller," he said.

Mr Advani said India would provide all help to the US in its war against terrorism without compromising on national security and sovereignty. "So far, America has only asked for intelligence information regarding Taliban and Osama bin Laden which we have provided. There has been no other demand, but I assure you that we will keep our dignity intact in helping the US. In fact, we are not supporting the US in this war against terrorism. We have been fighting this war on our own since the past several years. It is America which has joined the war only after it felt the impact of this menace on September 11," he said.

Mr Advani, who was speaking at a function organised in the Saraswati Shishu Mandir here for the release of a special issue of

*Rashtra Dharam*, said India and its people should learn the spirit of unity and restraint which the people of America have displayed after the terrorist attacks.

Welcoming the US statement that its war against terrorism would not be restricted to Osama bin Laden alone but would also be directed against terrorism in general, Mr Advani said, "Pakistan, ironically, is now standing among the frontline states supporting America's war against terrorism."

Pakistan must explain this change of posture, he said, adding, "It is obviously America's strategy to pit Pakistan against Afghanistan and India does not need to bargain with anyone on this issue."

"India has been waging a lone war against terrorism all these years, and we are quite capable of tackling the menace on our own,"

Mr Advani said, adding that the maximum number of terrorists in Kashmir has been eliminated in the past three months.

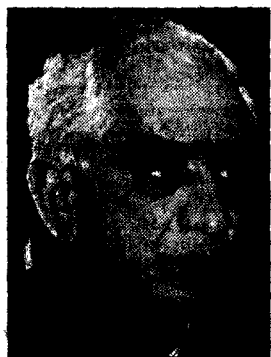
He said the criticism of police excesses, first in Punjab and now in Kashmir, was not always justified. "We must realise that the excesses, if any, are committed in unusual circumstances and, therefore, the intentions cannot always be termed as malafide."

THE ASIAN AGE

24 SEP 2001

# Defence ministry briefs parliamentary committee

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE



Mr Jaswant Singh

NEW DELHI, Sept. 18. - The defence ministry today briefed the parliamentary defence standing committee about its plans to reorganise the defence ministry, including appointing a chief of defence staff, as a single-point advisor to the government.

The Centre has earlier said it will hold consultations with all major political parties before appointing a chief of defence staff. Today was the government's briefing to the committee comprising MPs of major political parties. During the briefing, top ministry officials said that the Centre had largely made up its mind about the

changes but would take a final decision after consultations with major political parties.

Members of the committee were shown a detailed presentation of the future structures in the defence ministry, including the CDS structure, the integrated services and joint working of the ministry of defence and the services. The defence secretary, Mr Yogendra Narain, also briefed them. The presentation made the point that the present system of a chiefs of staff committee was loose and no unified decision was possible. Also, the three services had separate budgets which means they are fighting for the same scarce resources.

Integration would mean a joint decision on procurement and a procurement board would be set up. Also, the ministry officials pointed out that 34 countries including the United States, China, Britain, Vietnam and Australia had integrated their services. The CDS, they said, would have control of the strategic command, in-charge of India's nuclear weapons and would help in prioritisation of resources and would be a single-point advisor to the government.

Ministry officials said that wider discussions on the subject would be held before the government appoints a CDS. The meeting was largely a presentation and a briefing. Detailed discussions on the subject would be held later.

A large number of MPs, even from opposition parties said they were impressed by the briefing and felt there were positive aspects to the reshaping.

# Move to integrate defence staff gets Cabinet clearance

CCS also approves a new command for Andamans

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Sept 15: In a significant move, the Cabinet Committee on Security on Saturday gave a green signal to institute an integrated defence staff and approved the establishment of a new command for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and attended by the defence and home ministers, deputy chairman of the Planning Commission, the three services chiefs and the national security adviser, Mr Brajesh Mishra and foreign secretary Chokila Iyer.

This is for the first time in India's history that an integrated defence staff is to be formed to help introduce joint planning and formulation of defence policies.

The defence and external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, told reporters after the CCS meeting that the joint defence staff would also introduce joint training facilities for defence personnel.

The establishment of the new Andaman and Nicobar command

will enhance monitoring in the vast expanse of the Bay of Bengal. There was previously a persistent demand to set up a separate command in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The CCS also reviewed the security situation in the region in the wake of the terrorist strikes on the US and its fallout. This was the third meeting of the CCS after the US incident.

The clearance for setting up a command in the Bay of Bengal, comes close at a time when the sub-continent seems to be gearing up for a war against terrorism.

Mr Singh said that the integrated defence staff will be a tri-service wing and will introduce for the first time joint planning, joint formulations and also to an extent, possible joint training concepts. He said the CCS also reviewed the existing regional stations in the wake of the terrorist strike in the US on September 11.

The recommendation to integrate the three services with the defence ministry was made in a report by a group of ministers on national security which was headed by home minister L.K. Advani.

THE ASIAN AGE

16 SEP 2001

# CCS discusses closer ties with USA

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept 13. - The Cabinet Committee on Security today discussed the possibility of American military strikes on targets in Afghanistan and about closer cooperation with the USA on Intelligence-sharing issues.

Closer military and Intelligence-related ties with Israel are also being forged, a top government official later said, adding that the "USA and India are exchanging Intelligence and information to contain terrorism." The recent attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon, in Washington DC, have "hastened the process."

Economic issues, including a possible petroleum crisis, were discussed as were the contents of Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's speech tomorrow.

Speaking about the lifting of US sanctions, the official said: "That is a probability now and even Indian officials in the USA were now optimistic."

There is a feeling there may be

more US pressure on Pakistan to stop aiding the terrorists and closing down the camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. The USA is likely to play a more active role vis-a-vis Pakistan now, he said, adding that about 50 per cent of the militants active in J&K are "foreign."

"Now that the terrorists have named India, the USA and Israel as enemies, there is a chance of combining to fight this fundamentalist scourge... It's a good time to combine with the USA. We've been affected, like them and we're informally interacting with them," he said.

India feels it has the experience and Intelligence-gathering abilities being closer to the area of activity to be of help.

The Indian "nearness and experience" and the American resources, would be useful, officials said and the "Americans are buying our argument."

Speaking to reporters after the meeting Mr Jaswant Singh said the CCS reviewed the international situation and security questions arising out of the developments in the USA.

# Afro-Asian Games may be postponed

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 13. - The Centre is in favour of postponing the Afro-Asian Games, scheduled to begin here from 3 November. The issue was discussed at a Cabinet Committee on Security meeting today, a report from New Delhi adds.

However, a final decision would be taken only tomorrow after the Union sports minister, Miss Uma Bharati, meets Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The games were likely to be postponed indefinitely due to security considerations following the terrorist attacks in the USA.

Meanwhile, India won't participate in SAF Games in Pakistan from 6 to 15 October, secretary of the Table Tennis Federation of India, Mr Mulchand Chohan, said tonight in Kolkata.

**Kiwis withdraw:** The New Zealand 'A' team withdrew from the All India Coromandel King Moin-Ud-Dowla Gold Cup Cricket Tournament because of the terrorist attacks, adds UNI from Hyderabad.

■ Another report: page 12

THE HINDU

14 SEP 2001

## Challenge of Peace

In a bid to contain the domestic fallout of the proposed US strikes against the Taliban in Afghanistan, New Delhi has, wisely, advised state governments to monitor "at the highest levels" the communal situation and undertake necessary confidence-building measures. It has further asked the states to keep a close tab on "sensitive areas" and attend urgently to any complaints regarding the harassment of minorities. The Centre's fears about the present crisis acquiring communal overtones are, sadly, neither alarmist nor exaggerated. As we have repeatedly urged in these columns in the past week, however, it would help greatly if the government backs its legitimate expression of concern by a serious reconsideration of its overeagerness to join the US in the latter's global war against terrorism. A moment's reflection will suggest that our ability to manage the situation on the ground at home cannot be seen in isolation from our "gung-ho" response in the foreign policy arena. It is important too that the government makes a special effort to delink the present global concerns about terrorism from its supposed roots in any particular religion. In this regard, prime minister A B Vajpayee's pointed distinction, in his televised address, between the essentially peaceful message of Islam and the mindless perpetrators of terror who claim to act in its name, cannot be overemphasised. Regrettably, though, not all of the prime minister's men, especially those in his own party, have observed that distinction scrupulously in their public utterances.

There are signs too that a section of the party leadership in UP views the deepening crisis as a welcome opportunity to shore up dwindling popular support in the run-up to the forthcoming assembly elections. In a 'parallel' development, there have appeared reports which suggest that a specific student organisation in UP is allegedly disbursing an array of 'provocative' literature glorifying the Saudi dissident and terrorist Osama bin Laden as an exemplar of Islam in the context of last week's attacks on the US. In this climate of aggressive competitive posturing, it is imperative that saner elements from both communities as also moderate political leaders come forward to counsel tolerance and self-restraint. Given how high passions are running, however, it is unrealistic to expect that everyone will act rationally. It is this inevitability which puts a special onus on the local administration in keeping the tensions from boiling over. In view of past experience of such crises, it is possible to offer some broad guidelines. First, there is no greater danger in the current situation than a ham-handed overreaction by the administration in suppressing legitimate freedom of expression. While *agents provocateurs* must be swiftly isolated, a blanket clampdown on dissent would be counterproductive. It would serve the cause of peace better if the administration allows a controlled expression of public protest. It must also keep open its lines of communication with the people by involving important community leaders in the task of maintaining law and order. A dialogue of this nature, earnestly pursued, has produced excellent results in the past and there is no reason why it should not be effective now. Beyond the state, the role of civil society institutions, notably schools and colleges, in spreading the message of peace is particularly significant. It is only when state and civil society make common cause that we can best meet the present challenge.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

21 SEP 2001



# India to overhaul emergency plan

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 12

IT HAS taken 14 years and a great American tragedy to move the Indian security establishment to review a 1979 contingency plan that deals with emergency situations like those unfolding in the US.

An inter-ministerial group comprising bureaucrats and security officials met today under the chairmanship of Internal Security secretary M B Kaushal to review the contingency plan.

At the end of the meeting which lasted nearly two hours, it

12/9  
was decided to overhaul the existing plan to prepare the security agencies to meet the kind of situation the US has come to face.

Among those who participated in the discussions included officials from the Intelligence Bureau, Civil Aviation Ministry, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, Home Ministry, Defence Ministry, Civil Defence and the Delhi Police.

It was felt that in the backdrop of the threats posed by cross-border terrorism and other forms of terrorist violence, several outdated aspects of the contingency plan needed to be

scrapped. Sources said instructions have been issued to all concerned ministries, departments and intelligence agencies to adjust and upgrade their operations after a thorough study of the US experience, especially the security failures which caused it all.

The IB and the RAW have been tasked to report on activities of all terrorist organisations, within or outside the country. Likewise, the Civil Aviation Ministry and its security wing will be beefing up security at airports across the country. In this regard, advisories have already been despatched to all State govern-

ments and Union Territories.

The contingency plan was last reviewed in 1987. Since then, the country has experienced two major terrorist strikes — the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts and the Kandahar hijack in 1999.

Sources said the attacks in the US "may embolden" Kashmiri militants to step up strikes in Indian cities.

"They (Kashmiri and North-east militants) do not have the kind of resources possessed by Arab terrorist groups or Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda. But the attacks in New York and Washington could give them ideas," an official said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 SEP 2001

# Delhi rallies behind Bush with terror alarm

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

**New Delhi, Sept. 11:** Rattled by the terrorist attacks in the United States, India today sounded a high alert throughout the country asking security agencies to be on their toes to deal with any possible attacks on important installations, particularly those belonging to the Americans.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who convened a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security tonight, assessed the implications of the attacks in the US for India's internal security.

Aided by senior Cabinet colleagues L.K. Advani, Jaswant Singh, Yashwant Sinha, national security adviser Brajesh Mishra,

the three chiefs of the armed forces and the heads of security agencies, Vajpayee sat for more than one-and-a-half hours to discuss the attacks in New York and Washington.

"We express our great horror at this crime," foreign and defence minister Jaswant Singh told reporters after the meeting outside the Prime Minister's residence at 7 Race Course Road. He said India's deepest condolences and sympathies are with the American people, the family members of the victims and the President.

Singh said: "Terrorism is a crime against which India is committed to fight and it will continue to do so."

He said he had been in con-

stant touch with the US ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, and made it clear that "all actions necessary for the security and safeguarding of US installations on Indian soil" were being taken.

He said the Prime Minister also directed the security agencies to be alert to threats of terrorist strikes in India. The Cabinet Committee on Security "reviewed and assessed the situation following the attacks in the US and also reviewed the additional requisite steps to deal with India's internal security following the attacks."

He, however, refused to give details of what these steps — "highly sensitive in nature" — were.

The foreign minister said he had also been in touch with

India's ambassador to the US, Lalit Mansingh, and was assured that all its staffers and officials at the embassy in Washington, the New York consulate and the UN permanent member's office were safe and there has been no damage to Indian properties in the US. But he could not say for sure whether non-resident Indians and people of Indian origin living there were also safe. He said details about their whereabouts were difficult to get at this juncture.

The government directed the Lt-Governor of Delhi, Vijay Kapoor, to meet the US ambassador and assure him of all support to ensure the safety of American installations and citizens here. The authorities also threw a security

ring around the Prime Minister's Office, South Block, North Block, Rashtrapati Bhavan, the diplomatic enclave and other important installations in the capital.

India and the US have been working closely to combat terrorism at different fora and have formed a joint working group. There are apprehensions that if Saudi billionaire-turned-terrorist Osama bin Laden is behind the at-

tacks, Delhi could be one of the targets.

An India-initiated resolution to have a comprehensive convention on terrorism is likely to come up for discussion when the UN General Assembly begins its session later this month in New York. The Prime Minister, along with other world leaders, are scheduled to arrive in New York in less than a fortnight for the session.

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THE TELEGRAPH

# We will take Agra process ahead: PM

By Vinay Kumar

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 6. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said India would continue the dialogue with Pakistan — despite the recent contentious statements from Islamabad — to help reach a negotiated settlement over various outstanding issues, including Kashmir.

Ahead of his meeting with the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, scheduled for September 25 in New York, Mr. Vajpayee admitted that the efforts had not yielded the desired results so far. "Yet, a definite step has been taken in the quest for peace. We will continue the process set in motion at Agra."

The Prime Minister was addressing the ongoing three-day conference of the heads of Central and State police forces and intelligence agencies here. The Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, the Cabinet Secretary, Mr. T.R. Prasad, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, and the Home Secretary, Mr. Kamal Pande, were also present.

"Despite constant provocation and unabated cross-border terrorism, I took the initiative to invite Gen. Musharraf for talks. It remains our hope that dialogue alone can build mutual trust and understanding and help us arrive at a negotiated settlement over various outstanding bilateral issues, including Kashmir," he said.

Mr. Vajpayee's reiteration of continuing the dialogue with Pakistan came a day after the External Affairs Ministry disapproved the latest attempts of Pakistan to internationalise the Kashmir issue.

Expressing concern over the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, he said everyone knew about the many initiatives taken by India to



The Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, with the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, at the All-India Conference of Directors-General and Inspectors-General of Police in New Delhi on Thursday. The Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, and the IB Director, Mr. K.P. Singh, are also seen. — Photo: Anu Pushkarna

end militancy. "For over six months, we refrained from initiating combat operations. We did so in the hope that good sense will prevail among the terrorist groups and their mentors to begin a meaningful dialogue for peace."

Lauding the security forces for keeping pace with the political and diplomatic initiative and undertaking imaginative anti-insurgency operations, Mr. Vajpayee said militants had suffered heavy losses of men and materials in the past few months. "As the Assembly elections in the State draw near, I am confident the security forces and the administration will rise to the occasion to ensure a free and fair poll."

Referring to the northeast, he said the Government was committed to ushering in a new era of

peace, normality and all-round development in the region which had suffered decades of insurgency, militancy and violence. "We are trying to institutionalise the peace efforts initiated earlier with the principal Naga militant group, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (I-M). We hope to achieve concrete results without adversely affecting the interests and endangering the territorial integrity of other States."

In Assam too, there was clamour among the people for peace and security. Sounding optimistic about the talks with the Bodos, which had made "encouraging progress", he said the Centre was studying the prospects of initiating similar negotiations with other militant groups in the region.

Cautioning against fundamen-

talists, the underworld, terrorist outfits and criminals with international connections, who were out to create disruption and instability in the country, he said the global wind of religious militancy had touched India as well.

Asking the men in khaki to take a holistic view of things while maintaining law and order, he said they should act in "a fair and impartial manner in handling issues relating to social, economic, and political discord."

On the modernisation programme of State police forces, Mr. Vajpayee expressed dismay over the low utilisation rate of 20 per cent of the funds made available by the Centre. Last year, the funds were increased for 10 years from Rs. 200 crores a year to Rs. 1,000 crores.

# Maoist meet rings alarm bells in Siliguri

FROM PROBIR PRAMANIK

Siliguri, Sept. 6: A weekend convention by the Sumey Abhiyan Sanchalan Samity of the pro-Maoist Akhil Bharat Nepali Ekta Samaj (ABNES) to commemorate the 10th anniversary of constitutional recognition of Nepali language has raised the eyebrows of intelligence officials based in Siliguri.

An intelligence official said ABNES, alleged to be one of the foremost frontal underground organisations, has been spearheading a covert propaganda to spread ultra-leftist ideas among the Nepali population, stretching from Assam to Darjeeling district.

"The ABNES is presently engaged with its political-awareness propaganda programme being implemented in the Nepali-dominated areas of the Doo-

ars and the Terai belt and is also on a fund-collecting spree," the official added.

"We have concrete evidence of the organisation's strong links with the Nepali Maoists. We suspect that the outfit played a major role in organising a secret conclave in Siliguri on the night of August 15, which was attended by Maoist chief Puspakamal Dahal, alias Prachand, and the general secretaries of all the mainline Nepali communist parties, including the leader of the opposition in the Nepal parliament and chief of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)," he alleged.

ABNES members, however, deny any link with the Nepal rebel outfits. "The organisation is engaged with a political-awareness drive in the Terai and Dooars region. But its basic aim is to create an awareness of polit-

ical rights among the deprived and discriminated Nepalese of the region," said Rupesh Sharma, secretary of the Sumey Abhiyan Sanchalan Samity of the ABNES's north Bengal state committee. The committee has launched an awareness campaign called "Sankosh to Mechi, Mother Tongue Revival Campaign".

The organisation admits its "moral" support for the Nepali Maoists movement. "The ABNES is more of progressive group than a leftist organisation. We do morally support the Maoist movement in Nepal. We support of any other justified self-determination movement," Sharma said.

The ABNES-sponsored two day convention to be held in Siliguri is likely to be attended by "revolutionary" Leftist intellectuals from Nepal.

THE TELEGRAPH

- 7 SEP 2001

# Advani moots legal shield for forces fighting terror

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 5

HOME MINISTER L.K. Advani today stressed the need to give security forces fighting terrorism legal protection against charges of human rights violations.

Inaugurating the 36th annual conference of chiefs of police, intelligence and central police organisations here today, he said the Law Ministry was studying a proposal referred to it by the Home Ministry to make this possible. "Suitable changes in legislation are necessary for the purpose and we have taken up the matter with the Law Commission and the Law Ministry," he said.

Advani denied that he had earlier favoured a general amnesty for policemen accused of human rights violations in anti-terrorist operations. "I had only said that a security officer needs protection for his bona fide actions while fighting terrorism as he acts in the national interest. No human rights violation will ever be pardoned. A wrongdoer will have to face the consequences," he said.

The Home Minister said that during an open war security forces had legal and constitutional safeguards, but during a proxy war (read the situation in J&K), there were no legal provisions to justify even the bona fide actions of policemen.

Advani was of the view that Pakistan's obsession with Kashmir had raised serious doubts about Islamabad's sincerity



LK Advani shakes hands with officers at a conference of chiefs of police and Intelligence agencies.

HT PHOTO

about finding a lasting solution to the problem of Indo-Pakistani relations. This was reflected in Pakistan's approach to negotiations during the Agra summit.

Advani also said that Islamabad had never accepted that it was sponsoring a proxy war. He referred to his talks with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf during the Agra summit and said there was a "conviction" in that country that India would break up some time and Pakistan just needed to help the process along. That was why they had raised the level of the proxy war. He said he had raised

the issue of an extradition treaty between India and Pakistan with Musharraf, who had, after initially accepting the proposal, rejected it.

Advani said he had told Musharraf that the treaty was meant for ordinary criminals and "if (he returned) Dawood Ibrahim to India, the people here will say this is a Pakistani leader whom we can trust".

Advani said that the militants' challenge could only be met through a co-ordinated effort of the state police, the security forces and intelligence agencies. Special 'intelligence-

driven' security operations were necessary, he said.

Blaming Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism in other parts of the country as well, he said the recent busting of 101 ISI units (modules) by the Intelligence Bureau had exposed Islamabad's designs.

Speaking on the occasion, director, Intelligence Bureau, K.P. Singh said that the police and security agencies did not favour granting a general amnesty to violators of human rights, but the security personnel did require protection against unnecessary litigation.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 6 SEP 2001

No decision yet on financial powers to Services

# Defence ministry revamp begins

SF-10 9.08 N Security

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 1. — Work on the restructuring of the defence ministry and then, part integration of the three service headquarters with the ministry, has already begun. A large number of tasks that remained with the ministry have been handed over to the armed forces.

But there is some debate over handing over of some financial powers. A committee that includes a top defence ministry official in charge of financial matters and senior officers of the three services are dealing with the issue. A final decision will be taken after the report is submitted to Mr Jaswant Singh.

As a result of the recent restructuring, the armed forces have control over two issues — these relate to the promotions and postings of junior and middle-ranking officers. In the past, after the promotions were cleared by the services, they had to be cleared by the

ministry. Now, that amount of paperwork is reduced. The promotion of top officers to ranks of major-general, rear admiral and air vice-marshal and above will stay with the ministry and the government.

This move will ease the decision-making problem as the defence ministry had far too much on its hands. For instance, there is only one joint secretary for Air Force issues and one officer of similar rank for the Navy. A large number of other powers have also been handed over to the services.

The financial issues are still to be decided upon. The first point is the question of handing over of revenue expenditure to the services. At this point, the Army and the Air Force do not have much revenue expenditure powers but the navy has considerably more powers as the financial experts are "built into the system." This in-house vetting of decisions, perhaps about repairs of ships, apparently saves time. The other services are looking at the mod-

el as well.

The issue of capital expenditures is more tricky.

The three services are looking for some control over capital expenditure, including purchases of new weapons systems, for example.

Even if this is allowed, it would only be up to a certain sum.

At this point, the defence minister has the authority to buy capital equipment worth a certain sum above which it goes to the cabinet. There is a proposal to allow the chiefs to buy capital equipment up to a certain sum, say Rs 50 crores and the defence minister being allowed to buy military equipment without going to the cabinet of a larger amount and the rest going to the cabinet. Whether the government accepts it and changes existing rules will have to be seen. There is also a proposal of having military officers in procurement cells. This is also in the proposal stage and no decision has been taken as yet.

# POTO pothole: Govt to opt for amended bill

By Smita Gupta  
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: The battlelines on POTO are clearly drawn and there doesn't seem to be much chance of the opposition relenting on the issue. The government strategy is now to introduce in the Lok Sabha, most probably on December 13, an amended version of the bill—which will take care of the concerns of some of its NDA partners that it could be used against the press and political parties—to ensure their support for it.

For instance, in the section referring to the "duty of a citizen" to bring to the notice of the authorities any information connected with terrorist activities, journalists and doctors may be given an exemption along with lawyers, government sources said.

After getting the bill passed in the Lok Sabha, the government will then decide whether to allow it to be defeated in the Rajya Sabha in the closing week of the current session or keep "quiet". Either way, the BJP will then make it a campaign issue in the assembly polls coming up in February next year, especially in Uttar Pradesh, by presenting the opposition as a collection of anti-national parties.

The option of a joint session of both houses—in which the BJP-led coalition has a majority—remains, but government sources said there were mixed feelings on what that would achieve, and whether simply ramming the bill through would not take the sting out of its electoral campaign. The government also has the option of re-promulgating the ordinance if it does not bring it to the Rajya Sabha—as was done in the case of an ordinance on the management of Sapru House—but the consensus is that it would "not be proper" to do that. Besides, as a senior minister put it, "The ordinance is not the issue—it is to make a political point."

Meanwhile, the government has decided that on Tuesday, it will hold the all-party meeting that had been promised by the Prime Minister, more as a matter of form rather than with any expectation that a consensus will emerge from the deliberations, senior government sources emphasised.

Atal Behari Vajpayee, however, made a last-ditch effort in the Lok Sabha on Monday to be conciliatory when he admitted indirectly that perhaps the government should have consulted the opposition before promulgating the ordinance.



# Life sentence for Rashid

HT Correspondent  
Kolkata, August 31

HD-119  
2/19

A TADA court today sentenced satta don Rashid Khan and his five gangmembers to life imprisonment in the sensational Bow-bazar blast case.

Reading out from his 106-word judgment in the packed courtroom, Judge Pranab Kumar Deb said: the satta don and his henchmen were being convicted under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act and the Arms Act. "I am awarding the convicts life imprisonment." A pensive Khan stood inside a cage and heard the verdict in silence.

Earlier in the day, the court witnessed heated arguments when Khan's counsel Ganesh Maity and A Bakkar Dhali questioned the appointment of Deb as the judge of the Tada court. A Tada court judge must be appointment from a sessions court and Deb was never one.



RASHID KHAN

The petition was shelved after Deb said he had been appointed a judge of the City Civil and Sessions Court for four days before he was appointed judge of the Tada court.

It was then that the witnesses were summoned. Rashid, who heard the conviction yesterday without a word, broke down in the witness box. "I'm innocent. The police have framed me," he pleaded.

The silence in the courtroom was broken time and again by weeping relatives of the con-

9-08 R. Senth  
victs. Rashid's sister wept inconsolably and the caged don comforted him saying: "Don't worry, they will free me. I am innocent."

Soon after the sentence was pronounced, Rashid consulted his counsel and said he would move the Supreme Court against the judgment.

Outside the courtroom, a huge crowd of curious people waited to catch a glimpse of the notorious ganglord, who hit headlines six years ago. "I work at a nearby tea exporting company and came here to take a look at the man solely responsible for the death of 65 people. He deserved something stronger than this," said Anshuman Basak. "He's a criminal and criminals must not be spared," said Indrajit Bhattacharya, who runs a small business.

**On Page 3: Exclusive interview with Rashid Khan**

THE HINDU

1 SEP 2001

# Govt. to set up Defence Acquisition Council <sup>31/8</sup>

By Atul Aneja <sup>9. D 8 M. 1988</sup>

<sup>HD-17</sup>  
**NEW DELHI, AUG. 30.** In a bid to counter corruption and speed up decision-making in military procurements, the Government has decided to go in for an integrated Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), to be headed by the Defence Minister.

According to highly-placed Government sources, the apex council will also include the Minister of State for Defence, the Defence Secretary, the head of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the Chief of Defence Staff (when appointed) and Chiefs of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. The Secretary, Defence Production, the Financial Adviser, the yet-to-be appointed Vice-Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS) and the Special Secretary (acquisition), will be its other members. A Director-General of Defence Procurement Staff, who would be later replaced by a Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, will serve as the member secretary to the DAC.

The DAC will give policy guidelines to acquisitions, based on long-term procurement plans. It will also clear all acquisitions, including imported equipment and those produced indigenously or under a foreign licence.

Significantly, the DAC structure ensures that there are in-built checks and balances in relation to procurements. For instance, the armed forces are well represented, ensuring that the defence bureaucracy does not exercise overwhelming influence on decision

making. The adequate mix of bureaucracy and service officers is also reflected in other bodies involved in acquisition, under the overall supervision of the DAC.

To monitor the acquisition process, the DAC will preside over three wings — a Defence Procurement Board which will deal with purchases, a Defence Production Board and a Defence Research and Development Board.

The Defence Secretary will be the key person in the procurement chain as he will be the single point head of the procurement and production boards. The production board will supervise procurement from indigenous sources, such as ordnance factories and equipment manufactured under a foreign licence. Among the three wings functioning under the DAC, the Defence Procurement Board is of prime importance. Apart from the Defence Secretary, others on the board include the Secretary, Defence Production and Secretary, DRDO.

The defence forces will be represented by the VCDS and the three Vice-Chiefs. The Financial Adviser in the Defence Ministry will serve as its member secretary. The Deputy Chief of the Army Staff (Planning and Systems), the Deputy Chief of Air Staff, dealing with plans, and the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff will attend the board meetings as special invitees.

The procurement board will work out the nitty-gritty of all inductions, including procurement schedules and emergency purchases.

THE HINDU

THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 2001

## DEFENCE PURCHASES AND TRANSPARENCY

IT IS QUITE clear that the veil of secrecy drawn over defence procurements has played a major role in contributing to corruption and sleaze. Cumbersome procurement rules and procedural loopholes, coupled with a total lack of transparency, have resulted in a situation where defence deals are invariably attended by political lobbying and influence-peddling of the most worrying kind. Against this background, the Defence and External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh's announcement that a Defence Procurement Board will be in place within a fortnight could not have come sooner. The idea of such a Board has been in the offing since it was okayed by the Group of Ministers which assessed the recommendations of the Task Forces that were set up following the submission of the Kargil Review Committee report at the end of 1999. So much so, the concept of a Defence Procurement Board is part of the larger resolve to restructure the existing defence set-up and introduce measures which improve the management of the country's defence.

Important details about the Board — such as the composition and the exact powers it will enjoy in the business of procurement — have not been spelt out yet. But while addressing the Rajya Sabha, Mr. Jaswant Singh — who made other important announcements, most notably the setting up of an Andaman and Nicobar strategic command — did suggest that not only will the procedures for procurement be simplified but that they will also be made much more transparent. An aspect that the Tehelka investigation highlighted was the danger of a system in which defence deals are struck under a cover of overwhelming secrecy. It would have been impossible for the portal's journalists, who posed as arms dealers, to gain access and bribe key functionaries in the country's defence establish-

ment under a system where the methods for procurement were open and transparent. The success of the investigation depended critically on the fact that the methods by which defence purchases are finalised are opaque and outside the purview of the press and the public.

Significantly, Mr. Jaswant Singh has hinted that a decision will be taken shortly on whether or not to permit agents in facilitating defence deals. From these remarks, it seems that the Centre is prepared to consider rationalising the system of middlemen, who play a role in defence dealings virtually all over the world. Agents or middlemen were banned for the controversial Bofors howitzer deal 15 years ago and have been proscribed since then. Ironically, the ban has encouraged brokers and influence-peddlers to illegally lobby those in Government behind closed doors and in a clandestine manner. However, any system which legitimises the official agents of arms manufacturers should be re-introduced only in the most open and transparent manner. Following the Tehelka expose, which resulted in the setting up of a probe to inquire into all defence procurements referred to in the secretly-filmed videotapes, apprehension has been expressed in certain quarters that officials in the Ministry of Defence are reluctant to go ahead with big-ticket procurements for fear of being called into question or investigated later. Among the significant purchases that are pending are that of the 44,500-tonne aircraft carrier 'Admiral Gorshkov' and over 40 MiG-29Ks (estimated at around \$1.5 billions). Defence purchases cannot afford to be held up and, in the prevailing atmosphere of uncertainty about further procurements, the quick establishment of a Defence Procurement Board may provide the right measure of confidence to go ahead with the proposed acquisitions.

## Simi wants ban on RSS,

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29/8  
VHP  
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STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

LUCKNOW, Aug. 28. — Activists of the Students Islamic Movement of India staged a dharna in front to the Assembly today demanding that the RSS and the VHP, who were "openly giving arms training to their cadre", be banned.

Even as the Simi UP zone president, Mr Humam Ahmad, presented a two-page memorandum to the Governor, its national president, Mr Shaid Badr, asserted that the organisation had no relations with any militant outfit and said the government was indulging in malicious propaganda.

While pointing out the destruction of mosques in Rajasthan and UP, the Simi president talked of recovery of explosives at a temple in Etawah. "Such use of religious places should be stopped immediately," adding that the government should take strict measures to prevent attacks on mosques.

He said the arrest of the organisation's all India secretary, Mr Waquarul Hassan, and other members, is "nothing but state terrorism". Describing the allegations against the organisation as "communally biased and concocted", the Simi demanded that the police should stop harassment and arrest of its members.

The recent report of a group of ministers terming madrasahs as potential threat to national security was part of the RSS strategy to "blemish the image of Muslim institutions."

THE STATESMAN

29 AUG 2001

'ANDAMAN & NICOBAR COMMAND NEXT MONTH'

# 'Transparent policy on arms procurement soon'

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, AUG. 28.** The Joint Andaman and Nicobar strategic command, being put in place for the first time, would be established by September-end, while work on the integration of the three service headquarters with the Ministry of Defence would also be completed around the same time.

The Government is also establishing a transparent policy for arms procurement through a Board and would post details on the Ministry's website.

The Minister for External Affairs and Defence, Mr. Jaswant Singh, told the Rajya Sabha today that the Joint Command comprising the Army, Navy, Air Force and the Coast Guard would be headed by a Naval Officer with the rank of Commander-in-Chief and, subsequently, a suitable officer from any of the three services could head it.

Replying to a discussion on the security scenario in the light of the terrorist and other internal and external security threats, Mr. Singh

said the Government felt the need for wider consultations on the appointment of a Chief of Defence Services, and that the Prime Minister could discuss the issue with the leaders of various political parties. Mr. Singh regretted that members did not utilise the opportunity to discuss the appointment of the CDS during the debate.

In line with the recommendations of the Group of Ministers, rules were finalised for setting up a Defence Procurement Board and

**Jaswant rebuts Fernandes' statement on arms purchases: Page 13**

the Minister hope that it would be in place within the 15 days. Whenever weapons systems were acquired, they would be open for all to check with the details posted on the Ministry's website. A decision would soon be taken on whether or not to have agents and information on this too would be on the website. The current process involved time-consuming, 32 steps.

Refuting the Opposition charge that the Government had scarce allocation for defence procurement and doubts about the delivery of fighting machines, he said the first batch of T-90 tanks from Russia was scheduled to arrive by mid-December, followed by one in mid-2002 and the rest later. The Rs. 4,800-crore contract included the cost of technology transfer.

The funds for the Sukhoi combat aircraft were spread over three Plan periods, he said and dismissed as "irresponsible" reports that procurement of cheap spares had resulted in several MiG aircraft accidents. He denied any contract or negotiations on acquiring the Russian aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov, and said the Price Negotiating Committee was yet to arrive at a price for purchase of the Advance Jet Trainer, which had now become a "single vendor syndrome".

**'Not Pak.-centric'**

The Government, he said, was not Pakistan-centric in approach and cited efforts made to improve relations with neighbouring countries during the last three years. New Delhi was not convinced of China's stand that it was supplying arms to Pakistan in accordance with international laws.

Much heat was generated both during the discussion and after the Minister's reply over the Government's approach towards *madrasas* and reports that some of them were being used by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence.

The Minister clarified the Government's stand and agreed with some members' suggestion that support of Muslim members and community leaders could be enlisted to counter if reports of some *madrasas* being used to encourage terrorist activities were true.

## Arun Prakash tipped for post

By Atul Aneja

**NEW DELHI, AUG. 28.** Vice-Admiral Arun Prakash is expected to be the first head of the of the strategic Andaman and Nicobar (A and N) command which is expected to be established by the end of next month.

While Vice-Admiral Arun Prakash is the front-runner, the other name in circulation for this coveted post is that of Vice-Admiral Raman Puri.

Vice-Admiral Arun Prakash is now the Chief of Personnel at Naval Headquarters and Vice-Admiral Puri is the Deputy Chief of Naval staff. An aviator, Vice-Admiral Prakash also headed the Navy's technical group which evaluated the Russian aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov. He was also part of the task force on higher defence management which was headed by Mr. Arun Singh, Adviser (Security) to the Defence and External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh. Vice-Admiral Puri's name is also figuring in for this post because of his experience in heading the much smaller tri-service set-up which existed in the Andaman and Nicobar islands earlier.

**Will control major sea lanes: Page 14**

THE HINDU

29 AUG 2001

# Narco-terrorism worries Intelligence agencies

SANJAY SINGH  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 28. - Intelligence agencies have expressed concern over the increased narco-terrorist activities of Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and other militant organisations on Indian soil. They have spread their base to at least 36 cities in different states including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Gujarat.

Sources said the gun-running by the militant organisations has now become deeply linked with smuggling in narcotics and circulation of fake currency.

The official figures on drugs recovered from militants in the recent past is a clear indicator to this effect. While the amount of drugs recovered from the militants in 1998 was only 6 kg, it increased to 70 kg in 2000 and 72 kg in 2001.

Delhi apparently has been the favourite hunting ground for the Pakistan-backed militant organisation. Intelligence agencies have recorded 39 centres in the capital alone where mil-

itants indulged in activities like blasts or killings.

Besides the border areas, the militants have spread base in cities like Lucknow, Patna, Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar and others.

Sources said the militants' reliance on use of grenades and AK-47s for terrorist activities has gone up substantially in recent years. Figures indicate that the use of RDX for blasts had gone down but use of other sophisticated explosives for relatively low intensity blasts has gone up.

Circulation of fake currency has come as a handy tool to the militants to recruit unemployed youths into their organisations and also de-stabilise the economy at least at the local level.

Sleuths in 1998 had recovered fake currency worth Rs 31 lakh from the possession of militants after arresting them or busting their bases. But last year this figure shot up to about Rs 2.5 crore. The intelligence agencies had busted over 100 Pakistan-backed modules in different parts of the country in the last four years, sources said.

STATESMAN

29 Aug 2001

# Purulia arms-dropping case HC questions five Latvians' release

OUR LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, Aug. 28. — Calcutta High Court today directed the Superintendent, Presidency Jail, Alipur to appear before the court on 10 September and file an affidavit stating how the five Latvian accused-appellants in the Purulia arms-dropping case had been released from judicial custody during the pendency of the appeal and without any release order of this court.

The Division Bench of Mr Justice Nure Alam Chowdhury and Mr Justice Narayan Chandra Sil which passed this order, however, granted leave to Mr Peter Bleach, another accused in the arms-dropping case, to appear before it in person and argue his case on and from 24 September.

Mr Shrenik Singhvi, advocate-on-record for the five Latvians had appeared before the Division Bench on 27 July and 1 August and stated that the Latvian appellants had been released from custody and that they had left India.

In today's order the Division

## HC Bench in Jalpaiguri

NEW DELHI, Aug 28. — The Centre and state government have approved the establishment of a four-judge Bench of the Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri in North Bengal. Land for the courthouse has been selected and the Bench would be functional once facilities like the court building and accommodation for judges and staff is completed, in around two years time, a law and justice ministry communique said today.

An additional Bench of the Madras High Court has also been approved in Madurai, but a proposal for an additional Bench of the Allahabad High Court wasn't finalised because of a local dispute on the Bench's location. — SNS

Bench stated that they could not find on the court records any order of this court or of any

other court for the release of those five appellants. Mr Singhvi had been absent on all subsequent days when the appeal in which he was appearing was called for hearing. He could not satisfy this court by which order those five appellants had been released from custody during the pendency of the appeal in this court.

The court order referred to the submission of Mr RK Khanna, Mr Bleach's advocate-on-record, that he had received written instructions from Mr Bleach to retire from this case. Mr Bleach wanted to appear before this court in person and argue his case.

The Division Bench had also received Mr Bleach's letter to the Chief Justice praying for permission to appear before the court.

The Division Bench directed the department concerned to send a copy of today's order to the Superintendent of the jail in which Mr Bleach was in custody immediately by a special messenger and to make necessary arrangements to produce the appellant before this court on 24 September.

29 AUG 2001



**THE SIMI SCHEME - III**

*From Laden to  
Law Board, they  
all come handy* ✓

Haidar Naqvi  
Kanpur, August 27

IN AN attempt to transform itself into the political face of Muslims, the Students' Islamic Movement of India (Simi) made use of various organisations and minority community leaders.

Armed with the Babri demolition and Kashmir issues, Simi set about consolidating its position with the help of the Muslim Personal Law Board, Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamiat Ulema, Majlis Mashawarat, Tableegi Jamat, Dawat-i-Islami and Ahle Hadees.

Gradually, Simi grew to such an extent that it became a compulsion for all other Muslim organisations and movements in the city.

9-11 & N. Subul  
chief of Hamas, Sheikh Yaseen, Amir of Jamat-e-Islami in Pakistan, Sheikh Hussain Ahmed and Markaz's Prof Hafiz Mohd Sayeed addressed 60,000 Simi cadres on phone. A recorded speech of Maulana Masood Azhar was played at the Halim Muslim Degree College ground.

The conference firmly incorporated the Simi which used the opportunity to provide motivated youths to militant groups.

Buoyed by the success of the conference, leaders from the city were given adequate representation in national and State bodies. Its supremacy went unchallenged and its leaders even dictated terms, exploiting administrative fear about capability to

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

28 AUG 2001

**THE SIMI SCHEME — II**

HI-6 27/8

# Fanning a million Kashmiris now

Haidar Naqvi  
Kanpur, August 26

FOR ENLARGED version of militancy in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the controversial Student Islamic Movement of India (Simi) has provided a fertile ground to Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), Hizbul Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and now Maulana Masood Azhar's Jaish-e-Mohammad, to name a few.

Known for his amazing knack at mobilising funds for a 'cause', Maulana's cadres are the fresh entrants in UP because of Simi's close rapport with Jamat-i-Ulema Islami (JIUI), Pakistan. Moreover, Maulana himself was no stranger to the western belt, particularly Saharanpur. But the major force was the HuM, which has already formed Zehanat-ul-Ansar exclusively for UP.

"Certainly Jaish and Lashkar have been spreading tentacles here and cadres of Qafila-Sakht-i-Jaan specialises in insurgency-related activities with their help," says a source. This fact could be further corroborated with the interrogation report of Abdul Khaliq, an ex-Simi cadre or Umma, turned Lashkar militant.

A post-graduate in Arabic language, Khaliq was trained in Afghanistan and said to be involved in serial blasts in Delhi in 1997. His revelations confirmed Simi's designs to extend militancy to this part of the country with the help of these deadly forces.

HuM cadres found their way to UP after its merger with Harkat-ul-Jihad-Islami and came up with a new face, Harkat-ul-Ansar in

1993. Maulana Azhar, swapped for the IC-814 passengers, had visited India to oversee the merger and its impact. He visited UP thrice, before being arrested in J&K.

"Maulana, the key man of HuM, capitalised Simi for an atmosphere conducive to their cause. His ideological proximity to Simi helped Harkat develop a solid base in the belt," says the source.

The nexus was smashed in 1992 when Harkat's Jammu commander Faizul Waheed was arrested in Ferozabad and his dossiers showed numerous meetings with Simi leaders, who even laundered money for him. The JIUI influence on Simi kept on increasing even after Harkat-ul-Ansar was rechristened HuM in 1997 as it was ideologically the closest.

Moreover, JIUI's Sami-ul-Haq faction played the pivotal role in motivating the Simi leadership in a more planned way. Sami-ul-Haq faction runs Haqqania Madarsas in North West Frontier Province (NWFP), which has produced the Taliban leadership.

"The ideological proximity resulted in paradigm shift in Simi objectives. It brazenly owes allegiance to all outfits that are close to the Taliban." The change of guard in Harkat and Azhar's departure after his release in Kandahar drove Simi to develop proximity with the Lashkar, which recruited nearly 100 youths from UP alone.

The Jaish chief, who always got direct patronage from Ruqn and ummas, and those who subscribe Sipah-e-Sahaba ideology, too banked on this organisation to give his outfit a more Kashmiri face.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

27 AUG 2001

# Pushing the frontiers of militancy to India's heart

Haidar Naqvi  
Kanpur, August 25

LAST WEEK, when Home Minister K Advani said the Government was preparing a "fool-proof" case to ban the Students Islamic Movement of India (Simi) for its anti-national activities, the move was welcomed by security analysts.

Ever since its birth in Aligarh on April 25, 1977, Simi has meant trouble. Its chief mission: to infuse the spirit of jihad in its adherents in the war between Islam and Kufr (the un-Islamic) — a conflict that it claims has entered a "decisive stage".

What sets Simi apart from other fundamentalist outfits is that it advocates the arming of its cadres to achieve its pan-Islamic dreams. To a large extent, it has achieved its objectives. With its highly motivated cadres gaining in numbers, the controversial outfit is engaged in an insidious game — extending the boundaries of militancy from strife-torn Kashmir to India's heartland. "Simi has shifted its theatre of operations from South India to UP and

Bihar as part of a well-executed plan," says a source.

Simi appeared in the limelight in a big way following conventions in Nagpur and Hyderabad in 1991 when it brazenly advocated militancy. Though the convention was banned, the ex-cadres formed an outfit, Al Umma, that soon turned into its armed wing.

However, it is Simi's links with Islamic ideologues abroad that is worrying the Government. Simi has proved to be the platform that the hardcore militant outfits wanted for their forays into India.

(Groups such as the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Hizbul Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad of Islamic demagogue Maulana Masood Azhar have forged close bonds with it) Known for his amazing ability to motivate people and mobilise funds, Maulana's cadres are the latest arrivals in UP because of Simi's support. However, by creating the Zehanat-ul-Ansar exclusively targeted at Uttar Pradesh, it is the Hizbul that has stolen a march over other militant outfits.

"The Jaish and Lashkar have

been spreading their tentacles here, with Simi's help," say sources. This was confirmed after the interrogation of Abdul Khaliq, a Simi member-turned-Lashkar militant.

A postgraduate in Arabic, Khaliq was trained in Afghanistan and was involved in the 1997 Delhi blasts.

Hizbul cadres found their way into UP after its merger with Harkat-ul-Jihad-Islami in 1993. The new outfit was named the Harkat-ul-Ansar and Maulana Azhar visited India to oversee the merger. "Maulana's ideology is similar to Simi's and that helped Harkat to develop a solid base in western UP," says a source.

Its links with militant outfits have helped Simi in a major way. Apart from ingratiating itself with foreign mercenaries, its cadres get superior training. For instance, Pakistan-based Sami-ul-Haq played a pivotal role in motivating the Simi leadership. For the record, it is the Sami-ul-Haq madrasas in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province that produced the Taliban leadership.

# Centre has open mind on Poto, says Jana

50-3  
26/8

J. D. & N. News (Poto).

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, Nov. 25. — The BJP president, Mr Jana Krishnamurthy, today said the NDA government had an "open mind" on Poto and was willing to consider suggestions for amendments from NDA partners and the Opposition.

He urged the Congress and Left to "rise above narrow political considerations" and desist from opposing the Ordinance across the board.

Mr Krishnamurthy appeared confident that the Trinamul wouldn't oppose Poto in the Lok Sabha. But hasn't Miss Mamata Banerjee vowed to oppose the Ordinance? "Just wait and see what happens on the floor of Parliament."

He said he was present at the NDA meeting that discussed Poto. "All NDA partners were present, but none expressed any reservations. To the best of my knowledge, the Trinamul has no reservations."

One or two suggestions, he said, had come from some NDA partners and "due note" of those had been taken. The DMK had expressed fears, "taking into consideration its recent experience at the hands of the AIADMK government in Tamil Nadu." But, the DMK was "fully supporting" Poto.

The BJP chief said Mahara-



Mr Jana Krishnamurthy

shtra had a law similar to Poto. The Congress government in Karnataka had passed a Bill against organised crime (it's awaiting the President's assent), though the party is opposing Poto. The West Bengal government too wants to pass a similar law though it's against the Centre's Ordinance.

Mr Krishnamurthy said a stringent anti-terrorism law had become necessary especially after 11 September, but the move to enact it had not been initiated by the NDA government.

A vacuum had been created after the Tada was withdrawn in 1995. The process to fill the vacuum started in 1996, when Mr PV Narasimha Rao was the

## BJP PRESIDENT SLAMS ARJUN

KOLKATA, Nov. 25. — Mr Jana Krishnamurthy today criticised Mr Arjun Singh for accusing the NDA government of "Talibanising" education. Mr Singh had said this about a circular issued by the human resources development ministry.

The BJP chief said the circular was issued out of consideration for the Sikhs' religious sentiments. It was directed against objectionable and incorrect statements on Guru Tegh Bahadur, contained in certain books, he said. "There is need for a full debate on everything in Parliament. But they should not call us names."

Mr Krishnamurthy said the Congress didn't understand the implications of the term "Talibanisation."

He said a meeting was being held in Delhi today for drawing up a code of conduct for parliamentarians. It was being attended, among others, by Speakers and Deputy Speakers, as well as chairmen and deputy chairmen of Upper Houses. "We'll abide by its recommendations," Mr Krishnamurthy said. — SNS

Prime Minister. From the Congress and United Front governments, it had gone to the Law Commission. The commission had sent its recommendations to the NDA government in 2000.

Since then, the Centre has held widespread talks on the proposed legislation.

Mr Krishnamurthy said Chennai police had recently received a tip-off that a Singapore Airlines flight might be hijacked and crashed on the Prime Minister's Office. The matter was probed and nothing happened. "I would like to ask the Congress if any existing law can meet the prevailing situation."

**Immigration:** Mr Krishnamurthy hinted that the Centre

had not received full cooperation from successive Bangladeshi governments in curbing illegal immigration into India. "From the very beginning, the (NDA) government has been trying to establish the best of relations with Dhaka, but it can't be one-sided."

"The BJP," he said, "appeals to the Bangladesh government to take steps to stop the current exodus. The refugees can be persuaded to go back, and the 1 crore people who've come to West Bengal and the North-east can also return." He said Delhi had approached Dhaka on the current influx and he had read reports that the latter had promised steps to stop it.

THE STATESMAN

26 AUG 2001

# Panel wants women in combat role

9-0 & N Reports

25/8

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

5/1

NEW DELHI, Aug. 24. - Women officers in the armed forces should go to the battle field and a rule to ensure that jawans are not used as batmen by officers. These are the two radical changes suggested by the parliamentary defence standing committee.

A recent report welcomes the fact that all three services have women officers. At the moment, they are not combatants. In its report, committee members said the government should ensure there are more women in the armed forces "by taking necessary steps including opening up of more non-combatant and combatant branches to them."

Women in the logistics branch are already serving on naval ships; Navy officers said. These ships are not warships, but these support ships like oil tankers that can be attacked during war. Others are serving as doctors.

But there is opposition even within the defence ministry. A senior defence ministry official told the committee members: "I know the Navy chief is thinking of having ladies on board... I have some reservations on this because, traditionally, over the centuries, it has always not been found wise to have ladies on board the ship particularly in countries like India. Elsewhere, even in somewhat dif-

## OFFICERS SHOULD NOT USE JAWANS AS BATMEN

ferent societies like that in the USA, the Navy has had problems, so much so that one Navy chief had to take retirement, not because of anything he did, but because under him something went wrong."

The main problem on most ships is the lack of separate toilet facilities for men and women. Also, the women are yet to be trained to perform combat roles. In the Air Force, women fly helicopters and sometimes act as spotters for artillery fire. But there are no women fighter pilots, unlike in Israel and some Western countries.

Virtually every Army officer has a bat-

man to help him with his official work-like cleaning his uniform. But their services are often misused. There must be about 25,000 batmen in the Army. Now, the committee members have recommended that the "British practice of using jawans as batmen should be stopped forthwith and jawans should be treated in a dignified manner." Committee members are alarmed at the increasing number of court cases relating to service grievances being filed by armed forces personnel. In 1992, for instance, armed forces personnel filed less than 1,800 such cases. Last year, the number had climbed to about 6,500. The members called for a quick setting up of an armed forces administrative and court martial tribunal.

THE STATESMAN

25 AUG 2001

51-8  
248

# Jaswant backs appointments

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

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NEW DELHI, Aug. 21. — The defence minister today defended the appointment of his two advisers, special adviser Mr Arun Singh and media adviser Mr BG Verghese. He said Mr Verghese was appointed as he was dissatisfied with the performance of the ministry's public information officers.

He also asserted that he was prepared for a full-fledged discussion on the recommendations of the GoM based on which task forces on border management, internal security, Intelligence and defence restructuring were set up.

As for the appointment of his advisers, Mr Jaswant Singh said he wasn't doing anything "arbitrarily. The government had cleared the appointments.

In Mr Arun Singh's case, the minister denied there had been any violation of rules, saying he had subjected himself to Intelligence scrutiny and promised, in writing, to abide by the Official Secrets Act.

"He (Mr Arun Singh) has subscribed impeccably to every requirement of law when it comes to the Official Secrets Act and there is nothing he does is not directed by the defence minister to help him," Mr Jaswant Singh told the Rajya Sabha in response to a query from CPI-M member, Mr Nilotpal Basu, on Mr Arun Singh's status. As he had done an "outstanding" job as minister of state for defence, the government considered him to be the right person for the task, he added.

Asserting that Mr Arun Singh wasn't in the ministry on a permanent basis, the defence minister said he had volunteered to subject himself to Intelligence scrutiny as he had done in 1999 when he was appointed as an adviser in the external affairs ministry and later to head the task force for defence restructuring.

He said Mr Arun Singh was appointed special adviser when the question of implementing the task force's recommendation came. It was felt that the implementation will be facilitated if a person, entrusted to draw up the plan, is there to help.

On his media adviser, the minister said he had requested Mr Verghese to help revamp the publicity setup of the defence ministry as the public information system wasn't satisfactory.

THE STATESMAN

22 AUG 2001

# Advani's amnesty idea finds no favour with law ministry

By Akshaya Mukul  
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: The law ministry feels that the idea propounded by home minister L.K. Advani idea of providing amnesty to security personnel accused of human rights violations in fighting militancy is not workable. Although the ministry is still to receive a formal proposal from the home ministry, officials do not know how 'relief' can be given to forces within the existing constitutional provisions.

According to a senior ministry official, "The home minister's idea can be an infringement of Article 21 which guarantees protection of life and liberty. By implication, it will mean that the life of people in disturbed areas can be put to risk in the name of fighting militancy."

He also said that the present move was ironical since the law ministry was in the

process of amending the Indian Evidence Act (IEA). The proposal was aimed at amending Section 14 of the act in order to make the Indian police an instrument of cooperation and friendship. Also, it was

being proposed that in the event of the death of an accused, the onus of proof would be with the police. "The home minister's idea is diametrically opposed to the spirit of the IEA," he added.

The official also pooh-poohed the home minister's suggestion that a committee would be set up to look into cases of human rights abuses against security personnel. "Since

the days of MISA, these screening committees have never worked according to their brief," he said. "Most of the accused security staff will get off scot-free." Similarly, the Law Commission was busy formulating new laws on arrest.



L.K. Advani

THE TIMES OF INDIA

21 AUG 2001

# Centre plans to bail out security forces accused of rights violations

7-03-08  
11-1  
298

Times News Network

JALANDHAR: Union home minister L.K. Advani has ruled out the grant of amnesty to Punjab militants settled abroad and allowing them entry into the country. Setting at rest all speculation, he said there was no such proposal at present, nor would there be in future.

Mr Advani also said that the Union government was exploring the scope for providing assistance to police officers facing trial in various courts for actions related to their fight against militancy.

"The Centre is seriously considering extending relief to defence personnel and police forces within the ambit of the constitution for their fight against terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and the North-East," he said.

The announcement assumes significance in view of the cases of human rights violations filed against 600 Punjab police personnel during the turbulent period in the state.

The home minister was speaking at a function organised by the Shaheed Parivar Fund here on Sunday, at which Rs 5.46 crore was contributed towards quake relief in Gujarat.

Applauding the role of the Punjab police and para-military forces in the state in wiping out militancy, Mr Advani said they had contributed immensely in the war against militancy, which should not go unnoticed on such occasions. Exuding confidence, he said India would emerge victorious in the proxy war forced on it by Pakistan.

He said a comprehensive plan had been evolved to deal with terrorism in Kashmir in consultation with the ministries of home, defence and the government of Jammu and Kashmir in the post-

Agra Summit period.

"We will win the proxy war though it will take longer as it is not limited to our borders or Jammu and Kashmir but the entire country," Advani said.

"Since the proxy war is long-drawn and spread throughout the country, security forces can't be deployed to protect individuals," he said, but added that security for VIPs was essential as any attack on them had an overall demoralising effect.

However, the tendency to provide individual security was being discouraged.

Till four years ago, nobody used to talk of the role of the ISI in India, but we have exposed the outfit and successfully countered

its designs, Mr Advani said: "Our forces have neutralised, either arrested or eliminated, over one hundred members of the ISI in the last three years."

Launching a scathing attack on Pervez Musharraf, Mr

**" We will win the proxy war waged by Pakistan, though it will take longer as it is not limited to our borders or J&K but the entire country "**



Advani said the Pakistan President had no intention of bringing peace to the region.

That is why, claimed Mr Advani, after showing some interest in the extradition treaty, Mr Musharraf had backtracked when the issue of extradition of Dawood Ibrahim and associates, who were responsible for the Mumbai blasts, was broached.

The home minister said the Agra summit was bound to fail after Gen Musharraf, at a breakfast meeting with editors, refused to acknowledge the existence of cross-border terrorism and described it as a freedom struggle. "We realised the futility of talks then, yet the discussions dragged on till late evening without any result," Mr Advani said.

► Advani commends BJP workers in UP, Page 7



# Volte face: Brokers in defence deals okayed

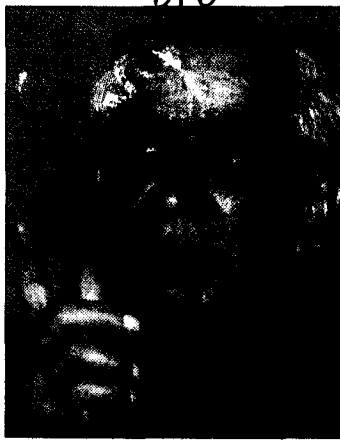
Saurabh Shukla  
New Delhi, August 17

THE DEFENCE Ministry is understood to have cleared a proposal to recognise the role of middlemen in defence contracts. Major international defence equipment suppliers would now be able to appoint their agents in India. Coming in the wake of the tehelka expose, the move is likely to kick up a political row.

Together with this controversial decision - a recognition of sorts of the way deals are struck in the international arms bazaar - the Government intends to put in place on the home front a transparent regime for defence procurements. The proposed measures are now under implementation after they received Defence Minister Jaswant Singh's nod.

The suggested institutionalisation of the arms agents will be through an arrangement where such middlemen - having the Ministry's clearance - will be entitled to a certain percentage (of the deal) as commission, sources told *Hindustan Times*.

The Ministry is also thinking of a more respectable description for the taxable cut or com-



DEFENCE MINISTER JASWANT SINGH

mission these agents would get as remuneration for the services rendered.

Both Chief Vigilance Commissioner N Vittal and the R P Bagai panel probing the tehelka expose have confirmed the middleman's role in swinging defence deals in the post-Bofors phase.

The Bagai Committee had listed 11 major changes in the existing defence procurement system. Recognition of defence agents - who act as middlemen between the buyer and the seller - was also its idea.

Sources said the process would have adequate safeguards to prevent agents from influencing Government purchases. For instance, it has been decided to place on the ministry's website the defence procurement manual now under preparation.

Besides, it has been decided to broad-base the Defence Procurement Board (DPB). It will comprise civilian defence and strategic affairs experts in addition to officials from the three services - the Ministry of Defence, Finance Ministry and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

The board will evaluate the country's defence needs and recommend whether acquisitions have to be made from abroad or the requirements can be met through indigenous development.

There is also a proposal to make decision-making in the Defence Ministry more open. For this reason, it has been decided to appoint a Joint Secretary (Press) in the MoD on the lines of Joint Secretary (External Publicity) in the Foreign Office. The official will provide the interface between various MoD departments and the media.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

18 AUG 2001

# NATION'S PRIDE-II

## Sacrifices Must Not Be In Vain

By GURMEET KANWAL

THE Indian army has been engaged in internal security and counter-insurgency operations in the country almost throughout the post-Independence period. The armed insurrections supported by various foreign powers in almost all the northeastern states since the early 1950s were successfully fought by the army and the Assam Rifles. Though various accords and cease-fire agreements were signed over the years, these interludes were used by the insurgent groups to regroup and re-arm themselves before getting back to the business of demanding either autonomy or independence. While in almost each case the army succeeded in providing the right security environment that is essential for a negotiated peace settlement, peace continued to elude the people for various reasons.

In Punjab, the army was employed as a force of the last resort to flush out Bhindranwale's armed followers from the holy precincts of the Golden Temple in June 1984. Though the operation was successful, the militants soon re-grouped in Pakistan and unleashed a reign of terror on communal lines. However, the people of Punjab did not support the demand for Khalistan and the movement never went beyond the pale of terrorism. The army was once again called out in the early 1990s to assist the civil administration to effectively control the internal security situation in conjunction with the Punjab Police.

### PEACEKEEPING

Even as the situation in Punjab was coming under control, the demand for azadi reared its ugly head in the Kashmir valley in 1989-90 and a new wave of Pakistan-sponsored militancy gathered momentum. The army was deployed in large numbers to combat this new "proxy war" from across the western borders and largely succeeded in restoring a semblance of normalcy. Over a decade later, though the people are tired and an elected government is in power, hard-core militant groups are yet to throw in the towel as they are still being provided financial, military and material support by their foreign masters in Pakistan who are getting increasingly desperate to gain some ground quickly.

Contrary to the canard spread by Pakistan, not more than approximately 120,000 combat personnel have been engaged in counter-insurgency operations at any one time. It was appreciated by the army leadership that it would not be possible to sustain this level of involvement over a long duration, as it would hamper the army's training and preparation for war. Yet, it was realised that though internal security is basically a state government and ministry of Home Affairs responsibility, the state police and central police and para-military forces could not be expected to counter foreign-sponsored, well trained militants, armed with sophisticated weapons and state-of-the-art communications equipment, without army help. There was need for a national-level counter-insurgency force with the army's ethos and leadership and, hence, the Rashtriya Rifles force was raised in the early-to-mid 1990s.

By being at the forefront of United Nations peacekeeping operations worldwide for almost 50 years, the Indian army has contributed immensely to advancing India's foreign policy

goals. Major missions in which Indian troops participated were in Korea, 1953-54; Vietnam, 1954-70; Gaza, 1956-67; Congo (Zaire), 1960-64; Cambodia, 1992-93; Mozambique, 1992-94; Somalia, 1993-94; Angola, 1994-97; Rwanda, 1995-96; and Sierra Leone, 1998-2000. At present, a battalion group from India is deployed in UNIFIL, Lebanon and preparations are under way to despatch a battalion to the Congo. Besides infantry battalions, artillery, engineers, signals and medical units and logistics personnel



have participated in UN missions and the army has contributed a large number of military observers to missions in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Several Indian generals have served with distinction as Force Commanders of UN missions in Korea, Gaza, Congo (Zaire), Cyprus, Yemen, Namibia and Yugoslavia. Maj General Inderjit Rikhye is a well-known UN veteran. The old peace-horse, Lt Gen Dewan Prem Chand, served with distinction as the Force Commander in Cyprus, as a member of the Rhodesia Commission and again as the Force Commander in Namibia in 1989-90, when he was in his 70s.

In addition to its employment in counter-insurgency and internal security duties, the army is frequently called upon to render aid to civil authority. Such assistance includes the maintenance of law and order during communal riots, flood and famine relief, and humanitarian aid during natural calamities such as the frequent cyclones on the Andhra and Orissa coast and the Latur earthquake, building of bridges and roads during emergencies such as landslides and for occasions like the Kumbh Mela. The army is often asked to provide essential services when these are disrupted by strikes and bandhs.

### DEMOCRATIC

The large-scale construction of border roads by the army has led to the development of far-flung and remote under-developed parts of the country. Army outposts have often provided canteen services to the inhabitants of remote villages. Very often the unit banya acts as the resident grocer for a cluster of villages, which have no access to a market. Army medical teams have been providing medical assistance and treatment to the inhabitants of remote localities on an ongoing basis.

Dubbed "scrupulously apolitical" the Indian army's greatest achievement since Independence is undoubtedly its monumental contribution to keeping the Indian nation united, despite strong fissiparous tendencies, strident religious fundamentalism, ethnic disson-

ance and externally aided insurgencies. Called out to quell numerous ethnic and communal riots, to disarm mutinying armed constabularies and state police forces and for many other allied tasks when the civil administration had failed to stem the rot, the army has always acted firmly but fairly. The army's unimpeachable impartiality has led to success in these endeavours and has earned for it the trust and admiration of a grateful nation as a steadfast defender of the supremacy of the Constitution of India. Unlike in some neighbouring countries, the Indian army has been a real champion of democracy.

With its diverse multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-cultural composition, the Indian army is a shining example of the national goal of achieving "unity in diversity". The army is also an exemplary proponent of the power of positive secularism, as all ranks not only tolerate each other's religion but also actively participate in all the rituals and celebrations in a spirit of genuine reverence. Hundreds of thousands of ex-servicemen have spread the army ethos of secularism, tolerance, moral uprightness and selfless discipline. The serving jawans proceeding to their villages on leave also carry the same message with them. It would not be an exaggeration to state that the Indian army has been a major force for national integration and has knit India together better than any other organ of the state.

### PROFESSIONALISM

Today, when the nation is at peace, the army continues to fight a war — even though it is only a proxy war and not a full-blown conventional war. In the vitiated security environment within the country and in the southern Asian region, it is clear that the army will continue to play a dominant part in the affairs of the nation. It is up to the present and future leaders of India to ensure that this great national institution remains in fine fettle. Army men take pride in their calling and engage themselves wholeheartedly in the pursuit of professional excellence so that they can serve their country with honour. Passionately patriotic, with an apolitical and secular ethos, the Indian army is without doubt a strong and unyielding bastion for national unity and integrity.

From the blizzard-swept snows of Siachen, through the sharp escarpments of the Himalayan massif, the steaming hot and humid jungles of the northeast to the shimmering sands of the Thar desert, the gallant men and women of the Indian army have maintained a steady vigil over the nation's frontiers for over 50 long years. The gallant jawans have suffered many hardships, borne numerous privations; they have been often lonesome, but they have never complained. A few millions have given the best years of their youth for our tomorrows. Many thousands have made the supreme sacrifice and a few hundred continue to do so every year.

Each generation of Indian citizens must ensure that those sacrifices are not in vain. With the support of the whole nation solidly behind it, as witnessed during the Kargil conflict, the Indian army will doubtlessly continue to stand firm as a central pillar of the nation's future.

(Concluded)

THE STATESMAN

15 AUG 2001

49-11

OFFICER'S ARREST / NAVY MAY CONDUCT SEPARATE PROBE

19/8

# 'Vital information passed to foreign agent'

S-D & N Se. units

By Our Staff Reporter

**VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 13.** Rajbir Singh, Deputy Chief Petty Officer of INS Circars here, arrested under the Official Secrets Act, had allegedly passed on vital information regarding naval exercises, equipment, weaponry, refitting of naval vessels and other aspects to an agent of a country inimical to India.

Mr. A. K. Khan, Commissioner of Police, confirming the Saturday evening arrest of the accused at a press conference on Monday, said the raids on the residence and office premises of the arrested revealed some incriminating material. A computer floppy seized from his house contained very sensitive information, including photo files.

Late in the afternoon, Mr. P. Purushottama Rao, Seventh Metropolitan Magistrate, remanded Rajbir Singh till August 27. The Fifth Town police produced the accused at the Metropolitan Ma-

gistrate's residence on Sunday evening and were directed to produce him in court on Monday.

According to Mr. Khan, intelligence personnel received a tip-off a few days ago that an officer of the rank of a junior commissioned officer of the Eastern Naval Command, was maintaining contact with a Kathmandu-based agent of a country inimical to India.

Police and intelligence agencies kept watch, and Rajbir Singh, in-charge of the ENC's Photo Division, was picked up near a cyber cafe in the 104 Area here and some incriminating information, he wanted to send to his contact through e-mail, was found on his person, Mr. Khan said. Rajbir visited Kathmandu and his travel and stay were reportedly taken care of by someone there. The police found tickets to Nepal and receipts of the hotel he stayed in while in the Nepali capital, during the search of his house. He last visited Nepal in September, 2000.

Rajbir Singh was reportedly involved in the espionage activities for the last four to five years. He was introduced to the Kathmandu contact by a Delhi-based security agency.

A native of Himachal Pradesh, the accused joined the Navy in 1973 and rose to become Deputy Chief Petty Officer. Transferred to the ENC four years ago, he was living in the Sri Vijayanagar Colony naval quarters in the 104 Area with his wife, two daughters and a son. Rajbir was said to be a drunkard but there seemed to be no complaints about the discharge of his official duties.

"During interrogation, Rajbir confessed to have passed on the information. He confirmed some of the information available with the police and revealed some more. He was sending information to his Kathmandu agent by post or courier and, of late, adopted the e-mail route. With the available information, police so far have estimated that Rajbir

Singh received Rs. 1.40 lakhs from his agent, most of it in cash and some amount through bank cheques or drafts," Mr. Khan said.

The ENC was intimated about the espionage activity and there was complete cooperation from the naval authorities.

The Fifth Town Police have booked him under Sections. 3, 4 and 5 of the Official Secrets Act, on charges of collecting classified information, passing on the same to others and for passing on information to others inimical to the nation.

Police would conduct investigation while the Navy might conduct a separate probe.

It was learnt that Birendra Singh Pagwar, former chief petty officer, had taken Rajbir to Kathmandu and introduced him to Rajesh (alias) R.K. Sharma and Anish, said to be agents of a foreign country. Rajbir was allegedly sending the classified information gathered by him to Ram, a resident of Khandala, near Pune.

THE HINDU

14 AUG 2001

# NATION'S PRIDE-I

## Army's Role In Nation-Building 1418

By GURMEET KANWAL

**I**N the first week of July 1999, the Indian tricolour was hoisted on Tiger Hill and soon fluttered atop many other peaks in the Himalayas of Kargil district. By mid-July 1999, Pakistan's perfidious intrusions into territory on the Indian side of the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir had been undone after a truly heroic effort and the Pakistan army had been handed out one more military defeat by the Indian army.

This victory was only the latest success of the Indian army in guarding India's national security interests.

Ever since Pakistani razakars and regular troops poured across the borders of J&K in October 1947, with rape, torture and loot as their weapons of choice, India's territorial integrity has never been free of threat.

For over 50 years since Independence, the Indian army has been at the forefront as the guarantor of the nation's freedom against external aggression, along with the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, and as the primary force engaged in keeping the nation together in the face of internal discord, communal disharmony and fissiparous tendencies.

Besides the inconclusive operations in Kashmir in 1947-48, in the early years after independence, the army assisted Sardar Patel, India's Iron Man and first Home Minister, in consolidating some of the recalcitrant princely states with the Indian Union.

### THREE WARS

In Junagadh, a simple brigade-level demonstration of strength achieved the desired results. The Nizam of Hyderabad dallied for one year and an armoured division had to finally undertake a 100-hour operation to settle matters in September 1948. When the government of Portugal had failed to see reason for 14 years, in a swift offensive in 1961, the army liberated Goa, Daman and Diu and finally rid the nation of foreign colonisers.

Basking in the afterglow of a successful non-violent struggle for independence and carried away by its own rhetoric of Ahimsa and Panchsheel, independent India's leadership neglected the development and modernisation of the army, secure in the belief that a politico-diplomatic response was adequate to meet the threats and challenges to national security.

Unprepared to execute Pandit Nehru's hastily conceived "forward policy", the Indian army suffered a crushing blow at the hands of China's invading hordes in 1962. However, it is not so well known that individual units mostly fought with spirit and determination in the face of daunting odds.

While the army took the rap for the nation's worst ever humiliation, with hindsight, the blame must be laid squarely on the national leadership's inept higher direction of war, unpardonable inability to accept professional military advice and its myopic vision of the inter-play between national security and foreign policy.

The post-1962 period was marked by rapid expansion of the army, primarily for the defence of the Himalayan frontiers. However, the next major threat came from Pakistan in the west.

Armed to the teeth with shining new Patton tanks and Sabre jets from the United States, Pakistan launched a series of misadventures in the Rann of Kutch in April-May,

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

Operation Gibraltar in Kashmir in August and Operation Grand Slam in the Akhnoor-Jammu area in September 1965.

The Mujahids of the Gibraltar Force were quickly rounded up in Kashmir, Grand Slam was checkmated near Chhamb and Lt Gen Harbakhsh Singh's three-pronged offensive into West Pakistan achieved major breakthroughs. In the largest tank-versus-tank battle since World War II, Pakistan's famous Patton tanks met their



fiery end in a border village of Punjab. Coincidentally but very appropriately named Assal Uttar (real answer), the wheat and paddy fields of this village are even today an eerie graveyard of the flaming metal coffins the fleeing Pakistani crews left behind. At the strategic level, the 1965 war was a stalemate, as the Kashmir issue remained unsettled.

Six years later, Pakistan president General Yahya Khan's refusal to install Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's legitimately elected Awami League government and his army's brutal crackdown in East Pakistan, led to the exodus of almost 10 million refugees to India and sowed the seeds of another war. The 14-day war, which Pakistan started on 3 December 1971, resulted in a grand Indian victory and the emergence of Bangladesh.

In a brilliantly planned and meticulously executed lightning campaign, the Eastern Command's multi-pronged offensive spear-heads contained and bypassed well-fortified defences.

They caused a mental paralysis by operating deep inside the enemy's rear areas and quickly broke the Pakistani commanders' will to fight. On 14 December 1971, Lt Gen JS Aurora, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Forces, accepted one of history's greatest surrenders. Lt Gen AAK Niazi and over 90,000 Pakistani soldiers laid down their arms. It is a defeat that Pakistan has still not been able to stomach. With this victory, the Indian army finally overcame the trauma of its defeat at the hands of the Chinese in 1962.

### INTERVENTIONS

The ethnic conflict between the Tamilians and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka finally sucked in India when, in response to a request from President Jayawardene, the Indian army was deployed in Sri Lanka to implement the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord in 1987. Initially, the Indian Peace Keeping Force was successful in maintaining peace without the use of force. However, when the LTTE violated the terms of the accord, there was no option but to resort to military action. The LTTE guerrillas proved to be a determined and well-motivated force.

Though they suffered many

tactical defeats and serious casualties the jungles of Vavuniya and Trincomalee provided them safe sanctuaries in which to rest, recoup and refit before launching still more raids and ambushes. At the insistence of President Premadasa, the IPKF returned home in March 1990. Whether or not the IPKF made a substantial contribution to the achievement of India's foreign policy objectives, will remain a debatable point.

That individual soldiers and units performed heroically on foreign soil under extremely unfavourable conditions, including restrictions on the use of force, shall never be in doubt.

India's other overseas intervention in the 1980s was more successful. The legitimately elected government of President Gayoom of Maldives was overthrown in a mercenary-led coup in November 1988. Flying in from over 2,500 kilometres away at Agra, Indian paratroopers secured the international airport at Hulale and the capital Male in a surgical strike which caught the coup leaders completely unawares.

Normally a nation's international borders are managed by para-military and police forces during peacetime. However, India's disputed borders with Pakistan in J&K and with China along the Himalayas, are managed primarily by the army. Along the LoC in J&K, there has been an eyeball-to-eyeball standoff between the Indian and Pakistani armies since the 1947-48 conflict. Exchanges of small arms and medium machine gun fire are an almost daily occurrence. On occasion, even artillery duels have lasted for a week to 10 days. Many of the posts are in high altitude areas above 3,000 metres height, in some of the most inhospitable terrain in the world.

### SIACHEN

The jawans live in bunkers under primitive conditions and usually only the most basic amenities are available. During heavy snowfall and after avalanches, some of the pickets remain cut off for many months. Casualties have to be carried on stretchers to the nearest helipads and then flown out when the weather conditions permit helicopter flights. To maintain a high level of morale under such trying conditions, superhuman skills of leadership and management are required.

The Actual Ground Position Line on the Saltoro ridge west of the Siachen Glacier is an undemarcated continuation of the LoC beyond the famous map reference NJ 9842. Since 1984, the Indian and Pakistani armies have been fighting at Siachen (average height 5,000 metres or 16,500), the highest battlefield in the world. Unlike the LoC where there is still some restraint, Siachen is an active battle zone.

Artillery duels are commonplace and short-range missiles and rocket launchers are employed frequently by both the sides. Incidents of hand-to-hand fighting, though infrequent, cannot be ruled out as attacks are still launched to gain tactical advantage. However, survival against the elements is a greater concern than the fear of an enemy attack. Besides advanced mountaineering skills, a stint at Siachen Glacier requires outstanding physical endurance, steely mental resolve, an indomitable spirit and raw courage.

If there is one bilateral problem between India and Pakistan that needs early resolution, it is the dispute over Siachen and the other glaciers of the Karakoram Range.

(To be concluded)

110-11  
14/8

# India has 'problems' managing nuclear arms 14/8

By Atul Aneja

**NEW DELHI, AUG. 13.** Armed with limited options to deliver its nuclear weapons, India is facing some difficulties in redefining the military command structure for managing land and air-based atomic weapons.

So far, it has been working on building a triad of land, air and sea-based platforms for delivering nuclear weapons and is integrating them under a coherent military command. As of now, the Agni-II strategic missile is the only land-based weapon the Government has decided to induct into its nuclear arsenal.

According to highly-placed Government sources, it has been decided not to arm the 150-km. range Prithvi missile or any of its variants with a nuclear warhead. The sources also said contrary to existing perceptions, the so-called Agni-III, with a range of around 3,000 km., did not exist. India, however, can do with a new missile, which is out of the Agni pedigree but has an intercontinental reach, to provide greater depth to its nuclear deterrent. Some Indian Air Force planes can also deliver nuclear weapons.

## Crucial decision

In June, the Government decided to hand over the Agni-II to the Army. The decision was primarily based on three considerations. First, the Army was the largest of the three forces. Second, it had an infrastructure that could be

adapted for storing and deploying the Agni-II with the minimum modifications and cost. Besides, it had the maximum experience in handling the Prithvi ballistic missile.

In determining a military chain of command for its nuclear arsenal, the Government has been guided by the draft nuclear doctrine advocating a small but effective nuclear arsenal and the post-Kargil recommendations of the Group of Ministers on higher defence management.

In defining the new defence architecture, the Government has tried to minimise the disturbance to its existing military hierarchy in the conventional field. It has also sought to separate the tri-service nuclear element for placement under a parallel hierarchy headed by a Chief of Defence Staff. The military chain of command, as far as nuclear weapons go, is therefore headed by the CDS.

After studying the command and control structures of the major nuclear powers including China, it has been decided to establish a Strategic Command. Reporting to the CDS, the strategic command will be tri-service in nature, with representatives from the Army, Navy and the IAF presiding over the nuclear assets.

## New architecture

The unveiling of the new defence architecture, however, has been delayed as the cross-linkages between the military and the

political leadership for deployment of nuclear weapons is still being worked out. For instance, while it is logical that any decision related to the use of nuclear weapons will be ultimately taken by the Prime Minister, a series of fall-back tie-ups between the political hierarchy and the military, in case the Prime Minister, for some reason, is unavailable for taking a decision, is yet to be finalised. In other words, it is yet to be decided who will hold the nuclear trigger in case the Prime Minister is unable to do so?

The Government's effort to redefine a new command and control set-up has also experienced other hiccups. The IAF is apparently reluctant to being absorbed in a new tri-service architecture. The IAF, as widely reported, first opposed any change in higher defence management even during the early stages of the nuclear debate following the Pokhran tests. It is also not too happy with the likely formation of a strategic command where all the three services will be equally represented.

In a note to the Defence Minister after the handover of the Agni-II to the Army, the IAF reiterated the demand for an apex nuclear air command under it to spearhead the nuclear forces. Sources said it was also not too keen on the strategic tri-service Andaman Nicobar Command, which may be able to exert an influence along the shipping lanes heading towards South-East Asia.

# Army gets Agni II, IAF goes ballistic

Vishal Thapar  
New Delhi, August 11

THE OPPOSITION of the Indian Air Force (IAF) to the revamp of the country's Defence management, it now unravels, is proxy war for the control of the 2,500 km Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) Agni-II, a nuclear warhead delivery vehicle, which, for the moment, the IAF seems to have lost.

The Government has decided to hand over the Agni-II missile to the Indian Army, which has been asked to raise a Strategic Rocket Command to operationally handle surface-based nuclear weapons. A recommendation to this effect was reportedly made by a committee headed by Arun Singh, special advisor to the Defence Minister.

This has deeply upset the Indian Air Force (IAF), which has for long fancied for itself the role of the sole custodian of the country's nuclear assets, and which only last year proposed that one of the air commands be converted into a strategic forces command. The IAF has now expressed its resentment by opposing the proposed Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) set-up after initially okaying it. Though its opposition has been overruled, it may still get the Strategic Forces Command under the CDS.

The bitterness has manifested itself in unseemly spats and turf wars with the Army. The IAF has staked claim to the Army's Air Defence role. Forty-nine Air Defence Artillery regiments of the Army currently do the job.

## TURF WAR

- Both ask for Agni II but Army gets it
- IAF goes into a sulk, opposes the Chief of Defence Staff set-up
- IAF is eyeing the air-defence role of the Army
- Army wants greater say in ground-support air operations, seeks attack choppers. Turned down
- Army seeks Mi-17 transport helicopters to reduce reliance on the IAF

The Army wanted Mi-24 and Mi-35 attack helicopters for the Army Aviation Corps (this was turned down), which only has Chetak and Cheetah choppers. It also wants the Mi-17 transport copters.

Opinion is divided in the strategic community over the legitimacy of the IAF's nuclear aspirations. Rear Admiral (Retd) Raja Menon says the IAF claim is justified. "Setting targets thousands of kilometres is not an Army function. It's the Air Force culture to look a thousand kilometres beyond the borders. The Army is used to looking just 40 km beyond it."

The Army insists it's not being unreasonable. "Only the Army has the wherewithal to fire surface-based ballistic missiles. It has an expertise in rocket gunnery, and ballistics missiles follow from it. Already, our 333 Mis-

sile Group is handling the short-range ballistic missile, Prithvi," says a nuclear expert.

Then, there's the concern of nuclear safety: "The entire process of handling and securing the Agnis on trains, as is mandated, is manpower intensive. About 150 soldiers will be required on every train. The Air Force has neither the manpower nor the training for close defence. Who will secure the launch pads all along the tracks? They have to depend on us even to protect air bases." Only the Army, he says, has training and manpower for this purpose.

But informed sources say the spat is silly, because the Navy may steal the nuclear thunder in the not-too-distant future. India is likely to have the third leg of the nuclear triad, the submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), "sooner than expected", hints a senior Defence Ministry official.

"The most reliable second strike capability is the sea-based nuclear capability. It alone will make our 'no first use' doctrine credible," he says. So, it's the Navy that could hold the key and not the Army of the IAF.

Defence analyst, Major-General Ashok Mehta says the IAF's claim as the sole strategic force is "dated". "That mindset has its origins in the era when India was a covert N-power, and Jaguars were the only vehicle for delivering nukes. But times have changed. Nukes are no longer just an air-deliverable resource. And the IAF doesn't seem to have reconciled to it," he argues.

## WHITHER THE CDS?

5-6-1988 Problems still persist 9-8-88

THE renewed objections from the air force to the switch-over to a Chief of Defence Staff system of higher military management would serve to confirm suspicions that when the government said it would be consulting political parties on the proposal it was only ducking a hard decision. A couple of months have elapsed without the consultation process having commenced, there are no indications of it being launched soon. Consultations across the political board are wholesome in principle, but in this case there is reason to assume that the government was playing for time. Hoping that the Services would sort out their in-house difficulties — many of which actually boil down to ego problems. Funnily enough, the institution of a CDS was aimed at fostering greater integration in terms of planning and operation both within the forces and the ministry. It has instead taken a definite toll on the ethos of the uniformed community, going into those details would be a little short of muck-raking. Like so many of the other initiatives of the present government the intentions were good, the process of implementation tardy. Surely the Group of Ministers which prepared the comprehensive report on national security ought to have been alive to the IAF's misgivings. If it felt the objections were valid it should have effected a remedy before recommending a CDS, but if it found them frivolous it should have ensured that the government endorsed the suggestion — the Group was, in fact, the Cabinet Committee on Security.

This is not a matter which lends itself to a compromise solution, major changes in higher defence management were proposed and a comprehensive revamp advocated. The present pussy-footing will do nobody any good. More so since the GOM's recommendations came up with only a watered down CDS. Even those who initially declared a CDS to be a panacea had second thoughts when they read the fine print of the actual proposal. A "first among equals" does not make for a definitive chain of command. Maybe the forces will eventually come to terms with the changes proposed, but the government could find further pinpricks on the road. Having opted for political consultations it will find it hard to ride roughshod over objections from those quarters. It should not be forgotten that the CDS system was recommended by the Arun Singh Committee on Defence Expenditure a decade ago, and the Congress-led government of the day did not accept it. Will the major opposition party of today reverse the stance it took? Perhaps there was greater sagacity to P V Narasimha Rao's celebrated pout than was openly acknowledged!

THE STATESMAN



'IT IS A DIFFICULT BATTLE IN J&K, THERE WILL BE UPS AND DOWNS'

# TADA-like law if need be: Advani

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, AUG. 9. Arguing that the militancy in Jammu and Kashmir was a special case of state-sponsored terrorism and that there were bound to be ups and downs in the battle against Pakistan's proxy war, the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, today sought the "support and cooperation" of all political parties as he unveiled (in both the Houses of Parliament) the Centre's new plan to meet the terrorists' challenge in the State.

Mr. Advani made identical statements on the "recent killings in Jammu and Kashmir" in the two Houses and later responded to the discussion and criticism of the Vajpayee Government's handling of the situation in the troubled State.

However, the Opposition parties remained unimpressed with the Minister's arguments and staged protest walkouts in both the Houses. For good measure, demands were made for Mr. Advani's resignation.

The burden of the Minister's remarks was that the recent spurt in the terrorist attacks should be seen in an overall perspective, and that the militants were picking on "soft" civilian targets because they themselves were being hit hard by the security forces.

He cited figures to support his claim that the militants indeed had been on the run and it was out of desperation that they were now targeting the civilian population.

As per Mr. Advani's analysis, the militants' renewed attacks were meant (a) to stretch and disperse the security forces to newer areas, thereby lessening the forces' presence from the Kashmir Valley; (b) to create a communal divide, with possible repercussions in and out of Jammu and Kashmir; (c) to force the minorities to flee from the State; and (d) to attract media attention. But Mr. Advani also assured the House that the Government was wise to the terrorists' designs and would not allow "the

counter-insurgency grid to be thinned out".

In his statement, Mr. Advani listed the steps of a new approach that was agreed upon on Wednesday in a high-level meeting. These include (1) the State Government's decision to declare as "disturbed areas" under the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act, 1990, the entire Jammu province; (2) the Unified Headquarters would "initiate fresh tactics and modified dynamic deployments"; (3) special intelligence-driven security forces operations (English translation: a pro-active campaign against terrorists); (4) upgrading of Village Defence Committees; (5) enhanced security and patrolling at the Jammu railway station; and, (6) action against "the overground supporters of the terrorists".

During his intervention, Mr. Advani made three interesting points. In the Lok Sabha, to a demand from the BJP benches, he said the Government was not averse to re-examining the feasibility of a new anti-terrorist law, on the lines of the lapsed TADA. In the Rajya Sabha, Mr. Advani said that though the Vajpayee Government had rejected the State Assembly's "autonomy resolution", it was open to suggestion from the Chief Minister as to what additional powers he would want for the welfare of the people. And, third, Mr. Advani rejected Gen. Pervez Musharraf's comparison of the militants' activities with the Mukti Bahini; he pointed out that the Mukti Bahini never indulged in terrorism and had the overwhelming support of the entire population in the erstwhile East

Bengal. Mr. Advani had a difficult time in both the Houses, though he managed to stand his ground against sustained attacks from the Opposition.

He was painfully reminded of his many previous statements (in and out of Government) of tough intentions, and his Ministry's inability to meet those standards. A somewhat self-assured Mr. Advani acknowledged that he was painfully aware of those previous statements.

At the end of the day, the Government can have the satisfaction of expression of support from the two Houses in the battle against terrorism, but despite Mr. Advani's efforts it failed to overcome the cumulative political embarrassment of a "failed Agra" and the unequal response to the militants' overheated violence.

## Don't talk like Musharraf: BJP

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, AUG. 9. The Opposition parties were roundly criticised by the Bharatiya Janata Party today for not applauding the response of the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, to the calling attention motion in the Lok Sabha on the recent Jammu killings. The party regretted that the Opposition "walked out" of the House instead of appreciating Mr. Advani's claim

that the Government had met with "success after success." The BJP spokesperson, Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, argued that by describing the unfortunate incidents in Jammu as indicating "failure" the Opposition was guilty of "lowering the morale of our security agencies."

Mr. Malhotra said the Congress was "making the same mistake it did at the time of the Kargil war"

when it was critical of the Government at a time when "our soldiers were fighting gallantly and laying down their lives for the country".

The party used yet another argument: criticising Mr. Advani was bad because this was exactly what the enemy number one, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, was doing. Therefore, criticising Mr. Advani meant being on the same side of Gen. Musharraf.

Mr. Malhotra said Pakistan did not like Mr. Advani because of his hard stance (was he implying that the Prime Minister's stance was soft and therefore Gen. Musharraf was generous in his praise of Mr. Atal Bihar Vajpayee?).

"Outside the House the Opposition leaders demanded Mr. Advani's resignation. They should know that Pakistan will be happy to see Mr. Advani out. Rather than criticise Mr. Advani they should criticise Gen. Musharraf," Mr. Malhotra suggested.

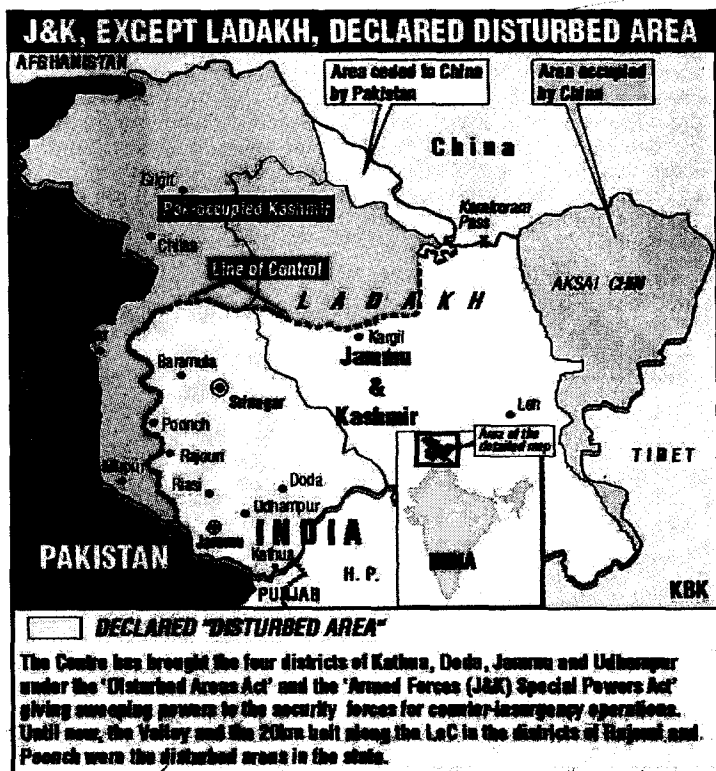
Mr. Malhotra ignored the suggestion that even the Sangh Parivar had been critical of Mr. Advani and had not applauded the Government after three big massacres took place in quick succession.

## Nothing new, says Cong.

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI AUG. 9. The package of measures announced by the Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, to fight terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir appears to have left the Congress unimpressed. The party continued to press for Mr. Advani's resignation.

Briefing newsmen today, the party spokesperson, Mr. Jaipal Reddy said: "the package lacked anything substantive and was meant to produce an illusion of a fresh initiative by the Government". "The twin proposals of invoking the Special Arms Act and extension of the Disturbed Areas Act had proved ineffective in the Kashmir Valley. How can it be expected to succeed now," he asked. Mr. Reddy also questioned the proposition that more stringent laws were needed to meet the challenge posed by the terrorists. "What is required is a focussed strategy and good governance," he said. Mr. Advani's package had "nothing new" and "it only proves that under Mr. Advani, the Home Ministry has run out of ideas, and his response highlights his intellectual incapacity to produce a new initiative".



THE HINDU

10 AUG 2001



# Govt nod mandatory for buying satellite images

ALDKE TIKKU  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 9. - India will do what it can. It cannot stop Pakistan from buying satellite images of strategically-sensitive locations in India from commercial spy satellites. But a new policy to be unveiled shortly intends to make it mandatory for anyone in India buying high-resolution satellite imagery to seek the government's permission.

This, apparently, is to ensure that India's national security interests are protected by screening out

images of sensitive areas. Not that it will make much of a difference.

Satellite images of a resolution as high as one metre taken by commercial satellites are already up for sale for US \$2,000 upwards. Images which can capture details of even "sensitive areas" so as to recognise the types of fighter aircraft, tanks or even the details of nuclear missile sites.

As when Mr John Pike of the Federation of the American Scientists got down to examining new satellite photos purchased of Pakistan's nuclear missile site, he expected to find "two warehouses

inside a fence". Instead, he discovered a whole well-developed military base.

The group, an arms-control organisation, buys photographs of chemical, biological and nuclear facilities across the world and has already had a look at the facilities in some countries. India too has made it to this list.

In May last year, the group also released satellite images depicting the Hyderabad Defence Research Complex in India, which the group said, houses primary institutions for development and testing of Agni intermediate-range ballistic mis-

siles. The images show India had expanded the storage area which, he said, is almost certainly devoted to rocket propellant and fuel assemblies for these missile systems.

It is, however, the realisation of the futility of preventing organisations in the country from accessing the high resolution imagery available elsewhere in the world which has prompted the government to allow acquisition of the satellite images.

Additionally, the government believes that India too could benefit from the market for high resolution satellite imagery and plans to get into the business.

The global market for satellite imagery is expected to be worth anywhere between US \$ 420 million and US \$ 2.5 billion by 2005, depending in large measure to whether it will be just governments who cannot afford their own spy satellites, who will make a beeline to organisations like Space Imaging; the first to have a commercial satellite capable of high resolution images into the orbit.

The US Defence department will be one of them. It plans to increase spending on commercial services including satellite imagery by US \$ 1 billion over the next five years.

Security forces to get more teeth to fight ultras

# Centre declares Jammu disturbed area

11  
5/1  
9/8

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 8. — The Centre tonight decided to declare the entire Jammu province a "disturbed area" under the Armed Forces (J&K) Special Powers Act, 1990. With this, the entire state, barring the Ladakh region, will come under the Act.

Security forces will now get more teeth to fight Pakistan sponsored mercenaries who have escalated violence in the region, especially after General Pervez Musharraf returned empty-handed from the Agra Summit.

The decisions were taken at a high-level meeting convened by Mr LK Advani. Mr Jaswant Singh, Mr Nitish Kumar, the J&K Governor, Mr GC Saxena, Dr Farooq Abdullah, and the minister of state for home, Mr ID Swami, attended.

The home secretary, Mr Kamal Pande, the defence secretary, Mr Yogendra Narain, the director general of military operations, Lt-Gen. GS Sihota, and the chiefs of paramilitary forces and Intelligence agencies were also present.

Of the six districts in Jammu province, Rajouri and Poonch are already under the Disturbed Areas Act. Dr Abdullah had demanded that the other four districts be declared "disturbed area". These are Udhampur, Doda, Jammu and Kathua. Six districts of Srinagar also fall under the Special Powers Act.

After the high-level meeting in North Block, Dr Abdullah said Mr Advani would make a formal announcement in Parliament tomorrow.

The J&K chief minister said he had placed the proposal to declare six districts of Jammu province as disturbed areas before Mr Advani. He said all the issues he had raised were discussed at the meeting. But he declined to elaborate. The state Cabinet would meet tomorrow to take steps to formally imple-

ment the decision, he said.

The Armed Forces (J&K) Special Powers Act 1990 was enacted by Parliament in September 1990, making it effective from July 1990. The state government in its notification had declared "areas falling within 20 km of the Line of Control in the districts of Rajouri and Poonch and districts of Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam, Kupwara, Pulawama and Srinagar" disturbed areas under the provisions of Section 3 of the Act.

On the issue of human rights violation if security forces were given more power, Dr Abdullah said human rights activists do not utter a word when innocents are killed in terrorist attacks. "Have any of the human rights activists come out with any statement after the incidents?" he asked, referring to the militant attack in Doda district in which 13 persons were killed and last night's attack at Jammu Railway Station in which 11 persons died. "They shout only when security forces do something", he said.

The CRPF DG, Mr Trinath Mishra, said the National Human Rights Act and the Special Powers Act do not impinge on each other.

A home ministry statement said the recent terrorist attacks on soft civilian targets in Doda and Jammu Railway Station are borne of desperation and are aimed at reducing the pressure of the security forces and gain media attention.

**BJP demand:** The BJP today demanded a pro-active policy in J&K to contain militancy. "The security forces should be given more powers so as to enable them to search out and eliminate the terrorists," the party spokesperson, Mr Vijay Kumar Malhotra, said. The pro-active policy did not mean crossing the LoC, he clarified.

## PM remark outrageous, says Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 8. — Pakistan today reacted sharply to Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's speech in the Lok Sabha. It described as "outrageous" his statement that during the Agra summit General Pervez Musharraf had offered to take back part of Kashmir ceded to China if India and Pakistan reached an agreement on the Kashmir issue.

The foreign office spokesman, in a statement here, said Mr Vajpayee's assertion yesterday that Gen. Musharraf had told him that he would take back the portion of Kashmir from China once the Kashmir issue is resolved "is a figment of his (Mr Vajpayee's) imagination." The Prime Minister had said during talks with Gen. Musharraf that he had raised the issue of one-third of Kashmir which was under illegal occupation of Pakistan, as also a portion of it which Islamabad had gifted to China.

"No such discussion took place at any stage. The Indian Prime Minister's outrageous claim is, therefore, a figment of his imagination," the spokesman said.

**Pak rushes official to UN:** Pakistan has rushed a senior foreign ministry official to the UN to convey Islamabad's concerns over the Security Council's decision to send monitors to oversee implementation of sanctions against Afghanistan. Islamabad has already announced it wouldn't allow any Indian to be part of the UN monitoring team.

■ More reports on page 8

■ Editorial: Puppet master, page 6

THE STATESMAN

5 AUG 1991

## Army chief not keen on being CDS

S.P. 218 J. D. N. M.  
SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 7. — The Army chief, General S Padmanabhan, is reportedly not very keen on being appointed Chief of Defence Staff.

The Centre has accepted the recommendations of the Group of Ministers and decided to appoint a CDS after consultations with the Opposition, but it has faced a number of problems.

Worried about the speculation on the subject, the Navy chief and chairman, chiefs of staff committee, has written to the defence minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, saying he doesn't want to be considered.

Air Chief Marshal AY Tipnis doesn't favour the appointment of a CDS and has made his views on the subject very clear.

The Army chief, the "junior-most" of the three, apparently prefers to be Army chief than CDS though he hasn't said anything in writing.

One top official said that at this point, Gen. Padmanabhan, who was appointed chief less than a year ago, would rather continue as chief of the Army, about 12 lakh strong rather than take over as CDS and have only two commands, that are still being developed, under him.

These are the joint-service Far Eastern Command at the Andamans which, apart from other issues, will be involved in surveillance, and the Strategic Command, which will be in charge of the country's nuclear arsenal. The Strategic Command isn't yet ready as the Army and the Air Force are yet to agree on certain issues.

THE STATESMAN

8 AUG 2001

## Tipnis expresses reservations on CDS

**DELHI, AUG. 4.** The Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal A.Y. Tipnis, has reportedly expressed reservation over the creation of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) in its present structure and suggested certain operational modifications, according to Defence sources.

Air Chief Marshal Tipnis has sent a communication to the Defence Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, asking that the Government not go ahead with the August 11 deadline for setting up the CDS, but wait for incorporating suggestions from the Air Force as well as the Army.

When asked about the communication, an Air Force spokesman said "communications between the Service Chiefs and the Defence Minister are confidential" adding "we will not like to comment on it".

Air Chief Marshal Tipnis is the second Service Chief to have sent a letter to the Defence Minister on the CDS issue, earlier, Adm. Sushil Kumar, the Naval Chief and Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, had written to Mr. Singh forsaking his claim to the post of CDS.

Adm. Kumar being the seniormost of the three Service Chiefs would have been the natural choice as the country's first Chief of Defence Staff.

But, sources said, with the Government yet to hold consultations with the Opposition on the issue and new reservations expressed by the Air Chief, would mean that the creation of the CDS

and its structure was likely to be further delayed.

Sources added any further delay in setting up of the CDS structure could mean that both Air Chief Marshal Tipnis and Adm. Kumar would lose their claims as both of them would be retiring from service before December 31 this year.

They also said a committee headed by Adm. Kumar had finalised the basic structure for the CDS system with the Government opting for four-star ranking for the new CDS instead of the earlier proposed five-star as is in vogue in the U.S.

The Chief of Defence Staff would be assisted by a Vice-CDS and four Deputy CDS from the three services. Alongwith this, the Government had also cleared the setting up of a joint Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) which would be headed by an Army General and one of the four proposed Deputy Chief of Defence Staff.

The Government, according to sources, had also cleared the setting up of the country's first tri-service command at the Andaman and Nicobar islands. The command will be headed by a senior naval officer of the rank of Vice-Admiral.

The post of Director-General of the Armed Forces Medical Service would also be re-designated as one of four Deputy CDS. The tri-service institutions such as the National Defence Academy and the National Defence College would also fall under the jurisdiction of the proposed CDS. — PTI

1210 11/11/84

5 AUG 1984

# Air Chief opposes <sup>H/T-1</sup> CDS proposal

SPS Pannu  
New Delhi, August 3

9/8

THE TUSSELE between the Defence Minister and the Indian Air Force (IAF) over the proposal to appoint a Chief of Defence Staff has taken a new turn with Air Chief Marshal AY Tipnis putting in a written request for scrapping the idea.

Sources disclosed that the air chief shot off a letter to Defence Minister Jaswant Singh stating that the proposal should be put on hold as IAF's views have not been incorporated in it.

The letter has come as a jolt for the Defence Minister as he has already cleared the proposal after discussing the matter with the three service chiefs, Tipnis.

The air chief has also sent a copy of the letter to the Defence Secretary, stating that the proposal should not be sent to the Finance Ministry for clearance as yet.

Tipnis has sought a fresh opportunity for making a detailed presentation of the Air Headquarters views on the issue to the Defence Minister. Tipnis apparently wrote the letter soon after the Agra summit.

The air chief has gone to the extent of accusing the implementation cell, comprising senior defence services officers, of being biased against the IAF while preparing the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) structure.

According to sources, the Defence Minister is quite upset over the matter and has asked the Army Chief, General S Padmanabhan, and the Navy Chief, Admiral Sushil Kumar, to clarify the entire issue with the Tipnis.

Sources say the IAF is opposed to the introduction of the CDS as it will result in a dilution of its control over the resources and assets of the Air Force. The IAF Vision 2020 document envisages a centralised control of all its resources and air defence assets to make the system "lean and cost-effective". The CDS system has been evolved after studying the military establishments of advanced countries such as the US, UK and Germany and aims at a synergy in operations of the three defence services.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 AUG 2001

# 118 Army for change of strategy in J&K

By Atul Aneja

119.13

**NEW DELHI, JULY 31.** With a political breakthrough on Kashmir at the Agra summit turning elusive, the security establishment is debating alternatives to bring down violence in the border State.

The armed forces are veering round to the view that the status quo along the 540-km. Line of Control (LoC) is unrewarding. Without a change in the tack, it will be difficult to seize the initiative in this highly sensitive area, they feel, and cite three key reasons to substantiate their views.

First, the Pakistani establishment is getting increasingly militarised and this, in turn, is likely to harden Islamabad's disposition towards the LoC and Kashmir. The likely appointment of Maj. Gen. Mohammad Anwar Khan as the President of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is a case in point. With the military acquiring an even higher profile in PoK, the assessment is that Pakistan-aided activity in Jammu and Kashmir may become more streamlined. The overall control over the LoC is exercised by the Rawalpindi-based 10 corps,

headed by Lt. Gen. Jamshed Gulzar Kiyani.

The Pakistan military's tight control is evident from the appointment of loyal Colonel-level officers to man the district level monitoring cells to supervise the functioning of the civil administration.

Second, militant activity in Kashmir after the Agra summit is on the rise and Pakistan's capacity to trigger violence remains intact. The spurt is visible in the form of the Amarnath blasts by the Al Umar Mujahideen and the killings in Doda on July 22 by the Lashkar-e-Taiba. The issue of the Amarnath blasts was raised by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, with the visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Ms. Christina Rocca, recently. The Lahore declaration, he said, was followed by the Kargil war and the Kandahar hijacking, while the Amarnath blasts followed the Agra summit.

Infiltrations, especially in the area from the Keren to the Gurez sectors along the LoC during the ceasefire phase, are likely to encourage high-voltage militancy in the State.

Third, the phase of "maximum restraint" along the LoC has already been dented. The

security establishment feels firing by Pakistan will be restrained in the area between Jammu and Rajouri because of Indian retaliatory fire. The deployment of Israeli-built Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), which can keep track of Pakistani gun positions, has enhanced the firepower of the Indian artillery.

Given the Indian capabilities in the Jammu zone, Pakistan is likely to land artillery shells in the high mountains of Ladakh till the Zojila Pass. The UAVs, highly effective at lower heights, are ineffective at high altitudes. Intelligence inputs suggest that Pakistan will strike known targets, but will keep the volume of fire relatively low to avoid undue escalation of tension. Keen on seizing the initiative, the armed forces feel the prevailing "cold LoC" is not in their favour. The Army's standpoint, which includes the need for better monitoring of the 10-km. band on either sides of the LoC, has already been conveyed by the Chief of the Army Staff, Gen. S. Padmanabhan, to the Defence Minister. The Government, as of now, is, however, unlikely to endorse any steps which may hamper the next round of India-Pakistan talks.

21 AUG 2001

# Hizb men held for Delhi blasts

New Delhi, July 31

DELHI POLICE today arrested four Hizbul Mujahideen militants for the blasts in high security zones in the capital, including one near the Prime Minister's office. The arrests come two weeks before Independence Day amid reports that Kashmir militants are gearing to strike in Delhi during the celebrations.

The four militants were involved in planting explosive devices at the North Block, causing twin blasts near the South Block, which also houses the Prime Minister's office and Army headquarters, and launching a grenade attack on the BSF headquarters, police said.

Gulzar Ahmad Wani alias Abu Hamid, Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah alias Nazir (both residents of Kashmir), Mushtaq Ahmad alias Maulana and Feroze Rafi (both residents of Kanpur) were picked up late last night from Ajmeri Gate near New Delhi railway station. Police seized from them some explosive powder, grenade-launchers, grenade shells, detonators, timer devices and samples of RDX.

Police said the four were assigned by the ISI to carry out 'small' blasts in the national capital to maintain pressure over the security agencies and create panic among the public.

In April last, suspected militants had planted explosive devices in the parking lot of high security North Block. This was followed by detonation of two crude bombs in the vicinity of the Prime Minister's office and in the cycle shed of army headquarters canteen in May.

Militants launched a grenade attack at the BSF headquarters in south Delhi, which partially burnt the tent erected for security personnel.

PTI



A worker folds Tricolours at a Government-owned Khadi Gramodyog warehouse in Bangalore on Tuesday. The demand for flags is high ahead of the Independence Day, when police fear more militant strikes in Delhi.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

1 AUG 2001

# PAC report casts slur on defence ministry

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, July 24. — A Public Accounts Committee report today accused the defence ministry of shielding guilty officials involved in acquiring electronic warfare equipment for the Navy.

The report, placed before Parliament today, said that though the ministry decided in 1994 to conduct a special internal audit to fix responsibility, the formal order was not ready till 1996. The ministry had "pleaded non-availability of records" when asked to share the findings of the Economic Investigation Bureau.

## 'WARFARE EQUIPMENT PURCHASE QUESTIONABLE'

The PAC has also taken the Navy to task for letting the vendor off. Though the Navy had recommended that the vendor not be paid in 1990, it changed its stand in September 1991. The Navy and the ministry did not take any action against the firm.

The deal for the EW systems were made in a questionable manner, the report said, adding that the equipment purchase plans were advanced to 1980. The frigate it was supposed to be on was to have been commissioned between

the exchequer dearly in terms of cost and time overruns besides impinging on national security."

The report said "loss of interest on advance payments made to the firm amounted to Rs 10 crore... the imported systems were of seventies vintage for which a total payment of Rs 25.92 crore had been made... The Navy agreed to waive penalties without the consent of the ministry and spares worth Rs 9.54 lakh had not been returned by the firm."

Efforts to put the system together in

■ See PAC: page 8

THE STATESMAN



51.8 PAC: 25/3  
(Continued from page 1)

India have not been very successful. The Navy did not accept the system even after Rs 4.39 crore was spent on development and Rs. 17.93 crore on procurement.

To make matters worse, the ministry bought a second system and then, three more. The foreign firm did not deliver the system on time and took more time to fit the systems on the warships. The report takes the ministry to task for conducting factory acceptance tests for the systems in an incorrect environment.

The systems failed when they were put on the frigates and even when the ministry informed the vendor, it took five years to remove the deficiencies, reducing the life-span of the systems.

Finally, the ministry did not draw up the contract properly, the report said. As a result, the ministry was forced to make heavy additional payments "owing to the disadvantageous cost escalation clause."

## POLICEMEN AMONG VICTIMS OF MILITANT ATTACK

# 12 killed in Amarnath

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JULY 21. Twelve persons, including three women pilgrims and two police officials, were killed and 15 injured when a militant hurled two grenades at a camp and later fired indiscriminately near the holy cave late on Friday night.

The authorities have suspended the 'yatra' and a major operation to flush out the militants has been launched.

A police spokesman said today that the incident took place around 1.25 a.m. near Sheshnag, one of the highest stops en route to the Amarnath cave where the ice 'Shivalingam', personification of Lord Shiva, is worshipped.

The militant lobbed a grenade towards the camp which exploded but did not cause any damage. As the policemen rushed to the spot from the makeshift police post, the militant tossed another grenade which landed amid the police officials killing a Deputy Superintendent of Police, Mr. Parveen Kumar, and Sub-Inspector, Mr. Sahki Akbar, on the spot.

As chaos prevailed in the area due to darkness, the militant, police said, rushed towards a camp of sadhus and took shelter there. Police and paramilitary forces followed him which led to an exchange of fire. The crossfire continued for a long time and a number of pilgrims and locals



Policemen with wreaths awaiting the bodies of their colleagues and pilgrims killed in Amarnath on Saturday. —

Photo: Nissar Ahmad

who work as porters were caught in it. The exchange left a number of them in a pool of blood with bullets coming from every direction. By that time, the militant had shot himself. Before the injured could be removed to hospital, many of them had died. Sources said that five pilgrims,

three of them women, had died of their injuries by afternoon. Three civilians who were there as vendors were also killed.

The 15 injured persons, including nine pilgrims and five policemen, have been shifted to the Army hospital where the condition of many of them is said to be

critical. The spokesman said the militant was affiliated to the Lashkar-e-Taiba and an AK-rifle and four magazines were recovered. However, the Al-Umar Mujahideen chief, Mr. Mushtaq Zargar, rang up newspaper offices here and owned the responsibility for the attack. The Jammu and Kashmir Governor, Mr. G.C. Saxena, who is chairman of Amarnath Shrine Board, and the Minister for Power, Mr. Surjit Singh Salathia, flew to the site of massacre and talked to the stunned pilgrims.

### Pahalgam deserted

Pahalgam town wore a deserted look after the killings as many pilgrims rushed back to their homes in panic. The authorities banned the movement from Pahalgam onwards and even mediapersons were not allowed beyond the town. Hundreds of pilgrims are stranded en route.

### Shabir condemns attack

PTI reports:

The president of the Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP), Mr. Shabir Ahmad Shah, condemned the attack and said "this is the handiwork of those who want to sabotage the ongoing peace process in the State". "We condemn in the strongest terms those responsible for the act as they are killers of humanity."

Central Minister being sent: Page 8

# IAF, Army disagree over structure

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

## STRATEGIC COMMAND

NEW DELHI, July 20. - The Army and the Air Force disagree on the structure of the Strategic Command, to be responsible for India's nuclear weapons and related issues.

The structure was expected to be ready by the end of July, but the Army isn't agreeing with the IAF on equal representations in terms of senior staff.

"The IAF wants a 1:1 structure or an air marshal for every lieutenant-general, for example, but the Army isn't agreeing as it is a larger organisation and promotion opportunities, besides control, are involved. Though it doesn't want representation in the command depending on size, it wants more officers than the IAF," an official said.

The structure and representative ratio is being decided and the Army has reportedly

indicated that it would be flexible on the issue and a compromise could be worked out.

The Strategic Command will be under the proposed Chief of Defence Staff and will be initially headed by an air-marshal (equivalent to a lieutenant-general). The commander-in-chief's post will be rotated among the three Services. Army, Navy and the IAF officers will be a part of the command. Currently, the chairman, Chief's of Staff Committee is dealing with the issue. In case there is no "internal" reconciliation, the decision on the structure and the representation will be taken by the Centre.

The other issue involved is about the Command's "assets." Officials pointed out that India's nuclear arsenal is a deterrent, while the missiles and aircrafts can have

dual-purposes. For instance, the Agni and Prithvi missiles with the forces can have both conventional and nuclear warheads. Also, the Air Force's planes like the Mirage-2000 can be used to drop conventional bombs and nuclear bombs. Just who will hold these "assets" have to be sorted out.

"For instance, if a squadron of Mirage-2000s or a batch of Prithvis are kept aside only for nuclear weapons, they would come directly under the CDS and maybe, the Army or the Air Force won't be able to use them. Yet, the Strategic Command should have the delivery systems at hand when necessary. So, some flexibility will be necessary," a senior official said.

The Strategic Command would comprise the nuclear weapons, the delivery systems (planes, missiles and perhaps, submarines in the future) and a command and control system.

## RESTRICTING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

THE SUPREME COURT, in its wisdom, has dismissed the petition challenging the Union Home Ministry memorandum making it mandatory for organisers of international conferences and seminars to seek prior clearance if such events cover certain subjects or are attended by members from specified neighbouring countries. While the Court's general observation that certain restrictions on free expression are justified in the interests of the country's sovereignty cannot be faulted, the Home Ministry's order deserves to be questioned on many grounds. To begin with, it is baffling why a broad procedural hurdle of the kind laid down in the memorandum is necessary in the first place. Clearances are mandatory under this order for conferences on subjects which have been defined in an extensive and imprecise manner. Some of these subjects, such as human rights, seem to have no direct bearing on questions of national security and the country's sovereignty — the very issues which have been invoked to defend this and other such procedural rules. And finally, the memorandum contains a discriminatory and offensive provision by making it mandatory for conference organisers to secure prior clearance in case any of the events has participants from five select neighbours — Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, China and Sri Lanka. To identify foreign scholars and academics wholly on the basis of their country seems reflective of paranoia and not of reason.

The Union Home Ministry's defence rests on the ground that the memorandum, which was issued in September last year, is really only in the nature of a revision. The original set of guidelines was issued many years earlier. Moreover, the Ministry has claimed that the current provisions are a big improvement over the past; for instance, under the revised rules the number

of conference subjects for which clearance is required has been reduced a hundred-fold, from 500 to 5. But neither the existence of earlier guidelines nor the fact that they are less restrictive would be an acceptable justification for the revised order. Such justifications only beg the question about whether it is necessary to have such rules to vet conferences and seminars at all. Moreover, the revised rules are still unacceptably broad and extensive in their restrictive reach. For instance, prior approval of the Home Ministry is required if the subject matter of an international conference or workshop is "political, semi-political, communal or religious in nature or is related to human rights". This is a remarkably ambiguous formulation and it does not take much to realise that this could be reasonably interpreted to include virtually every social science subject as well as law.

17/7 RD-10  
It is true, as the Supreme Court has pointed out, that the Home Ministry's memorandum is only in the nature of a procedural guideline. But, as past experience has demonstrated, such rules — particularly when they are broad and ill-defined — are capable of misuse in the hands of an insensitive Government. Therefore, it is not surprising at all that the Home Ministry's new order is seen as a threat to free expression as well as a potential danger to the autonomy of Indian universities, NGOs and think-tanks which organise international conferences and symposia. Procedural rules of this nature also seem very much out of place in an age where technology has made the free flow of information across borders not only possible but also unstoppable. The Supreme Court's decision to dismiss the petition challenging the order must not be treated by the Government as an approval to implement the order in a discriminatory or excessive manner.

# DGMOs' MEET AFTER AGRA

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, July 10: The proposed talks between Pakistan and India at the director-general of military operations-level will be held after the forthcoming summit between Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

India was informed by Pakistan on Tuesday that military-to-military contact between the two countries at the level of DGMOs to discuss the situation along the Line of Control and Siachen glacier could be held after the Agra summit.

Pakistan DGMO Major General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani spoke to his Indian counterpart Lt. Gen. G.S. Sihota to convey that the right time for military-to-military level contact could only be after the summit meeting. It is learnt that he suggested that the talks be held after the summit as this will give the two sides more time to prepare for the talks.

Maj. Gen. Kayani's call was in response to one made by Lt. Gen. Sihota on Monday urging for an early meeting, a defence ministry spokesman said here.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson of the external affairs ministry in response to a query related to the DGMO level talks said that the response from the Pakistani side has been positive. She said that the dates for the talks will be worked out later.

Foreign secretary Chokila Iyer had spoken to Pakistan high commissioner Ashraf Jehangir Qazi on the same matter on Monday. The two DGMOs are expected to discuss the issues related to stabilising peace and tranquillity along the LoC and AGPL besides an immediate freeze on the ground positions from both sides.



THE GENERAL'S MOTHER: Zarreen Musharraf, the 80-year-old mother of Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, walks in for an interview with Reuters with an Army official in Rawalpindi on Monday. (Reuters)

## 'My son really wants peace'

BY TAHIR IKRAM

Rawalpindi, July 10: Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf who is due to meet Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in Agra next weekend to discuss the Kashmir issue, will pursue his goal of peace with determination, his mother has said.

"Pervez has determination. Whatever he wants to do, he must do it," 80-year-old Zarreen Musharraf said in a television interview on Monday.

"He wants to have peace. He

wants to help Kashmiri people. They are our brothers... They are fighting for freedom," said Mrs Musharraf, who formerly worked for the International Labour Organisation.

Mrs Musharraf, who has two other sons, said Gen. Musharraf never had political aspirations although he was always keen on joining the military. His leadership qualities were visible even when he was a boy, she said.

"He was never in politics and never dreamt of being in politics. Politics was thrust on him," she

added. Gen. Musharraf was born in New Delhi on August 11, 1943 and lived there until the family moved to Karachi on August 13, 1947, a day before the bloody partition of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan. Mrs Musharraf described the three-day journey to Karachi as "nightmarish" as their train would pull up at any sign of trouble and there was constant fear of attacks. Mrs Musharraf also described Gen. Musharraf as an average student with many friends. (Reuters)

## Pervez has a close shave in road mishap

BY MOHAMED ASGHAR  
Dawn

Islamabad, July 10: Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf escaped narrowly in a road accident while his gunman and the driver of his escorting car sustained injuries when a car smashed into their vehicle near Islamabad Airport on Monday, police sources said.

The accident occurred when a private car driven by one Abdul Hafeez appeared from the left side and smashed into a car escorting the VVIP convoy near the entrance gate of the Islamabad International Airport.

As a result, the driver of the escorting car, Mohammad Tariq, and the chief executive's gunman Sadiq sustained injuries and their car was damaged.

The accident created panic among the security officials who immediately cleared the road and impounded the private car and arrested the driver.

## Musharraf to bring a small team

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, July 10: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf will lead a small 19-member delegation on his visit to India beginning from July 14.

The Pakistani government on Tuesday informed the ministry

THE ASIAN AGE

11 JUL 2001

# Dangerous liaisons: Chhatre Subba and ISI

**Kinsuk Basu**  
Kolkata, May 29

ARMY AND Central Intelligence agencies have stumbled upon an ISI blueprint to convert North Bengal into a trouble spot so hot that the Indian Army would have to maintain round-the-year heavy deployment in the region. This, it is believed, is part of a broader plan to create unrest in insurgency-prone North-east.

One of the conduits in this grand plan, it has been revealed, is Chhatre Subba, the Gorkha Liberation Organisation (GLO) chief now in police custody.

Investigations suggest that former first secretary in Pakistan's Kathmandu mission Mohammad Arshad Cheema

had met Chhatre Subba to discuss the destabilisation plan threadbare. This meeting, sleuths said, took place during Subba's stay at Elam in East Nepal. He was then under MCC protection.

Sleuths got to know of the Pakistani Intelligence agency's grand design while probing Cheema, who played a key role in the December 1999 IC-814 hijacking.

Cheema was arrested from his Upper Baneshwar home on April 13. He is now in Islamabad. The Kathmandu police, that carried out the operation, also recovered 16 kg of RDX from his residence.

The revelation bolsters the State Government's claim that

secessionists in North Bengal were receiving ISI backing. It also raises questions about claims of some GNLFF leaders that Subba was a pawn in the hands of the Left Front Government to make the going difficult for Ghisingh.

Cheema — who was relieved from his post on April 9, 11 days before his arrest — played an important role in recruiting ex-servicemen with the lure of plum UN postings. Once these former Army men were trapped, they were packed off to Saudi Arabia to liaise with ISI agents there. They were made to divulge secret information about the corps they served. The recent arrests of two such former Army men confirms this

Siliguri corridor. For every such transaction, the agents received 40 per cent of the currency denomination.

One of two Pakistani officials who met the IC-814 hijackers at Tribhuvan Airport shortly before the aircraft took off for Delhi on December 24, 1999, Cheema is believed to be a trusted aide of Lt Col Mahmood Ahmed, the man who reportedly runs the show for the ISI in Islamabad. He had even asked Chhatre to blow up a number of bridges, which he refused to do.

Investigations revealed that the Gorkha Liberation Organisation leader was picked to create disturbances along the Siliguri corridor. The ripple effect of this instability was to spread across

the whole of North-east. The gameplan was to convert the entire sweep of territory from Arunachal to North Bengal into a combat zone.

This would open up yet another front for the already-stretched armed forces, battling insurgents in Jammu and Kashmir. This, agencies say, was the main objective of the Pakistanis.

Not just that, Cheema also kept the supply line of RDX alive. Apart from the 16 kg of RDX recovered from his home, sleuths also cite the arrest of Yakeer Singh, a Sikh militant on October 1998 with 20 kg of the explosive material from Kathmandu to justify their case. Singh had confessed that Cheema had handed him the packet.

Besides explosives, what has rattled the Army Intelligence is Cheema's interaction with ex-army men and the way he trapped them. The findings were reiterated following the recent arrests of a Nepali ex-army man from Lucknow and Hari Gurung from Siliguri. Investigations suggest that the Pak national had a well-oiled mechanism whereby his members picked up such former army personnel, mostly Nepali, from the pubs with the lure of a job in the UN. Once people walked into the trap, they were packed off to Saudi Arabia to liaise with ISI counterparts there on secret information about Indian Army Sources in the Army said Gurung was trapped for this purpose.



**Chhatre Subba (left) and Cheema**

finding. His men had soft targets in Nepali ex-servicemen in Kathmandu.

Cheema was also the brain behind the well-oiled racket in counterfeit currency notes operating in North Bengal. This cartel pushed Rs 500 notes in large numbers into India using the

# Astra missile ready for test: DRDO

SRIDHAR C KRISHNAPRASAD  
BANGALORE, JUNE 29

**A**FTER the recent successful test of the Indo-Russian ship/submarine based supersonic cruise missile PJ-10, India is now making preparations to test the indigenously developed 'Astra' air-to-air Beyond Visual Range (BVR) missile in a configuration meant for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA).

Top Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) officials stated that a recent review meeting on the Astra project had concluded that development was completed, and the missile, 'manufactured' to the LCA, was ready

to be tested. The modalities and possible test sites were being explored, and Russian help may be sought, the sources indicated.

Astra is being developed by two DRDO laboratories, the Hyderabad based Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), and Research Centre Imarat (RCI), which are DRDO's centres for guided missile technology. A key significance of the Astra test is that it is India's first major foray into air armaments. Most air armaments in the arsenal of the Indian Air Force (IAF) are from Russian and European sources.

The labs have used their experience with the Integrated Guided Missile Development

Programme (IGMDP — covering Agni, Prithvi, Trishul, Akash and Nag) and their access to available air-to-air missile technology to develop the Astra. The Astra missile is understood to be a BVR employing both electro-magnetic and infra-red active seekers, with a range of about 100 kilometres, putting it in the higher-end of BVR missiles. The Russian RVV-AE BVR missile, which is the key weapon on the Sukhoi-30 as well as the MiG-21, has a range of about 50-70 kilometres. Exact range and other details are of course closely guarded secrets. "We intend the Astra to be better than the RVV-AE," a DRDO official states. The LCA has still a long way to go before

becoming an operational aircraft, weapons technology for the craft is being developed concurrently, and is at an advanced stage. Weapons capability is of course closely linked to that of the radar. The Multi-Mode Radar (MMR) on the LCA is still under development, it is the key technology which will be doing the job of sifting targets from clutter and presenting it to the pilot for engagement. The Mig-21 Bis fleet is being upgraded with the Russian Phazotron Kopyo MMR, enabling the tracking of eight targets simultaneously, and engagement of two.

Air to Air missiles fly faster than the fastest supersonic aircraft.

NUHAN EXP 127

# India denies opening base to USA

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, June 27. - India today denied media reports that it had given access to military bases in the country to US armymen.

Defence and external affairs ministry officials said the reports were incorrect and no such decisions had been taken by India.

A defence ministry spokesman said defence training establishments were open to all friendly countries. An officer in the US army had participated in a course at the counter-insurgency and jungle warfare school in Vairangte in Mizoram last year. This was part of the normal training and exchange programmes between the two countries. The spokesman said Lt-Gen TS Shergill had not spoken of "access" and said that equating training with access to military bases was "highly speculative and incorrect."

An MEA spokesperson, however, said though one US army official had attended a one-month's training at the counter-insurgency and jungle warfare school last November, "no US army personnel is receiving training there," she said.

She further said that when a foreign country makes a request for participating in the training, "we examine it".

Media reports here today quoted Lt-Gen Shergill, GOC, 3 Corps, Agartala, as saying that the training to US army personnel would be part of an "exchange programme".

The reports also said that India had cleared the way for US army personnel to receive training in counter-insurgency and jungle warfare at Vairangte.

The school has been a highly-protected institute and its opening up to Americans has sparked strong reactions among defence personnel, the reports said.

DELHI-BEIJING EXPERTS' GROUP MEET TODAY

NEW DELHI, June 27. - The ninth meeting of the India-China experts' group of diplomatic and military officials will be held here tomorrow. So far, the meeting has been limited to one day, but some parts of the talk can spill over to Friday.

An Indian delegation visited Beijing last November when the two sides exchanged maps on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), as perceived by them respectively, in the middle sector.

It was the first time that India and China swapped maps since the Indo-Sino war in 1962, although the middle sector is the most uncontroversial part of the border dispute, covering 500-600 km of area in Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal. The eighth meeting in Beijing had followed a letter from the external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, to his Chinese counterpart, proposing that the process of clarification of the LAC be expedited. During the visit of senior Chinese leader Mr Li Peng to India, both sides agreed to expedite the process through the experts' group.

Experts from the Chinese foreign office and defence ministry are expected to confer with their Indian counterparts on a range of related issues at tomorrow's meeting.

The group had been established after the two countries signed an agreement on maintenance of peace along the LAC during the visit of then Prime Minister, Mr PV Narasimha Rao, to China in September 1993. - SNS



# Militants set up new camps in Pakistan, PoK

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

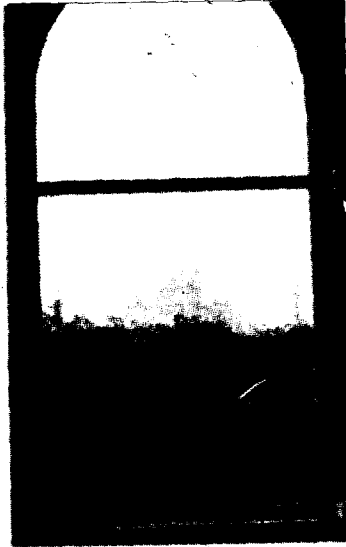
NEW DELHI, June 26. — India and Pakistan may be preparing for the Vajpayee-Musharraf summit but militants are setting up new camps in Pakistan and PoK.

Preliminary Intelligence reports submitted to the government say the old camps are active too.

Reports by agencies spoke of new camps in PoK's capital, Muzaffarabad, Sialkot and Kotli and have suggested stronger security measures in the border states of Gujarat, Punjab and Rajasthan. The militants' camps, old or new, are quite active and getting supplies, money and ammunition. Army officers said the old camps in Mirpur, Aliabagh, Muzaffarabad and Sialkot, were still very active and were recruiting new militants.

Apart from the usual active militant groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and the ISI-backed Jaish-e-Mohammed, several other organisations are also being talked about. They are Al Quda, which has the blessings of Osama bin Laden, and the Al-Khidmat, which has a new commander, Abu Hashim, an Egyptian.

The Army too is aware of the proxy war continuing. A senior Army officer said the number of "kills" by units operating in J&K had actually gone up in



ROOM WITH A VIEW: This could be the view Pervez Musharraf will get from his Agra hotel. — PTI

recent times — that's perhaps natural after a long period of a ceasefire.

The Army chief, General S Padmanabhan, was consulted about the situation. This not only suggests renewed activity by the militants after the ceasefire (though the actions didn't ever stop) but also the presence of a large number of ultras in the valley and other areas.

The Army has said that not only are the militants active but also infiltrating the Line of Control every day.

After the Kargil intrusion

that violated the Lahore declaration, the Centre has decided not to change its policy of strongly fighting the low-intensity conflict in J&K and keeping a watch on ISI activity.

A number of senior officials, including the Delhi police chief, Mr Ajay Raj Sharma, and the Intelligence Bureau chief, have been briefed about not "diluting" the fight against militancy, though General Pervez Musharraf's visit is being considered the best opportunity, after Lahore, to make peace.

**Pak high commissioner:** The Pakistani high commissioner left for Islamabad last night after meeting the foreign ministry's chief protocol officer, Mr Manbir Singh.

Mr Ashraf Jehangir Qazi reportedly discussed the details of General Musharraf's visit to India. After Mr Qazi's visit, an advance team from Islamabad will come to India early next month to review the arrangements in Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and Ajmer. The team will comprise officials from security, protocol and publicity divisions. The foreign ministry is busy working out General Musharraf's itinerary.

Though Kashmir will be the focus of the talks, nothing is clear on the agenda front. Pakistani officials said there was an "understanding" that the two leaders would discuss Kashmir.

■ See CAMPS: page 8

## CAMPS:

(Continued from page 1)

But India officials said that since the talks couldn't start with the disputed issue other outstanding matters would be discussed to create a climate of goodwill and confidence to hold talks on the main issue.

Officials said Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf are expected to hold four rounds of talks in Delhi and Agra. The tentative schedule so far includes an extensive luncheon meeting between the two leaders at Hyderabad House on 14 July, to be followed by delegation-level talks. The prime minister will attend a banquet to be hosted by the President, Mr KR Narayanan, in honour of Gen. Musharraf.

The next meeting between the two will take place in Agra on the morning of 15 July. There may be another meeting on 15 July before the two attend a dinner to be hosted by the UP Governor, Mr Vishnukant Shastri.

The fourth and last meeting may take place on 16 July before Gen. Musharraf leaves for Jaipur en route to Ajmer, where he'll offer prayers at the dargah of Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti.

# Fainted officer dares Malik to open Kargil debate

HT-9

ns/b

HT Correspondent  
Chandigarh, June 24

BRIGADIER SURINDER Singh, who was removed from military service earlier this month, today challenged the former Army Chief, Gen V P Malik, to an open debate on TV or at any other platform on who was responsible for the Kargil conflict.

At a press conference at the house of his lawyer, the first after his unceremonious removal from service, Brig Singh said Gen Malik could bring the then Army Commander, Lt General H M Khanna and the Corps Commander, Lt Gen Krishen Pal to help him out during the debate. "Let the nation know who really goofed up in Kargil," he added.

Brig Surinder Singh was removed from command of the Kargil Brigade at the height of the Kargil war in June 1999, and since then has been in the centre of one controversy or the other.

"For me the battle starts now. I will be move an appropriate High Court in the first week of July to seek restoration of my military honour and prestige, which these self-serving Generals tried to damage," Brig Singh said.

He said the biggest casualty of Kargil was the faith between senior and junior officers. "After my episode, nobody will take a decision without a written permission from their seniors. In this whole episode, instead of putting the blame on me, Gen Malik should have taken the responsibility on himself for the Kargil failure."

Lashing out at the K Subrahmanyam Committee that conducted a probe into the enemy intrusion in Kargil, Brig Singh said: "The way the Committee dealt with my case clearly indicates that they had already a brief to make me the scapegoat. I provided documentary evidences for everything during the fourth hearing of the Panel. But the Committee chose not to include these documentary evidences because they already knew what they had to do."

"The intrusion took place in more than two-dozen areas, spread over nearly 250 km, why was action taken only against me? Who is to be blamed for the Pak intrusions in other cases including the adjoining Brigade sectors?" he asked.

He said at least half a dozen senior officers including the then GOC, 3 Div, Major Gen V S Budhwar had been given adverse bat-

tle reports for their handling of the war in Kargil. "Why haven't they been axed like Brigadier Surinder Singh?"

Talking about the Intelligence failure, Brig Singh said the Intelligence didn't do its job properly. "When Pakistan decided to purchase 50,000 snow boots and other materials from the West, what was our military attachment doing there? They never informed the Government about it."

Brig Singh reiterated that he did not give any secret document to anybody and said: "The documents, which the Army is talking is about those briefings of senior commanders including the then COAS, warning of impending threat, which were of no operational significance when the enemy had already achieved surprise." These documents only talked about warnings at his level, which were ignored, Singh added.

He said that since the Army conducted a Court of Inquiry against him, it should have ordered a court martial. However, the Army did not do that as the officials knew that evidence could have proved them wrong. He said he was disappointed that even the present Army Chief, Gen Padmanabhan, had not given him justice.

"In my Annual Confidential Report (ACR) in July 1999, Gen Budhwar wrote: "On discovery of the armed intrusion by Pakistan, he acted swiftly, blunted the designs of the enemy by containing the intrusion and set the pace of further operations." Even then, instead of praising my work, I have been punished," he said.

Brig Singh said: "When Lahore Bus yatra took place, everybody in the Government went overboard and stopped thinking that such an intrusion could take place.

"I got indication in February itself that the enemy was up to creating a big problem for us. I informed the senior officials about it, but no means was provided to me." His written demand for additional troops to Infantry 3 division was overruled, he said.

"Even now I am speaking with a lot of restraint. There are hundreds of issues that can be highlighted to prove me right. But I don't want to say anything that risks national security. I don't want to demoralise my comrades in arms, the Brigadier said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Bihar-Centre crossfire on ISI

FROM OUR SPECIAL  
CORRESPONDENT

Patna, June 23: A Centre-state feud has erupted with the Rabri Devi government hitting back at the Union home ministry, which has pulled up the Bihar police for their laxity in keeping an eye on ISI-sponsored operations in the districts bordering Nepal.

The face-off comes in the wake of the arrest of international terrorist Osama bin Laden's henchmen, who were conspiring to blow up the US embassies in New Delhi and Dhaka in August. Of the four arrested, two were from Bihar.

Even as Intelligence Bureau was tracking down the conspirators, the Union home ministry is learnt to have sent an alert note to Bihar, saying that the police were ignoring the issue of ISI-sponsored operations in the districts bordering Nepal.

Expressing surprise over the low priority accorded by the police to the problem of fundamentalists infiltrating into the state and using it as a safe haven, the Centre stressed the need for stricter surveillance of the border and gangsters, their operations and links with anti-nationals.

The Rabri Devi regime has shot back, saying that the warning remained a mere rhetoric as the Centre failed to sanction projects for strengthening surveillance along the border. L.K. Advani's department allegedly went back on its promise to sanction police stations at 10-km intervals on the border.

Besides, the state government

had drafted a project to set up 43 outposts along the border and install special branch units in them. The Centre agreed to the proposal, but is yet to give its stamp of formal approval.

State home ministry sources said Patna had drawn up the schemes after Delhi sought proposals for strengthening border surveillance at a meeting between Rabri Devi and Advani in Delhi in August last year.

The latest row on Bihar being used by Islamic fundamentalists as a safe haven was sparked as two of bin Laden's alleged associates were arrested from Bihar. Arshad, son of Mohammad Shah, was arrested from Patna's Phulwarisharif after a midnight swoop on his den.

Originally a resident of Nalanda, Arshad used to drive an autorickshaw as a camouflage for his disruptive activities.

Shamim Sarwar, a post graduate in Persian from Patna University, was the other person who hailed from Bihar. He was part of the plot to blow up the US embassy in Delhi, intelligence officials said. Confirming the arrests from the state, Bihar I-G (Intelligence) Ashis Ranjan Sinha said they had been taken to Delhi for interrogation.

The intelligence sources said Hawash, the arrested key accused in the conspiracy, had squealed on Arshad, who was hiding in Bihar. They said they were also looking for a Yemeni national, A.L. Safani, who was allegedly involved in the bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

# Police team nabs Bin Laden's contact from Bihar town

File 7  
28/6

By Gyan Prakash  
The Times of India News Service

PATNA: A joint police team of Intelligence Bureau (IB) and special cell of the Delhi police picked up international terrorist Osama bin Laden's Patna connection, Mohammad Arshad alias Ladoo Mian, from his residence in Naya Tola under Phulwarisharif police station on Thursday morning.

Soon after his arrest, Arshad was taken to Delhi for interrogation. Disclosures by Laden's confidants, including Sudanese national Hawash and his Bihar associate Pirkaba, that Arshad, too, was part of their "grandiose plan" to blow up U.S. embassy led to the arrest of Arshad, sources said.

According to them, Arshad, son of one Mohammad Sah, in order to camouflage his "real operations", used to drive autorickshaw carrying passengers from Phulwari to Patna



Bin Laden

and vice versa. The arrest of Arshad was kept a closely guarded secret so much so that the local police was not even informed why their "catch" (Arshad) was being taken to Delhi.

The Chanakyapuri police of Delhi has instituted a case against Hawash, his Indian accomplices, who include Shamim Sarwar, and Pirkaba for planning to orchestrate attacks on the U.S. embassies in Delhi and Dhaka sometime in August. Sources further said that as soon as the "sinister design" of Laden was unravelled by the Delhi police following the arrest of Hawash and Shamim Sarwar, the police were on the look out for Arshad following their disclosure that he, too, was part of the "greater conspiracy". The police hope that interrogation of Arshad would provide them more clues and leads on their plan to blow up the embassies.

The special cell of the Delhi police are also on the look out for a Yemenese national Al Safani. Hawash had reportedly confessed to the police that he had come in

contact with Safani sometime in February this year and also mentioned that Safani was instrumental in triggering the blast in U.S. embassy in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998, which had left over 200 people dead. Apart from this, Safani was also reportedly involved in blowing up of a U.S. Navy ship while it was anchored along the shore of Aden in Yemen.

The arrests of Pirkaba and Arshad have confirmed that Laden has established his contacts in Bihar as well. Strategically, Bihar suits Laden for carrying out his operations because of the fact that it borders Nepal and is close to Bangladesh. Sources further said that Laden has established a network of 200 people in India and Bangladesh and over two dozen persons are considered to constitute the core group of dedicated people and sympathisers in the two countries.

Whether Arshad was part of the core group would be established once the Delhi police and IB interrogate him jointly in Delhi, sources added.

Considering the nuclear threat, the proxy war in Kashmir, air space violations and maritime security challenges, the post of Chief of Defence Staff has become an absolute necessity

# INDIA NEEDS THE CDS

5.8 1996  
9.03.96

**C**ONSEQUENT to the submission of the Kargil Review Committee report, a task force headed by Mr Arun Singh was constituted by the government to analyse the functioning of the higher defence organisation in India. Among the major recommendation was the creation of the post of the chief of defence staff with a joint planning staff HQ. The group of ministers headed by the home minister accepted this recommendation but its approval by the Cabinet committee on security (CCS) was deferred pending further consultations.

In India's prevailing security environment with a nuclear overhang, marked by regional instability, an ongoing Pakistan-supported "proxy war" in Kashmir and elsewhere, a vitiated internal security situation, repeated air space violations and burgeoning maritime security challenges, the early appointment of a CDS is an inescapable necessity. More than ever before, and especially in the nuclear era, it is now necessary for the national security decision makers to be given "single point military advice" that takes into account the inter-dependence of each of the armed forces.

Success in modern war hinges on the formulation of a joint military strategy based on the military aim and its joint and integrated execution. At present, under the system bequeathed to India by Lord Ismay in the early-1950s, the three Services draw up their own operational plans based on the Defence Minister's Operational Directive, with some coordination at the operational and tactical levels. In the present era of strategic uncertainty and rapidly changing threats, there is now an unavoidable necessity of establishing a joint planning staff HQ for the planning and conduct of joint operations under a CDS so that integrated operations can be planned "top down".

Many analysts have sought to question this need. With India's "no first use" nuclear strategy, the CCS would be in a real quandary if at a cri-

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

tical stage during war, when the adversary has unleashed the nuclear genie, the chiefs of staff express divergent views on using nuclear weapons in a retaliatory strike. Besides the national interest, the service chiefs would to some extent be guided by the impact of the use of nuclear weapons on their forward-deployed fighting troops and would need to take the pre-

By GURMEET KANWAL

ces Command for the planning, coordination and control of India's nuclear weapons must function under the CDS. However, the nuclear warheads and the delivery systems comprising the "triad", recommended by the National Security Advisory Board in the draft nuclear

make hard decision that would be binding on all the services. As Churchill said famously, "Committees cannot fight wars." The rather limited achievements of coordination during the previous wars, notably in 1965 and 1971, were mainly due to the personalities of the chiefs in position of authority and not

netic compatibility will lead to electro-magnetic interference that will play havoc with communications and radar systems when the full complement of electronic equipment is deployed during the next war. Only a joint, top down approach can overcome the inherent difficulties in reconciling different staff and user requirements.

A CDS supported by a well-structured Joint Planning Staff, will be able to overcome almost all the problems inherent in the present system of higher defence control within the services. Ideally, a CDS should be appointed simultaneously with theatre commanders. However, in order to minimise turbulence and to ensure that the change comes about gradually, initially India could graduate to a CDS system at the apex level, with the Chiefs of Staff of respective services continuing to perform their present functions, and move step by step to a theatre system. Once theatre commanders are appointed, the chiefs of staff of individual services should have responsibility primarily for force structure and drawing up perspective plans. They should oversee the development and acquisition of weapons and equipment, plan recruitment, guide individual training at specialised training establishments and control administrative matters such as the annual budget, pay and allowances, maintenance support and medical services.

Often during war, the fate of an entire campaign can hinge on a single decision. Such a decision can only be made by a specially selected defence chief and not by a committee like the COSC that operates on the principle of the least common denominator. Military history is replete with examples of how such decisions changed the course of a war. Eisenhower's decision to launch the Normandy landings in the face of continuing rough weather and MacArthur's decision to land at Inchon against stiff opposition from virtually his entire staff could not have been made by committees. All other major democracies have opted for the CDS system; India cannot ignore it any further except at great peril.

**A CDS, supported by a well-structured Joint Planning Staff, will be able to overcome almost all the problems inherent in the present system**



vailing military situation into account while making their recommendations. It is axiomatic that the differences among the chiefs of staff be resolved by the military professionals themselves, with one of them acting as the arbitrator. Only a CDS would be able to take a detached view and present an objective analysis along with the available options.

Ideally, the CDS should be an overall commander-in-chief and from him command should flow to individual theatre commanders. Given India's long land borders with a varied terrain configuration and two major seaboards, as also adversaries who are geographically separated, a "theatre" system of tri-service command is best suited for the optimum management of both external and internal security challenges. The Chinese, with similar needs, have a well-established theatre system. Each theatre commander should have under him forces from all the three services based on the requirements. The initial allocation of forces need not be permanent and could be varied during war or during the preparatory stage. However, at this stage it would be more appropriate to make the CDS "first among equals" and let the three chiefs of staff retain operational command and administrative control over their services.

The proposed Strategic For-

doctrine released in August 1999, should form part of the Army (surface-to-surface missiles), Navy (sea-launched missiles) and the Air Force (air-delivered nuclear warheads). Similarly the tri-service Andaman-Nicobar Command and the Defence Intelligence Agency, which are on the anvil, should report directly to the CDS.

The shrinking defence budget demands greater inter-service coordination in the development and acquisition of weapons and equipment and in the planning of cantonments, which should be common to the three services and not mutually exclusive. To keep pace with the changing security environment, periodic reviews of the laid down priorities are mandatory. The need for inter-service compatibility of electro-magnetic equipment and the need for inter-operability demand that weapons and equipment development and acquisition, especially those pertaining to the development of reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition capabilities, be undertaken jointly with common staff and user requirements. At present the chiefs of staff committee finds it difficult to resolve conflicting inter-service viewpoints.

The chairman COSC lacks executive authority over services other than his own. The COSC works primarily by consensus and cannot

due to any institutionalised arrangements.

There is no permanent organisational structure for joint operations planning at the level of the Services HQ. The present Joint Planning Committee is an ad hoc subcommittee of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. The Director General Defence Planning Staff is not organised and staffed for joint operations planning. The concept of National Command Post, vital for nuclear operations, is yet to mature. Hence, there is no joint services operations room. It is well known that the Operations Room of Army headquarters in South Block was the hub from where the political leadership forming the CCS directed the Kargil conflict and where coordination between the Army and the Air Force was carried out on a daily basis.

Despite the establishment of tri-service organisations to coordinate the development and acquisition of weapons, communications and electronics, the state of inter-operability continues to be low. Several cases have been reported of weapons and equipment development and acquisition where two or more services took divergent routes for similar systems and equipment. In fact, with the proliferation of hundreds of transmitters in the combat zone, the lack of electro-mag-

# Foreign scholars should not attend certain seminars, says home ministry

By Siddharth Varadarajan  
The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: David Shulman, author of the landmark *Tamil Temple Myths: Sacrificial Divine Marriage in the South Indian Saiva Tradition*, may be well-known in India and abroad for his work on Hinduism, but the ministry of home affairs (MHA) would be happiest if the professor were not to be invited to present a paper the next time Madras University holds a seminar on comparative religion.

If the university were nevertheless to insist on his presence, it would have to write to the home ministry and apply for 'security clearance' for Mr Shulman. Only if the MHA certifies that his participation at the seminar will not be a threat to the country or government—a process that the ministry says can take from four to six weeks—will an Indian embassy abroad grant the professor a visa.

Call it paranoia or a perverse form of protectionism, but under 'secret' guidelines (OM No. 25022/40/97/FIV) issued recently by the

MHA, Indian universities and academic bodies have been told that foreign scholars "should not be generally considered to attend conferences of a political, semi-political, communal or religious nature". In addition, universities organising conferences on subjects "related to human rights or sensitive technical subjects which can be utilised as a platform for any particular line of propaganda or where the subject matter is of a purely national or local character" should also try and avoid inviting foreign academics. Where invitations are unavoidable, the MHA will vet which scholars may come and which may not.

The MHA's new guidelines, dated September 1, 2000, are now being forwarded by the human resources development ministry to all universities and deemed universities with the advice, "It is requested that henceforth applications in the prescribed proforma (in six sets) complete in all respects may be forwarded as per revised guidelines at least one month and a half before the commencement of the conference".

While a foreign scholar wishing to attend a seminar on a subject other than the above-mentioned categories need not be security-vetted by the MHA, Indian university departments planning to invite academics from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, China, Bangladesh or Afghanistan must get prior clearance from both the MHA and the ministry of external affairs regardless of the subject of the conference.

Thus, Shuxiong Liu of Peking University, China's leading Iqbal scholar, would have to be screened by the MHA and MEA the next time Lucknow University wants him to attend a seminar. What happens if he were to come on a tourist visa anyway? S.K. Das, under secretary in the MHA and the point-man for the implementation of the new rules, told *The Times of India*, "If he just sits and listens, that's OK." But if he stands up and makes a comment about the poetics of Iqbal and Herder? "Speaking at a seminar (without prior clearance) will mean a violation of the Foreigners' Act and visa rules," Mr Das said.

**WRESTLERS SET FOR FIELD DAY IF TODAY'S MEGA-RELEASES, LAGAAN AND GADGAR, HAVE A DREAM RUN**

THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2001

## THE MISSILE'S MESSAGE

HP 12  
14/6

TUESDAY'S SUCCESSFUL TESTING of a supersonic cruise missile in collaboration with Russia should be hailed as a leap forward in India's defence effort. The missile, in effect a small pilotless aircraft that can operate at supersonic speeds with extraordinary accuracy, is a weapon of offence that increases the range of targets in the regional theatre. The success scored at the interim test range at Chandipur-on-sea in Orissa will need to be repeated in further testings before the missiles can be inducted. The eventual addition of this strategic missile is a logical follow-up and essential for the fulfilment of the country's minimum nuclear deterrent profile as outlined in the draft nuclear doctrine prepared by the Vajpayee Government. With this technological achievement, India joins more than 20 countries which have the capability to produce cruise missiles. Technology to manufacture these cruises, which have a range of up to 500 km, is available off the shelf. Nearly 80 countries have acquired these missiles from the primary producer-nations. Essentially, these are anti-ship missiles which can be launched from the ground, ship, submarine or air. The characteristic that defines the cruise is that it can change its altitude or direction at any time during its flight. Apart from its relative low cost compared to the ballistic missile, the most attractive factor is its accuracy, which was demonstrated with devastating effect during the Gulf War a decade ago.

The External Affairs and Defence Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, who has just returned from Moscow after attending a meeting of the inter-governmental commission on military cooperation, has described the development of the missile as a landmark in technology partnership. The missile goes beyond the symbolisms

evident during his meetings in Moscow and confirms the perception that the old warmth has been restored to the bilateral relations. For, the choice of Russia for the joint missile effort signals more than a commercial deal in a situation where the technology is available from several sources. It cements the strategic partnership that was renewed during Mr. Jaswant Singh's low-profile visit.

The joint venture and its success possibly send strong signals of emerging strategic realignments and come at a time of some uncertainties in the region. The production or possession of the missiles need not by themselves materially alter the geostrategic equations in the immediate future. But the timing of the launch and the partnership do give rise to the apprehension that regional tensions could get exacerbated. Coming even as the dates are being finalised for the visit of the Pakistani Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, the testing can provide a handle to the fundamentalist forces to whip up anti-India sentiments and queer the pitch for the long desired summit. Mr. Vajpayee has sought to reassure Pakistan and reiterated that India will continue to preach the doctrine of universal peace. The impact on the already strained relations with China can also be negative. An improving climate which has seen an increasing number of bilateral visits by official and nonofficial delegations has recently been vitiated following certain remarks in the annual report of the Defence Ministry to which Beijing has taken exception. China may be over-reacting, but the fallout on the bilateral relations between the two Asian giants from the cruise missile testing will be watched with interest and concern.

THE  
14/6

# Dy chiefs of staff may be part of CDS panel

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

518 14/6

NEW DELHI, June 13. - Four deputy chiefs of defence staff of lieutenant-general rank may be part of the Chief of Defence Staff's committee.

While the Centre has decided to consult with top leaders of the Opposition and the NDA before deciding to have a Chief of Defence Staff (a presentation is likely to be made for them), the current Chiefs of Staff Committee is deciding on the possible structure and composition of the CDS's support staff.

This could include four deputy chiefs of defence rank - all of them three-star generals or their equivalent. They are likely to be in-charge of intelligence, medical facilities, operations and the strategic forces, a euphemism for nuclear weapons. A major-general or his equivalent may be in charge of logistics and allied issues.

This is in addition to the three senior lieutenants-general or their equivalent who would be appointed as vice-chief of defence staff, head of the tri-service command at the Andamans and head of the strategic forces.

This could create a problem in the services who are allowed only a fixed number of generals, admirals or air marshals. If nearly a dozen of them are moved to the CDS committee, the services could face a shortage of brass-hats as the government is likely to allow the appointment of only one or two more generals or officers of equivalent rank in the services.

The COSC is deciding on the issue and is likely to submit its report on the CDS committee structure to the government in three months or perhaps, even earlier, by early August.

Other issues being decided upon are how the command and control system would be structured - or simply, who will head the nuclear forces, where the weapons will be and what should be done with them, in terms of who will be pressing the relevant buttons in case of war.

Similarly, the defence secretary, Mr Yogendra Narain, has set up committees to examine certain important issues. For instance, the role of the armed forces in relation to other ministries. It will decide whether the armed forces can interact directly with other ministries or remain attached offices of the ministry and go through it. Financial powers of the armed forces are being restructured as also, the current procurement procedures.

After the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sushil Kumar, recently wrote to the defence minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, saying he did not want to be CDS, even though he was the front-runner, the 'calculations' have changed. It had been assumed that with the CDS being a naval officer, the VCDS would be an Army man possibly, Lieutenant-general Pankaj Joshi, an Army commander) and the head of the strategic forces, an Air Force man, but the situation is more fluid. This is more so as the air force chief is only partially agreeable to the appointment of a CDS.



## 12/10 Defence Diplomacy 10

The visit to Moscow by Jaswant Singh has further reinforced the defence relationship between India and Russia and arguably taken it to a level higher than what it was in the erstwhile Soviet era. The agreements on the acquisition of sophisticated weapon systems and for a co-production of some of them — including missiles — mark a new stage in the recently-proclaimed strategic partnership between India and Russia. Moscow's disquiet notwithstanding, the cold war is over and Russia is at least no longer projected as an adversary by the US — a theme made much of by president George Bush in his May Day address recently. On the face of it then, the US has more reason to acknowledge Russian economic compulsions in selling sophisticated weaponry. Besides, given the current dynamics of Sino-US relations, the latter would much rather have Russia sell weapons to India than China. Happily, this allows India the space to have cordial relations both with Moscow and Washington. It is therefore regrettable that the old cold war mindset continues to overtly influence foreign policy analysts and commentators. Take for example the media reaction to India's statement in the wake of president Bush's speech on the NMD. Contrary to popular perception, a case can be made that India has not quite endorsed the NMD. India no doubt welcomed the US intent of going beyond the adversarial cold war paradigm of mutually assured destruction, of unilateral cuts in strategic arsenals and the de-alerting of weapons and, most importantly, the US desire to enter into dialogue and consultation with important world powers, including India, before embarking on new defence initiatives.

Yet the Indian statement did not mention a word on NMD proper. The only official pronouncement on the issue was Mr Singh's speech during his visit to St Petersburg early this year which set out the Indian opposition to any unilateral abrogation of the Anti Ballistic Missile treaty. That position, one hopes, remains unaltered. The US has meanwhile initiated consultations with Russia on the issue and it is hoped that they will find a solution acceptable to both parties at the forthcoming summit between the two. On its part, Russia has already accepted the need — perhaps, the inevitability — of a missile defence system, and indeed offered to co-operate with the European Union, not to mention the US, in the development of such a defence shield. Therefore the question of India and Russia having differing perspectives on the NMD issue is partly an academic one and not relevant to the evolving strategic partnership between the two. At another level, the new doctrine of the US defence secretary has shifted the focus of policy away from Russia, whose power is by all accounts declining, to China which is regarded as an emergent power of great future significance. Such strategic shifts demand corresponding changes in assessments of India's relations with Russia and the US and their implications for our security concerns. However, those who conclude from all this that there is now a cold war on between the US and China would do well to ponder that the two currently enjoy an annual bilateral trade of over one hundred billion dollars. The need of the hour is to inject a healthy dose of pragmatic realism in foreign policy matters rather than unreflexive responses rooted in a antiquated cold war mindset.

# India cruises into the supersonic missile era

HT Correspondents  
New Delhi & Balasore, June 12

INDIAN AND Russian scientists today successfully flight-tested a supersonic surface-to-surface cruise missile from the Interim Test Range at Chandipur-on-Sea in Orissa.

The missile has been developed by a joint venture company, BrahMos — short for Brahma and Moscow — set up under a bilateral agreement signed in February 1998 between India's Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia's State Unitary Enterprise NPO Mashinostroyeniya. Incidentally, today was Russia Day, which lent a symbolic importance to the event.

Defence Minister Jaswant Singh, scientific adviser to the Defence Minister, V K Aatre, Air Chief Marshal AY Tipnis and scientists from India and Russia were present during the launch.

But a bigger significance is the arrival of the era of supersonic missiles in the sub-continent. It marks a generational improvement over China's existing supersonic missile capability (Moskit) and certainly leaves Pakistan, whose collaboration with the Chinese for ballistic missile technology is reeling under US sanctions, far behind.

Moreover, the step could have ramifications for the Sino-

Indian race for superiority in the Bay of Bengal.

The 280 km-range missile can be either solid or liquid-fuelled. It can be launched from a variety of platforms like mobile launchers, ships, aircraft and submarines. When fired from a ship, it can skim the surface of the sea and penetrate the defences of any regional navy. The missile comes fitted with a computer, which, when fed with Latitude-Longitude details of a target, can strike with pin-point accuracy.

This was only the first in a series of flight tests planned to demonstrate the capabilities of the system to potential customers.

The missile will be ready for regular production and marketing within two years. The Prime Minister has congratulated scientists of the two countries.

Defence ministry sources said the development of the cruise missile could mean India leap-frogging into the global arms bazaar as a supplier. At present, defence exports are valued at only Rs 200 crore but BrahMos could take the Indo-Russian partnership into production of the latest generation equipment range. The propulsion for today's test came from Russia while the on-board computer guidance was developed by Indian scientists.

# Inter-service Integrator

## Defence Forces Need Common Chief

By R H TAHILIANI

THE release of the recommendations of the group of ministers to the cabinet committee on security is a major milestone and a welcome departure from the excessive security which has attended such matters hitherto. The committee has accepted all the recommendations of the ministerial group, except the one about the creation of the post of chief of defence staff (CDS). This has been deferred till the prime minister has discussed the subject with opposition leaders and National Democratic Alliance partners.

Speculation in the media that the CDS would be a super boss of the three services, or that the status and responsibilities of the three chiefs would be diminished, would hopefully have been laid to rest by now. During the Raj, the commander-in-chief in India was the head of the total military apparatus in the country, although the defence policy was dictated by the war office in the UK. After independence, policy-making became the responsibility of the ministry of defence, with the defence minister as the head. Service chiefs were designated as commanders-in-chief and chiefs of staff of the respective services. In 1952, the headquarters of the three services were made attached offices of the defence ministry. In 1955, the designation of the commander-in-chief was abolished and the heads of the three services became chiefs of the army, naval and air force staff respectively. Inter-service coordination was to be achieved by the three-member chiefs of staff committee and other committees like the joint planning committees.

During the 1950s and 60s, the services made their individual plans for force and equipment levels and tried to persuade the government to provide the funding to implement them. These were scrutinised first by the defence ministry, staffed entirely by the civil services, and then by the defence finance department, leading to enormous delays. What was reflected in the defence budget was a mere addition of the demands of the three services, suitably trimmed to adjust to what the finance ministry could provide. No effort was made to take a holistic view of the needs of defence and drawing up of priorities to keep within the budgetary constraints. Much of the inter-service rivalry had at its root the need of each service to grab as big a share of the defence cake as possible.

All the authority came to be vested in the civil service bureaucrat. The soldier, sailor and airman who had to actually do the fighting had no authority whatsoever to decide what weapons he was going to fight with. In mature democracies, uniformed and civilian personnel work together in an integrated ministry of defence, each one contributing his expertise to the common goal. The defence services in India have pleaded from time to time for such integration. But these pleas fell on deaf ears because the bureaucracy was loath to share power, and politicians had no time to get into the details of such reorganisation. The periodic inter-service rivalry left the minister little choice but to fall back on the advice given to him by the defence secretary.

The inadequacy of this system was brought home to the government during the 1971 war. Com-

and Air Marshal P K Dey — headed the DPS. Their charter of duties was to take a holistic view of defence, bearing in mind that the creation and maintenance of the country's defence structure was an essential ingredient of its foreign policy. The end product of the efforts of the DPS was 'Plan 2000', a 15-year perspective agreed to by the three services. The navy's allocation was to be progressively increased to 19 per cent and that of the other two services adjusted appropriately.

The DPS also produced operational directives for big Trishakti exercises in 1986 and 1987. These were conducted by a unified commander from a different service each time, and many valuable lessons were learnt. One had hoped that this bottom-up approach would form the basis of an expanded group which would in due course form the headquarters of the chief of defence staff. The partnership exhibited by the officers in the DPS was truly heartwarming. During presentations made to us and the political leadership, the Major General would present the air force case, the Air Vice-Marshal the navy case and the Rear Admiral the army requirements. In countries like the US, a senior appointment in an inter-service staff is a pre-requisite for higher promotions.

Some of our successors in the chiefs of staff committee did not share our enthusiasm and this progressively reduced the effectiveness of the DPS. The projected requirements for the defence budget once again became merely an addition of what the three services asked for.

A chiefs of staff committee, where the seniormost chief is the chairman, has never been the best answer. On occasions it has worked well, as it did in the mid-80s (the credit goes to my colleagues: Air Chief Marshal La Fontaine and General Sunderji). However, even our team could not resolve the unified fortress commander tangle in the Andaman & Nicobar islands. I chose to sweep the problem under the carpet in the larger interests of inter-service harmony, as indeed have all my successors since. With strategic forces as an additional factor, the nation can ill-afford any further delay in institutionalising a four-member chiefs of staff committee with the CDS as its permanent chairman.

(The author is a former chief of naval staff)

### IN BRIEF

- No effort is made to take a holistic view of defence needs
- Authority is vested in bureaucrats who do not themselves fight wars
- A chief of defence staff is needed to improve inter-service coordination

mittees to take a holistic view of our defence needs were appointed in 1972 and 1976 under the chairmanship of D P Dhar and P N Haksar respectively. In 1990, another committee under Arun Singh was appointed to go into the whole gamut of defence expenditure. These ad-hoc committees did produce valuable ideas and some prioritisation. However no mechanism existed to continuously update and fine-tune the plans which had been made by these committees.

In 1984, the chiefs of staff committee sought government approval for the setting up of an inter-service defence planning staff (DPS) with representatives from the ministry of external affairs, defence finance department and the Defence Research and Development Organisation. The DPS actually came into existence at the time when I took over as chairman of the chiefs of staff committee. During my 22-month tenure as the chairman, two outstanding officers — Lieutenant-General B C Nanda

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# Rules eased for non-strategic defence buying

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, June 9

THE MINISTRY of Defence has decided to waive stringent Military Standards in the procurement of "non-strategic items" required by the armed forces. Commercially available products will now be purchased off the shelf to meet such requirements, a list of which is now being prepared. The market approach will also extend to components of weapon systems.

A defence spokesman said this methodology was being adopted to save costs, and also to give an

11/6/06

impetus to the government policy of encouraging the Indian private sector to cater to defence requirements. Since the commercially available goods do not meet these standards, the defence establishment imports most of the goods it needs. Indian industry says that manufacture of defence-grade goods is not commercially viable since there is no market demand for such products, and that defence demand alone won't generate the volumes required for profits.

The Defence Ministry has to rely particularly on Russia, and consequently incur considerable

costs in maintenance and stocking of life-cycle spares.

To address the issue, the Directorate of Standardisation, Ministry of Defence conducted a seminar on "Adopting Commercially off the Shelf (COTS) Technology in Defence Services" at Bangalore on Friday. The seminar was held primarily to identify strategies to involve the local market. With this aim in mind, it brought together users, designers and defence production agencies. The thrust was on encouraging local manufacturers "gear up for production of components suitable for defence equipment".

A Unified Indian Defence COTS Philosophy on electronic items encompassing avionics, air-borne systems, maintenance, codification, logistic practices, spares, service-related issues and selection of competent manufacturers was discussed. The COTS purchases would range from clothing and boots to tyres and tubes, and from nuts and bolts to complex integrated circuits.

"Most defence purchases are of standard components. Even if they are replaced by commercially available counterparts, the basic purpose will be served," states a defence press release.

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# India eyes allies against China: Jane's

STANLEY THEODORE  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD, June 8. - India's increasing emphasis on its Navy and its effort to bolster a growing number of Asian countries wary of China could possibly evolve an India-Vietnam-Japan military understanding against Beijing.

The *Jane's Defence Intelligence* in its April article, *Jane's Fighting Ships 2000-01*, says greater emphasis to Indian Navy's aspirations to exercise its presence beyond the Indian Ocean was given in 2000 when Indian and Vietnamese navies held joint exercises for the first time in South China Sea. But a defence ministry spokesman in New Delhi said: "There's no such alliance. We don't believe in forming an alliance against another country." The article in the *Jane's*, considered an authentic source of world military information, said: "These (the India Ocean exercise) may have been relatively low

key but a strong message has been sent to China whose own growing ambitions have received perhaps greater attention in recent years.... There's ample evidence to illustrate that India is rapidly acquiring the hardware to enable its Navy to exercise maritime influence, if not dominance, over the region."

India's allocation of 13% to the Navy in 2001, after 15% in 2000, is to enhance its power projection capabilities "at the heart of which lies the plan to have two operational aircraft carriers in 2010," the article says. *Jane's* thinks the Russian contract for procurement, that includes 20 MiGs, could be finalised this year. "But the need for the ship to have a refit, at India's considerable expense, means that it is unlikely that the ship will enter service before 2004."

The report contrasts this with China's expenditure on defence, hiked to 18% this year. The navy is at the forefront of its drive "to be regarded as a force to be reckoned with both region-

## DELHI, TOKYO, HANOI MAY FORCE MILITARY ALLIANCE

China border, narrated events that led to India adopting a pro-active approach towards China's belligerence. For the past two-and-a-half years China has committed over 100 incursions, especially in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh "at an alarming level". India sought to play them down because of hectic diplomatic activity between Beijing and Delhi, it said.

This disappointed the Indian Army that warned of grave consequences to the national interest. When Indian security officials pointed to Chinese nuclear submarines in the Indian Ocean, the government stepped up surveillance along the Chinese border and proposed to improve the infrastructure in the affected zones.

"As a result of this (Army pressure and disturbing military intelligence reports) Delhi has successfully made inroads into South China Sea by its ally and internationally". *Jane's* foreign nations report in January had said an indication of India bolstering countries wary of China - a subject "rarely discussed" - is its agreements with Vietnam.

India signed an agreement to supply Vietnam equipment for a nuclear science laboratory; this apart from another for enhancing military cooperation and help in overhauling Hanoi's ageing Soviet MiG aircraft. Governments in the region are particularly worried over China throwing its weight around in Spratly Islands, a group of shoals and rocky outcrops in South China Sea. Beijing wrested control of a number of these islands from Vietnam in 1998, and Hanoi has now beefed up its military presence fearing a repeat.

*Jane's Intelligence Digest* in a November 2000 report, Tension in Indo-

military alliance with Vietnam and strategic understanding with Japan". *Jane's Intelligence* said: "Delhi may even be considering a re-evaluation of its Tibet and Taiwan policies in order to obtain further leverage against China"

*Jane's* last year began analysing the changing equations in South East Asia in response to China's military growth. It mentioned the "low key visit" of the then Japanese Defence Agency's director to Vietnam and Singapore where he secured regular military meetings and exercises with those countries. It noted Japan's "busy" activity in post-Pokhran India that involved regular defence talks and anti-piracy training exercises.

India in 2000 struck deals "with countries as diverse as Japan, Vietnam and Malaysia to conduct joint naval exercises" it said. Vietnam too has signed similar agreements with Japan while Singapore has agreed in

principle to undertake such joint exercises, another *Jane's* report said in November 2000.

*Jane's* reasoned that increased Beijing activity on the border was to move its forces and military hardware closer to Line of Actual Control and lift India's role as a regional power by exerting military pressure and supporting Delhi's military preparedness.

"Likewise, the People's Liberation Army has repeatedly intruded in the strategically important (but disputed) area of Aksai Chin and has built up a network of roads and bunkers"

In the North-east, the PLA in April 2000 was seen laying roads heading towards the Line of Actual Control barely 6 km away. The Indian Army found a Chinese-built mule trail in Kaila Pass in Dibang valley district, and incursions were reported from Tawang, Taksing and Maja areas of Arunachal Pradesh, the report said.

# Indo-Russian talks on NMD this month

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, June 7. — Indo-Russian discussions on the proposed American National Missile Defence system and the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty are likely to be held in Russia in the third week of June, defence ministry officials said today.

The meetings are likely to be held after a meeting on the issue between USA and Russia. Both the external affairs and the defence ministries are likely to take part in the discussions. Ministry officials said the composition of the team would be decided after the defence minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, returns from Russia.

Discussions are likely as the Russians don't favour the NMD system, claiming it is too expensive to set up, is not fool-proof and is likely to trigger another arms race. The Indian stand, after appearing to accept the American position is that it is only part of a new strategic framework, part which also includes cuts in the number of American nuclear weapons, non and counter-proliferation.

Meanwhile, defence ministry officials said the two main benefits from Mr Singh's visit has been

the firming up of the Sukhoi deal and the Russian promise to provide spares, the rest just being talk. Though the Sukhoi deal was signed when Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav was defence minister, about five years ago, only 18 aircraft have arrived, barely enough for one squadron. Improved versions of the plane were expected but they are yet to be delivered, with the Russians saying India has delayed delivering the avionics package prepared by the Defence Research and Development Organisation for the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft and also, the Sukhoi.

The other breakthrough has been the spares situation. The break-up of the Soviet Union a decade ago led to delays in the delivery of spares, a critical problem as perhaps three-fourths of the Indian weapons that are imported are from Russia.

Otherwise, the talks about air-defence weapons and the development of a medium aircraft lack great substance. The S-300, for one was offered to India years ago, and the Air Defence Artillery of the Army rejected it, the system being too elaborate and too expensive. The IAF has been "looking at it" for a while. The medium aircraft will probably be ready in a decade, officials said.

THE STATESMAN

# India, Russia in defence deal

Moscow, June 6 (Agencies): India and Russia today signed a "ground-breaking" accord on bilateral defence cooperation with Moscow offering Delhi the blueprint of an advanced integrated air defence system and joint production of a fifth generation of fighter aircraft.

"Russia is to shortly provide the Indian government a blueprint of advanced integrated air defence system. This is a big and very complex project," Vice-Premier Ilya Klebanov said after signing the pact with defence minister Jaswant Singh.

The system is expected to integrate Indian-developed surface-to-air *Akash* missiles and Rajendra radars with the elements of the Non-Strategic Missile Shield offered by Russia to Europe and allies as an alternative to the space-based US National Missile Defence system.

Russia also offered India a stake in the joint development and production of a fifth generation of fighter aircraft. Klebanov said his country is awaiting "tactical and technical" requirements of the Indian Air Force.

The two countries will also develop a military transport aircraft, the Il-214, Klebanov said, describing it as "the plane of the 21st century". The new accord shifts Indo-Russian interaction from the buyer-seller track to the realm of joint development and production of new generation weapons on a technology-sharing basis.

The Russian Vice-Premier said the Indian and Russian air force could get the new generation fighter around 2009 when the US joint strike fighter (JSF) is scheduled to be commissioned.

He did not rule out the signing of an ambitious deal for the aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov*, by the year-end. It would involve over 60 individual contracts on fighter, infrastructure, training and so on, he added.

The bilateral protocol signed by its co-chairmen after the two-day session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission

on military and technical cooperation will ensure "closer relations and trouble-free business" in defence cooperation, Indian defence secretary Yogendra Narayan said.

"Russia and India have agreed on joint research and development and production of new high-technology weapons as a new area of cooperation," he said. The panel was set up during President Vladimir Putin's visit to India last October to resolve issues cropping up in defence interaction at a higher level. It is co-chaired by the defence minister on the Indian side.

THE TELEGRAPH

# Navy chief to visit Siachen

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, June 5. — Admiral Sushil Kumar will visit Siachen Glacier, the first Navy chief to do so, on Friday.

Admiral Kumar, who is also Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman, will be on the glacier when Indian and Pakistani troops are exchanging fire despite the defence minister's recent statement that there have been no reports of trouble. India and Pakistan have been fighting for the glacier, parts of which are above 20,000 feet, for over 15 years.

Lt-Gen Arjun Ray, who commands the 14 Corps — part of which is the 102 Brigade — told reporters in Partapur on Friday that there'd been "odd exchanges of fire on a few occasions." Pakistanis were firing heavy machine guns, mortars and small arms along with the occasional artillery shells. The level of

exchanges has come down in recent months and senior Army officers said Indian soldiers were exercising maximum restraint.

Army officers said Pakistani troops had been firing in the northern and central glacier region and there were exchanges of fire several times a week, though there have been no casualties. Pakistan doesn't recognise the positions on the glacier as a part of the Line of Control and the ceasefire along the LoC doesn't apply there.

The Army's 102 Brigade has about 10 battallions of about 800 officers and men each as well as elements of artillery, air-defence and other units but all of them are not on the glacier at the same time as troops can only be there for six months. Much of the rest of the period is spent "inducting and de-inducting." There are still some war-related casualties, an officer said. "Not long ago, a soldier from Gurkha Rifles idly threw a stone. It landed on a mine which blew up, injuring him," an officer said.

THE STATESMAN



# Defence staff merger plan irks officials

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**New Delhi, June 3:** The defence ministry has proposed bringing a section of the civil service under the control of the army, leaving about 150 bureaucrats and a host of subordinate officials belonging to the Indian Defence Estates Service (IDES) seething in anger.

Defence minister Jaswant Singh is understood to have taken a stand that the IDES be merged with the Military Engineering Service (MES). According to highly-placed sources, Singh discussed this proposal with chief of army staff General S. Padmanabhan and defence secretary T.R. Prasad on May 29.

The move to merge the IDES with the MES has several implications. First, the municipal governance and management of defence lands will be entrusted with the army. This function is being discharged by members of the IDES, a "lesser known" organised civil service. "That the army should take over both civil and civic administration in the cantonments and also deals with intricate land management laws and procedures appears to have baffled senior IDES officials," a defence ministry source said.

The sources said an immediate problem the government will face is filling up the posts in the defence ministry currently occupied by IDES officers. "There is also the question of training and expertise in the complex areas of urban governance and land management in which the olive greens have no expertise. Besides, how does the government expect the bureaucrats to suddenly develop engineering skills?" a defence ministry official asked.

The administration of cantonments — altogether 62 nationwide

is looked after by Cantonment executive officers of the IDES cadre which came into being in 1951 when it was called the Military Land and Cantonment Service. Following the replacement of the Cantonment Authority, as it existed during the Raj, by the Cantonment Board after Independence, the official component of the board was to be in majority. But through an executive order, the number of official and elected members on the board were kept on a par. The functions of the board are municipal in character and it is essentially a local self-government body.

The IDES cadre also provides defence estate officers (DEOs) responsible for management of defence lands throughout the country. Sources said the tussle for control over defence lands has been on for quite some time. Time and again the army has been demanding the DEOs be placed under its administrative control. The defence ministry has resisted this move on the ground that the DEOs are "independent representatives of the Centre to keep watch" over the management of defence lands.

The sources pointed to the "friction" between the armed forces and the IDES, particularly over the issue of revenue being generated from the Santushti shopping complex in Delhi which was built on defence land some years ago. "The armed forces want to control the management of land which so far was under public scrutiny because they were being overseen by the IDES," an official said.

As defence minister, Sharad Pawar had tried to take over some of the unused defence land, particularly in Maharashtra, for building activity. This led to a furore forcing Pawar to abandon the plans.

THE TELEGRAPH

# A periscope on defence

Yet another warning that the enemy lurks within

COUNTERING terrorism must remain a major priority for India's security forces, the ministry of defence rightly says in its annual report. Even as the army modernises and seeks to increase the speed, accuracy and range of its weapons and responses, it is necessary to commit more manpower and more resources to the north and Northeast. Discussion within the government about whether dedicated forces should take up the greater burden of the anti-terrorism task and army units be assigned to other areas remains inconclusive. Meanwhile, the fact is that increasingly the forces are called upon to deal with urban guerrilla-type operations and this requires highly specialised skills and training, apart from close intelligence coordination. As can be seen from figures cited in the report, there was no let-up in terrorist incursions and actions in Jammu and Kashmir last year, even though an unilateral Indian ceasefire prevailed for several months. During what are described as "intense counter proxy war operations", particularly in Kupwara, Poonch and Rajouri, as many as 1,432 terrorists were killed and 274 captured. Averaging out these numbers to four terrorists killed or captured a day gives some idea of the intensity of activity. While the government is committed to finding a political solution, that is obviously going to be a lengthy process with many ups and downs. In the course of it, terrorism must be expected to continue. The upgradation of weaponry, communications and training for militant groups based in Pakistan and the fact that Kashmiri groups have been marginalised are new dimensions that have to be taken into account. Planning for the long

haul in J&K as also in the Northeast is imperative. No less important is committing the kind of resources the troops need to be effective.

One would wish for a more careful setting out of the security environment in India's neighbourhood than what is available in this MoD report. Some of the language leads to the suspicion that George Fernandes still presides over the ministry in spirit, if not de facto. To point out that every major Indian city is within reach of Chinese missiles and Chinese nuclear and missile capabilities are being enlarged, and to leave it at that, gives a partial and inaccurate picture which tends to exaggerate the threat at this time. China has two dozen or so ICBMs which means, technically, every Indian city is within range. But it must also be said that none of those missiles is currently targeted at India. To put things further into perspective, it should be explained that China's force expansion is not designed with India primarily in mind. Significantly, the MoD believes Beijing is too preoccupied with Taiwan and domestic matters to give high priority to resolving differences with India but will try instead to manage differences.

Much emphasis has been given to the acquisition of new hardware for the defence services. Krasnopol guided ammunition has been supplied to the army, unmanned aerial vehicles to patrol the LoC will be available shortly. But the Sukhoi-30 MK1 is still being upgraded and the Mirage 2000 is still on its way. Perhaps next year's report will concentrate on changes in force structure which have to be undertaken as well as part of the modernisation drive.

# Chinese missiles can strike major Indian cities: report

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, May 31. (Every major Indian city is within the reach of Chinese missiles, the defence ministry's annual report said. China's nuclear forces are stronger than those of India, it added.)

The 2000-2001 report, released today, appeared to target Beijing as a future threat after the Chinese government had solved its problems with Taiwan and that in the South China Sea area. These issues along with its domestic situation will keep China preoccupied for the next few years. During this period, China will keep its differences with India within manageable limits.

The report said the asymmetry in terms of nuclear forces is strongly in favour of China which additionally has helped Pakistan to build missile and nuclear capability and noted that the Chinese were preparing to have submarine launched ballistic missiles, difficult weapons to target and destroy.

In addition, China is modernising its armed forces and

making political and military alliances with India's neighbours. This may be a reference to Pakistan and also, Myanmar.)

(The report quoted top Chinese leaders as saying there is not sufficient mutual trust and understanding between India and China and added that China occupies 38,000 sq km of Indian territory in Ladakh and claims another 90,000 sq km of

■ Agni production likely to begin next year: page 8

territory in Arunachal Pradesh. In addition, Pakistan gave away 5,180 km of PoK to China.)

The report does not mention Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's recent letter to Gen Pervez Musharraf and the subsequent peace moves. This is because the report relates to a time period upto 31 March this year, though it was released only today.

The defence minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, explained the current position on Pakistan Monday and the reason for inviting the General, but the re-

port said a conducive environment is an obvious requirement for a meaningful dialogue. However, as Pakistan had stepped up both its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism and hostile propaganda against India, it was clear that the country was not interested in fostering such an environment.

While saying that Pakistan had called for maximum restraint, the report mentions that these measures are clearly self-serving in nature and do not address India's concerns related to Pakistan's continued sponsorship of cross-border terrorism. It spoke of Pakistan's help to Pakistan-based terrorist groups like the Jaishe-Mohammed, the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and the Harkat-ul Mujahideen and the logistic support to them by Pakistani armymen.

There is also criticism of the use of Nepalese territory by external vested interests (a possible reference to the ISI) inimical to the friendly relations between India and Nepal.

THE HINDU

# Agni-II missile may be inducted within one year: Jaswant

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, May 31: India plans to induct *Agni II* missile, the 2,000-km surface-to-surface key delivery system in India's nuclear deterrent profile, during the year 2001-2002.

This was stated here on Thursday by defence minister Jaswant Singh while addressing the meeting of the Consultative Committee attached to the defence ministry.

Mr Singh said that limited production of the two stage missile using solid propulsion system has already begun.

The government has approved the *Agni* missile project for development of long range system using the state-of-the-art technology that was developed indigenously.

Two flight trials of the *Agni* missile — which can carry a payload of one tonne and is launched from a rail mobile launcher — were carried out successfully on April 11, 1999 and January 17.

In his address, Mr Singh emphasised the need for strengthening defence capabilities and national security.

AA According to the defence minister, the development of various missiles through Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme, the country is now on a steady path towards indigenisation of design as well as the development and production of the four missile systems.

These include surface-to-surface missile *Prithvi*, surface-to-air missile *Trishul*, medium range surface-to-air missile *Akash* and anti tank missile *Nag*.

Mr Singh said that no constraints in funds will be allowed to come in the way of indigenous development of IGMDF.

He said that the *Agni II* system is a proof of the country's determination to indigenise India's defence system.

It was informed that the Defence Research and Development Organisation will undertake the design.

It will also take care of the development of air-to-air missile system *Astra*.

It is expected to be beyond visual range state of art air-to-air missile being developed for integration with the Light Combat Aircraft.

THE ASIAN AGE

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