

Indo-US pact on criminal immunity

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India and the US have signed an agreement that will expand the immunity of American citizens from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC), a step that will undoubtedly invite the concern of some EU members.

Announcing the agreement, an external affairs spokesperson said India shared the US concerns about "the possible conflict between robust national judicial processes and international tribunals as also the impact of such tribunals on national sovereignty".

While the agreement is on the principle of reciprocity, it is however advantageous largely to the US which has been entering into a series of such agreements with a number of countries (15 so far).

The agreement, signed on Thursday by US ambassador

Robert Blackwill and foreign secretary Kanwal Sibal, will ensure that citizens of either country are not handed over to a third country for transfer to any international tribunal.

However, Indian citizens in any other country may still be liable to prosecution unless India secures immunity through individual agreements with other countries.

That, clearly, is not on the drawing board with officials admitting the agreement had been signed at the initiative of the US.

The US which had signed its accession to the ICC with some reservations during the Clinton administration had later withdrawn from it under the Bush administration, saying it threatened national sovereignty. The move was seen primarily as a move to protect US national from prosecution for acts committed while participating in peace keeping operations and

multilateral actions.

The US had promised its commitment to international accountability for war crimes genocide and crimes against humanity by promising to pursue the prosecution of the accused under its own domestic law.

Since then the US has embarked on a path of signing bilateral agreements with a number of countries, more controversially with EU members who have become party to the ICC.

In a bid to resolve the issue, the EU, in September set out guidelines for its members when considering the necessity of an agreement in a bid to stem the collapse of the ICC.

Though India is neither a member of the ICC nor bound by EU guidelines, the decision to enter into the agreement with the US will be seen as a clear signal of its desire to accommodate US interests.

27 DEC 2002

India, US to sign rights pact

Udayan Namboodiri
New Delhi, December 25

FOREIGN SECRETARY Kanwal Sibal and US Ambassador Robert Blackwill will on Thursday sign an agreement to prevent the extradition of Indian and American nationals accused of human rights violations to third countries.

The agreement will also prevent Indians and Americans from being hauled up before the international judicial system.

This is considered a significant step as it secures for India an important ally in its argument upholding the sanctity of national judicial systems over multilateral ones like

the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Rome or the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague.

The Indo-US accord will stress the primacy of national judicial processes over international intervention. "We are signatories to human rights conventions but are against multilateral courts because they impinge on national sovereignty," a Government source said.

The implication is that the US and India will stand by each other if other countries or non-government organisations demand that a person of either Indian or American origin be extradited to a multilateral court to be tried for crimes against humanity.

The existing bilateral extradition

and legal assistance treaty would come into play if an American or Indian is arrested in either country.

Indians serving on UN assignments would also benefit as they would have the right to resist extradition to third country courts.

While India has always rejected multilateralism and is one of the few countries to have refused to sign the ICC Treaty, the US is a new convert. After signing that treaty, it walked out of it.

Though India has often defended cases brought against it in the ICJ — the latest being the one lodged by Pakistan over the 1999 Atlantis shooting — there are no cases of New Delhi moving this court.

26 DEC 2002

U.S. could not make Pak. give up terrorism: Brajesh

HP - 1 2002 us
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, DEC. 11. The United States and others in the international community have repeatedly talked to Pakistan about ending cross-border terrorism, but the fact is that inspite of all these efforts, the results have not been satisfactory from India's point of view, says Brajesh Mishra, National Security Adviser and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Mishra is in Washington on a three-day visit and is meeting top officials of the Bush administration for what he termed as "wide-ranging discussions" on all aspects of bilateral relations as well as regional and other issues.

"The U.S. and other Governments have talked repeatedly to Islamabad to end infiltration of terrorists, wind up camps and the infrastructure of the militants... We cannot complain on that score," Mr. Mishra said and added that the results of the efforts were "not satisfactory" from India's perspective.

"Yes, they made efforts. We're grateful... but they did not succeed... We cannot blame the United States for cross-border terrorism not ending. The blame lies elsewhere," he told mediapersons here on Tuesday evening.

He maintained that there could be no dialogue with Pakistan unless cross-border terrorism ceased and that the Bush administration did not lean on India "this time" to resume talks with Islamabad. "How can

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we talk, with cross-border terrorism still going on."

Asking India to forget about cross-border terrorism and talk to Pakistan would amount to adopting double standards on terrorism.

Mr. Mishra had extensive discussions, including a three-hour meeting with his counterpart, Condoleezza Rice, and a long session with the Secretary of State, Colin Powell.

He had also met the Directors of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agencies. He described his interactions as "very satisfactory".

In Washington, during a media briefing at the Embassy of India, Mr. Mishra said he had discussed "fairly extensively" with American policy-makers cooperation in the peaceful uses of space, nuclear energy and high technology; and hoped that some progress would be made.

Mr. Mishra argued that the recent revelations on North Korea-Pakistan should not be turned into a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan for the simple reason that the development of nuclear weapons by North Korea affected a lot of countries.

Asked to comment on Washington's so-called "demarche" to India over Afghanistan, he did not get into details other than saying "that incident is behind us".

THE HINDU

1 2 DEC 2002

India, U.S. share vital national interests: Blackwill

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, DEC. 10. The promotion of peace and freedom in Asia, combating international terrorism and slowing the spread of weapons of mass destruction are three "big" overlapping vital national interests shared by India and the United States.

Speaking on Indo-U.S. relations in Kolkata on November 27, the U.S. Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, stressed that close and cooperative relations between the two countries would endure over the long run because of convergence in democratic values and national interests.

Stating that Asia was poised to become the new "strategic centre of gravity" in international politics, Mr. Blackwill said both India and the U.S. would benefit from an Asian environment free from inter-State con-

flikt, including among the region's great powers.

The Ambassador quoted the U.S. President, George W. Bush, as saying: "We seek a peaceful region where no power, or coalition of powers, endangers the security or freedom of other nations; where military force is not used to resolve political disputes".

"Achieving this objective requires the United States to particularly strengthen political, economic and military-to-military relations with those Asian States that share our democratic values and national interests. That spells India..." he said.

Mr. Blackwill said the most pressing danger was international terrorism. "These newer terrorist organisations, which attract recruits by perverting great religious traditions, embody a lethal threat to both

India and the United States. Their worldview propels them to conduct deadly attacks to inflict mass, indiscriminate casualties among innocents..."

The two countries must work together to curtail the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them.

He maintained that India and the U.S. were also interested in advancing stability in Afghanistan — a stable, free and peaceful Afghanistan — one with a representative central government that can provide physical and economic security for its people. "We want an Afghanistan that has good relations with all its neighbours and with the international community and one that will never again export terrorism," he said.

"While we place emphasis on economic reconstruction and help build

national institutions such as the Afghan National Army, the U.S. and India agree that the hunt for the remaining Al-Qaeda and Taliban elements must continue vigorously until they are brought to justice," he felt.

On defence policy, Mr. Blackwill revealed that Indian naval ships — Sukanya and Sharda — conducted escort patrols for U.S. ships through the Malacca Straits in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. "With American warships now routinely refuelling in Chennai and Mumbai, we saw in September and October the largest-ever U.S.-India naval exercise, called Malabar..."

The Office of Net Assessment, the Pentagon's key think-tank, conducted its first seminar in India with counterparts in the Integrated Defence Staff, he said, pointing to growing defence cooperation between the

two countries. The U.S. and Indian defence intelligence agencies had instituted a formal relationship, the Indian and American Army Training and Doctrine Commands had begun a formal exchange on doctrinal matters and Indian experts participated in a missile defence simulation in Colorado in June.

"While exercises, visits and exchanges are key to building joint military capacities for future interoperability, India also naturally views defence sales as a way to gauge the potential for substantive future bilateral military cooperation...there have been a number of breakthroughs on defence sales that have put the United States and India on the road to a stable, long-term defence supply relationship."

Mr. Blackwill revealed that the Bush administration had worked

with Congress to amend the law requiring congressional notification of all application for export to India of items on the U.S. munitions list. "Since October 24, 2002, only those major defence equipment items above \$14 million now require congressional notification.

This change puts India in a category with American treaty allies such as South Korea and Japan."

India is leasing several additional U.S. fire-finding/weapon locating radars, in addition to those already contracted for purchase. "The Pentagon is expeditiously processing the Indian Army's request for significant Special Forces equipment and border sensors; and the Bush administration approved the sale of General Electric engines and advanced avionics for India's indigenous Light Combat Aircraft," he said.

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CONFIDENTIAL

Brajesh holds talks with Condoleezza Rice, Powell

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, DEC. 10. Brajesh Mishra, National Security Adviser and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, has had extensive talks with key members of the Bush administration as part of the ongoing bilateral dialogue in the context of broadening and deepening relationship between India and the United States.

On Monday, Mr. Mishra met his counterpart, Condoleezza Rice, here for a discussion that lasted three hours, including a working lunch. Later, he called on the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, for a session lasting fifty minutes.

At a general level, issues of bilateral, regional and global interest were also taken up during the talks, which took place in a "cordial and friendly" atmosphere.

Mr. Mishra is expected to focus on specific issues of bilateral interest such as cooperation in technology. He is also expected to meet top officials of nodal intelligence agencies here like George Tenet, head of the Central Intelligence Agency and officials at the Pentagon.

Normally, Mr. Mishra's visit would include interaction with top lawmakers of both parties, but Congress is not in session. Still, he is expected to meet a few of them, including the incoming Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Lugar.

Washington, these days, is quite obsessed with Iraq and Saddam Hussein. And, hence, this is a

topic of discussion. The U.S. is aware of New Delhi's stand on Iraq. India's interests in Iraq and West Asia have been well articulated.

One of the issues that Mr. Mishra is expected to pursue is the North Korea-Pakistan relationship that has taken a new and dangerous route in the realm of nuclear and missile proliferation.

Whatever private steps the Bush administration seems to be taking, publicly it appears to be giving the benefit of doubt to Islamabad saying that things and attitudes have changed since September 11, a view hotly contested here and elsewhere. That the dubious Islamabad-Pyongyang missile-for-nuclear technology-axis continued as late as July has been exposed. It has also been revealed that Pakistan had the audacity to actually use a U.S.-supplied C-130 transport meant for fighting "terror" for a "shipment" from Pyongyang, all, of course, denied by Islamabad.

In fact, many in this country want the administration to probe China's role in all this. Beijing is said to have actually given its blessings to the Islamabad-Pyongyang "barter deal" and, in the process, "having" it both ways.

The Bush administration is also quite aware of India's growing concern and anger about Pakistan's continuing role in the cross-border terrorism.

And, more pointedly, that the President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, is not living up to his part of the commitment to the U.S. and others in the international community.

THE HINDU

1 1 DEC 2002

India doubts the reliability of the US as a source of defence supplies and technology

Technically bilateral

J.N. DIXIT

An important bilateral discussion between India and the United States of America took place in the second week of November to review and revive technological cooperation between the two countries after a gap of nearly two-and-a-half to three years. The discussions were crucial since this was the first exercise to comprehensively review this vital aspect of bilateral relations since India's nuclear weapons tests of May 1998. Before one comes to an assessment of this most recent of initiatives and prospects, it is relevant to examine technological interaction between India and the US over the years. The cooperation in this sphere, however, does not and cannot occur in a vacuum. It is necessarily dependent on the guiding political and strategic considerations in the foreign policies of both countries.

The over-arching influence on India-US relations till the late Eighties was the chemistry of the Cold War and the central point in American foreign policy was the question whether the democratic West, led by the US, could more effectively meet the objective of successfully responding to the rising expectations in developing countries, particularly in a large one like India, which also claimed the additional virtue of being a democracy. The end of the Cold War between 1989 and 1991 has in a manner reduced the centrality of the question mentioned above, as the US diplomat and scholar, Dennis Kux, asserted in the mid-Nineties: "Now that the Cold War is happily history, India has slid down the ladder of US priorities although its continuing effort to develop as a democracy does remain significant." Kux goes on to add the significant conclusion: "One can hardly make support for democracy as a guiding principle of American foreign policy, yet ignore what happens in a democracy in a country where 860 million people live, one out of every six human being on earth [Kux wrote this in 1994]." But at the most fundamental level this remains the basic consideration in the dilemmas in US's south Asian policies.

The way out was articulated in the draft of the US defence planning guide which was leaked to *The New York Times* early in 1992. The portion related to India partially read as follows: "We [the US] will seek to prevent the further development of nuclear arms race on the Indian sub-continent. In this regard we should work to have both countries, India and Pakistan, adhere to the non-proliferation treaty and to place their nuclear energy facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards."

The author is former foreign secretary of India

We should discourage Indian hegemonic aspirations over the other states in south Asia and on the Indian ocean. With regard to Pakistan, a constructive US-Pakistan military relationship will be an important element in our strategy to promote stable security conditions in southwest Asia and central Asia. We should therefore endeavour to rebuild our military relationship with Pakistan given the acceptable resolution of our nuclear concerns."

Though this approach might have been modified in articulation in the final official document, the basic considerations influencing US policies as mentioned above have not altered. This is the basic orientation underpinning the US's subcontinental policies, particularly so in respect of technological cooperation.

The history of India-US technological cooperation has been a chequered one. While on the one hand, it is the inputs from the US which initiated our space and nuclear programmes, cooperation in these spheres was always subject to US concerns about horizontal proliferation and military imbalance between India and Pakistan and in the subcontinent. There was a certain reluctance on the part of the US to assist India in developing its infrastructural industries, particularly in the steel sector, which only changed after the Russians gave this assistance and the resulting competition brought in the British and the Germans.

The 1974 underground nuclear tests by India resulted in re-imposition of technological and economic sanctions against India, slowing down bilateral cooperation. An attempt was made to remedy matters half way during the tenure of the then president, Ronald Reagan, when a memorandum of understanding for technological cooperation was signed between the US and India in 1984. This included arrangements for close cooperation in the spheres of computer technology and certain aspects of space technology for peaceful purposes. These arrangements did not take off the ground because of the Iraq-Kuwait crisis and the anxieties about horizontal proliferation in countries like North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and India.

Regimes like the missile control technology regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group agreement, the nuclear non-proliferation act of the US came into operation. Similarly, doctrines of dual-use technology, the need to prevent such technologies from falling into the hands of "rogue" or "irresponsible" states created a generally restrictive atmosphere on prospects of

India-US cooperation in the spheres of sophisticated technology.

The 1998 nuclear weapons tests by India compounded the situation as far as this cooperation was concerned. The US imposed across-the-board economic and technological sanctions, putting into operation its "enhanced proliferation control initiative". Two hundred Indian organizations or entities were put on the prohibited list under what was called a catch-all connotation. No US company or entity could trade or interact with these 200 Indian entities. Any trading arrangement was subject to export licences predicated on an *a priori* negative decision. Even contracts between individu-



als in these agencies and their US counterparts stood suspended. The more recent developments in this sphere of India-US relations commenced with the talks between Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbott in 1999, resulting in about 50 or 60 Indian entities being removed from the above-mentioned prohibited list. One hundred and fifty entities still remain on the list.

It was only in September 2001 that the Bush administration removed all sanctions against India and Pakistan, although certain restrictions have remained in place under the US non-proliferation act and related congressional stipulations. Now only 24 entities remain on the restrictive list. These entities are India's nuclear facilities which are not under IAEA safeguards, the Defence and Research Development Organization, Bharat Electronics, and the Indian Rare Earth Organization. India's importing sophisticated tech-

nologies now is not subject to the comprehensive negativism of the Enhanced Proliferation Control Initiative. US export licences are still necessary, but the applications are predicated on a positive response.

The Bush administration, which came into power in January 2001, not only continued but also expanded the qualitative positive orientation towards India initiated by Bill Clinton in the last year of his tenure. While the Bush administration remained committed to its global non-proliferation and arms control objectives, there was a certain adjustability in its approach to these issues rooted in US's strategic and security interests. There was more

“ The extent to which India can conform to the US's world-views is a challenge for Indian foreign policy planners ”

political realism. India, therefore, decided to engage the US in a discussion to reduce restrictions on technological cooperation, particularly in the spheres of space, nuclear technology and dual-use goods, and on technologies given the label of Trinity.

The external affairs minister, Yashwant Sinha, broached this subject when he was in Washington on September 9 this year. The item also formed part of the agenda of the prime minister's discussion with George W. Bush. The response was positive. S.

Rangarajan and Anil Kakodkar, chiefs of our space and atomic energy departments, followed up on this political dialogue when their US counterpart came to India. The US under-secretary of commerce, Ken Juster, visited India in the second week of this month to give more substance to India-US exchanges on this subject.

There is a joint India-US high-tech technology consultative group tasked with working out plans of bilateral technological cooperation across the board. This, however, does not mean that there would be no differences of opinion between India and the US on this issue. The cooperation has to be structured subject to the general obligations of the US government to its legislative non-proliferation obligations. However, the political and strategic considerations affecting US policies towards India seem to be changing. The president of the US has to present a national security assessment to the congress once during every tenure. Bush made this presentation in September 2002. It is significant that he referred to India in this presentation under the chapter of emerging centres of global power, underlining the strengthening of relations with India as an important item on the US's foreign policy agenda.

The India-US trade in technology, particularly the non-atomic energy sector, forms a major segment of India-US bilateral trade and it is growing at the rate of 35 per cent to 40 per cent per annum. The US seems to reluctantly acknowledge India's nuclear weapons status, and more important, India's capacities to function as a responsible nuclear weapons power (even though the US does not recognize India as a nuclear power legally).

Further meetings of the high-technology consultative group are scheduled for next year and it is reasonable to presume that cooperation in the technological sector would be a cementing factor in India-US relations. This prospect, is of course subject to overall strategic stipulation that India's policies do not radically contradict or challenge the global and regional order envisaged by the US policy planners. The extent to which India can conform to the US's world-views in the context of Indian interests constitutes a challenge for India's foreign policy planners.

Having stated this, one also has to acknowledge that there are doubts and reticences in India about the reliability of the US as a source of defence supplies and technologies because of India's experience of the US turning off the tap whenever it feels that US interests are affected by Indian policy orientations, particularly in relation to Pakistan. This remains a limitation.

Wisner moots steps to boost Indo-US trade

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HT Correspondent
New Delhi, December 3

FORMER UNITED States ambassador to India and currently vice-chairman of insurer AIG Frank Wisner, who is leading a high-powered US-India Business Council delegation to India, has presented an eight-point proposal which could give a fillip to economic cooperation between the two countries.

Wisner highlighted the fact that the state of the world economy is fragile and the prospects of a conflict in the Middle East or further terror attacks could jeopardise any hint of growth in 2003. However, he did say American business had made a major impact on India and that country's impact on the United States was increasing day by day. "In areas like information technology,

IT-enabled services, biotechnology and other knowledge-based industries and services the potential of economic cooperation has increased dramatically", he stated.

Wisner said India had to reform its tariff structure for trade to take off. "The opening up of trade is the mother of all reforms", he pointed out, adding that lower tariffs would make foreign direct investment more viable for overseas investors.

"The proposed tariff reduction in the Kelkar report sends a loud signal of India's commitment to opening up its market", he added.

Among Wisner's other proposals were for the government to remove foreign investment caps and to ease the process of investing in India. He also felt more capital needed to be in the hands

of the private sector as well as reform of regulatory bodies.

Another of Wisner's proposals was for financial sector reforms. "Broader, deeper capital markets will power India's growth forward and from an American business perspective India is on the right track."

He also repeated the oft-mentioned requirements for better infrastructure as well as protection of intellectual property rights.

One of Wisner's more interesting proposals was for the security of information pipelines. "With several Fortune 1000 moving their back office operations to India it is crucial to make this trade secure, reliable and routine. Our two countries can set up the gold standard for BPO (business process outsourcing) operations", he pointed out.

4 DEC 2002

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Blackwill meets Mufti

20/11 By Luv Puri

JAMMU, DEC. 3. The United States Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, said today that the global fight against terrorism would remain incomplete as long as terrorism existed in Jammu and Kashmir and added that it was far from over.

Speaking to reporters here today after meeting the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, at the latter's residence late this evening he said: "Jammu and Kashmir is a beautiful State but it is afflicted with the menace of terrorism. People here have suffered a lot in the last decade. Most of the victims are innocents." He emphasised the urgency for ending the prolonged tragedy of the people.

Paying tributes to the soldiers guarding the State, he said: "I went to the areas near the Line of Control and the International Border. The security personnel deployed over there are guarding the difficult terrain against heavy odds. The beautiful land has been ravaged by violence."

4 DEC 2002

THE HINDU

Plan for the great thaw

IN discussions earlier this month, technological cooperation between India and the United States was revived. This was the first exercise in nearly three years to comprehensively review this vital aspect of bilateral ties. Technological relations between the two countries have been in a general hiatus since India's nuclear weapons test of May 1998.

The overarching influence on Indo-US relations till the late 1980s was the chemistry of the Cold War. The central question in American foreign policy was whether the democratic West, led by the US, could more effectively meet the objective, of successfully responding to the rising expectations in developing countries, particularly in a large developing country like India which also claimed the virtue of being a democracy. The end of the Cold War between 1989 and 1991 has reduced the centrality of that question. As US diplomat and scholar Dennis Kux asserted in the mid-1990s, 'now that the Cold War is happily history, India has slid down the ladder of US priorities although its continuing effort to develop as a democracy does remain significant'. Significantly, Kux went on to conclude: 'one can hardly make support for democracy as a guiding principle of American foreign policy, yet ignore what happens in a democracy in a country where 860 million people live, one out of every six human beings on earth' (Kux wrote this in 1994).

A draft defence planning document, leaked to the *New York Times* in 1992, outlined the USA's South Asia policy thus: 'We (US) will seek to prevent the further development of nuclear arms race on the Indian sub-continent. In this regard we should work to have both countries, India and Pakistan, adhere to Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place their nuclear energy facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguard. We should dis-



Indo-US technological ties have just got stronger

■ J. N. DIXIT

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courage Indian hegemonic aspirations over the other states in South Asia and on the Indian Ocean. With regard to Pakistan, a constructive US-Pakistan military relationship will be an important element in our strategy to promote stable security conditions in South West Asia and Central Asia'.

The history of Indo-US technological cooperation has been a chequered one. While on the one hand, it is the inputs from the US which initiated our space and nuclear programmes, cooperation in these spheres was always subject to US concerns about horizontal proliferation and military imbalance

arrangements did not take off. Regimes like the Missile Technology Control Regime, the NSG Agreement by the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Act of the US came into operation. Similarly doctrines of dual use technology created a generally restrictive atmosphere.

The 1998 nuclear weapons tests by India compounded this situation. The US imposed across-the-board economic and technological sanctions putting into operation its 'enhanced proliferation control initiative'. Two hundred Indian organisations or entities were put on the prohibited list.

India's importing sophisticated technologies now is not subject to the comprehensive negativism of the Enhanced Proliferation Control Initiative

between India and Pakistan. There was reluctance on the part of the US to assist India in developing its infrastructural industries, particularly in the steel sector which only changed after the Russians gave this assistance and the resulting competition brought in the British and the Germans. The 1974 underground nuclear tests by India resulted in the re-imposition of technological and economic sanctions against India. An attempt was made to remedy matters in Reagan's tenure when a memorandum of understanding was signed between the US and India in 1984, which included arrangements for cooperation in computer technology and aspects of space technology for peaceful purposes. But these

It was only in September 2001 that the Bush administration removed all sanctions against India and Pakistan, although certain restrictions have remained in place under the US Non-Proliferation Act and related congressional stipulations. Now 24 entities remain on the Restrictive List. These are India's nuclear facilities which are not under IAEA safeguards, the Defence and Research Development Organisation, the Bharat Electronics, Indian Rare Earth Organisation. India's importing sophisticated technologies now is not subject to the comprehensive negativism of the Enhanced Proliferation Control Initiative. US export licences are still necessary but the applications are predicated on posi-

tive response. The Bush administration not only continued but expanded the positive orientation towards India initiated by Bill Clinton in the last year of his tenure. While the Bush administration remains committed to its global non-proliferation and arms control objective, there has been a certain adjustability in their approach on these issues rooted in the US's strategic and security interest. There has been more political realism.

The political and strategic considerations affecting US policies towards India seem to be changing. The US president presents a National Security Assessment to the Congress; Bush made this presentation in September 2002. It is significant that he referred to India in this presentation under the chapter of emerging centres of global power, underlining the strengthening of relations with India as an important item on the US foreign policy agenda. Indo-US trade in technology, particularly the non-atomic energy sector, forms a major segment of Indo-US bilateral trade, growing at 35 to 40 per cent per annum. The US seems to reluctantly acknowledge India's nuclear weapons status and, more importantly, India's capacities to function as a responsible nuclear weapons power (even though it does not recognise India as a nuclear power legally). Further meetings of the high technology consultative group are scheduled for next year and it is reasonable to presume that cooperation in the technological sector would be a cementing factor in Indo-US relations. This prospect is, of course, subject to the overall strategic stipulation that India's policies do not radically contradict or challenge the global and regional order envisaged by the US policy planners. The extent to which India can conform to the American world view in the context of Indian interests constitutes a challenge for India's foreign policy planners.

28 NOV 2002

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'IRAQ MUST RELINQUISH WEAPONS, IF ANY'

No power should enforce its will on any country: PM

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

NEW DELHI, NOV. 19. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, said today that the clouds of war were hanging over Baghdad, but hoped there would be no conflict.

Mr. Vajpayee said all the issues, and all the problems (relating to Iraq) should be settled through dialogue at the United Nations. "Nobody should use force against another," the Prime Minister said.

"If Iraq has such weapons that pose a threat to humanity, then it should relinquish these weapons on its own."

Other countries, he said, should understand that every nation has the right to determine its own destiny and choose its own ruler.

"Nobody can be imposed, nor should there be any imposition," Mr. Vajpayee said in what appeared to be a reference to "regime change" in Iraq.

The Prime Minister was speaking at a function at his official residence to celebrate Guru Nanak's birth anniversary and referred to Iraq after stating that the Guru had travelled to Baghdad.



The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, during a prayer at his residence on the occasion of Guru Nanak Dev Prakash 'utsav' in New Delhi on Tuesday.

— Photo: Anu Pushkarna

India doubts reliability of U.S. as defence partner

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By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, NOV. 12. India today publicly questioned the reliability of the U.S. as a long-term partner for defence equipment. A similar message was delivered to the U.S. Government representatives at a closed-door meeting which, incidentally, cleared most of the Indian requests for military hardware.

"The U.S. needs to show that its industry will be a reliable partner. There are serious doubts on product support," said a senior Government official. Although several irritants have been recently removed and in-principle approvals granted to a large number of items, officials remained unimpressed. "So far, we have dealt with simple items. We are yet to test out the efficacy of the changed U.S. approval procedures," said the Defence Production & Supplies Secretary, N. S. Sisodia.

He went on to warn the U.S. of alternate supply sources if it continued to waffle on long-term product support. "It needs to be recognised that we are operating in a competitive market

for defence equipment. If the U.S. is not a good source for state-of-the-art equipment, there are alternate sources available," he observed at a meeting between U.S. armaments industry officials with the Confederation of Indian Industry representatives.

Reluctance by the Americans to stipulate a time-frame for delivery of equipment also betrayed a "lack of reliability", Mr. Sisodia said adding that the old American argument that even its closest allies were vulnerable to disruption of supplies was "not of much support."

The U.S. in reply assured that it was genuinely interested in a long-term defence relationship and sought to alleviate the display of Indian apprehensions by observing that it took time to develop a robust relationship.

Edward Ross, heading the U.S. team at the inter-governmental meeting on defence purchases, assured that the principles on which arms were allowed to be sold to India and other countries were similar. He asked New Delhi to understand the imperatives that made the U.S. act the way it did in the

past and said such situations could be avoided through frequent dialogue. A closer Indo-U.S. security relationship was ordained because it would not only meet U.S. political goals but also fulfil the Indian need for defence equipment.

Mr. Sisodia and a senior Indian Army general, Pankaj Joshi, also commented on the simple "buyer-seller" relationship that the U.S. appeared to be interested in. "There should be some technical partnership such as joint production or transfer of technology," observed Gen. Joshi, adding that the U.S. industries would do well to emulate the model they have agreed upon in China and Turkey.

They asked Washington to refrain from viewing New Delhi as a market for weapon systems if it wanted to capitalise on the enormous commercial opportunities that had arisen due to increased threat perceptions. Both officers pointed out that Indian requirement for military hardware was defensive in nature, purely aimed at protecting its borders and combating terrorism.

13 NOV 2002

THE HINDU

New Delhi can never compete with Islamabad in wooing Washington

There's a limit to being nice

Aug 12

Nearly a decade of being "nice" to the Americans as a policy is coming to its logical *cul-de-sac* in New Delhi's Raisina Hill. That policy started with stray, isolated gestures during the days of P.V. Narasimha Rao's prime ministership, when South Block was told by 7, Race Course Road, the prime ministerial home, that the United States of America was the most important foreign policy priority for India and that the Americans needed to be wooed.

These individual instances of taking that extra step to please the Americans became sacrosanct and was converted to policy once Frank Wisner arrived in New Delhi as the US ambassador. The mandarins of South Block are sticklers for protocol. They were horrified when the then foreign secretary decided to invite Wisner to his official residence at 3, Circular Road for dinner within days of his arrival.

Not even a tentative date had been discussed for Wisner to present his credentials to the *rashtrapati*. Diplomatic convention dictates that a new ambassador does not meet officials of his host country until after he has presented credentials. Such a convention is not limited to India. It applies to all world capitals except a few like Washington, where the president has no time for ambassadors for months and months after they have arrived.

Or Baghdad, where Saddam Hussein may never receive an ambassador's credentials at all, as it happened to the previous Indian ambassador to Iraq. In Washington, they get over this problem by asking ambassadors to function as ambassadors right away after the state department goes through the formalities, pending the formal credentials ceremony at the White House.

In Baghdad, on the other hand, several meetings are fixed with the president, the ambassador is driven to different locations, his cars are switched for reasons of security and the ceremony is aborted at the 11th hour and 59th minute as a message comes on the cell phones of protocol officials that Saddam feels it is unsafe for him to present himself at the ceremony. With several such aborted credentials ceremonies behind him, the ambassador finally starts work in sheer desperation after handing over his letter of credence to the Iraqi foreign ministry.

But to get back to Wisner's experience, the foreign secretary's dinner invitation to the new US ambassador was viewed by many then as an affront to the president. Rashtrapati Bhavan was then engaged in an exercise of streamlining its dealings with foreign missions and the ministry of external affairs. The foreign secretary's office first tried to bully the president's secretariat and get Wisner ahead of the queue of ambassadors waiting for their first formal meeting with the head of state. The invitation for dinner was extended when the

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president's secretariat refused to be bullied and told South Block that Wisner would have to await his turn like every other envoy who was new to India. But the cosy dinner chat at 3, Circular Road was a signal from the MEA that Wisner could start functioning as "His Excellency" without waiting for the president to receive him, as protocol required.

In the years that followed, as the print media and television created illusions of a special relationship between India and the US, it became an unwritten rule not only in South Block, but also in North Block — even in Akbar Bhavan where protocol, customs and other issues concerning foreign missions are handled — that officials had to go that extra mile to be extra nice to the Americans.

Even as other diplomatic missions grumbled, the US embassy in New Delhi received special treatment in the issuance of cards which allowed diplomats access to airports right up to the departure gates to the aircraft, to mention one example of little consequence. But the trouble with such an attitude, especially in a foreign office, is that once you bend the rules, there is no limit to the requests you get and the concessions you are able to make.

That was what happened in the run-up to Bill Clinton's visit to India in March, 2000. The Americans told the Indian embassy in Washington that the US marines who were going into India in connection with the visit would land in New Delhi without visas. The embassy was appalled. But the Americans said that the Marines were used to going into countries without having to carry their passports. In fact, many of them had no passports. But the embassy stood its ground, and in the end, every US Marine who went to India carried a valid passport with a visa for India duly stamped on the document.

More recently, when the secretary of state, Colin Powell, was going to New Delhi, some smart alec in the Indian government proposed that journalists accompanying Powell should be issued *gratis* visas by the Indian mission in Washington. The proposal may have been carried out but for another official who said it would create a scandal in the Indian media. Because the US embassy and consulates in India charge the usual fees from journalists — even those accompanying Indian prime ministers to the US. Reciprocity, for a change, won the day.

The change in attitude that Raisina Hill is now going through does not mean that officials will henceforth be nasty to the Americans. Not at all. It only means that protocol will strictly apply to the Americans just like anyone else. Several factors have prompt-

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K.P. NAYAR

ed such a change. There is a new minister for external affairs and his minister of state has put in his papers. South Block also has a new foreign secretary. Unlike his well-liked, but comprehensively ineffective predecessor, Kanwal Sibal is determined to exercise his authority, judgment and discretion.

So when Powell packed his bags to leave for New Delhi in July, it was put to the new minister in South Block, Yashwant Sinha, and to the prime min-

Rice, in her office. The defence secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, had received Jaswant Singh, when he was defence minister, with special honours.

The ambassador's rationale was grudgingly accepted at 7, Race Course Road, but in the process neither the British foreign secretary, Jack Straw, nor his French counterpart, Dominique de Villepin, who were both in India around the same time as Powell, got to meet Vajpayee. Protocol could



There is a new hard look at foreign policy now under way in the MEA and in the PMO

not be jettisoned again and again.

Sinha and Sibal also believe that niceties are no substitute for policy. Being nice can help, but only upto a point. Besides, south Asia, they reckon, is entering a new period of hard, often uncomfortable, realities in its dealings with the US. Look carefully at what is happening within Pakistan. And the changes that are taking place in US-Pakistan relations.

Most people in India did not even notice a prophetic statement to Pakistan television by Richard Haass, the director of policy planning at the state department, when he was in Islam-

abad after his visit to India last month: "I don't think it is any exaggeration to say that out of all of our bilateral relationships, probably the US-Pakistani relationship is the most changed for the better over the last year or two years. This change was already happening before September 11th. When we came into office, we were determined to improve the US-Pakistani relationship — which, by the way, had begun to improve somewhat even under the previous administration, toward the end. It is quite remarkable how far we have come. Pakistan now is, I think, one of the top four recipients of US assistance programs...Our militaries are cooperating much more...So I think there has really been extraordinary progress."

The question that was asked of Haass did not require such an effusive reply. He could have got away with much less. That he said what he did only shows that he meant every word of it. And that is something which South Block is beginning to grasp as the dust settles on the events since September 11, 2001. Meanwhile, within Pakistan, the only common thread among the various political parties — make no mistake on this score — is their competing claims to get into America's good books. Soon after the elections in her country, Benazir Bhutto was in Washington trying to convince the assistant secretary of state, Christina Rocca, that her party was the best bet for the Americans.

The very first statement, after the elections, by the alliance of Islamic parties, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, said: "We are ready to cooperate with the US in the war against terrorism, but the Americans should not expect support from us in the war against Islam or Muslims." Why, right from the morrow of the September 11 terrorist attacks, the MMA had word from Bush himself that America's war is against terrorism and not against Islam.

So the Islamic parties in Pakistan would have reason to cooperate with the US if and when the need for such cooperation arose in Washington. In any case, Indians should not forget that Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the MMA's choice for prime ministership, used to be an honoured guest at the state department in the first half of the last decade when he was chairman of the Pakistan national assembly's foreign relations committee and an ardent international lobbyist for the Taliban.

In the final analysis, the whole of Pakistan and its political establishment — including the Islamic parties — are like ripe fruit for the Americans to pick from. India is different, and therefore, New Delhi can never compete with Islamabad in wooing Washington. Which is why there is a new, hard look at foreign policy now under way in the MEA and in the prime minister's office.

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INDO-U.S. TIES / 'REMOVE INVESTORS' FEARS'

India is a victim of terrorism: U.S.

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 29. The United States Ambassador, Robert D. Blackwill, said today that India was a victim of terrorism which was entirely "external driven".

Addressing a FICCI meeting here on U.S.-India economic relations, Mr. Blackwill responded to a question on Jammu and Kashmir by observing that "India is a victim of terrorism. The problem in Kashmir is cross-border terrorism. In our judgment it (terrorism in Kashmir) is entirely external driven."

He said the insurgency-hit State had the potential to become a great tourism destination if peace returned. "If peace and stability can be brought, it is a fabulous destination (for tourists)."

He did not comment on the prospects for peace following the successful Assembly elections in J&K and said "what happens there remains to be seen."

Mr. Blackwill said Indo-U.S. relations were rooted in "common interests, shared beliefs and personal feelings." However, major advances notwithstanding, econom-

ic relations lagged far behind.

"Transformation of our bilateral ties can be seen in the unprecedented stream of Washington policymakers who continue to visit New Delhi, nearly 100 in the past year. These officials engage intensively with their Indian counterparts in U.S.-India diplomatic collaboration, counter-terrorism efforts, defence and military-to-military cooperation, intelligence exchange, law enforcement, development assistance, joint scientific and health projects."

The Indo-Pak tensions, the recent communal violence in Gujarat and the "uncertainty" over disinvestment policies were putting the brakes on the flow of foreign investments into India. Americans hesitated to invest in India because of the uncertainty over economic reforms. "The disinvestment debate in the last two months is only the latest example," he said.

Also, potential U.S. investors felt that Indian taxes and tariffs were too high and there was much government interference in business decisions. There was erosion of confidence whether the sanctity of contracts would be honoured. The erosion of

confidence was the cumulative effect, he said while not blaming it on any single project.

"U.S. pharmaceutical and biotech companies would expand their presence here if India had a modern legal framework to protect product patents," he said and drew a parallel with China which had forged ahead of India on most economic measures and was an attractive destination for U.S. investors.

There was need to raise the foreign direct investment caps and open up the retail sector, besides putting up worldclass infrastructure of roads, airports and ports to attract foreign investment.

"The image among many U.S. investors—and the underlying reality—is that India Inc. is only partially open for business. The present American view is largely that China is a place where companies can make money, and India is not," he said emphasising that India was capable of high growth rates and should pursue reforms aggressively as that would help transform bilateral relations between the two countries for mutual prosperity.

Sinha, Haass discuss bilateral issues

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, OCT. 28. India and the United States today had their first face-to-face discussions on the North Korean nuclear issue when Richard Haass, Director (Policy Planning Staff) in the State Department, called on the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha.

According to the Foreign Office spokesman, the entire gamut of bilateral issues came up for discussion between Mr. Haass and Mr. Sinha. There was also a brief review of the prevailing regional situation apart from discussions on Iraq. Mr. Haass meets the Finance Minister, Jaswant Singh, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, tomorrow. According to the spokesman, Mr. Sinha and Mr. Haass spoke about the current state of play in the U.N. Security Council relating to a possible resolution on Iraq.

Separately, Mr. Haass interacted with the newly-formed, 50-strong India-U.S. Parliamentary Forum.

The U.S. Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, was also present at the meeting.

Mr. Haass, who travels to Pa-

kistan tomorrow, also had a meeting with the non-official "Kashmir Committee" headed by Ram Jethmalani, which has some prominent editors and retired officials as members.

According to sources, Mr. Haass reiterated the need to resume dialogue with Pakistan when he met with the bipartisan Parliamentary forum. He explained the American position on Iraq to the MPs. At his meeting with the Kashmir Committee, the American official — a key adviser to the Secretary of State — whose job it is to take a longer-term vision of the U.S. foreign policy, reportedly stressed the importance of the panel's job.

Mr. Haass was hopeful that the new Government in Jammu and Kashmir would take steps to redress the grievances of the people, sources said, adding that he saw the elections to the State Assembly as free and fair.

(After the meeting with Mr. Haass, Mr. Ram Jethmalani told PTI that the Committee was ready to hold talks with "certain elements" in Pakistan, who were willing to solve the problem of militancy peacefully).

(In another development, the

All-Party Hurriyat Conference chief, Abdul Ghani Bhat, held a separate meeting with the Kashmir Committee this afternoon at Mr. Jethmalani's residence).

A spate of American visitors will be following in the footsteps of Mr. Haass. While the U.S. Special Envoy for Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, arrives in New Delhi tomorrow night, the Under Secretary for Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky, will be here on October 30. Ms. Dobriansky will hold what has been billed as the "global issues forum" with the Foreign Secretary, Kanwal Sibal. The frequency of the dialogue will be decided at the first meeting. On November 7, Alan Larsen, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, is expected. The Under Secretary for Trade, Ken Juster, will be here on November 11-12. Mr. Juster is expected to take up outstanding issues relating to Indo-U.S. cooperation in high-technology areas.

There is little doubt that the level of Indo-American engagement is intense and can only grow in the coming months.

The "fullness" of the Foreign Office calendar in the next fortnight demonstrates that clearly.

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Our strategies differ but views on terrorism identical: Blackwill

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, OCT. 18. The United States and India have identical objectives regarding terrorism, but sometimes differ on strategy and tactics. "That seems to me the most natural thing in the world. We have that with our closest partners and allies," the U.S. Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, said here today in an interview to *The Hindu*.

"...In all those decades of the Cold War, our principal differences were on objectives, not on strategy and tactics... it's hard for me to think of a single international issue where we have a serious, fundamental difference with India on objectives," he said.

Would the electoral success of Islamists in Pakistan complicate the India-Pakistan equation? Mr. Blackwill said this remained to be seen. On Gen. Musharraf's commitment to end infiltration permanently, he said this was an issue that was "important to the U.S."

"We have lots of stamina and we'll con-

tinue to pursue this until we reach the objective that both the U.S. and India have — which is the end of terrorism against India emanating from Pakistan... that's our stated view."

To a question whether the pullback of troops in the sub-continent would lead to a shifting of American and Western attention from South Asia, he said that in the last 36 hours, the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, had called the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, and the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha.

"This is not an example of attention shifting away... we have vital national interests out here. We have a vital national relationship in continuing to transform the U.S.-India relationship. We have a vital national interest in the future of U.S. relations with Pakistan."

On Gujarat, he said he joined with "Indians who hope for communal harmony". At the height of the Gujarat tragedy, the U.S. had hoped it would end and would not be repeated. "I have expressed that to the Government of India. I haven't lectured the

Government of India on that. We don't think we need to do that. This is a great democracy and this will be played out in the context of democratic debate and discourse within the country."

He conceded that the speed of moving forward in high-technology cooperation between the U.S. and India had been slow. But the two countries were overturning, in virtually every element of bilateral relationship, impediments of either years or decades.

Referring to the quality of diplomatic exchanges, military cooperation and law enforcement, he said: "...we are working together, I would almost say, as one Government to get Abu Salem back to India from Portugal." His one frustration was lack of progress in the Indo-U.S. business relationship, where foreign direct investment from the U.S. continued to be "flat as a chapatti".

On the U.S. President, George W. Bush's plans to visit India, Mr. Blackwill said he wanted to come. "We have to see. There are external influences on that..."

Indo-US forces enjoyed great, camaraderie

By Chidanand Rajghatta
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Portland (Maine): The second Indo-US joint military exercise which began in Anchorage, Alaska, on September 29 found plenty of common ground, according to officers who are overseeing the exercise.

The officers got along famously. By week's end, the former Cold War adversaries appeared to be warming up with talk of more exercises and regular operations in the near future.

In a telephone interview with this correspondent from Anchorage (which is as far from Portland, Maine as you can get in this sprawling country), Indian ambassador Lalit Mansingh said the aim of the exercise is to learn from each other's experience and procedures towards achieving inter-operability.

That's diplomatese for doing things together. Already, sections of the Pakistani media are fulminating about what the cold weather joint operations mean in the Siachen context.

With the army and the navy hav-

ing held joint exercises with the US forces, it is now the turn of the Air Force, which has had fraternal relations with the USAF, going back to 1988 (stemming from the LCA cooperation) but has not been in the exercises picture yet.

Mr Mansingh, who attended the exercises mid-week wearing combat fatigues and even cradled weapons on the occasion, said there was a great camaraderie between the two sides. The spirit of the exchanges reflect a real change in attitude, he gushed.

Questions remain though. De-

spite all the military-to-military cooing and billing, at the policy level, Washington has still put a restraining hand on India's purchase of the Arrow missile system from Israel.

There are also signs that the US may resume military supplies to Pakistan, although American officials have indicated that it will largely comprise items that will help Pakistan fight terrorism and the F-16s and other lethal high-tech systems that could be used against India and will not be in any new list.

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Paradigm shift in Indo-U.S. ties: Cohen

By Mahesh Vijapurkar

MUMBAI, OCT. 7. The American expert on South Asia, Stephen Cohen, today forecast a "slightly more pro-active role for the United States in Kashmir", saying that the results of the elections in Jammu and Kashmir would determine the direction of future ties between India, Pakistan and the U.S. India itself now saw the U.S. as a "potential strategic partner" and seemed to "acknowledge that the U.S. is here to stay".

"I see some limited engagement" in the future, Dr. Cohen said, "though I cannot say in what way". The U.S. could continue to engage Pakistan without disengaging with India. The U.S., in the past, "had made mistakes, which have been corrected" and "the Bush administration may make some more of its own" but the relationship between India and Pakistan would "stabilise".

Addressing presspersons at the Mumbai Press Club, he said he saw "the relationship stabilising somewhere in the positive zone". A large Indian-American population was exerting pressure — by its participation in domestic politics — on the Bush administration to "engage India". The same was true of the Pakistani-American population.

Dr. Cohen said there was an apparent paradigm shift. In the past, the U.S. diplomatic approach was one of "hectoring, lecturing India" on its nuclear policy. Now, "the two sides have learnt to keep diplomacy quiet. They are more indirect and more polite and the diplomats have learnt to

keep their mouths shut."

In the context of the post-9/11 situation, India "significantly, has been accommodative". "There was every reason for the Bush administration to have kept India out of the containment of terrorism but there was a skilful engagement involving India as it realised that the relationship had to be more enduring than in the past."

The U.S. would not like to see a "collapsed Pakistan". If the Indian perspective called for a "stable but weak Pakistan", the U.S. was for "a stable Pakistan strong enough to deal with Islamic extremism". This "strength" would help India too.

A crucial aspect of Washington's policy, Dr. Cohen felt, was the declaration during the Clinton regime that the Line of Control was inviolable and that the international community did not approve of the "constant threats of wars" between the neighbours.

In future, he expected the U.S. to show Pakistan how to be "more flexible". The military in that country saw "India as an implacable enemy", which would "not negotiate unless put under pressure". Pakistan could have done worse, he said, referring to the Pervez Musharraf regime.

Dr. Cohen was sceptical of a civilian approach to domestic politics in Pakistan and wondered if it could ever have a "democracy without any dictatorial power".

Kashmiris are not for Pak.: PM

LONDON, OCT. 7. Commending the voter turnout in Jammu and Kashmir elections despite "violence orchestrated" from across the borders, the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, today said people had expressed the view that they were not for Pakistan.

"The voter turnout so far has been commendable in the face of the most vicious campaign of threats, intimidation and violence orchestrated from across our borders and aimed at voters and candidates alike."

"People have expressed their opinion. They are not for Pakistan," Mr. Vajpayee, who began a three-nation tour to Europe, said in a wide-ranging interview to the *Financial Times* published today.

Expressing disappointment with "Pakistan-backed" attempts to sabotage elections in Jammu and Kashmir, where polling for the last phase will be held tomorrow, the Prime Minister said the current level of violence by militants suggested that Islamabad had not changed its behaviour and had "done nothing" to fulfil its pledges to stop cross-border terrorism.

Mr. Vajpayee ruled out the immediate resumption of talks with Pakistan saying "terrorism and dialogue cannot go together. Pakistan is not prepared to listen. The overwhelming sentiment in India is that no meaningful dialogue can be held until Pakistan abandons the use of terrorism."

The Prime Minister regretted that India's attempts to make peace with its belligerent neighbour had always been "repaid with violence."

"I have made a conscious effort to resume and sustain a dialogue with Pakistan in the face of the most discouraging responses from that country and, I must confess, sometimes also in the face of domestic opposition."

The "series of high-profile attacks convinced us that our efforts at initiating a dialogue were being seen as our weakness," he said. — PTI

Blackwill, Kashmir panel confer

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 7. The American Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, today had a luncheon meeting with the Kashmir Committee headed by the former Union Law Minister, Ram Jethmalani. The two sides discussed the nature of "free and fair" elections in Jammu and Kashmir as well as what need to be done next in the troubled State.

Accompanied by his senior colleagues, the American envoy learnt for himself the kind of dialogue the Kashmir Committee has established with the various pockets of opinion and resistance in the Kashmir Valley. According to a committee member, the American diplomats appreciated the committee's efforts and acknowledged that it had opened certain channels of communications that otherwise would have remained indifferent and closed.

The American side is believed to have noted with satisfaction that the committee had managed to secure an understanding with all "resistance" groups that if a solution to the Kashmir "problem" was to be found, then all sides must eschew "extreme" positions. This understanding has been spelt out in the joint statements issued by the committee, first, after its interaction with Shabir Shah and later with Abdul Gani Bhat.

After an hour-long meeting, Mr. Jethmalani said the committee and the U.S. had a "clearer understanding" of each other's viewpoints and they hoped to continue their effort. Mr. Jethmalani described the meeting as "very positive" and both sides would continue to coordinate to find a solution to the Kashmir problem.

Asked about the U.S. interest vis-à-vis the Kashmir issue, Mr. Jethmalani said not just the U.S. the whole world was interested in peace and finding a durable solution.



The U.S. Ambassador, Robert D. Blackwill, with the Kashmir Committee Chairman, Ram Jethmalani, in New Delhi on Monday. — Photo: R.V. Moorthy

To a question on the post-elections scenario, while Mr. Jethmalani did not comment, he hoped that the Government would keep to its promise of holding talks after the elections even with those who did not take part in it.

Apart from Mr. Jethmalani and Mr. Grover, the committee convener, Ashok Bhan, and members, journalist, Dileep Padgoankar and the former Law Minister, Shanti Bhushan took part. The committee, mean-

while, came under fire from the National Conference president, Omar Abdullah, who accused it of wanting to "weaken" his party. He saw a conspiratorial design in the committee granting audience the same day to both Sajjad Lone (of the People's Conference) and Saifuddin Soz (a former National Conference parliamentarian and now a Congress member).

However, the committee members describe the presence of the two as entirely fortuitous.

Indo-U.S. military exercises begin

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 3. Indian soldiers and airmen who landed in Alaska on September 30 have begun their platoon-level joint training exercise with their American counterparts at Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Air Force base.

'Geronimo Thrust 02' is the first exercise of its kind involving Indian troops and airmen on American soil. It is designed to familiarise the military personnel with some U.S. training techniques and equipment as well as give U.S. soldiers the opportunity to interact with soldiers and airmen from India, according to a statement from the U.S. Embassy here.

Sponsored by the U.S. Pacific Command, this exercise will involve Indian soldiers training with soldiers from the U.S. army. The Indian forces include a platoon of 32 soldiers plus 10 pathfinders and eight senior Army and Air Force observers. IAF personnel and aircraft include 35 personnel and one IL-76 aircraft. The exercise features a training phase, an airborne mission, a manoeuvre portion and a foot march.

The exercise will consist of several phases. During the training portion, forces will conduct ground training and equipment familiarisation and day and night jumps. Forces will also conduct an air-borne mission in which Indian pathfinders and scouts jump with U.S. scouts, Indian squads jump in U.S. platoons and some Indians jump from the IL-76. The Indian personnel, who flew to Alaska in their own aircraft, will conduct training and manoeuvre using their own and U.S. aircraft and equipment. They will return to India around October 11.

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EU team voices concern over minority killings

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, OCT. 1. A five-member delegation from the European Parliament, which met with the Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, on Monday and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today, raised the issue of killings of minorities earlier this year with their interlocutors.

Neena Gill, member of the European Parliament from the United Kingdom, said that such incidents detracted from India's future given its secular character.

Addressing a press conference today with Ms. Gill, E. Baron Crespo, president, parliamentary group of the Party of European Socialists, said they had no doubts about the way the Election Commission

conducted elections in India.

Responding to questions on the elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Crespo said it was not for them to put a "seal" on the polls taking place in the State. Expressing himself in support of the elections, Mr. Crespo said they had received information from different sources, including European diplomats, that it was a democratic process.

Praising the Election Commission, the member from Spain said the body had managed to modify the will of the Gujarat Government.

"We have no doubts about their way of doing elections in India," he said, adding that the electoral process was up to the Indian institutions to handle.

On India-Pakistan tensions,

Mr. Crespo said his delegation was worried about the situation. It was in favour of a solution through dialogue and negotiations and pointed to the European experience of resolving differences.

On elections in Pakistan, Mr. Crespo said they had not received any guarantees about the safety and security of MPs who might want to travel to Pakistan for the elections. There had been several assassinations and it was difficult to send people to that country.

Asked about cross-border terrorism from Pakistan, he said terrorism was not "your" (Indian) problem, but was a global concern. "We are not looking at the problem from outside," he said, adding that they supported the Indian position. On Iraq,

he said there was a clear identity of views between his delegation and India. Calling for respect for the U.N. role, Mr. Crespo said there was need to have a new U.N. resolution. Iraq, he said, must let the arms inspectors back in, but "one, single country" could not decide on changing the dictatorial regime in Iraq — it was a matter that should be left to the Iraqi people to decide. Also, sanctions must be lifted if Iraq complied with the U.N. resolutions. Referring to the upcoming Indo-European summit in Copenhagen, he said there was need to intensify and upgrade the relationship between India and the European Union. And called for greater interaction between the European and Indian Parliaments.

U.S. has appreciated Indian view on terrorism: Sushma

By Our Staff Correspondent

RAIPUR, SEPT. 20. The Union Information and Broadcasting Minister, Sushma Swaraj, today said that the U.S. had, for the first time, translated into action its concern over terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir by pressuring Pakistan to allow the smooth conduct of elections in the State. This was an important step towards the strengthening of the Indo-American ties.

Speaking to presspersons at "Meet the Press" here, Ms. Swaraj said that until now the U.S. had not viewed the Kashmir problem from an Indian perspective and that the Indian leaders, including the Prime Minister, had made their resentment to Washington's stand known. "However, the statement made by the American Ambassador in India, Robert Blackwill, yesterday that elections in the State were off to a positive start despite the fact that infiltration across the Line of Control had gone up since Ju-

ly indicated a shift in the American stand on the issue," she said.

The outcome of the elections in the State was not the issue. The Government's concern was only to hold credible, free and fair and participatory elections. "This has been proved beyond doubt at the conclusion of the first round of polling."

She had never supported the demand for the trifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir, Ms. Swaraj said. She had only said that a demand for separate statehood within the country was not unconstitutional. "If the people feel that Jammu and Ladakh have been neglected and a separate economic, political and administrative identity can help in overcoming their grouse, there is nothing wrong in such a demand." The Jammu State Morcha, demanding a statutory regional council, was not a communal front but an organisation of Hindus, Muslims and all those who wanted the neglect of Jammu to end.

On the achievements of the National Democratic Alliance in the past four years, Ms. Swaraj said that when the concept of coalition governments started in India, political analysts expressed apprehension about them. Their doubts were proved right when coalitions collapsed within a year or so, and this included the BJP Government in 1998. "But when we sought the mandate again, we went to the people with our allies and with our Prime Ministerial candidate. This was acceptable to the people and the result is that the NDA will complete three years next month," she said.

On the Congress president, Sonia Gandhi's foreign origin, Ms. Swaraj said she deserved all respect for being the "bahu" (daughter-in-law) of the Nehru family, wife of Rajiv Gandhi and president of a major political party. But when it came to electing her as the Prime Minister, it would amount to belittling the capabilities of 100 crores of people.

White House calls for stronger ties with Delhi

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20. — A White House strategy paper today described India as a “growing world power” and said “US interests require a strong relationship” with Delhi. The document, approved by President George W Bush, also reaffirms US interest in seeing India and Pakistan resolve their disputes.

The paper said Washington sees India’s potential to become one of the great democratic powers and “has worked hard to transform our relationship accordingly”. With regard to Pakistan, it said: “US bilateral ties have been bolstered by Pakistan’s choice to join the war against terror and move towards building a open and tolerant society.”

The paper, however, stressed that the USA looked first to concrete steps by India and Pakistan that can help defuse military confrontation. The annual strategy document laid down the strategic path for each administration and is one of the most im-

portant published papers of a Presidency.

The USA has undertaken a transformation in its bilateral ties with India “based on a conviction that US interests require a strong relationship with India... We are the two largest democracies, committed to political freedom protected by representative government”. The paper said India was moving toward greater economic freedom as well. “We have a common interest in the free flow of commerce, including through the vital sea lanes of the Indian Ocean. “Finally, we share an interest in fighting terrorism and in creating a strategically stable Asia.”

It, however, said differences remained over development of India’s nuclear and missile programmes and the pace of its economic reforms. But “today we start with a view of India as a growing world power with which we have common strategic interests. Through a strong partnership with India, we can best address any differences and shape a dynamic future”, it said.

Drive to step out of US-Pakistan shadow

K.P. NAYAR

New York, Sept. 16: Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee wound up his trip to America last night after laying the groundwork for enhanced Indo-US ties, independent of Washington's relations with Pakistan.

In the next few weeks, several high-level bilateral visits from both sides will build on the momentum imparted to the relationship by Vajpayee's meeting here with President George W. Bush.

Finance minister Jaswant Singh, who steered India's ties with the US out of the turbulence of the 1998 nuclear tests as external affairs minister, will be in Washington later this month.

Commerce minister Murali Manohar Murmu will also travel to the US shortly. The chief of naval staff, Admiral Madhukar Singh, is already in the US on an official visit as part of the

growing defence ties between the two countries.

Addressing a press conference before explaining for home, Vajpayee acknowledged that India's ties with the US now stood on its own, implying that it was no longer Pakistan-centric.

Vajpayee was particularly satisfied that he had received all-round support for India's stand against terrorism.

"A common theme running through all my meetings was that of international terrorism. Every single world leader whom I met condemned the terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India," the Prime Minister said of the bilateral meetings he had here with several Presidents and Prime Ministers on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

Marking out Pakistan as a dictatorship, he said: "I naturally discussed with all these lead-

ers the imperative need for democracies to cooperate in rooting out terrorism effectively and without discrimination."

Articulating differences with the US policy on Iraq, the Prime Minister said India had a "historical relationship" with Iraq and vital strategic interests in the Gulf region.

"We believe that the sanctions against Iraq should be lifted in tandem with full and effective compliance by Iraq with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions."

The press conference saw many light moments and revealed a relaxed Vajpayee fully in grasp, belying recent Western media reports about his health and faculties.

In the presence of B.K. Agnihotri, India's ambassador-at-large for persons of Indian origin (PIOs) and non-resident Indians, there was a discussion on

whether General Pervez Musharraf qualified for PIO status since he was born in Delhi.

Referring to Bush's comments to him about jointly building up a robust Indo-US relationship, the Prime Minister said he had remarked to the US President that "I may not be there, but you will be here."

Vajpayee said it was understandable that the US was paying more attention to Afghanistan in the war against terrorism than to India's troubles with cross-border terror because they are the victims of the Taliban's policies. "It is understandable," he said.

But he added that UN Security Council resolutions on terrorism will become meaningful only when al Qaida is vanquished and its followers brought to justice.

The Prime Minister will halt overnight in Zurich tonight and leave for New Delhi on Tuesday.



Vajpayee at a media conference in New York. (PTI)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2002

PREDICTABLE PATTERN

THE VERY NECESSARY bilateral interaction between India and Pakistan has once again fallen hostage to the penchant of both parties to draw in third party interlocutors on their side and to remain locked in their own rigid positions. While Pakistan's President, Pervez Musharraf, expressed stridently and provocative anti-India sentiments in his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Indian officialdom too seemed unable to resist reacting in similar language, depicting Pakistan as an irresponsible party that should be meted out harsh treatment by the rest of the global community. An unwanted result, from India's point of view, was that the importance of the bilateral discussions between the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the U.S. President, George W. Bush — discussions that should have furthered the prospects for a strategic partnership — was overshadowed. This symptom appears to emanate from the guiding principle of current policy that the U. S. must be brought unequivocally on India's side before any initiative can be launched with respect to Pakistan. Efforts in this regard fly in the face of the frequent pronouncements that Indo-U.S. bilateral ties will be insulated from the Indo-Pakistani rivalry and the repetition of points already taken note of by Washington could prove to be an unnecessary irritant. The reaction to the verbal assault by the Pakistan President is also contrary to the spirit of a statement by Mr. Vajpayee at the outset of his visit that a violence-free election in Jammu and Kashmir would be the "litmus test" of an end to cross-border terrorism. Since India has made the initiation of a dialogue contingent on the ending of cross-border terrorism the necessary corollary is that a dialogue will ensue if the Assembly elections are relatively free of violence. These are the objectives and game plan that New Delhi must stick to.

Gen. Musharraf has, in a subsequent interaction with the media, described his anti-India

statements as a resort to the use of the language of desperation which he felt was justified by India's failure to reciprocate and respond to several initiatives taken by him. That there is an element of desperation in Pakistan's policy-making circles appears evident from the persistent and foolhardy efforts to draw a distinction between "freedom fighters" who resort to terror and violence and terrorists of another breed. That these efforts are untenable in the new context should now be obvious with U.S. President's dismissal of the distinction. Neither can Pakistan's efforts to devalue the importance of the forthcoming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir hold much weight in a context where the U.S. and the rest of the international community do regard this democratic exercise as an important milestone on the way to the restoration of normality and repeatedly emphasise (in a message obviously directed at Pakistan) the necessity of ensuring that they are held in a violence-free atmosphere. Gen. Musharraf's plea that crisis management should not become a substitute for conflict resolution is premature in a context where the third parties that are trying to manage the crisis have shown no inclination to take on board Pakistan's counter-argument that resolution of the conflict over Kashmir will ensure that there are no crises in the future.

In contrast to the main protagonists, the U.S. appears to have given thought to the broad and long-term objectives it seeks to attain in regard to the subcontinent. Its is a multi-faceted agenda and it is far from certain that a super-power that must deal with developments all over the world will be able to sustain the focus and energies required to fulfil it or that the implementation of this game plan will synchronise with the dynamics that will unfold on the ground. That makes it all the more imperative that India and Pakistan stick to the bilateral route for a resolution of the conflict between them.

Atal, Bush clear hi-tech hurdle

K.P. NAYAR

New York, Sept. 12: The way has been cleared for scrapping restrictions on Indo-US cooperation in space and nuclear energy following a 35-minute meeting here today between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President George W. Bush.

The restrictions, which were in force even before India's nuclear tests in 1998, were tightened by the Bill Clinton administration after India declared itself a nuclear weapons state.

So severe were the restrictions imposed on India that anyone associated with nuclear and space technology was denied visas to visit America even for academic conferences.

In the run-up to today's meeting between Vajpayee and Bush, the chief of the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro), K. Kasturirangan, and head of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre Anil Kakodkar were in the US for preliminary talks envisaging Indo-US cooperation in space and nuclear energy.

Briefing reporters on the Vajpayee-Bush meeting, external affairs ministry spokeswoman Nirupama Rao was circumspect about such cooperation.

She said the two leaders had agreed to explore the possibility of increased cooperation in "diverse forms of energy", space, high technology, commerce and science.

If India and the US go ahead with joint activity in space and nuclear energy, it will be a quantum leap in their bilateral rela-

tions, which underwent a fundamental transformation following Clinton's visit to India two-and-a-half years ago.

The US has traditionally opposed India's space programme because of its possible military potential and because India is outside the framework of the Missile Technology Control Regime.

Washington has in the past criticised Soviet — and later Russian — help for India's programme and pressured Moscow unsuccessfully to stop such assistance.

On nuclear cooperation, the Americans have been steadfastly opposed to the Indian programme since the first nuclear tests in 1974. Successive administrations have declined to cooperate with India even in the areas of peaceful or civilian use, including energy.

Although it would be unrealistic to expect the Americans to work with India on any military aspect of New Delhi's nuclear programme, the way is now open for cooperation on nuclear energy.

Vajpayee's meeting with Bush, which was held at America's permanent mission to the UN, reviewed the progress of Indo-US relations in the context of their first meeting last year in Washington.

The two leaders noted the qualitative transformation of these relations, especially in the areas of defence and counter-terrorism, Rao said. The US has just announced a fresh arms sale to India.

QUOTE

We will not allow any terrorist or tyrant to threaten civilisation...

GEORGE W BUSH

13/9
Pun 05

ECONOMIC, DEFENCE TIES DISCUSSED

Pak. must halt cross-border terrorism, PM tells Bush

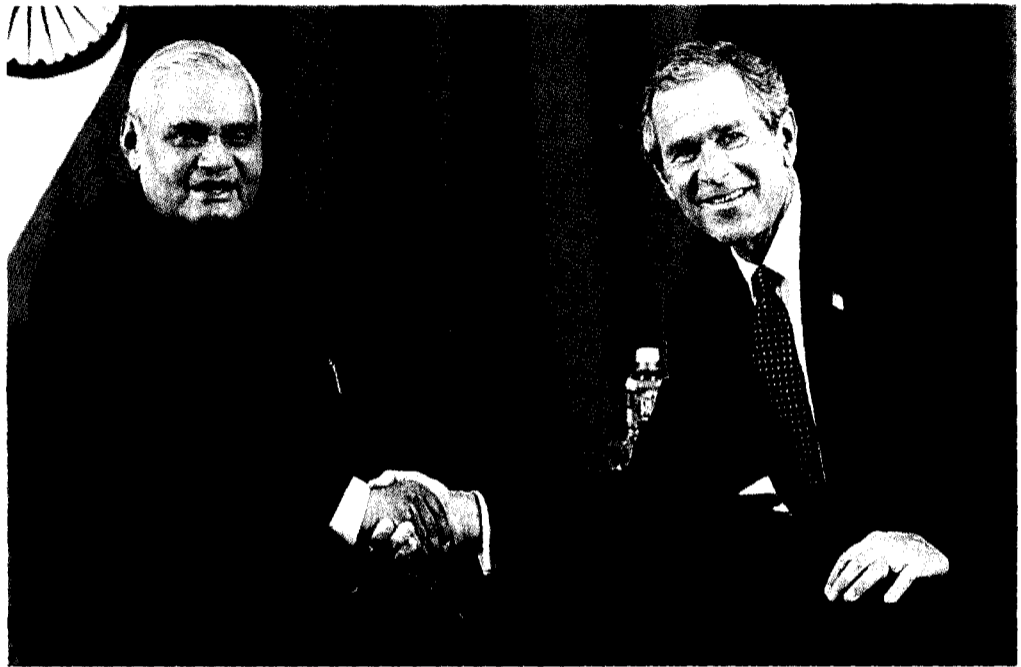
NEW YORK, SEPT. 12. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today met the U.S. President, George W. Bush to discuss Pakistan's continued support to cross-border terrorism and its sustained attempts to disrupt elections in Jammu and Kashmir through terrorist violence.

During his interaction with Mr. Bush, Mr. Vajpayee is understood to have emphasised the need for telling the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, in no uncertain terms that cross-border terrorism must come to an end for restoration of peace and normal ties between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Mr. Vajpayee, who was assisted by the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, the Foreign Secretary, Kanwal Sibal and his Principal Secretary, Brajesh Mishra, is believed to have drawn Mr. Bush's attention to the sudden upsurge in violence in Jammu and Kashmir, ahead of the Assembly elections.

The meeting came a day after the gunning down of the Jammu and Kashmir Law Minister and National Conference candidate, Mushtaq Ahmad Lone.

Economic and defence cooperation also reportedly figured in the parleys ahead of Gen.



The U.S. President, George W. Bush, with the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, in New York on Thursday. — Reuters

Musharraf's meeting with Mr. Bush. As regards defence cooperation, the two countries had recently conducted joint military exercises in Agra and further exercises are planned in Alaska. They are also likely to go

in for joint naval exercises soon.

India's claim for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council and contributions to the U.N. is also believed to have come up. Mr. Bush in his second meeting with Mr. Vaj-

payee in one year apprised him about the broad contours of the road map for U.S. relations with India, including Washington's desire to further consolidate the new momentum in bilateral ties. — PTI

Diego Garcia stage for Indo-US games

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 17. — Diego Garcia, the US naval base in the Indian Ocean, will be an important staging point for Exercise Malabar, the cornerstone of Indo-American defence ties.

The exercise, first since the Pokhran II blast in 1998, will involve two Indian surface ships (probably modern destroyers), a submarine and an equivalent American fleet from the Seventh Fleet. The three-day exercise is six weeks away and will involve a journey to Diego Garcia and back, the starting point probably being Cochin, the headquarters of the Navy's Southern Naval Command.

The exercise is, in some ways, symbolic. For it marks the complete normalisation of Indo-US defence ties.

This is the first time that Diego Garcia will be used in any of the Malabar Exercises. Significantly, India was one of the countries that felt

threatened when the USA established a base there in the seventies.

Diego Garcia is still an important base for the USA. Even during the Afghan War, the B-52 bombers striking Taliban targets refuelled there.

Important US naval vessels in the area — during the Afghan War, there were four super-carriers — use the port. This exercise will involve honing anti-submarine skills with Diego Garcia being a staging post for an OTR, or operational turnaround, a logistical exercise.

The exercise is part of a "busy season" for the Navy, with the Chief, Admiral Madhvendra Singh, leaving for Moscow. Sources said the Admiral, during his 10-day stay, will visit shipyards — Russia is building Krivak class warships for India — and hold important meetings with top level officials of the Putin government and the Navy.

This visit to Russia comes after that of Vice Admiral

Rajeshwar Nath, who was then in charge of warship production. The Navy is perpetually short of spares for its Russian-built vessels. Russia has also offered advanced weapon systems and radars for the ships being built for the Navy.

Admiral Singh will visit the USA soon. Sources said there was a conscious effort to have the trip now. Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat visited the USA at the fag end of his term.

Admiral Sushil Kumar was also scheduled to go just before he retired, but the visit was postponed because of the 11 September incident. By going now, nine months after being appointed, the Navy chief will be able to "build chemistry", officials said. Admiral Singh is likely to meet his US counterpart, Admiral Vernon Clark, other senior members of the government and military for discussions on strategic issues, and probably visit bases in Norfolk, Virginia and Hawaii.

PM, Bush to discuss 'broad bilateral agenda'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, SEPT. 11. The U.S. President, George W. Bush, will be discussing the "broad bilateral agenda" that will include the problem of the Line of Control and Kashmir when he meets the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, here on Thursday, the White House has said.

And when he meets the President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, Mr. Bush, aside from the bilateral issues in the relationship that includes the importance of democracy, will also discuss "diminishing tensions between India and Pakistan over Kashmir."

"Mr. Bush will have a chance to meet a second time with Mr. Vajpayee and at that meeting will talk about our broad bilateral agenda with India," a senior administration official said. "We have a number of important issues with India, a number of areas of cooperation. And in that context also about regional security, and, of course, the problem of the Line of Control and Kashmir," the official said. On Pakistan, he maintained that Mr. Bush would talk to Gen. Musharraf about the war on terror, the importance of democracy and in particular "the fact that the U.S. is watching very closely the elections that are to take place," this October. "And of course, also about diminishing tensions between India and Pakistan."

In fact, in his meeting with the members of the Indian press corps in Washington on Monday, the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, said that the focus of the Bush-Vajpayee meeting would be on the bilateral agenda, the emphasis being on the areas already identified by the two leaders and on how the relationship could be taken further.

Mr. Sinha listed at least five or six areas where India and the U.S. were keen on expanding the breadth and scope of cooperation. These include

research and development, trade, space technology, civilian nuclear technology, the framework of economic and defence dialogue and the subject of regional and global questions. He said the relations with the U.S. were "no longer hostage or prisoner to the old Pakistan-centric approach."

"The desire to go beyond the Indo-Pakistan-centric approach was expressed by the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, during his visit to India and it has been like that since," Mr. Sinha said.

In rather two days of hectic talks here, Mr. Sinha held wide-ranging discussions not only with his counterpart, Colin Powell, but also with the Deputy Secretary of Defence, Paul Wolfowitz, the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, and the President's National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, at the White House.

Mr. Sinha also met senior lawmakers of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Kashmir and the issue of cross border terrorism did come up during his meetings in Washington and the Mr. Sinha said that it was "very satisfying" for his delegation to note what Gen. Powell had said after the meeting and during the media stakeout at the State Department. To a question Gen. Powell said: "I reaffirmed to the Minister that we would continue to press the Pakistan Government to do everything possible to stop the cross border infiltration and remind them of the commitment they have made not only to the U.S. but also to the international community that they would not support such activity and would work actively to stop it." Before leaving for New York, Mr. Sinha addressed the Brookings Institution where he dwelt on not only what terrorism meant to India but also that in the war against terror "India and the U.S. stand shoulder to shoulder" and have a vital stake in defeating the forces of terror.

PM, Bush to discuss bilateral ties

Desikan Thirunarayanapuram
in Washington

Sept. 10. — The focus of Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's meeting with US President Mr George W Bush in New York later this week will be broader bilateral issues rather than the India-Pakistan conflict that has dominated interactions between the two countries in the recent past, external affairs minister Mr Yashwant Sinha said here yesterday.

"India-US relations will not be hostage to India-Pakistan relations," said Mr Sinha, who met top American officials in Washington to prepare the agenda for the New York summit.

But Pakistan, Kashmir and the situation on the LoC are not quite off the agenda for the talks, and Mr Sinha said he shared with US officials information on "activity along the LoC".

Mr Sinha told reporters after his meeting with US secretary of state Gen. Colin Powell that Washington would continue to press Islamabad to do everything possible to stop infiltration, and "remind them of the commitment they have made not only to the USA but also to the international community that they would not support such activity and work actively to stop it".

On the elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Gen. Powell said the USA has told Pakistan not to interfere "in any way" in the election, "which (the US) expects to be fair." Mr Powell also made an indirect plea to India to allow international observers to monitor the elections: Washington expects "there will be an opportunity for people to see that the elections are being held in an open, free and fair manner," he said.

Besides Mr Powell, Mr Sinha also met President Bush's national security adviser Ms Condoleezza Rice, deputy defence secretary Mr Paul Wolfowitz and Senator Mr Charles Hagel and member of the foreign relations committees and the banking subcommittee on international trade. Defence secretary Mr Donald Rumsfeld joined for a short while Mr Sinha was meeting Mr Wolfowitz.

1 1 SEP 2002

THE STATESMAN

India and US: a new maturity?

AMERICAN shuttle diplomacy in South Asia is based on two assessments shared by its important allies. One, though the prospect of an imminent military conflict between India and Pakistan has receded, India-Pakistan tensions remain a matter of high priority concern; and two, to keep the lid on these tensions, diplomatic and political pressure should continue to be exerted on Pakistan and India, and particularly on India, because its restraint is reaching the limits of its tolerance threshold.

There is a more recent context as well to the latest visit by US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage to Asia in August. The management of the situation in Afghanistan, which involves a fair amount of cooperation between India and the US, is descending into a pattern of uncertainty with the Karzai government remaining isolated in the ethnic and regional cross-currents of Afghan politics. The intensity of the anti-terror campaign in Afghanistan is abating. Even the anti-Taliban and anti-Al Qaeda campaign in the North-western areas of Pakistan is tapering off. The focus of US attention has now shifted to the preparations for ousting Saddam Hussain. Despite the importance India attaches to cooperation with the US in countering terrorism, it is opposed to a military campaign against Iraq, particularly a unilateral one led by the US.

Calibrating relations with India and Pakistan has become somewhat problematic for the US because of Musharraf's policy stances and India's responses during the last three weeks. The level of intrusions from the Pakistani side of the Line of Control remains at a dangerous high. Even more critical is the systematic campaign of assassinations being carried out against political figures who have indicated a will-



Protect the emerging realism in the relationship

■ J. N. DIXIT

ingness to participate in the elections in September. General Musharraf did not help matters by announcing his judgement that elections in J&K will be a farce in his address to the nation on Pakistan's Independence Day. While India continues to be responsive to suggestions from the US about restraint vis-a-vis Pakistan, it remains firm on not resuming dialogue unless there is evidence of Pakistan withdrawing support to terrorist activities.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell indicated the lines on which the US plans to deal with the dilemma of sustaining its close relationship with Pakistan and consolidating positive trends

National Missile Defence project, it is not entirely happy about the US's withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. India has reservations about the US pulling back from the Kyoto Convention on Environment Management. President Bush's decision not to participate in the Johannesburg summit and India's differences of opinion with US policy on environmental issues since the summit at Rio in 1992 underline the differences on this issue. India also harbours reservations regarding US refusal to participate in fully implementing the WTO arrangements finalised in 1996 which will impact on Indian exports to the US.

Calibrating relations with India and Pakistan has become problematic for the US due to Musharraf's policy stances and India's responses in the last three weeks

in Indo-US relations. During his last visit to the sub-continent, he announced the ingredients of the US policy: the US thinks the government of Pakistan has taken steps to curb terrorist infiltration into India but it could do more (but he did not acknowledge any direct linkage between the government of Pakistan and anti-India terrorist activities); Kashmir is on the international agenda; the US welcomes elections in J&K as the first step towards a long-term solution; it desires that India and Pakistan resume direct dialogue.

There are other issues on which a divergence of opinion has emerged between India and the US. Though India supported US President Bush's decision on the

While differences of opinion on specific issues are not unexpected, and they are being dealt with through the normal diplomatic means, it is at the deeper level of public perceptions in India and the US that Indo-US relations are entering a somewhat critical phase. There is a general disappointment and rising criticism in India about the US not being sensitive and supportive about Indian concerns regarding Pakistan. There is angst that despite India's continuing endeavour to establish close rapport with the US since the early 1990s, the US response has not been as reciprocal as India hoped for.

India's new Foreign Secretary's speech at the Federation of

Indian Industries in July articulated this disappointment which was noted by Armitage who enquired about its implications in a discussion with the Indian ambassador in Washington. The Indian ambassador's response was that there is no shift in India's policy and that Sibal's remarks are only a reflection of trends in public opinion in India.

As far as the specifics of Armitage's discussions in Delhi are concerned, Indian interlocutors, particularly National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra, clearly conveyed India's disappointments with the US for not taking a firm stance on Pakistan's subversive activities in J&K. He was told that Indian restraint should not be taken for granted if Pakistan sponsored violence disrupts the political processes in J&K. In response, Armitage stoutly maintained that Musharraf is committed to fulfilling his promises to the US about withdrawing support to terrorist activities in India. Secondly, he said he would again urge Musharraf to speed up the fulfilment of his promises. Both L.K. Advani and Brajesh Mishra have publicly stated that while attaching importance to India-US relations, India is clear it would have to deal with Pakistan without depending on support from the US.

Armitage's visit was also in preparation for Prime Minister Vajpayee's forthcoming meeting with President Bush in New York in September on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly session. The substance and atmospherics of the Armitage visit have served the purpose of nudging both governments to undertake a reality check on Indo-US relations. India should ensure that this emerging realism adds maturity to the consolidation of Indo-US relations. This process should not be disrupted by the dips and turns in Indian public opinion.

5 SEP 2001

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32/8

Pallone wants U.S. to back India's candidacy to U.N. Council

By Sridhak Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, AUG. 29. The Democratic Congressman, Frank Pallone, has called on the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, to follow the lead of Britain and back India's candidacy to the Security Council.

"It's time for the Bush administration to recognise the importance India plays in the region and the world and support its bid for a permanent seat at the U.N. Security Council," Mr. Pallone has said in a letter to Gen. Powell. Mr. Pallone, a Democrat from New Jersey, who has a large constituency of Indian Americans, has argued that a friendly India will help

American security and geopolitical interests in the region."

"All five members of the U.N. Security Council must realise that having India as a permanent security council member will give the South Asia region a stabilising force, helping peace efforts in Central Asia and all parts of our increasingly connected world," he said.

"I also believe that it is morally wrong to ignore the voice of over one billion people in security decision-making that affects them and the rest of the world. India's location, its large population, its history of participating in U.N. peacekeeping operations and its leadership in the non-aligned movement all

justify its bid for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council."

In his letter to Gen. Powell, the Democrat argued that India and the U.S. worked together to defeat terrorist cells in Afghanistan and other areas of the region, including Jammu and Kashmir. "The United States' eradication of terrorism in Afghanistan helped stabilise the region while India's work in ridding terrorist cells in Kashmir in turn helps the U.S.," he said.

The State Department Spokesman, Richard Boucher, commenting on the latest killings in Kashmir said the goal of the Bush administration was to encourage India and Pakistan to

reduce tension and engage in dialogue. "The Deputy Secretary's visit, that was one of the subjects discussed with both the parties as it was during the Secretary's visit. And that's an ongoing issue that we keep working on," the spokesman said.

On an unrelated topic Mr. Boucher said the State Department had nothing to comment on what an Indian court had ruled on the Union Carbide and its former Executive Warren Anderson. "...It's been an issue in the Indian State courts for many years and we have not had and don't have at this point anything particular to say about the court case," Mr. Boucher said.

30 AUG 2002

U.S. paying attention to cross-border terrorism: Armitage

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, AUG. 23. India today made it clear that the United States had to decide for itself what it wanted to tell Pakistan on the issue of cross-border terrorism. Speaking to presspersons after a two-hour meeting with the visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Brajesh Mishra, said India could not say what the U.S. should do or not do on the question.

For his part, Mr. Armitage made it clear that the U.S. remained engaged in the task of persuading Pakistan and said Washington was "still at it" as far as dealing with Islamabad was concerned.

The U.S., he said, was using its good offices to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan.

"(Pakistani) President (Pervez) Musharraf in his broadcast, in his press conferences has made certain promises; not only to India but to the international community in general. And those promises have not been kept. What the U.S. is doing about it only the U.S. can tell you," Mr. Mishra said in response to questions outside the Prime Minister's Office late this evening.

"What we can tell you is that he (the Pakistani President) has not implemented the promises that he had made," Mr. Mishra said as the senior American official stood by.

Maintaining that India and the U.S. had detailed discussions on all issues, he said India did not ask Mr. Armitage to convey anything to Gen. Musharraf tomorrow.

"It is up to him. What he wants to say, he will say. We only told him what is going on here," Mr. Mishra said, adding that he did not see the possibility of talks between India and Pakistan till cross-border terrorism ended.

Signalling a sense of dissatisfaction within Government circles, he said: "I cannot tell you



The U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, with the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, prior to their delegation level meeting at the South Block in New Delhi on Friday. — Photo: V Sudershan

what America should do or should not do. It is for the U.S. to decide. We know that something was communicated to us and that has not been implemented. It is clear to us and I believe it is clear to the United States also."

When asked about a certain sense of dissatisfaction about what the U.S. was doing with regard to Pakistan and the issue of cross-border terrorism, Mr. Armitage said he was "sorry" that some people in India felt that way.

"But I'll note that we are still at it. Secretary (Colin) Powell has been out here several times... my third trip to India. There's an extraordinary amount of attention paid by my Government to this issue and I am sorry that in some minds it falls a little short. We are going to stay at it and continue to use our good offices," he said.

Mr. Armitage, who also held detailed discussions with the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, and the Foreign Secre-

tary, Kanwal Sibal, said he had a full range of discussions on bilateral, military and multilateral issues and also exchanged "strategic views".

Washington wanted the elections in Kashmir to be free and fair and open.

"There have been some difficulties historically but it looks to this visitor as if the Government of India is quite intent on having these as free and fair and open as possible. We are concerned about the possibilities of violence. Obviously this is something I will be discussing as I travel further (to Islamabad) on this mission."

Mr. Armitage said he had seen the Indian Government's gesture and that it was willing to have a dialogue with the All-Party Hurriyat Conference.

Asked whether he felt separatists should take part in the Kashmir elections, he said the dialogue offer was significant and ultimately the parties had to decide for themselves.

24 AUG 2002

HD-11

Boosting Indo-U.S. ties

21/8

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, AUG. 20. With their current focus riveted on managing the Indo-Pak. military crisis, New Delhi and Washington are in the danger of missing the larger imperatives of their own bilateral relations. The U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, who arrives here this week in an attempt to de-escalate Indo-Pak. tensions, will hopefully try and impart some fresh momentum to Indo-U.S. relations.

After an extraordinary bonhomie in the first months of the Bush administration, Indo-U.S. relations seem to have hit a political plateau.

President Bush's intent to elevate the relations with India to a strategic level was matched by India's own enthusiastic support to the controversial American initiative on missile defences. India and the U.S. appeared on the verge of an unprecedented convergence of worldviews.

The Bush Administration's decisions to lift the nuclear sanctions imposed on India after May 1998 without any conditions, the acceleration of cooperation on counter-terrorism and the resumption of arms sales to India seemed to expand the basis of Indo-U.S. engagement.

The events of September 11, however, have introduced new complexities into Indo-U.S. relations. India, which eagerly supported the American war on terrorism, found the U.S. moving towards a renewed partnership with Pakistan.

The Bush Administration has, indeed, worked hard to limit the fallout from the rediscovery of Pakistan on the relationship

with India. And after the attack on Parliament on December 13, the U.S. has pressed Pervez Musharraf to end cross-border terrorism against India.

The jury is out on the results from American nudging of Pakistan, but there is no question that the nature of the U.S. policy towards Indo-Pak. relations and the Kashmir question has begun to alter visibly.

But if the triangular diplomacy begins to overshadow Indo-U.S. ties and there is no further expansion of bilateral cooperation, the bureaucracies in both the capitals are likely to resume the old habits of mutual suspicion or neglect. Preventing the return

ARMITAGE VISIT

to old ways in Indo-U.S. relations must be at the top of Mr. Armitage's mission to New Delhi.

Three areas of bilateral cooperation require some immediate political attention. First, India and the U.S. need to build on the emerging convergence of interests in promoting South Asian stability.

Both in Sri Lanka and Nepal, they have similar objectives-in defeating the forces of extremism and promoting peace.

But as the Bush Administration steps up its involvement in the internal conflicts of India's smaller neighbours, it is important that there is more intensive consultation and coordination between New Delhi and Washington in the management of South Asian security.

During the Armitage visit the two sides

must explore ways to deepen bilateral cooperation on South Asian security.

Second, there is an urgent need for greater interaction between the two sides on issues relating to war and peace in the Persian Gulf. As the United States prepares for another round of conflict in the Gulf, it needs to take into account the many concerns that India has.

New Delhi's energy imports from the Gulf have dramatically increased in the last decade and so has the size of Indian expatriate labour in the region.

Talk about Indo-U.S. strategic cooperation is meaningless if there are no consultations on their vital national security interests that converge in the Gulf.

Defining a framework for bilateral discussions on energy security and political stability in the Gulf has become an immediate necessity.

Finally, the worm of non-proliferation is beginning to turn again and has the potential to poison Indo-U.S. relations. The U.S. restrictions on technology transfers remain and the habit of describing India as a non-proliferation concern has begun to resurface in Washington.

Even more galling for India is the fact that while New Delhi has supported the Bush initiative on missile defences, there is a growing chorus in Washington that the U.S. must stop Israel from transferring defensive technologies to India.

If New Delhi and Washington do not quickly settle the outstanding differences on the nuclear issue, it will return to haunt their bilateral relations.

Armitage urged to raise Gujarat issue

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, AUG. 20. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has specifically asked the Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, to raise the "sectarian violence" in Gujarat when he visits India later this week.

Mr. Armitage has also been asked to bring up the attacks of Christians in Pakistan, the need to discuss religious freedom during the coming meeting of the Presidents of China and the United States and the situation of North Korean refugees during his trip to Beijing later this month.

The USCIRF, a federal agency that advises the President and Congress, has said that although some Bush administration officials had commented on the Gujarat violence while answering questions from the media, "as far as we know, no senior U.S. administration offi-

cial has expressed concern over the killings or called for accountability for those responsible".

The Commission said the Secretary of State, Colin Powell had himself specifically said that the Gujarat violence did not come up in any of the conversations he had in his recent trip to India and Pakistan. Despite the by the Government of India, the Gujarat situation remained highly volatile. "India's own National Human Rights Commission has detailed evidence of premeditation by members of Hindu extremist groups, complicity by Gujarat State Government officials and police inaction in the face of orchestrated violence against Muslims," the Commission said.

"Clearly, it is important that the United States speak out publicly against such religion based extremist violence, all the more so in view of our country's

war on terrorism," the USCIRF maintained.

There is a definite feeling in some quarters here that the Bush administration, for all its emphasis and talk on human rights, has done precious little on Gujarat, substantively saying very little on the violence in the State and in the response of the BJP-led Government at New Delhi.

On the violence against Christians in Pakistan, the Commission argued that Islamabad should "forcefully combat such violence, punish its perpetrators and work more effectively to foster an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for the rights of everyone."

At the State Department, Deputy Spokesman, Philip Reeker, did not read too much into the USCIRF statement. "Human rights is usually a discussion we have in our bilateral dialogue with every country," he said.

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Delhi 'snub' awaits Armitage

Nilova Roy Chaudhury in New Delhi

Aug. 18. — India's dissatisfaction with America's perceived reluctance to crack down on Pakistan-sponsored terrorism will be made apparent with the absence of Mr Yashwant Sinha during talks with Mr Richard Armitage.



ODDS AGAINST:
Armitage (top) and Sinha



The US Deputy Secretary of State is scheduled to arrive here on Friday. In his meetings here, Mr Armitage will be given a detailed briefing on the situation along the LoC and how infiltration is continuing almost unabated. The forthcoming J&K elections will feature prominently in the talks. He is also scheduled to visit Islamabad.

Mr Sinha will leave for Kathmandu on Tuesday (for the SAARC foreign ministers' meeting on 21 and 22 August).

He will visit Bangladesh on Friday. Hence, the foreign minister won't be in the country for the 24 hours that Mr Armitage is here. Adhering to protocol requirements, the minister of state, Mr Digvijay Singh, will lead the delegation-level talks with Mr Armitage, officials said. Mr Sin-

ha's visits are part of his familiarisation process with India's neighbours. Dhaka will be his sixth neighbourhood capital call, completing the series for the moment.

Indo-Pak tensions are likely to cast a shadow on the Saarc foreign ministers' meet during which India will convey its concerns over cross-border terrorism and infiltration. The meeting will give Mr Sinha a chance to come face-to-face with Pakistani foreign minister Mr Inamul Haq.

19 AUG 2002

India cool to US denial of envoy status to staff

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 10. — India today downplayed reports that USA had rejected Delhi's request to accord diplomatic status to New York-based diplomat Mr BK Agnihotri. The fact was known for some time and was being dealt with, the government said.

In a controversial move, Delhi had appointed Mr Agnihotri as Ambassador at Large for Indians Overseas. A request was subsequently sent to the US State Department to accord diplomatic status to Mr Agnihotri, who is reportedly close to the RSS.

The State Department rejected the request made by the Indian Embassy in Washington, saying that the USA could recognise only one ambassador.

Asked about the reports, foreign secretary Mr Kanwal Sibal said India was aware of the fact for quite some time. "We have known about this for some time and we are dealing with this," he said.

But there may not be a lot that the government can do to get Mr Agnihotri's the red diplomatic passport. There are technical hurdles that come in the way of the Washington obliging New Delhi.

India had given Mr Agnihotri the status of adviser to the Indian embassy in Washington. But the State department does not recognised adviser as a diplomatic position. The recognised titles are ambassador, minister, councillor, first secretary, second secretary and attache.

State Department regulations stipulate that diplomatic status would be granted to those who have residence in Washington. As Mr Agnihotri is based in New York, he can't be shown on the diplomatic list in Washington. Also, Mr Agnihotri's a green-card holder in the USA. Permanent US residents are not given envoy status.

Mr Sibal today said an Indo-Pak conflict could be avoided if Pakistan gave up using terrorism as an instrument of state policy.

148 8 1/8 Rocca to initiate 'regional dialogue' with India

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, AUG. 3. India and the United States will begin a new "regional dialogue" in late September when the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Christina Rocca, arrives for talks on a wide range of issues. Explaining the rationale behind the dialogue, sources said the U.S. role in Asia was expanding and India wanted more information about Washington's plans and what it was doing.

For instance, Ms. Rocca could explain what exactly the U.S. plans to do in Afghanistan or whether coordination between New Delhi and Washington could be furthered to counter the Maoist insurgency in Nepal.

There has been contact and coordination between India and the U.S. on the Nepal front and this dialogue would take such issues forward. Indo-Pakistan issues will not figure in these discussions. Sri Lanka, too, will be on the agenda of the talks Ms. Rocca will hold with her Indian interlocutors, according to the sources. The progress made in the peace process

and the direction it is taking could all be discussed.

They stressed that as the U.S. took on a larger role in Asia (it has troops operating on the ground in Afghanistan and the Philippines) and India's relations with Washington moved forward, there would be need for greater dialogue between India and the U.S. For some time, the U.S. has been stressing a larger role for India in South-East Asia — the first-ever ASEAN-India summit is also scheduled for November this year. During a recent Defence Ministers conference in Singapore, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence, Paul Wolfowitz, envisioned a larger role for India in South-East Asia.

Referring to the current Indo-U.S. dialogue, the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, said here on July 28: "We are conducting intensive and valuable diplomatic exchanges on issues ranging from Afghanistan to trade, we are working together on counter-terrorism issues, on intelligence, on law enforcement and on science projects." Reflecting on the expanding scope of the dialogue, Gen. Powell, the

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Non-Proliferation, John Wolf, will be in New Delhi in early September to begin a "new strategic framework dialogue" with a focus on "proliferation efforts". According to sources, Indian export controls will be on the agenda for the talks. New Delhi is looking at some changes in its legal system to address continuing U.S. concerns on the issue, they added.

There is, clearly, an entire new and deepening agenda for talks between India and the U.S. While Gen. Powell's comments on Kashmir and observers for the coming State Assembly elections may have irked political sections here, Washington and New Delhi have an expanding area of engagement. The U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, will be the first of several visitors from Washington arriving in New Delhi. His visit takes place later this month. Presumably, his visit will focus on the India-Pakistan scenario and the continuing concerns of India on cross-border terrorism and infiltration through the Line of Control (LoC).

148 8 1/8

India, Pak. must resume talks, says French Minister

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, AUG. 3. The visiting French Foreign Minister, Dominique de Villepin, today emphasised the need for a "violence-free" election in Jammu and Kashmir and resumption of Indo-Pak. dialogue to defuse tension in the region.

Addressing a news conference here after meeting the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Inam-ul-Haq, the French Minister termed the election, scheduled in September/October, as a "milestone".

Mr. De Villepin, who arrived here after discussions with the Vajpayee Government, went straight from the military airport for a meeting with the Pakistan President at the Army House in Rawalpindi.

In response to a specific question about his talks with Gen. Musharraf on the Indian complaint of continued infiltration, the French Minister said the Pakistan President expressed "full determination" to fight terrorism. "The President has given a commitment without any caveats on reining in militants from crossing over to the Indian side".

An official statement said Mr. de Villepin was apprised of the "substantive measures" taken by Pakistan to defuse tensions with India. "It was also underlined that India needed to reciprocate these measures and enter into a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, and all other issues between the two countries".

Mr. De Villepin was cautious in his formulations on the perceptions of India and Pakistan about the current standoff. Conscious of the sensitivities of Islamabad and New Delhi, the Minister maintained that it was a bilateral issue. So careful was Mr. de Villepin in his observations that he chose to entertain questions, with the help of a translator, in French. The question-answer session followed a carefully worded statement in English read out by the Minister.

Mr. de Villepin said both India and Pakistan were at a "critical moment" with general elections in Pakistan due in October and Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir scheduled in September/October. "There is a special responsibility on both the countries". He urged India to ensure that the elections were held in a transparent, reliable manner. He declined to be drawn into a debate on whether the elections in Kashmir could be a substitute for a plebiscite promised by the U.N. Security Council resolutions.

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THE HINDU

US wants Hurriyat to take part in J&K polls

By Chidanand Rajghatta
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Washington: Anger in Indian political circles over US secretary of state Colin Powell's suggestion of international monitors for elections in Jammu and Kashmir is distorting a more fundamental shift in US policy, endorsing the elections itself.



For a country that still says Jammu and Kashmir is

"disputed territory", the US has gone way out on limb to push for elections in the state, to the extent of even sending officials to persuade the Hurriyat to take part in the exercise.

In effect, if the moves fructify, it would virtually legitimise the status quo over Jammu and Kashmir although publicly Washington says the elections would be a good first step to resolving the issue.

In the process, the US has ditched the familiar Pakistani refrain of referendum

or plebiscite for the state to determine its future. The sense here is that changes in demography (ethnic cleansing of pandits), geography (ceding of territory by Pakistan to China) and psychology (the distortions due to unremitting terrorism) makes a plebiscite impossible.

In fact, by linking the October elections in Pakistan to the polls in Jammu and Kashmir and placing the burden of smooth conduct in both places on Islamabad, Washington appears to have linked Pakistan.

"For us, having the election go off smoothly is an important step in moving to

towards non-violent resolution of the Kashmir problem," a state department official told TNN. "It will demonstrate the commitment of the Indian government to hold free and fair election, demonstrate the commitment of the Kashmiris to participate in a democratic exercise, and demonstrate the commitment of the Pakistanis to democracy."

Key to the American gameplan is to get the Hurriyat to participate in the polls, something they have not had great success in so far. The state department official expressed disappointment at reports that the

Hurriyat was against participating in the election but suggested the last word has not been heard on the matter.

The US position on the Jammu and Kashmir issue began to evolve in the days of the Clinton administration itself when it became evident that it was not possible to roll back history in the region. That was when the administration quietly changed its formulation to the two sides (India and Pakistan) resolving the issue "taking into account" (instead of "in accordance with") the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

PLAYING THE GAME

The recent visit of the secretary of state of the United States of America, Mr Colin Powell, has created mixed feelings within India. While New Delhi can feel reassured by much of what Mr Powell said during his press conference, there were elements in his remarks that must have disturbed the government of India. On the one hand, Mr Powell stressed the need for the "broadest possible" US-India relationship, and indicated that several high-level officials would be visiting India in the next few months. He also seemed to echo India's own position when he stressed that Pakistan must "make good" its pledge to cease support for infiltration across the line of control. On the other hand, Mr Powell bluntly stated that Kashmir was on the international agenda and that India should allow independent observers to monitor the forthcoming elections in Jammu and Kashmir. He also argued that releasing political prisoners from Kashmir, in the run up to the elections, would help improve the credibility of the polls. He also seemed to suggest that while infiltration from Pakistan may not have stopped, it had gone down and that the US expected India to take further steps to de-escalate tensions within the region.

Mr Powell's visit may seem to reinforce his image of being soft on Pakistan and Mr Pervez Musharraf, but there is clearly a more complex US policy at work. His visit has clearly revealed that the latest American policy towards south Asia will be governed by three objectives. One, the US continues to view India as a long-term strategic partner, an ally in ensuring stability in Asia, and will seek to reassure India that its relationship with Islamabad will not affect the growth of the Indo-US relationship. Two, Washington clearly sees Mr Musharraf as the best bet for Pakistan, and for furthering American interests in the country and beyond. The US will, therefore, at least in the short term, do nothing that will undermine the military regime, even while it nudges it to move further in the process of reforming the country. The US clearly believes that the Pakistan president has delivered substantially on his promise to stop sponsoring terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. Lastly, it is not in American interests that there is a military conflict between India and Pakistan, and the US views credible and inclusive polls in Jammu and Kashmir as one way of reducing tensions.

It would have been naïve for India to expect that Kashmir would stop being of interest to the international community once the crisis with Pakistan was over. The shield that had seemingly protected Kashmir from global opinion has been pierced irreparably. Kashmir is now out there, at the centre of the agenda of almost every country that matters. But this sharp internationalization of a problem that India has traditionally sought to insulate offers New Delhi, counter-intuitively, with an unprecedented opportunity. Political imagination and diplomatic deftness could create conditions for a final settlement that would not just be in the long-term interests of India, but would also win widespread support from the world. But shibboleths of the past and dogmas of the present need to be discarded if India has to win the endgame on Kashmir.

Infiltration not taking place, now: Musharraf

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 28. The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, seemed to have pre-empted any worthwhile discussion on cross-border infiltration as he told reporters while receiving the United States Secretary of State, Colin



Powell, today that there was no truth in the Indian allegation on infiltration.

"It is not taking place now. Whatever the Indian side is saying is absolutely baseless. I don't have to do anything because we've already done it," Gen. Musharraf said as he escorted Gen. Powell here for formal talks.

AFP reports:

Rejecting India's assertion that Pakistan-based militants were still crossing the LoC, he said "it is already stopped in the past." He reiterated that India should agree to a dialogue to find an end to the standoff between the two countries. "Our stand is very, very clear. We need to start a dialogue on Kashmir and all of the issues... That's what we want to see. The reciprocation and response (we want) from them is to initiate a dialogue on Kashmir."

29 JUL 2002

LEVELS OF INFILTRATION HARD TO MEASURE: POWELL

India conveys concern about Pak. role to U.S.

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, JULY 27. India said today that its "very legitimate" concerns about Pakistan and its role in fomenting terrorism had been conveyed to the visiting United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, during talks this evening.

Gen. Powell, who held discussions with the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, was able to get a first-hand assessment of where India stands on these issues, the Foreign Office spokesperson, Nirupama Rao, told presspersons late tonight. As India politely informed Gen. Powell about its concerns on terrorism, the U.S. official was quoted as telling presspersons on board his aircraft that levels of infiltration across the Line of Control (LoC) were hard to measure with any level of precision.

In his remarks, Gen. Powell made it clear that the U.S. was concerned that tensions between India and Pakistan, which had subsided somewhat, could rise again and, hence, the need for continuous engagement with both sides.

New Delhi insisted that conditions for a dialogue with Pakistan had not been created and since its troops were on the ground, India was in a better position to speak on the issue of infiltration across the LoC.

Describing the meeting between the two Ministers as very constructive, the spokesperson said it was emphasised by Gen. Powell that the U.S. does not see its relationship with India within the framework of India-Pakistan relations.

"He was appreciative of our holding free and fair elections in Jammu and Kashmir and em-



The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, with the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, in New Delhi on Saturday. — Photo: V. Sudershan

phasised that these elections should take place without interruption or violence... There was understanding and convergence of views between the two sides on the need to fight terrorism in a global manner," she said. "Our concerns about the lack of action by Pakistan to fulfil the pledges made by President General (Pervez) Musharraf to (U.S.) Deputy Secretary (Richard) Armitage was stressed. Our Minister referred to the fact that Pakistan's private commitments were entirely contradicted by its public pronouncements"

India referred to the fact that violence in Jammu and Kashmir had only come down marginally and Pakistan's actions were violative of the U.N. Security Council resolution 1373.

"Clearly, it was our view that

Pakistan had to do more if tensions in the region were to be reduced and the possibilities of resumption of dialogue were to be realised."

She said the U.S. was used to its friends (a reference to Pakistan) honouring their pledges (on ending cross-border terrorism). Asked if the all-crucial issue of verification across the LoC came up in the discussions this evening, she replied in the negative.

India and the U.S. also discussed the need to deepen the bilateral dialogue on regional issues and intensify high-level consultations. The strategic dialogue between the two nations needed to be deepened further. Military-to-military cooperation had also developed well in recent months, she added.

See also Page 8

Centre's nod for Srikrishna's elevation

By J. Venkatesan

NEW DELHI, JULY 27. With the Supreme Court collegium reiterating its recommendation for elevating the Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court, Srikrishna, the Centre is said to have relented and given its nod for the proposal. And, Justice Srikrishna, along with Justice Kalla of the Rajasthan High Court, are soon to be appointed judges of the Supreme Court.

Sources here said the name of Justice Srikrishna, who headed an Enquiry Commission that

probed the December 1992 and January 1993 Mumbai riots, was earlier recommended for elevation just before the retirement of the former Chief Justice of India, S.P. Bharucha. At that time, the Centre had reservations against him in view of the fact that he, in his capacity as commission chairman, had strongly indicted the then BJP-Shiv Sena Government in Maharashtra.

Therefore, instead of openly disapproving of Justice Srikrishna's name, the Centre is said to have brought to the notice of the apex court that Rajasthan

was without any representation for over three years and, hence, a judge from Rajasthan could be considered for elevation.

But after the retirement of Justice Bharucha (in May) and Justice R.P. Sethi (in July), two vacancies have arisen. After favourably considering the Centre's suggestion, the collegium once again recommended Justice Srikrishna, along with Justice Kalla. In the light of this recommendation, the Government had no option but to approve the two names, the sources said.

AN IMPREGNABLE WALL

Powell's mission is dead on arrival

THERE is a fatal flaw in the Bush administration's understanding of cross-border terrorism and this stems from the untenable position taken by George Bush that Musharraf is a protected species and too much time should not elapse between one expression of American support and another, lest he be disappointed. The expression used is to *stop* cross-border terrorism. In the Bush lexicon, which happily is unknown outside the ignorant circle of the White House and the administration, the word *stop* in context means a carefully calibrated reduction in the level of infiltration to just enough for Bush to decide that India should start talking to Pakistan. We can leave aside the violence being done to the English language; in common parlance, the word *stop* in context means not to continue infiltration in any form however attenuated and India has made it clear that it necessarily includes dismantling all training facilities, and ending altogether the financing and supportive infrastructure for infiltrators and terrorists. It is common sense there can be no other meaning, unless one is speaking with a forked tongue. Musharraf does this constantly and by making a habit of taking Musharraf at face value, Bush, just as constantly manages to make a fool of himself.

General Powell is endowed with a fine intellect and he is increasingly finding himself isolated in this administration. The likes of Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Condoleezza Rice when added to George Bush make a pretty impregnable wall, which reason, intellect and evidence cannot breach. The dossier being prepared by the Indian Army for Colin Powell is bound to impress him but the tragedy is that he has practically no clout in Washington. The rumours going round that he could be the Democratic candidate for President against George Bush is not as laughable as it may sound. Dealing with the American President on a daily basis can make you lose your balance or as is likely in Powell's case, bring him to the conclusion that being sent as an errand boy to achieve the impossible on pain of being considered less macho than the rest is not a reputation that one of America's finest soldiers can be expected to live with for any length of time. Powell's frustration is beginning to show.

India is right to administer a diplomatic snub by refusing a meeting with the Prime Minister, although they will have to think up another reason than that Vajpayee is tired. Somebody may take it seriously if it happens too often! Yashwant Sinha the untried and a very unlikely Minister for External Affairs, should also keep himself away for a different reason; the mission is too delicate for the former Finance Minister. Foreign Secretary Sibal is more than capable of dealing with the visiting Secretary of State. The message needs to be forthright, firm and so clear that even if Powell repeats it verbatim to Bush, the President will understand. If Musharraf with his record of deception, double talk and double think is a stalwart ally of the United States, and Powell will be under orders to repeat that in Delhi, there really is nothing to be said. Powell will understand the situation on the ground and that is all we can hope to expect. Let's treat him nicely though; it is not beyond the bounds of probability that we may be talking to a future American President.

Early talks with Pak ruled out

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, July 27. — Having agreed that their views on handling Pakistan differed, India and the USA today decided to shore up bilateral ties, raising it to a level where it would count — politically and strategically.

What impressed the US secretary of state, apparently, was Mr Omar Abdullah's exposition on the situation in J&K, where political workers are being "murdered" daily. The two sides talked of how best to ensure peaceful conduct of the J&K polls.

India iterated that Pakistan had not done enough to curb cross-border terrorism, thereby negating the possibility of an early Indo-Pak dialogue. "Disappointment" was expressed at the resumption of US-Pak military ties.

De-escalation of border tension and early resumption of talks with Pakistan, key concerns of Gen Colin Powell, were ruled out because the conditions didn't exist. "India has always held that if the necessary conditions for talks are created, we'll have talks. But we don't think that necessary conditions exist," Mr Yashwant Sinha said before his talks with Gen Powell.

The secretary of state and foreign minister established a "warm rap-

port" personally and held their first one-on-one talks for an hour before being joined by their delegations. Gen Powell was accompanied by US assistant secretary of state for South Asia Ms Christina Rocca and Ms Elizabeth Millard of the National Security Council.

Gen Powell said en-route to New Delhi that he would "share" some information (probably about Pakistan) with Indian leaders. A foreign ministry spokesperson, however, said the issue of "verification" along the LoC was not raised, nor was the issue of having Pakistan classified a terrorist state, nor did Gen Powell suggest any specific de-escalatory measures.



Gen Powell and Mr Sinha before the talks. — AFP

He said during the talks that the USA "was used to its friends keeping their pledges," implying a certain criticism of how Pakistan has reneged on its commitments.

There was a last-minute addition to Gen Powell's list of meetings, with a brief "call on" scheduled with the Prime Minister.

The dinner Mr Sinha was to host in Gen Powell's honour was cancelled because of the Vice-President's death. The secretary of state leaves for Islamabad tomorrow morning.

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'KASHMIR IS ON INTERNATIONAL AGENDA'

India should allow 'outsiders' to monitor J&K polls: Powell

29/7 By Amit Baruah
NEW DELHI, JULY 28. The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, said here today that Kashmir was "on the international agenda" and asked India to allow "outsiders" to monitor the coming Jammu and Kashmir elections to add credibility to the process.

Gen. Powell, who addressed a press conference before meeting the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, spoke bluntly about what he wanted India and Pakistan to do in South Asia.

"We look to India to take further de-escalatory steps as Pakistan makes good on its pledges to permanently cease support for infiltration (across the Line of Control)," he said.

The General indicated that a dialogue between the two nations appeared possible only after the Kashmir polls and the October general elections in Pakistan. He refused to be drawn into commenting on Indian statements that infiltration had declined only marginally. "There has been a reduction in infiltration levels, whether marginally or not I can't answer." But, he added, it seemed clear that infiltration was continuing and every effort was needed to end it.

"President Musharraf has pledged to end it (infiltration) on a permanent basis. I look forward to discussing this with President Musharraf in detail..." His comments today go to show the "cost" India will have to bear for inviting the U.S.-led international community to pressure Pakistan to put an end to supporting the terrorist cause.

India has traditionally rejected the notion that Kashmir is an international issue;

Gen. Powell's thinking is clearly on a different plane. Just as the Americans want the Pakistanis to deliver on a number of issues, India, too is feeling the heat to do more from the U.S. He reiterated on Indian soil that the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, was playing a "useful role" in bringing tensions down with India — a formulation which is completely at odds with New Delhi's daily statements from the Foreign Office. While tensions were down, Gen. Powell said, both the Indian and Pakistani armies remained mobilised. The American

Infiltration has gone down, Powell says in Pak.: Page 11

goal, it appears, is that of making "regional stability permanent" in South Asia. He said the U.S. looked to both India and Pakistan (not Pakistan alone) to take steps to bring peace to the region. If one were to go by Gen. Powell's statements, the Americans have come to believe that a "credible election" in Jammu and Kashmir could be the beginning of a process of addressing the Kashmir issue in a broader sense. Stating that he looked forward to India taking "concrete steps" to foster Kashmiri confidence in the election process, he said the polls could serve as a first step for peace and reconciliation. Permitting international observers and releasing political prisoners would be helpful, he said.

Gen. Powell went to the extent of saying that the elections could begin to address Kashmiri grievances and lead India and Pakistan back to the path of dialogue. Only sustained and productive dialogue between India and Pakistan could bring peace to the region, he said.

Calling for free, fair and open elections, Gen. Powell said he had suggested to the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, that the participation of moderate elements, which played by the rules, should be encouraged in the election process. He hoped that an atmosphere of safety and peace would be provided by both sides — India and Pakistan.

"I will be speaking to the Pakistani side to make every effort to avoid disturbing these elections," he said. Asked by a foreign correspondent why India was resistant to the idea of international observers in Kashmir, Gen. Powell said India believed it was capable of managing the elections without a formal monitoring system. He said India should make it as easy as possible for people to travel to Kashmir to give credibility to the poll results. "If you have enough outsiders to watch the election process this would benefit the Indian Government," he said.

"Elections (in Jammu and Kashmir) alone, however, cannot resolve the problems between India and Pakistan or erase the scars of so many years of strife," Gen. Powell said. Stating that the U.S. was looking for the broadest possible relationship with India, he stressed that he was not in New Delhi just because there were tensions in the region. Announcing several visits from the U.S. to India in the next few months, the General said it was important for the American and Indian leaderships to remain in close and frequent contact with each other. He said the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca would be in New Delhi in late September for a "regional dialogue" last quarter of a century.

DROP IN INTRUSION 'TACTICAL NOT PERMANENT'

Delhi rejects Powell claim

Nilova Roy Chaudhury in New Delhi

July 26. — The US secretary of state, General Colin Powell, is likely to get a somewhat chilly reception when he comes to India tomorrow, going by signals emanating from the government.

He will be here overnight, meeting Deputy Prime Minister Mr LK Advani, foreign minister Mr Yashwant Sinha and national security adviser Mr Brajesh Mishra before he leaves for Islamabad on Sunday morning. He will not meet the Prime Minister.

Dismissing the statement made this morning by General Powell, about a reduction in levels of Pakistani infiltration across the Line of Control, senior officials here said the decreased infiltration was "tactical and not permanent". India does not feel any pressure to resume talks with Pakistan because the latter has not fulfilled its commitments.

"There cannot be a quid pro quo in the war against terrorism," a senior official said. "Pakistan has reneged on its promises, and though infiltration might be down, it has not ended, and nothing has been done to dismantle the terrorism infrastructure," he said.

That the government is unhappy with the western world's perception of Pakistan as a "stalwart ally" in the war against terrorism is clear from the fact that there was no joint press conference with the British foreign secretary, Mr Jack Straw, and his Indian counterpart. Nor is one scheduled with the US secretary of

state. Also, going strictly by protocol, the Prime Minister could not make time for either of them during their brief visits. The Americans had sought a meeting, but "time constraints" did not permit such a meeting.

A US state department statement today quoted General Powell as having said: "There has been some reduction in infiltration across the LoC, but it is still unfortunately the case that there is violence."

Indian Intelligence intercepts indicate that the entire infrastructure of terror — communications, training camps, launch pads, funding and facilitation — has not even been disabled, "leave aside closed," an official said.

The USA is aware that "President Pervez Musharraf is two-timing them," but its interest in pursuing the Al-

Qaida (which, by all accounts, is strongly regrouping in Pakistan) is so strong, "that it is thankful for the little intelligence-gathering he is allowing."

According to officials, the pressure is on Pakistan to ensure that the upcoming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir is not disrupted, because the international community has committed itself to the polls that will reflect the wishes of the people of that state.

"Pakistan will naturally want to create disruptions that would place the credibility of the process and people's participation at stake," an official said. "But the world community is placing them under a scanner and is against them adopting disruptive tactics."

Another report on page 6

India does not feel any pressure to resume talks with Pakistan because Islamabad has not fulfilled its commitments

Powell's visit poses protocol problems

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By Aunohita Mojumdar
TIMES NEWS NETWORK 119

New Delhi: The government seems to be confronted with a protocol problem over the visit of US secretary of state Colin Powell beginning on Saturday.

During his visit to New Delhi last week, British foreign secretary Jack Straw got no higher-level audience as his meetings were confined to those with his counterpart Yashwant Sinha.

In fact, Mr Sinha, in one of his first meetings in South Block with his officers, stressed the principle of parity in organising high-level meetings. Will the government be so emphatic on the subject with visiting Americans?

Not likely, if the past is any guide. But there is a face-saving formula that was patented by the Americans during Mr Jaswant Singh's visit to Washington in October 2001.

This was US President George Bush 'dropping in' at the meeting between national security adviser Condoleeza Rice and Mr Singh and inviting him into the Oval office. But no one really expects Mr Vajpayee to wander through the normally locked entrance of the PMO to the South Block offices of the external affairs minister.

A via media, it seems, is on hand with the appointment of a new deputy prime minister.

The designation, the equivalent of which does not exist in the US unless it



Colin Powell

is in the person of Vice-President Dick Cheney, provides the perfect fit. Important enough to be prime ministerial (there will be those who will tell the US that, that is where the real power lies) but not so high in the hierarchy as to cause

a flutter.

The official response from the external affairs spokesperson on Mr Powell's meetings, however, was a plea not to "read other meanings" into what were issues of "logistics and timing".

Interestingly, also absent from Delhi during Mr Powell's visit will be US ambassador to India Robert Blackwill whose rating in Mr Powell's department has not been very high.

Pakistan is likely to dominate the agenda during Mr Powell's visit with India pointing to the US its responsibility in ensuring that Pakistan delivers on its commitments.

"We will tell him that unless Pakistan responds to the steps we have already taken to de-escalate (tension), there will be no further steps on the part of India," sources in the external affairs ministry said.

India will highlight its concerns about the continuing infiltration, citing from reports about the violence in Jammu and Kashmir as well as evidence of the continuing activities of terrorist groups operating in Pakistan.

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POWELL VISIT / FOCUS ON VIOLENCE IN J&K

India to hold 'frank discussion'

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 26. India will convey to the United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, that the real test of Pakistan's commitment to end cross-border terrorism will be seen in the run-up to the elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

Highly-placed sources told *The Hindu* that India's concerns about continuing terrorist actions and infiltration from across the Line of Control would be conveyed in a direct manner to Gen. Powell, who arrives in New Delhi tomorrow evening.

In what promises to be a "frank discussion", India will also tell Gen. Powell that the commitment to end cross-border terrorism was given by Pakistan to the U.S. and its allies and they must hold the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, accountable on the issue. The sources said the same message was conveyed to the British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, during his visit last week.

For its part, India had its own assessment of the ground-level situation in Jammu and Kashmir and New Delhi would be guided by its own information. During his visit, Gen. Powell will hold talks with the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, tomorrow evening — this will be his first meeting with the new Ministers.

There will be an element of "probing" involved in Gen. Powell's visit since Mr.

Sinha's predecessor as External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, had been plugging an American line in Government.

Mr. Sinha — the new man at the helm of the Indian foreign policy — is not known to the Americans and both Foreign Ministers will use the occasion to get to know each other.

On Sunday morning, Gen. Powell will address a press conference (there will be no joint press conference as was the case in the past) before meeting the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Brajesh Mishra, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, L.K. Advani.

There are also concerns in diplomatic quarters about the frank comments made by the new Foreign Secretary, Kanwal Sibal, at a CII function on July 8 on Indo-U.S. relations.

While Mr. Sibal did not offer any "definitive discourse" on Indo-U.S. relations, his comments have generated considerable interest. "It is a fact, that in the past and to some extent even today, the policies of the U.S., even if they have not been directed against the interest of India, have tended to adversely affect the interest of India."

On Jammu and Kashmir, he said the issue had a long history and the issue had been complicated in large measure by the policies pursued by some Western nations, in particular Britain and the U.S.

On the all-crucial concern of India — terrorism — Mr. Sibal had this to say: "Interestingly, September 11 is all about combating international terrorism. If one were to logically go down this road together, that is India and the U.S., then it is very clear what our expectations are and what the U.S. must do. They can not separate one element of terrorism from another and say that they would deal firstly, and on a priority basis, and forcefully, with only that segment of international terrorism which potentially threatens their security..."

Interestingly, Mr. Sinha has kept a low profile till date and has not interacted with the press. In such a scenario, the comments made by Mr. Sibal acquire added importance.

In response to questions, the Foreign Office spokesperson told presspersons this evening that the "whole gamut" of issues between India and the U.S. would come up for discussion with Mr. Powell.

She said opinions, views and perspectives need not coincide between countries. India, for instance, disagreed with the U.S. statements that Pakistan was a "stalwart ally" in the war against terrorism.

She added that Mr. Powell had a full schedule of meetings on Saturday evening and Sunday morning before leaving for Islamabad and nothing should be read into the fact that he would not be calling on the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee.

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Terrorist violence still taking place: Powell

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 26. The United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has said that while there was "some reduction" in infiltrations across the Line of Control, terrorist violence was still taking place. And, one of the objectives of his visit to the sub-continent was to see whether any measures could be taken to reduce the violence or the potential for it.

"There has been some reduction in infiltrations across the Line of Control but it is still unfortunately the case that there is violence. There is terrorist violence that takes place," Gen. Powell said in response to a question after his meeting with the Afghan Foreign Minister, Abdullah Abdullah.

"And in my conversations with the Indians and the Pakistanis, I will see if there are any other actions that can be taken to reduce the level of violence or the potential for violence, and I am sure we will have discussions on the possibility of a dialogue at some point in the future between the two sides that will deal with the question of Kashmir", he added.

Gen. Powell said he was travelling to India and Pakistan to

review bilateral relations with each one of the countries. Washington had good relations with both the South Asian nations and it was important for the Secretary of State to regularly travel to the two "very important" countries. "Of course, I will also talk about the current tension in the region," he added.

For his part, Mr. Abdullah said his country would like to see decreased tensions in all these regions and in the neighbourhood. "We would like to see an end to the conflict in that part of the world and an end which will be acceptable for both sides."

Infiltration down: Boucher

The State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, said on Thursday that the bottom line as far as infiltrations across the Line of Control into India was that they were "down".

Asked repeatedly that while he said that the infiltrations were down "significantly", Gen. Powell had remarked earlier in the day that the U.S. had seen "some" reduction. "On whether "significantly" and "some" were synonymous, Mr. Boucher

said: "It is down. I do not think I can be too precise in this matter. It is down since the Deputy Secretary, Richard Armitage, was out there. It is down since the commitment was made to end the infiltration along the Line of Control. I am not able to go more precisely into the specific information." Asked if the American view on infiltrations had been altered at all by New Delhi's continuous claims that it is not down to a "significant" amount, he said, "I have seen different statements from the Indian side. We obviously keep in touch with both the parties about the situation there and we obviously are interested in any information that might be available. But I am afraid beyond saying it is down, I cannot go into the kind of information we may have or may not have".

On whether the situation in the region had deteriorated since Mr. Armitage's visit six weeks ago, Mr. Boucher maintained that both Pakistan and India had taken a number of specific steps on the infiltration front and in the subsequent responses by India. "So, there certainly were positive developments that lowered the level of violence, that lowered the level of tension.

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'Ensure permanent end to infiltration'

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By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 25. Two leading members of Congress in the House of Representatives have urged the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, that he reiterate the message to the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, that halt to terrorist infiltration must be "permanent and visible" to India.

"We are confident that you will reiterate that sentiment to President Musharraf as you urge him to keep the commitment to abandon terrorism he has made to our Government, to the international community and to the Pakistani people," said Congressmen, Benjamin Gilman and Gary Ackerman, Chairman and Ranking Member respectively of the House International Relations Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia.

The senior members of Congress, in a letter to Gen. Powell, however, were sceptical if the particular sentiment will be taken in the right spirit or heard at all. "We are confident that you will deliver the right message, but are greatly concerned that the man on the receiving end of the message does not want to hear it or worse intends to ignore it. There is ample evidence to support this fear," they said.

The Republican and Democratic members of Congress argued that Gen. Musharraf has been hailed in this country for his decision to side with the U.S. on terrorism and on the steps he had taken domestically; but they questioned the subsequent statements of the Pakistani leader. "No sooner did the international community commend President Musharraf for his rejection of Islamic extremism than he reverted to form in attempting to describe the terrorist acts committed in In-

dia as those of 'freedom fighters'. Apparently his rejection of terrorism 'anywhere in the world' did not include India," Mr. Gilman and Mr. Ackerman maintained.

Recalling Gen. Powell's own statement that terrorism was not something "where you turn a tap on or off", they said Gen. Musharraf's commitment on the terrorism front must be permanent and verifiable and this is the "minimum" that the U.S. should expect out of its "ally" in the war against terrorism.

Turning to the subject of democracy, they said the return to democracy in Pakistan was an issue of "equal importance".

On Gen. Powell's visit to the sub-continent, the State Department again said that the administration expects to continue its efforts to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan.

"We expect to continue our efforts to reduce tensions between them. We look forward to discussing and developing these important bilateral relationships and we want to work with them on how to develop dialogue between them so that they can address the issues between them, including Kashmir", the spokesman, Richard Boucher, said on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Congressman Frank Pallone called on Gen. Powell to support the Israeli sale of the Arrow Weapon System to India saying that this would be a positive step for Indo-U.S. relations.

The Bush administration had said that it was looking into the Israeli request and is examining all issues related to the sale, including regional stability and provisions of the Missile Technology Control Regime. The issue could figure in Gen. Powell's discussions in New Delhi.

U.S. hails Pak. role in anti-terror campaign

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 24. The Bush administration has once again rejected India's call to brand Pakistan as a terrorist state. The statement to this effect came not from the State Department but from the White House. In fact, the United States has hailed, for yet another time, the steps taken by the President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, for curbing cross-border terrorism and for the support against the Al-Qaeda.

"President Musharraf has taken strong action in the war against terror. And that includes against Al-Qaeda or the Taliban, as well as taking steps to diminish the cross-border incursions into Kashmir. And the President (George W. Bush) is pleased with the actions that the President Musharraf has taken," the White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said. The spokesman was responding to a question on the kind of message the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, may be taking to India later this week, especially in the context of the demand by the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, that the United States declare Pakistan a terrorist state.

"The situation between India and Pakistan has twice, this year, reached almost a boiling point. And as a result of a lot of intervention and diplomacy by the President, by the State Department and by the Secretary, Colin Powell's travels to the region, that situation has been managed to the point now where the situation is more defused; the risk of violence is defused," Mr. Fleischer remarked.

"And that's going to be an ongoing part of America's diplomacy in the region. It's an area of the world the United States is going to continue

to actively work," the spokesman added.

Meanwhile at the State Department, the spokesman, Richard Boucher, said that the administration was considering an Israeli request to transfer the Arrow missile system to India; and was not sure if this issue would be discussed during the coming visit of the Secretary of State. The law, commitments and issues were being considered, Mr. Boucher, said on Tuesday. "...we're all concerned about stability in South Asia. We're all concerned ... emphasise the importance of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). So these are issues we've been discussing with the Israeli Government. At this point, we have not given a definitive answer to the Israeli request, but...we continue to discuss the issue in Washington," he said.

"Stability in the region as a whole is a factor. These decisions, because they do involve long-term changes and introductions of weapons systems, have to be made with a larger perspective than this week's events or last week's events," Mr. Boucher said, going on to stress the importance of the MTCR, which prohibits the proliferation of certain kinds of missiles and systems. He was asked why Washington would not view the Israeli sale of the Arrow system favourably given that India was a democracy; or if the administration had some reason to believe that the system could be used against Pakistan.

"...until we have a definitive answer — yes or no — I can't give you all the arguments one way or the other. They're still being discussed. They're still being considered. The law's being considered, commitments are being considered and the issues are being considered," Mr. Boucher said.

THE HINDU

25 JUL 2002

U.S. frowns on India's plan to buy Israeli weapons

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 23. The Bush administration is voicing its disapproval of India trying to purchase a missile defence system from Israel; and the objection will be conveyed by the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, when he visits New Delhi later this week, says a report in *The Washington Post*.

The State Department fears that the proposed sale of the Israeli Arrow Weapon System could exacerbate tensions between India and Pakistan, besides giving an opening to other nations — read Russia and China — to peddle missile technology. "We have concerns about the introduction of more missiles into this area. It could be destabilising," an unnamed senior State Department official was quoted as saying.

But the Indian interest in the Israeli anti-missile system has its backers in the Bush administration who argue that a number of objectives could be met — American support to Israel, the President's idea of enlisting allies in missile defence development and the furthering of Indo-U.S. ties. It would also be a reward to New Delhi for its "retreat" from confrontation in the current crisis with Pakistan.

The paper maintained that the administration's analysis of the Israeli proposal to India is not complete; nevertheless, the idea has received fresh attention in recent days. Washington apparently will be advising the Israelis "very soon."

It is also said that India has

expressed interest in the Patriot, an American anti-missile system manufactured by Raytheon. The company will brief Indian officials on the missile capabilities next month. The Patriot, which is in use in at least eight countries, was put into service in the 1991 war with Iraq as a protection against the Soviet Scud missiles.

The U.S. views will have to be factored in by Israel because the Arrow System is developed jointly by the two countries; and Washington's "approval" is indeed required for sale. Senior officials at Foggy Bottom are believed to be against the Israeli sale for reasons of geo-politics and arms control. Some in the administration are seeing if the proposed sale violates the Missile Technology Control Regime. "We have some issues we need to sort through, particularly how the sale relates to the MTCR. That's an open question," a Defence Department official told the paper.

Pakistan's response to any Israeli sale to India is seen as a foregone conclusion. "Were India to proceed with an investment in missile defence, one thing is certain: Pakistan will respond in some fashion, either by increasing its offensive capability to counter such a defensive shield or by pursuing its own form of missile defence wherever they could obtain it. That is an iron law of action-reaction cycle in South Asia," the paper quoted Karl Inderfurth, former Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, as saying.

THE HINDU

26 JUL 1992

US modifies India travel advisory

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, July 22

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THE UNITED States has modified its earlier travel advisory warning American citizens against travelling to India. The State Department today said the India-Pakistan tension had subsided from the high levels it reached in June and cleared the way for the return of US government personnel and their families.

On June 26, the State Department had issued a travel warning for India that was valid till November 20. But while noting a "return to normalcy in most aspects of public and economic life in India," the US has warned that the risk of renewed tension cannot be totally ruled out.

However, American citizens have been advised to stay away from all areas on the Indo-Pakistani border. The US Embassy and Consulates are expected to operate at normal staffing levels in the near future, the announcement added.

Britain, meanwhile, is yet to review the Indo-Pak tension with a view to relaxing its own travel advisory on India. British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, on Friday, said: "As far as travel advisories are concerned, we keep these under review all the time and would make an announcement as ap-

Hizb attacks CRPF

MILITANTS ON Monday struck on high security Residence Road hurling a grenade on a CRPF camp at a local hotel injuring one of the security personnel and damaging three vehicles, including two of the CRPF.

Soon after the attack at noon, a Hizbul Mujahideen spokesperson called to claim responsibility for the blast. The person said the outfit had planned a suicide attack after the explosion, but decided against it, as it would have caused civilian casualties. More attacks would follow, he added. The multi-storeyed hotel houses the 113th battalion of the CRPF and some banks.

HTC, Srinagar

propriate."

The spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs refused to comment on the US move.

India had consistently maintained that the fears leading to the issue of the travel advisories were "misplaced and inappropriate".

US turns terror tables on Indian guests

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, July 19. — The "detention" of a cultural troupe from Kerala, including popular film heroine Samyuktha Verma who is considered the Julia Roberts of Malayalee films, at New York airport this week seems to be just the latest in a series of such incidents wherein visiting Indians, including many VIPs, have been harassed in the wake of the September 11. High-profile globetrotting Indian politicians have also not been spared.

Only three weeks ago, CPI-M MP Mr Somnath Chatterjee had a "taste" of the "reception" Indians are increasingly being given on arrival at US airports. The

fact that Mr Chatterjee is one of India's senior-most politicians who travels around the world quite often, plus his holding a diplomatic passport and the indemnity of his position did not stop US officials at an airport near Hawaii from "detaining him" for about 45 minutes when he arrived there on the invitation of a local Bengali association.

The CPI-M leader in the Rajya Sabha, Mr S Ramachandran Pillai, today raised in the Rajya Sabha the issue of "the harassment" of Indian citizens, pointing out the cases involving Mr

Chatterjee, Ms Verma and actor Kamal Hassan. Mr Pillai said Mr Chatterjee was "detained" for 45 minutes, subjected to a thorough check-up and faced uncomfortable queries about his identity and visit. Mr Pillai said the veteran Communist leader had produced for inspection his 'VIP' passport and parliamentarian's ID card. Even displaying the invitation from his hosts did not satisfy the "suspicious" officials; Mr Chatterjee was made to actually write his name in Bengali for confirmation.

Post 11 September, prominent Indians on tour to the US — politicians and celluloid celebrities alike — have returned with only bitter memories of harassment and gruelling checks at airports

"This is very insulting.... There is absolutely no justification for what is being faced by many Indian citizens visiting the USA," Mr Pillai said. Mr Chatterjee wrote to the Prime Minister on his return to protesting the "harassment", and has urged the Centre to take it up with the US authorities. Mr Chatterjee, now not in Delhi, could not be contacted.

The CPI-M Parliamentary Party today also issued a statement demanding that the Centre take up the matter of "harassment of Indian citizens" with Washington. "India has consistently asked the USA to declare Pakistan a terrorist state. But the USA is treating Indian citizens as terrorists. The Centre should raise this matter to uphold the dignity of Indians."

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'KASHMIR IS A BILATERAL ISSUE'

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U.S. rejects calls for a plebiscite

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 19. The Bush administration has brushed aside calls for a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir saying that it was for India and Pakistan to settle the issue bilaterally. The United States also said that it saw the coming elections in the State as a first step towards the resolution of the problem.

"... The U.S. supported successive U.N. efforts... But in 1972, India and Pakistan reached an agreement (Shimla) that it would be a bilateral issue. We support India and Pakistan and we are working towards getting these two countries to the table to resolve the issue," the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, said at a hearing in a House International Relations Sub-Committee.

Ms. Rocca was responding to the Republican Congressman, Dana Rohrabacher of California, who wanted to know where the Bush administration stood on the issue of plebiscite. A critic of India, Mr. Rohrabacher, in his opening remarks, argued that much of the instability in the sub-continent stemmed from the "unwillingness, arrogance and intransigence" on the part of India for not permitting the people of Kashmir the "right to control their own destiny".

"We are also supportive of Indian efforts to conduct free and fair elections in the State of Kashmir scheduled for later this year and to begin to address Kashmiri grievances. Such elections could proceed with a much greater chance of success in an

atmosphere free of violence and intimidation and serve as a first step towards resolution of the issue", Ms. Rocca said in her prepared statement to the House Sub-Committee on the Middle East and South Asia. Ms. Rocca recalled that the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, due to visit India and Pakistan next week, had said that war was not an option for the two South Asian countries; and that the Republican administration was working to help India and Pakistan find acceptable ways to begin the de-escalation process.

"The only way forward that offers a prospect of genuinely resolving their differences

India welcomes statement

NEW DELHI, JULY 19. India today welcomed the U.S. statement that India and Pakistan should resolve their bilateral differences under the Shimla Agreement, saying it amounted to "complete vindication" of New Delhi's stand.

India had all along been saying that the two countries must adopt the bilateral course to resolve their problems. "The statement from Washington vindicates our stand," an External Affairs Ministry spokesperson told reporters here.

She was asked to comment on the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca's testimony before the U.S. House International Relations Sub-committee on West Asia and South Asia. — UNI

is the path of dialogue and confidence building. We are working to help the two sides find mutually acceptable ways to begin the de-escalation process", she said.

Ms. Rocca made it clear that the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, must live up to his pledges. By the same token, once tensions begin to subside, India should agree to resume talks with Pakistan on all issues including Kashmir. "President Musharraf has pledged that infiltration into Kashmir from his country will end permanently. Pakistan needs to keep that pledge in order to begin a process of resolution of the immediate crisis and of its more fundamental differences with India. Once tensions begin to subside, the process should be continued by New Delhi agreeing to resume talks with Islamabad on all issues, including Kashmir", Ms. Rocca said.

Arguing that the encouraging progress in South Asia towards prosperity and democracy is "too often overshadowed by the spectre of war between India and Pakistan", Ms. Rocca maintained that the administration remained deeply concerned over the high levels of tension between the two countries, in particular about the continued deployment of forces along the border and within Kashmir.

"A surge in violence could spark a military confrontation with long-lasting and devastating consequences for the entire region. The enemies of moderation in the region are aware of this fact and are trying to exploit it through high profile terrorist attacks, such as that outside of Jammu this past Saturday," Ms. Rocca said.

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THE HINDU

India, an important player: U.S.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 19. The United States sees India as an increasingly important player in world affairs and from the start the Republican administration of George Bush has sought to effect the transformation of the bilateral relationship, says the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca.

"We are engaging with India on a wide range of issues. From counter-terrorism to security issues, climate change and commerce, to strengthening democracy and fighting HIV/AIDS, the President has looked to India as a partner," Ms. Rocca told the House of Representatives International Relations Sub-Committee on the Middle East and South Asia.

The senior Bush administration official for South Asian affairs talked about the region, especially in the context of counter-terrorism, the situation between India and Pakistan and about every country in that part of the world.

"... Our relationships with South Asian states have been central to our successful prosecution of the war on terrorism. All have been fully supportive, and their support in this war has been, and will continue to be absolutely crucial," Ms. Rocca told the House panel.

On India, Ms. Rocca talked of the all-encompassing nature of the bilateral relationship — military, economic,

counter-terrorism and law enforcement. "We are working ever more closely with India on military cooperation. Our military forces are now actively developing the capability to work together effectively through joint exercises, planning and senior-level visits," Ms. Rocca said making the point that within the framework of the Defence Planning Group, the U.S. and India were discussing technology and research and development cooperation, sales and licensing issues and peacekeeping operations.

"U.S.-India counter-terrorism cooperation is rapidly maturing. It has contributed to the arrest of many terrorists around the world... Our cooperation includes intelligence sharing, training, counter-terrorism, finance and money laundering, improving border security, combating cyber terrorism and providing mutual legal assistance. Our joint diplomatic efforts against terrorism have been unprecedented in our relationship," Ms. Rocca argued.

Non-proliferation, she said, remained an item on the bilateral agenda which would be addressed through cooperation and mutual understanding. The cooperative aspects in this area aside, Ms. Rocca expressed confidence that the Government of India shared the U.S. concerns on the spread of sensitive technologies of weapons of mass destruction and missiles that posed a security risk to both countries.

The prepared statement of Ms. Rocca

apart, at least two members of Congress raised the Kashmir issue and wanted to know what the administration had done to raise the concern about "Hindu extremists" in India.

"... The entire issue of Gujarat is one that has been of great concern to us. It is one we have been following very closely... Our officers have gone down to monitor the situation themselves. It will figure highly in our religious freedom report," she said.

Ms. Rocca was asked whether the administration considered coming up with a plan for Kashmir in the same fashion as it had come up for West Asia.

"Our position on this is that no outside Government can impose any peace plan on the two nations involved. The two nations involved need to get together and talk about it themselves. They need to work this out. It's not something that can be superimposed from the outside by any nation. We are working, however, to get both sides to the table, and we have made it clear to both sides that we don't think it can be resolved without dialogue," she responded.

She argued that the current situation would have to be defused first before a discussion of all issues including Kashmir. "... the current crisis needs to be defused first. India has said that when there is a peaceful situation, they are willing to talk about all issues, including Kashmir," Ms. Rocca told the Republican Congressman Joseph Pitts.

THE HINDU

20 JUL 2002

US terror tag denial on Pak upsets India

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, July 18. — India is upset with the USA for refusing to declare Pakistan as a sponsor of terrorism and for rewarding it with aid and weapons.

"As far as India is concerned, the circumstances fully warrant Pakistan being declared a sponsor of terrorism. This is what we have been saying consistently. The situation suggests that Pakistan is the world's 'holding company of terrorism'," foreign ministry spokesperson Mrs Nirupama Rao said.

Earlier today, the USA made it clear that it would not declare Pakistan a terrorist state as it had been a "stalwart ally" in America's fight against terrorism.

"As far as putting Pakistan on the terrorism list is concerned... Pakistan has been a stalwart ally in the fight against terrorism," state department spokesman Mr Richard Boucher told reporters in Washington.

His comment came after Deputy Prime Minister Mr LK

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Advani's statement in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday saying that USA's declaration of Pakistan as a terrorist state would have placed enough pressure on Islamabad to take steps to dismantle the framework of terrorist infrastructure in its territory.

Russian stand: The Russian first deputy foreign minister, Mr Vyacheslav Trubnikov, today said Russia was "against labels" like calling Pakistan a terrorist state.

Hastening to add that "we have supported India's views," Mr Trubnikov said Russia had invited General Pervez Musharraf to Moscow to "convince" him that dismantling the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan was essential to reduce tension in the region.

Gen. Musharraf will visit Moscow before President Putin comes to India in December, though dates for the visit have not been finalised.

After meeting Mr Advani, National Security Adviser Mr Brajesh Mishra and external affairs minister Mr Yashwant Sinha, Mr Trubnikov said: "We

have invited Musharraf to convince him of the need to dismantle terrorist infrastructure and to meet its obligations."

He denied at a news conference that Russia was trying to play "mediator" between India and Pakistan and said "we believe the keys to solve the bilateral issues are in the hands of" Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf.

The Russian minister said the issue of cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir would "most probably" be on the agenda of the US-Russian joint working group meeting scheduled for 26 July in Minneapolis, USA.

Mr Trubnikov, here for a meeting of the Indo-Russian joint working group on Afghanistan, said a trilateral pressure group on Afghanistan, comprising India, Russia and Iran (the three closest allies of the Northern Alliance) had been mooted to try and prevent a possible split in the NA and the re-emergence of Al-Qaida and Taliban elements in the garb of greater power to the Pashtuns.

THE STATESMAN

19 JUL 1997

INFILTRATION / 'INDIA MUST ALSO TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE TENSION'

Cross-border infiltration should end permanently, says U.S. 14/7

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 13. The U.S. State Department has said that though there has been significant decline in infiltration along the Line of Control in Kashmir, the Bush administration will like to see the commitments made by the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, permanent.

The U.S. said that it wanted to see Gen. Musharraf take action against terrorist outfits in Pakistan and to see "a continuation of steps on the Indian side" to ease and de-escalate the situation.

On the infiltration, the State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, said "President Musharraf has said that that's a permanent change. He has made that commitment to us, and we have conveyed it to the Indian Government. And we all want to see that happen, that this does remain a permanent change".

"And second of all, we want to see the continued action that he (Gen. Musharraf) has talked about, like the action against camps and groups. So we want to see those

things continue. We also want to see a continuation of steps on the Indian side to ease off and de-escalate the situation," he said.

Mr. Boucher argued that the U.S. wanted to keep the momentum going as far as easing tensions in the subcontinent was concerned. "And we want to keep on the agenda and in the discussions with them the issue of dialogue, which I think we all agree (is) the way that ultimately these questions need to be resolved. And so our interest in pursuing that and seeing it move forward is very strong."

The administration reiterated that the coming visit of the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, to India and Pakistan would have a much broader agenda, over and beyond the current crisis and tensions.

"There are other issues. We have important relationships with both these countries as well; in Pakistan, a growing and broadening relationship and a movement towards democracy with elections in October that we want to firmly support. That can be an important step on the road back to democracy which is very important to us. And

with India, a much broader relationship as well. So a lot to discuss," Mr. Boucher said.

Gen. Powell is scheduled to be tentatively in South Asia on July 27 and 28, although it is not clear which capital he will be visiting first. He is on his way to the ASEAN Regional Forum Meeting in Brunei. Gen. Powell is expected to swing through a number of South East Asian allies of the U.S. between July 26 and August 3.

At the White House, the spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said at a press briefing that the India-Pakistan border was dangerous and volatile; and that the U.S. would continue to be engaged actively and consistently in the region. "Through the very act of diplomacy and some of the personal efforts of the President, the Secretary of State and numerous other diplomats, tensions have indeed been reduced tremendously between India and Pakistan," Mr. Fleischer said.

"However it remains one of the world's most volatile, dangerous regions. It is an area the administration is going to remain actively and consistently engaged in. Hence the Secretary's trip," he said.

Indo-US ties intact, more joint exercises likely

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 11 JULY

AFFIRMING the growing Indo-US engagement at the military level, the two countries have decided to start a full schedule of joint exercises in coming months.

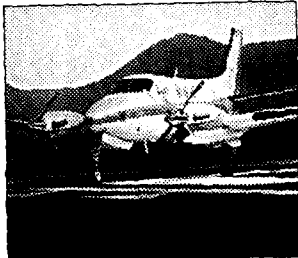
Some of the exercises, especially those involving the Indian Air Force, were finalised during Air Chief Marshal S. Krishnaswamy's visit to the US a fortnight ago. These include exercises in Alaska, in reciprocation to the one held in Agra a couple of months ago.

Officials contended that the moves marked an upward shift in military relations between the two countries, particularly in the aftermath of September 11. The enhancing of ties has been complemented with the resumption of defence equipment sales and the keenness displayed by the US to involve India in its ballistic missile defence initiative.

There has been a bit of scepticism, however, and certain circles feel the current warmth in military ties is a reflection of America's own war against terrorism in this region rather than an attitudinal shift towards India.

This point is buttressed by the fact that the US has chosen to ignore the Indian proposal to hold military exercises in the Arabian Gulf.

The Americans are understood to have given a variety of reasons for rebuffing the Indian suggestion. However, this contention has been rejected by many, with the argument that overlooking one proposal does not mean much when several joint exercises have already been lined up.



GOING WITH THE WIND

According to officials, two joint exercises have been planned in Alaska, the first in October and the second in December. These are, in fact, the winter versions of the exercises held in Agra and have been conceived to give Indian paratroopers and Air Force personnel an opportunity to gain experience in performing duties such as loading, unloading, paradrops etc in extremely cold conditions.

The next exercise will be held in the US Pacific Command base in Guam islands, also at the end of the year, in which the Air Force may even fly down an IL-76 aircraft. The US Pacific Command and India will also co-host another exercise here next year.

USA urges J&K separatists to take poll plunge

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, June 27. — The USA has renewed its efforts to play a mediator's role in Jammu & Kashmir. A US State Department delegation met Kashmiri separatist leaders yesterday and asked them to take part in the state Assembly polls.

The delegation comprised the US embassy's defence attache, Colonel Steven Soboton, the second secretary, Ms Sheetal Patel, and the press adviser, Mr Unni Menon. They held talks with Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party chief Mr Shabir Shah, Hurriyat chairman Prof Abdul Gani Bhat and third front leaders Mr Abdul Hanief Khaliq, Mr Azam Inquilabi, Mr Abdul Rahim Naikoo and Mushtaq Ahmed Sagar.

The delegation assured the separatist leaders that international observers would be present during the polls. "Pakistan would never agree to withdraw its forces from PoK as per UN resolutions ... The US delegation has 'guaranteed' them that the elections would be held in the state in the presence of international observers," sources said.

After the meeting, Prof Bhat said he had told the US team that first a conducive atmosphere for talks should be created. This should be followed by defusing of tension along the LoC and talks between India and Pakistan.

The leaders reportedly told the delegates that they would participate in the polls only if the USA agreed to play a mediatory role in Kashmir. They wanted an assurance that India would be ready to discuss the Kashmir issue with Pakistan after the polls.

Mr Shabir Shah, who met PMO official Mr AS Dullat recently, had told him that he was not averse "to participation in the elections if it helps resolve the vexed Kashmir issue".

"We are not against the democratic process," Mr Shah told US officials yesterday. "We believe in elections. India has been holding polls in the state for the past 50 years. The Kashmir issue remains unresolved... We are ready to participate in the elections if these are held to resolve the issue... We have no problem in demonstrating our representative character. But we will not participate in the polls unless the Centre initiates a dialogue."

The team will submit its "Kashmir report" to the US government soon.

Militant group banned under Pota

The Centre today banned Dukhtaran-e-Millat, a Kashmiri terrorist organisation, under Pota with immediate effect. The organisation is involved in terrorist activities and hence has been "banned under Pota with immediate effect", a ministry notification said.

Dukhtaran-e-Millat (Daughters of Faith), an all-women pro-Pakistan outfit was established in 1987. The group wants women to be clad in *burqas* and (veil) system. It claims the Kashmir issue is primarily a religious one and that "jihad is mandatory" and supports the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan.

28 JUN 2002

US flip-flop comes under cabinet panel's scanner

By Mahendra Ved
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Conflicting signals from the US on the response to the continuing infiltration of militants into Jammu and Kashmir are understood to have dominated a meeting of the cabinet committee on security on Friday.

The meeting, chaired by the Prime Minister, also closely reviewed what a government source described as a "civil war-like situation" in Pakistan, the latest evidence being the explosion outside the American consulate in Karachi. Sources said India would like to know how the US assessed the situation and to study its implications for the ground situation in Kashmir.

Talk of confidence-building measures in such conditions has been taken by New Delhi with a pinch of salt. "Islamabad has to

create an atmosphere conducive to the resumption of a dialogue," external affairs minister Jaswant Singh said after the meeting. "The situation is pregnant with all types of possibilities."

Sources said India was dismayed at the US' 'narrow' definition of who constituted the Al Qaida, and this had been conveyed emphatically to defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld and earlier to deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage.

"It cannot only be the Arabs and Afghans when different nationals, including Pakistanis, are there. The US knows fully well that cadres of the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad had also fought in Afghanistan. It must decide whether it is going to extend 'Operation Enduring Freedom' to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir," said a source involved in talks with the American visitors.

The Pakistani media itself has been talking of the Al Qaida-Taliban movement. The June issue of Herald carries an article—'Sleeping With Enemy' by Mohammed Ilyas Khan—describing how five Arabs "stole into" Pakistan through Khyber Agency last month, and of "travel arrangements" made at Akhura Khatak for their onward journey to Muzaffarabad (PoK).

Sources asserted that the intensity of Pakistan-sponsored infiltration had changed only marginally in the last five months. India would like to wait out the summer before making any meaningful assessment. The immediate urgency was to attend to the Lashkar and Jaish "sleeper agents", estimated between 1,500 and 2,000 and operating in the state, to ensure a peaceful assembly election.

● See Edit: US Double-take, Page 14

THE TIMES OF INDIA

JUN 2002

IF KALUCHAK RECURS, RESPONSE WILL BE INTERNAL

India, US against joint LoC patrol

SFI 14/6
Sub us

**Nilova Roy Chaudhury and
Aloke Tikku in New Delhi**

June 13. — Days after the Prime Minister mooted the concept of joint patrolling with Pakistan to check infiltration, India and the USA have veered around the view that "joint patrolling" along the Line of Control will not be possible in the immediate future.

The two sides agreed at discussions during Mr Donald Rumsfeld's visit yesterday that mutual trust, a prerequisite for joint patrolling to succeed, was missing.

New Delhi has also indicated to the USA that if another major terrorist incident like Kaluchak occurs, the Indian response would be internal and not across the border.

There are fears that in the run up to elections to the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, terrorists already within the Valley (some estimates place the number close to 3,000), cut off from their mentors across the LoC, would attempt "spectacular terrorist feats" to frighten people against the poll process. In that case, the response would be in the form of swift reprisals against the perpetrators within the state, sources said.

The USA has pleaded for restraint on India's part, saying Pakistan was not in control of all

militant outfits, and fears that an Indian attack on terrorist training camps across the LoC would escalate into a major conflagration.

When the issue of jointly monitoring infiltration from Pakistan came up for discus-

**Evidence... here today,
gone tomorrow!**

ISLAMABAD, June 13. — A day after Mr Donald Rumsfeld said in Delhi that he had evidence on the presence of Al-Qaida in J&K, the US defence secretary said in Islamabad that he had no concrete evidence, but only "scraps of intelligence". He described the intelligence input as speculative and not verifiable. He expected Pakistan to crack down on the network if there was any "actionable intelligence". — PTI

Details on page 6

sions, it was pointed out that this proposal could not be implemented in the immediate future.

Not only because Pakistan had not responded to the Indian proposal favourably, but also due to the lack of mutual trust between the two countries at this stage.

It emerged in the discussions held yesterday with the US de-

fence secretary that it would be difficult to put this plan on the ground at a time when the armies — which have to mutually work out details for the joint patrolling — are standing eyeball to eyeball.

"The two sides agreed that certain confidence-building measures would be required to be put in place before New Delhi and Islamabad can work on joint patrolling," a senior official said, adding that it was in this context that Mr Rumsfeld suggested that India install sensitive ground sensors along the LoC.

The new generation of American ground sensors would enable New Delhi not only to stop infiltration, but also provide evidence of attempted infiltration.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee had at Almaty earlier this month rejected Islamabad's proposal to allow international forces along the LoC to monitor infiltration and suggested that joint patrolling of the LoC by Indian and Pakistani security forces could be acceptable to New Delhi.

India's foreign office has since then been pushing the proposal to counter Islamabad's attempts to internationalise the LoC, notwithstanding reservations at the viability of the suggestion expressed by many analysts and the defence ministry.

THE STATESMAN

14 JUN 2002

Rumsfeld reassures

US as guarantor of permanent end to cross-border terrorism

BY far the most significant element of Donald Rumsfeld's visit to India was the acknowledgement that the US was aware that Al-Qaeda fighters were operating in Jammu and Kashmir close to the Line of Control. No one should expect the US at that high level to say more. But the fact that the US Secretary of Defence thought it fit to make the information public is an indication of the challenges that both India and the US face, and the likely direction of his discussions in Islamabad. At one level this may shift the responsibility of cross-border terrorism from Islamabad to what has been often described as the "stateless" groups of terrorists. At another, for exactly the same reason, the US may find it easy to apply greater pressure on Islamabad which has officially agreed to co-operate with Washington on its war against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The latter would depend greatly on the recently re-emphasised strength of Indo-US relations.

For us it should not matter whether the target is described as Al-Qaeda or by another name. Terrorists will remain terrorists regardless of the title their group bears. And Al-Qaeda has not proved to be any less unbeatable than, say, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba. What is worth noting is that with Al-Qaeda let loose in J&K, the US war against terrorism comes even closer to our war against cross-border terrorism in terms of even tactical objectives, leave alone the

larger strategic goals. Given its strong diplomatic position during the past fortnight, especially its categorical assurance of Islamabad living up to its promises of choking infiltration and terrorist infrastructures, the US seems to have assumed the responsibility of being the guarantor of halting cross-border terrorism permanently. This does not mean that we would not have to maintain the strategy of political-military pressure on Islamabad to reverse its policies. What it does imply is that a co-ordinated Indo-US strategy is more likely to produce favourable results than a unilateral one.

• Deeper involvement by the US may well increase the apprehension levels in some quarters of increasing our dependence on Washington. But this must be seen in the context of New Delhi's clear position that any de-escalation would be in tune with the practical steps taken by Islamabad to permanently seal infiltration and dismantle sanctuaries and financial support to the terrorist organisations. The US is strategically engaged with countries of Southern Asia. The difference from any earlier period is that its interests and objectives and ours converge markedly. The US has been emphasising that the Kashmir issue must be resolved bilaterally and peacefully and we should continue to hold them to it. In the process if its engagement nudges Islamabad toward a more co-operative approach, so much the better.

INDIAN EXPRESS

1 11/11/02

PRAISE FOR INDIA'S 'CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORTS'

'More steps' if Pakistan clamps down on infiltration

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, JUNE 12. India today conveyed to the United States its willingness to take more steps towards the reduction of military tension with Pakistan if Islamabad moved towards a comprehensive effort to end cross-border terrorism.

After an intensive round of consultations with the top layer of the political establishment, the visiting U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, praised the steps taken by India as "useful" and "constructive" and explored the prospects for additional actions by India.

Coming out of a 75-minute meeting with the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Mr. Rumsfeld told reporters that America "recognises the leadership demonstrated" by Mr. Vajpayee "in a period that has been tense."

At the heart of the discussion between Mr. Rumsfeld and the Government were the timing and sequence of the next steps to ease the military standoff in the subcontinent and their linkage to the actions in Islamabad. These measures were discussed in some detail by Mr. Rumsfeld and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes. The two leaders had more than an hour of one-on-one talks before they were joined by their aides. Mr. Fernandes said some "understandings" had been arrived at



The U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, with the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, in New Delhi on Wednesday. — Photo: V. Sudershan

between India and the U.S. which could lead to the creation of a "better atmosphere in the subcontinent." He refused to go into the "specifics" of the understandings with Mr. Rumsfeld, who is expected to carry them to Pakistan.

According to the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, Islamabad had communicated to Washington new commitments over the weekend that an end to infiltration across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir would be permanent and that it "would be followed by other activities that had to do with the

dismantling of the (training) camps." If Pakistan does indeed implement these promises, India might agree to resume direct air and ground transportation links between the two countries and withdraw some Air Force units from forward locations.

The U.S. is said to be keen on some Indian steps in relation to the ground forces. India apparently made it clear to Mr. Rumsfeld that there was no question of demobilising its troops on the LoC until the elections in Jammu and Kashmir are held later this year. But it is believed

to have indicated a little more flexibility on the posture of its ground forces on the International Border with Pakistan in Rajasthan and Punjab. New Delhi might be willing to pull back its strike forces from the IB if there is a visible movement in Pakistan towards dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism on its soil.

The Indian side has underlined the fact that it has no desire to perpetuate the military confrontation with Pakistan, if there is a genuine progress across the border to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism, according to well-placed sources. At the same time, it insists that its steps can only follow, and not precede, additional actions from Islamabad to wind down the terrorist camps, squeeze their finances and cut their communication links.

The Indian leaders also conveyed to Mr. Rumsfeld that the crucial test of a change in Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism rests in Gen. Musharraf's willingness to let the elections in Jammu and Kashmir go off peacefully. And if Gen. Musharraf passes this test, India might be prepared to resume a substantive political dialogue with Pakistan after the elections, official sources say.

Mr. Rumsfeld, who arrived here on Tuesday night, had a breakfast meeting with the National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, and held discussions with the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, over lunch. He also met the Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani.

Al-Qaeda operating along LoC, says Rumsfeld

NEW DELHI, JUNE 12. Reinforcing India's fears, the U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, said today that there were "indications" of Al-Qaeda terrorists operating near the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir and offered to provide ground sensors to monitor the militant incursions from across the LoC. "I have seen indications that the Al-Qaeda is operating near the LoC," he told reporters after his meeting with the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, before leaving for Islamabad.

Asked whether the U.S. forces would pursue the Al-Qaeda in Kashmir, he said "we are getting cooperation of all kinds of countries across the globe to fight the Al-Qaeda and its terrorist network and working to see that (these countries) do not become a haven for terrorists."

The setting up of an infiltration monitoring mechanism figured prominently in Mr. Rumsfeld's talks with the top Indian leadership, a U.S. official said. The sensors would be set on ground rather than being air-borne and would

be operated by the local forces, he said.

"It is unclear as to whether or not, and to what extent, we could be helpful... it is for the technical people to see," Mr. Rumsfeld said on sensors, adding that the goal was to see that there was no infiltration across the LoC.

However, the deployment of foreign forces to monitor the LoC was not discussed during Mr. Rumsfeld's talks with the Indian leaders, highly-placed Indian and American sources said tonight. The clarification came in the wake of some remarks attributed to Mr. Rumsfeld.

"We discussed a whole range of subjects and I guess the honest answer is yes. That subject did come up," Mr. Rumsfeld had said. The question was about deploying sensors to monitor infiltration along the LoC but some got the impression that the question related to sensors as well as the deployment of foreign forces. The U.S. Embassy spokesman confirmed that Mr. Rumsfeld's remarks related only to sensors. — PTI

Armitage relays Gen's tone, Delhi changes its tenor

By Mahendra Ved
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage's peace mission to South Asia appeared to be at least partially fulfilled as India, on hearing the "tone and tenor" of the message he had brought from Islamabad, found itself in "expectant mode" about Gen Pervez Musharraf keeping his promises on curbing incursions into Jammu and Kashmir.

Only a few days ago in Almaty, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had conveyed to the summitters, including Russia's Vladimir Putin and China's Jiang Zemin, that due to Pakistan's track record, India could not trust either that country or its President. On Friday, however, emphasising that India also wanted "an end to tensions" on the border, the Indian side seemed to be changing that approach, but without lowering its guard.

A significant outcome of the parleys



U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage speaks to Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee at his residence in New Delhi on Friday.

was the inglorious death of the so-called Anglo-American proposal of foreign soldiers monitoring the Line of Control (LoC). India expectedly rejected it, but it transpired that the proposal had not even found mention in the New Delhi parleys. Nor was it discussed in Washington, Mr Armitage said, calling it "far-fetched".

Diplomatic circles were not willing to speculate on whether Mr Armitage thought it prudent not to annoy the Indians with a proposal so warmly welcomed by Gen Musharraf, or on whether it was the brainchild of some elements in the British establishment with a penchant for playing a role to "resolve the Kashmir dispute".

External affairs minister Jaswant Singh said after the talks that India was committed to peace in the region and that it was achievable if Gen Pervez Musharraf kept his promise to end cross-border terrorism. It seemed a very general statement of intent.

Mr Singh reiterated that the proposal for joint patrolling of the LoC with Pakistan was "evolutionary". Efforts by both sides were needed to work towards it to solve the problem of infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir.

"It is not as if joint patrolling will be established tomorrow. It is an answer to a problem. It is evolutionary and that is why one should work towards it," Mr Singh said in response to a media query.

With a distinct lowering of tensions, US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld, due here in the middle of next week, should find it easy to deal with the South Asian adversaries. Foreign office sources here were not willing to speculate on the next course of action, emphasising the need for "prudence".

Parting message

US scare mongering scares India

US diplomats have been staunch in their denial that the exodus of foreign officials — and tourists who take the lead from their governments — is not part of a Washington strategy to keep India well inside the line that divides a diplomatic response from a military one. They count for little, given that the US is hardly likely to publicly admit that effectively it is giving India a choice — do what we say and we'll tell the world your country is safe, otherwise, look at CNN and *New York Times* painting a picture of sub-continental Armageddon. There is a legitimate Indian grievance against this. Which is that if the US does take the possibility of a nuclear conflict seriously, it also takes Pakistan as a trigger-happy party. In that case, sanctions should have been applied on Islamabad. Re-freezing bilateral and multilateral aid and loans would have acted quickly as sobriety restorer across the border. Instead, the US probably chose to talk tough to Pakistan but also hit India where it knew it will hurt. Unlike Pakistan, India has a reputation to lose. Indians don't like their country being thought of as a Third World basket case. More important, with a mature economy, many sectors depend on global confidence. A stock market crisis or another set back to the IT industry are counter-productive just when the steep downturn seem to be bottoming out. Some effects are already visible, and the general impression that India is a dangerous place to be in has gained credence outside the country.

Has the government reacted to this US pressure? Statements by the Prime Minister, the Defence Minister and the spin from the PMO indicate a toning down of Indian rhetoric. Reports from Almaty, where the Prime Minister is attending a regional security summit, talk of India being amenable to the idea that Pakistan may after all behave well. Senior government officials have said that India may not respond even in the case of another "Kaluchak-type attack". The timing of these statements is unlikely to be coincidental. It could be that the government has received some genuine reassurances from the US and the apparent softening of New Delhi's stance is a combined effect of American promise and pressure. If the promise is delivered, the pressure won't matter; normalcy and safety as perceived by CNN will return once Washington feels India has "backed off".

The tricky thing for India will be if Pakistan's promised action takes long time in coming and/or is taken with plenty of gaping holes. US pressure will not ease and the latter will have a hard time explaining domestically why it is appearing to be less distrustful with Pakistan. There's another pressure India will have to contend with — that of coming back to the negotiating table on Kashmir. This must be expected when the US feels that Musharraf has done "enough" to deserve a reward. India should start preparing for such a gambit now given that American pressure can wrong a country that is wronged.

U.S. condemns attack in Doda

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 31. The United States has strongly condemned the latest militant attack in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir calling it the "most irresponsible" action especially in the context of the highly-charged situation in the subcontinent.

"...in the current charged climate of tension between the two nuclear armed neighbours poised for war, this attack appears to be aimed at taking tensions to a higher level and undermining regional stability. So we strongly condemn the latest incident," the State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, said on Thursday.

The Bush administration is further making the point that only terrorists would stand to benefit from a war in South Asia. "...there is a danger that irresponsible elements such as these will try to spark a conflict

between India and Pakistan by engaging in terrorist provocations; and it's vital for everyone to do their utmost to reduce violence, lower the rhetoric and exercise restraint, bearing in mind that only terrorists would benefit from a war in South Asia," Mr. Boucher added.

The U.S. has been using the current tensions between India and Pakistan to constantly remind Islamabad and Pervez Musharraf that words have to be matched by deeds on the ground — a message that came out of the State Department again on Thursday.

"...we have heard again and again from the Pakistani Government as you have heard publicly from President Musharraf that he was certainly not going to allow Pakistani territory or territory controlled by Pakistan to be used for terrorist actions. And as we've discussed before, those are the commitments that we're looking for

him to carry out, in fact," Mr. Boucher maintained.

The administration is also making the point that the "role" of the U.S. in the India-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir is quite different from the one it has been playing between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

"We have a different role historically; we have a different role in fact," Mr. Boucher said stressing that Washington was not a mediator between India and Pakistan and that while it was prepared to facilitate, that (talks) should be agreeable to both India and Pakistan. In fact, the State Department is saying that the first priority in the present context is to deal with the threat of tension and danger and getting things on the "right track"; the second priority would be to get the parties talking; and this dialogue would have to settle the problem taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

0 1 JUN 2002

Concerned over Indo-Pak. situation: U.S.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

9/3/09
WASHINGTON, MAY 18. The Bush administration says it continues to be concerned about the rising tensions along the India-Pakistan border; at the same time, the State Department maintains that no decision has been made on travel plans of senior officials to the region.

"... We are concerned about the situation there, about the increase in tensions. As you know, the United States has been working all along with both of these nations to try to see if we couldn't contribute in some way to an easing of tensions between the two," the State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, said on Friday.

The Secretary of State, Colin Powell, had been in close touch with leaders of India and Pakistan. The Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, was

10-8 19/5
just in the region. "She had some very detailed, and we think fruitful, discussions with both parties", Mr. Boucher added.

The Bush administration has again said that it had excellent relationship with both India and Pakistan and that the U.S. would do everything it could to ease tensions.

"...We'll continue to be involved. I'm sure we'll continue to be involved at a high level and see what we can do", Mr. Boucher said in the course of a regular briefing.

On a possible visit of the Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, to the region, he said "there is no further decisions at this point on travel to the region".

A possible visit by Mr. Armitage to India and Pakistan has attracted media attention. One view is that he is already scheduled to visit the region by the middle of June and that given the current situation, the trip could be advanced.

There is speculation whether he is being "sent" to the subcontinent or "rushed" to defuse Indo-Pak. tensions. Diplomats and officials, however, note a sense of urgency in the Bush administration.

It is not just a question of what Mr. Armitage may be proposing to India or Pakistan.

New Delhi cannot ignore that the Bush administration has been quite tough on Pakistan and its leader, Pervez Musharraf.

At the same time, it believes that the military dictator will have to be given "more" time to deal with extremism.

In the context of the war on terrorism, Gen. Musharraf is a key U.S. ally and the Bush administration is not inclined to confront him on cross-border terrorism asking for action within a specific time-frame, at least publicly.

THE HINDU

19 MAY 2002

Delhi dons warpaint for American envoy

Saurabh Shukla
New Delhi, May 17

IF HOME Minister LK Advani expressed "deep disappointment" with the US in his speech in Parliament, he matched it with equally tough words to US Ambassador Robert Blackwill behind closed doors.

At today's meetings with National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra and Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh, Blackwill was told that the US had failed to keep its word that it would restrain Islamabad's support to terrorism. India, therefore, would take "appropriate action" in its national interest, the US envoy was told.

A similar message went

across to US Secretary of State Colin Powell when he spoke to Singh earlier in the morning.

Blackwill's assurances that the Bush administration saw the fight against militancy in Kashmir as part of the global war on terrorism was received with open scepticism.

India said despite US promises, Gen Pervez Musharraf had done nothing concrete to rein in terrorists.

Blackwill's request for more time to get Pakistan to comply was rejected. The US envoy was reminded that India had warned that making Pakistan part of the anti-terror coalition would only end up weakening it.

Blackwill expressed President George Bush's concern



LK Advani
Talking tough

over tensions escalating into a full-scale war. India, he was told, wouldn't take rash decisions but as a sovereign country it reserved the right to act on its security needs.



Blackwill
At the receiving end

India was also urged not to break diplomatic relations with Pakistan — it was important to keep the communication channels open.

Following these exchanges,

there was a ratcheting up of diplomatic activity in the city.

Blackwill and senior US Embassy officials reviewed the situation late into the night and consulted with Washington at length.

There was speculation that besides Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, expected in South Asia next fortnight, Powell may fly in as well.

Senior Indian officials from the Ministries of External Affairs and Home also burnt midnight oil in preparation for tomorrow's meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security. The meeting is expected to take key decisions on what steps — diplomatic and military — India should take against Pakistan.

18 MAY 2006

Blackwill echoes Bush stand on terror attack

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 16 MAY

US ambassador Robert D. Blackwill on Thursday called on Union home minister L.K. Advani amid clear indications that the latest terrorist outrage in Jammu and Kashmir may have severely undermined America's leverage with India.

Emerging from the meeting, Mr Blackwill was unusually taciturn and confined himself to "echoing" US President George Bush's condemnation of Tuesday's massacre in Jammu. He underlined that both Mr Bush and US assistant secretary of state Christina Rocca had termed the killings the work of terrorists.

Pre-September 11, this formulation would have been deemed satisfactory by an Indian establishment that had been trying hard to counter the "freedom struggle spin" that Pakistan had been putting on the killings by jihadis. Now, however, India wants the US to move beyond stating the obvious and lean on Pakistan to rein in jihadis.

With the US unable to tighten



BLACKWILL: HIS MASTER'S VOICE

the screws on Pervez Musharraf's regime, India's patience with US semantics has worn thin. What has contributed to New Delhi's reservations is the US' willingness to take Pakistan's disclaimer — on issues such as infiltration — at face value. The Indian frustration came across clearly in the way it refuted the assessment of the US deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage, about any drop in infiltration.

The Economic Times

17 MAY 2002

Infiltration must end but talks should resume: Rocca

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By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, MAY 15. While advocating the termination of cross-border terrorism, the United States today called for an early resumption of talks between India and Pakistan to defuse border tensions.

At a press conference — hours before her departure for Islamabad — in which she sketched a roadmap for better ties between India and Pakistan, the visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Christina Rocca, said Indo-Pakistani tensions must end as they could “spark off” an “unintended war”.

Urging a reduction of the border tensions, she said, “We are very worried about the continued mobilisation of the two major armies facing each other in close proximity and the threat that could be posed by a spark and lead to an unintended conflict.” She pointed out

that the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, had repeatedly sought to sensitise leaders in the subcontinent on the possibility of an “unintended conflict”.

Gen. Powell, during his visit to India in January, proposed that the weapons mobilised by India on the border need not always be kept on hair-trigger alert.

Ms. Rocca acknowledged that the tensions between India and Pakistan had not eased since the December 13 assault on Parliament. The attack in Jammu on Tuesday had only vitiated the atmosphere further. “We think that the level of tension needs to be eased somehow, and acts like this were clearly aimed at achieving the opposite objective and are intended to undermine peace and stability in the region as a whole.”

She said that the U.S. saw the Jammu attack as an act of international terrorism. “Terror-

ism against any country is part of the war on terrorism. Terrorism against India is as unacceptable as it is against America or against any other country.”

Apart from proposing border de-escalation, Ms. Rocca pointed to two basic premises for improving Indo-Pakistani ties. In an obvious reference to cross-border intrusions into Jammu and Kashmir, she said that all infiltrations “must stop” as these were counter-productive. The U.S., however, was still in the process of determining the exact level of intrusions.

She said that Pakistani action on the list of 20 fugitives given to it by India need not become a benchmark for reviving the dialogue.

“This is one of the series of things that are possibilities. But I wouldn’t hang my head on any one step being the ultimate answer. There are a number of things that could be done to ease tensions.”

To a question, she indicated that India need not wait for a Pakistani initiative to curb infiltration for restarting talks.

“The situation is complicated and it is not in black and white. Both sides should sit together to defuse tensions.”

The U.S. “is going to work closely, very intensely to try to reduce the level of tension and try to get both sides to talk because nothing gets resolved without dialogue ultimately.” Asked whether Washington would urge the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, to hold talks in Kazakhstan where they might be present next month, she said, “We always encourage both sides to talk.”

Reiterating that the U.S. would stay away from direct mediation, she said that India and Pakistan should themselves take concrete steps to resolve their differences.

OUT OF RS 63,000 CR, RS 21,000 CR IS SPENT ON BUYING NEW TECHNOLOGY

US warm to India's defence sales plea

T. V. Parasuram
WASHINGTON 14 MAY

MARKING CLOSER ties with India in defence matters, top US officials have said requests by New Delhi for defence sales will be favourably considered except in areas like nuclear and missile technology. Speaking at a seminar on US-India defence cooperation here on Monday with over 100 representatives from the US administration, defence industry and think tanks stressed that "differences" between two countries on security issues had "narrowed considerably."

Advocating further cooperation between India and the United States, Lt Gen Tome Walters of Defence Security Agency, said there was huge potential for partnership between the two countries in the area of defence.

Echoing similar views, Major General Bruce Scott of the Usasac (army) and Gibson Leboeuf, deputy director, Navy International programmes office said both India and the US should forge



French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle (second from bottom) and anti-aircraft vessel Cassard (third from bottom) perform a naval exercise off the Goa coast recently. It is for the first time that a French carrier is taking part in a joint exercise with Indian Navy. — AFP

closer military-to-military relations. Bilateral relationship have improved after the lifting of post-Pokhran sanctions and both countries were working to find their comfort

levels with each other. Prodipto Ghosh, additional secretary to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, said Indo-US economic relations had made tremendous progress over the past decade and pointed out that as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, India offers enormous potential for US business.

Out of India's annual defence budget of approximately \$13 billion (Rs 63,000 crore), around \$4.3 billion (Rs 21,000 crore) is spent on acquisition of new technologies and equipment, Mr Om Prakash, joint secretary in ministry of defence, said. Industrialist Atul Kirloskar said in some areas there was scope for joint ventures in areas like light/medium transport aircraft, surface-to-air guided weapons, radars, communication systems, electronic warfare equipment, guided missiles, pilotless target aircraft, navigation, surveillance, target acquisition, designation and underwater equipment. Among those who participated in the seminar was Lincoln P Bloomfield, assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs. — PTI

IT IS TERRORISM: ROCCA

Pullout of forces not possible: Delhi

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, MAY 14. With the terrorist killings in Jammu in the backdrop, India today said it would continue to position its forces along the Indo-Pakistani border until Islamabad restrained cross-border terrorism.

Talks with the visiting United States Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, today saw Indian officials impressing upon her that Pakistan had not restricted the cross-border infiltrations, notwithstanding its President, Pervez Musharraf's pledges to the contrary during his televised address on January 12.

Besides meeting officials, Ms. Rocca had half an hour meeting with the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh. The spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Nirupama Rao, in response to a question, clarified that Ms. Rocca was not scheduled to meet the National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, or the Defence Minister, George Fernandes.

The Indian side made three main points during the day-long talks with Ms. Rocca. First, contrary to Pakistan assertions, cross-border infiltrations from Pakistan-administered areas into Jammu and Kashmir had gone up in March. Ms. Rocca was apprised of the rising graph of cross-border infiltrations, as the winter snows along the mountain passes taken by extremists to enter Kashmir had begun to melt.

Second, the Indian side emphasised that with cross-border

intrusions continuing and Pakistan's refusal to take action on the list of 20 fugitives that it had been sent, it was neither possible for India to pull back its troops nor to "de-alert" them as sought by the U.S. on earlier occasions. Washington, on its part, has been keen on seeing a de-escalation of the Indian forces as any pullback of troops would "unlock" Pakistani forces from the Indian border for re-deployment along the Afghan frontier. Third, Ms. Rocca, according to sources, was told that India was determined to hold fair and free elections in Jammu and Kashmir. That meant keeping infiltrators out by positioning forces in sufficient numbers.

Incidentally, sources here pointed out that Ms. Rocca's mission to the subcontinent might have been prompted by Pakistan. India, in the second phase of its ongoing 'Operation Parakram', has been recalibrating its forces along the entire length of the Pakistan border, including Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan may have interpreted this movement as an Indian attempt to launch a limited strike against it and, consequently, alerted the U.S. about it, the sources observed.

Aware of the Indian sensitivities about this morning's incident, Ms. Rocca said the U.S. roundly condemned this "terrorist attack". "It is just this type of barbarism that the war on terrorism is determined to stop," she observed during her meeting with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) this afternoon.

THE HINDU

MAY 15 2001

We can become partners even in unexplored areas: Rocca

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MAY 14. The United States Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina B. Rocca, said today she visualised the U.S. and India becoming as partners even in as yet unexplored areas to their mutual benefit.

Addressing the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Ms. Rocca said that transformation and consolidation of Indo-U.S. ties was top on the agenda of the Bush administration — it wanted to engage India on a whole range of issues that ranged from counter-terrorism, national defence, global climate change, international commerce to preventing HIV/AIDS.

Ms. Rocca dwelt at length on the growing military-to-military cooperation between the two countries and said that the partnership had crossed some impressive milestones. The ties had moved from "discussion stage to active cooperation".

"Not far from Agra, Indian paratroopers and American Special Operations Forces are participating in their largest-ever joint Army and air exercises since India's independence," she said. The specific goal of the current exercise was to conduct joint parachute training and mutual familiarisation with small arms.

"But the larger, long-term goal is much more ambitious



The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina B. Rocca, with the Congress president, Sonia Gandhi, at her residence in New Delhi on Tuesday. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

and is based on strategic, diplomatic and political cooperation as well as sound economic ties. Military-to-military cooperation, for long a subject of discussion between us, is now producing tangible progress toward this objective," she said adding that functional working groups for the Army, the Navy and the Air Forces had discussed technological and research and development cooperation, sales, and licensing issues and peacekeeping cooperation.

A major highlight of the defence supply relationship between the U.S. and India, she

said, was involvement of the private sector as well as the Government. The armed forces of the two countries were engaged in determining areas of mutual interest in basic research for military purposes and identification of areas for joint work in future defence systems development.

Reiterating that non-proliferation remained an important item on the bilateral agenda, Ms. Rocca said "We are confident that the Indian Government shares our concerns about preventing the spread of sensitive technologies since the diffusion of weapons of mass

destruction (WMD) and missiles pose a serious threat to the security of both our countries." Further, India and the U.S. were also working together to stimulate bilateral high technology trade, besides having agreed to the resumption of three nuclear safety related projects and expansion of civilian space cooperation in areas of weather, migration and communications. Ms. Rocca, who, at the outset, condemned today's militant attack in Jammu said the U.S. and India had built a relationship in the war against terrorism. South Asia was a key front in the global war on terrorism and India had been a vital ally in the campaign to destroy the Al-Qaeda. She said U.S.-India counter-terrorism cooperation was rapidly maturing and the two countries were working towards protecting the two societies from threats of cyber attack. The Joint Working Group would be meeting in July to proceed further.

She referred to the visits by top-level functionaries for economic dialogues and said this would help the two countries to realise the enormous potential of "our economic relationship".

The U.S. Ambassador, Robert Blackwill, was present. Earlier, on the CII's behalf, Subodh Bhargava, welcomed Ms. Rocca and said there was vast scope for economic cooperation between the two countries.

THE HINDU

2002

No homily, Rocca told

Statesman News Service

Pakistan condemns attack

NEW DELHI, May 14. — That India is in no mood to accept US advice on “restraint” against Pakistan, or reduce or pull back troops from the border, became clear from the level of meetings that US assistant secretary of state held here today.

The bulk of Ms Christina Rocca's meetings — with senior officials of the foreign ministry and joint secretaries (for the Americas and Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan), Mr Jayant Prasad and Mr Arun Singh — though strictly correct, according to protocol, indicated that India was tired of US homilies on good conduct.

Today's killings in Jammu reinforced the government's “disgust and disillusionment” with Pakistani policy, which, officials said, was clearly conveyed to Ms Rocca. “The point was conveyed that it isn't okay to have one policy for terrorism in Afghanistan, and one for Pakistan's eastern border,” a foreign

ISLAMABAD, May 14. — Pakistan condemned the terrorist attack in Jammu and called for an “impartial and comprehensive” probe.

Without mentioning US assistant secretary of state Ms Christina Rocca's visit to New Delhi, a foreign office statement said acts of violence resulting in civilian casualties in Kashmir and other parts of India continue to coincide with the high-level visits to the region. Ms Rocca is scheduled to visit Islamabad tomorrow. — PTI

ministry official said.

India would do everything needed to ensure that levels of infiltration were restricted and there was no question of agreeing to a pullback of troops now.

Ms Rocca also met foreign secretary-designate Mr Kanwal Sibal and Mr Satinder Lambah, India's special envoy to Afghanistan, to discuss reconstruction efforts in that country, and called on Mr Jaswant Singh.

She didn't meet Mr George Fernandes and national security adviser Mr Brajesh Mishra, but was scheduled to meet Mrs Sonia Gandhi.

The US emissary was told that the

Pakistan “was pulling the over US eyes,” and deceiving them in their “support” in the global anti-terrorism effort. Confirmed that tensions between India and Pakistan were high, foreign ministry spokesperson Mrs Nirupama Rao said: “There is an absence of dialogue between the two countries”.

Combined with “a lack of response” from Pakistan on key Indian demands, articulated after the attack on Parliament, it was difficult to hope for a reduction in tensions, she said. The responsibility now lies with Pakistan.

Ms Rocca leaves for Islamabad tomorrow.

THE STATESMAN

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Rocca to ask Delhi to ease pressure on Pak

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: American forces and Indian troops are conducting joint exercises in Agra this week for the first time in nearly half-a-century. At the same time, the U.S. administration is sending a key official to New Delhi to counsel restraint to India vis-a-vis Pakistan. What's cooking?



Christina Rocca

It's the long-term, short-term outlook, that's what. In the short-term, the Bush administration is leaning on India not to take any precipitate steps against Pakistan for its failure to curb cross-border terrorism, fearing such a clash will upset its own international war on terrorism, not to speak of sparking off the nightmare scenario of a sub-continental nuclear war.

At the same time, Washington is sending ample signals that in the long-term it banks on India as a regional partner by publicly showcasing joint exercises, arms sales, and a heavy diplomatic and economic agenda.

Short-term is what brings U.S. assistant secretary of state Christina Rocca to New Delhi on Tuesday amidst red flags in the U.S. intelligence community about India cranking up its war machine, already in a state of readiness for several weeks now. The reading in Washington is that the snows in Kashmir have melted but there appears to be no decline in the infiltration of terrorists from across the border, an ominous development that could force India's hand.

Pakistan has thrown up its hands and said it is virtually impossible to stop the infiltration given the terrain, arguing that even the U.S. with all its sophisticated border monitoring technology is unable to stop illegal crossovers from Mexico. To compound matters, Islamabad has also declared that it is unable to commit more troops to a joint action with

U.S. forces against Al Qaida fugitives in its tribal territories to the west because of Indian pressure on the eastern flank.

The Rocca mission is evidently aimed at persuading India to ease the pressure on Pakistan, after getting Islamabad to commit to some specific action to address New Delhi's demands. One of the steps is to bring charges against, if not hand over, some of the 20 fugitives India says Pakistan is harbouring. Although commentators have invoked the nuclear nightmare, some diplomats say such fears are probably being overstated.

"Remember Gates mission? It sounds like a throwback to that episode," one Indian diplomat remarked, recalling 1990 event in which Washington dispatched its then deputy national security adviser Robert Gates to the region, ostensibly to ward off an imminent nuclear war.

Some accounts of that episode even spoke of Pakistani fighter planes armed with nuclear weapons ready to go, but the U.S. claim was subsequently rubbished by both Indian and Pakistani officials in positions of responsibility at that time. But Washington wants to take no chances even at the risk of being dubbed alarmist given the fragile situation in Pakistan. The U.S. now sees the situation in Pakistan spinning out of control because of the rapidly diminishing stature of Gen Musharraf and the upsurge in terrorist activity within that country.

Some accounts speak of a virtual civil war situation in Pakistan's tribal provinces with growing protests against the U.S. operations in the region. In some cases, U.S. forces have been attacked. The U.S. leverage has been further diluted because of an almost total withdrawal of its diplomatic corps from Pakistan in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks aimed at westerners. The administration is now desperately hunting for a replacement for ambassador Wendy Chamberlain, who is vacating the post because of the danger to her family.

'Pak army planned N-attack in '99'

LONDON: The Pakistani army had mobilised its nuclear arsenal against India during the Kargil conflict in 1999 without the knowledge of then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, *The Sunday Times* reported on Monday, quoting a senior White House adviser at that time.

In a paper to be published shortly by the University of Pennsylvania, Bruce Riedel, who was a senior adviser to then U.S. President Bill Clinton on India and Pakistan, recalls how the President was told that he faced the most important foreign policy meeting of his career.

"There was disturbing information about Pakistan preparing its nuclear arsenal," Mr Riedel writes. According to the report, Mr Riedel and other aides feared that India and Pakistan were heading for a "deadly descent into a full-scale conflict, with a danger of nuclear cataclysm".

They were also concerned about Osama bin Laden's growing influence in the region.

Intelligence experts had told Mr Riedel that the flight times of missiles fired by either side would be as little as three minutes and that "a Pakistani strike on just one Indian city, Mumbai, would kill between 150,000 and 850,000 alone".

Mr Riedel, the newspaper said, told Mr Clinton not to reveal his intelligence in the opening talks with Mr Sharif, in which the President handed the premier a cartoon that showed Pakistan and India firing nuclear missiles at one another.

But in a second discussion, at which Mr Riedel was the only other person present, "Mr Clinton asked Mr Sharif if he knew how advanced the threat of nuclear war really was. Did Mr Sharif know his military was preparing its missiles?" he writes (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

1 J MAY 2002

Delhi junks Rocca restraint sermon

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, May 14: India today told the US that its troops will remain deployed along the border with Pakistan, hardening its position after the morning attack in Jammu on the families of army personnel.

US assistant secretary of state Christina Rocca, who is in Delhi, was told in no uncertain terms that the onus of reducing tension in the region is directly linked with Islamabad's sincerity in reining in jihadis operating from its soil.

Delhi believes that it is through cross-border terrorism that Pakistan perpetrates violence in Jammu and Kashmir and the Pervez Musharraf regime in Islamabad is doing nothing to give up its hostile policy towards India.

Rocca, who is here to urge India not to break its restraint, was told that it is not India but Pakistan to whom she should deliver her message. It was also made clear to her that the heavy deployment of troops along the western border was done with "certain objectives in mind" and so far those objectives have not been fulfilled.

It is clear that India has refused to accept any suggestions for withdrawing troops and returning to the dialogue table with Pakistan. India would like Islamabad to take "urgent, sincere and visible" steps to stop cross-border terrorism before it can even think of a dialogue.

Rocca is scheduled to leave tomorrow for Islamabad, where she is expected to have similar dialogues with the Pakistani leadership over steps that could bring down the temperature in volatile South Asia.

Delhi's concerns about Islamabad were strengthened by today's terrorist attack in Jammu in which more than 30 people were killed. Rocca described it as "barbaric". Later in the evening, British foreign secretary Jack Straw called up foreign minister

Jaswant Singh to condemn the attack and convey his condolences to the families of the victims.

During the day, Rocca met Singh and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra. Later, she also called on leader of Opposition Sonia Gandhi. But her main interactions were with officials like Jayant Prasad, joint secretary (Americas), and Arun Singh, joint secretary (Iran-Pakistan-Afghanistan) in the foreign ministry. She also held consultations with India's special envoy on Afghanistan Sati Lambah and foreign secretary-designate Kanwal Sibal.

Earlier, she delivered a lecture at the Confederation of Indian Industry on "Transforming US-India Relations" where she drew a general outline of the interactions between the two countries in the last three years at all levels. "The US-India relationship is entering an exciting phase, a period of transformation which, if properly managed, can bring great benefits to both our countries," Rocca said.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said the meetings that Rocca had with the Indian leadership were "detailed, in-depth and mutually satisfying". She added that bilateral and international issues were discussed and India's assessment over "some of the regional developments and its concerns were conveyed in ample measures".

Rao pointed out that India has always advocated peace and stability in the region. "But after the terrorist attack on Parliament in December 13, we made certain demands of Pakistan. The US is fully cognisant of them and fully understands these legitimate demands," she said.

Rao said the key to peace in the region lies with Pakistan. "The Musharraf regime has to take steps to change the climate of mistrust. Unless that is done there can be no dialogue between the two sides," she said.



Christina Rocca at a luncheon meeting in New Delhi. (Reuters)

CPM doubts terror law teeth

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, May 14: The killings in Jammu sent shockwaves across political lines. The Congress condemned the terrorist attack in Jammu, saying this was another illustration of "Pakistan-sponsored atrocity" and urged the Vajpayee regime to do "everything possible" to prevent recurrence of such acts.

CPM leader Somnath Chatterjee, however, took a dig at the government, wondering the efficacy of the newly passed Bill against terrorism. "This government has completely failed in protecting the people. What was the point of bringing the Prevention of Terrorism Act if incidents like this continue?"

Congress spokesman Jaipal Reddy said: "The attack is part of Pakistan's strategy to internationalise the Kashmir issue." He said the attack had assumed a new dimension as terrorists had not even spared family members of army jawans.

Unlike the CPM, the Congress refrained from attacking the Vajpayee regime. Asked who is to be blamed for the incident, Reddy said it was not the time to indulge in a blame game, but added: "We do expect the Centre to do everything at its command to prevent recurrence of such ghastly acts."

Reddy said the government should consult all parties and come out with a "comprehensive strategy" to tackle terrorism.

The Congress spokesman, however, admitted that the government should have been more alert when US assistant secretary of state Christina Rocca was visiting India.

US rushes Rocca after India threat

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri
New Delhi, May 11

OVER THE past six weeks India has quietly signalled to the US and other Western Governments that it is prepared to consider limited military action against Pakistan if there is no drop in the infiltration of terrorists into Kashmir.

This led the US to decide on Thursday to rush US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, to visit India and Pakistan next week.

Sources say India has hinted it is contemplating assaults on the mountain passes on the Pakistan side of the LoC used by infiltrators or even airstrikes on terrorist camps in PoK. "The message was difficult not to miss," said a Western diplomat. Observers say India is possibly using the military threat as a negotiating ploy but say the international community has no choice but to treat it seriously.

The decision to send Rocca followed some last-minute attempts to salvage a compromise by key Western diplomats. The US Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, met Home Minister LK Advani earlier this week to express US concerns. Blackwill urged

Advani to be "patient" and promised action on the list of 20 wanted terrorists that India has handed over to Pakistan. The minister said he was "cynical" about such promises by the US. Advani argued the US was not applying enough pressure on Pakistan.

Blackwill held similar exchanges with National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra and Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh on Friday.

Rocca will fly into rough weather when she arrives in India for a three-day visit that begins on Tuesday next week. She is expected to argue that General Pervez Musharraf is politically too weak to enforce a ban on infiltration and lacks sufficient control over the ISI to do so. The US is hoping to broker a face-saving deal under which four or five people on the list of 20 are handed over to India while the issue of infiltration is put on hold.

India is expected to refuse to limit its military options so long as terrorist infiltration this year remains at previous levels. Sources say New Delhi will inform Rocca that infiltration is "non-negotiable". However, India is prepared to be flexible about the list of 20 terrorists.

Analysts say India's hardline on infiltration means the US compromise formula is dead even before Rocca's arrival. India will stress to Rocca that the subcontinent is not West Asia and that the US should not believe it has a role here as a diplomatic broker.

Preliminary assessments by the Indian authorities indicate the level of infiltration has not fallen. Officials dismiss recent comments by US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage that infiltration seemed to have fallen as being based on "out of date" information. New Delhi has also noted that terrorists are congregating at camps in PoK — the first step towards infiltration.

New Delhi protests

THE INDIAN Foreign Office has reacted strongly to Christina Rocca's remarks made in an interview to the Islamabad-based newspaper, *The Nation*. MEA sources said India is not expected to make any concession in the short term on its demand that the Musharraf regime turn over the 20 wanted criminals and show proof of its commitment to end the export of terror to J&K.

HTC, New Delhi

Indo-US defence cooperation

98-8
1995

Trust is the keyword

GENERAL S. Padmanabhan, Chief of the Army Staff, was on a week-long visit to the United States at the invitation of his US counterpart. It took place in the context of expanding defence cooperation with the US, the beginning of which could be traced back to the proposals made by General Kirk-Letter of the Central Command of the US in 1990. Though the then Defence Minister, Sharad Pawar, visited the US in the early 90s following a visit by the US Defence Secretary during the administration of Bush Senior, operational consultations and substantive defence collaboration had not occurred.

Given the BJP's traditional pro-US orientation in foreign policy, some beginnings in defence cooperation were made immediately after Vajpayee came to power. But they went off into a negative spin in consequence of India's nuclear weapon tests in May 1998. Political relations became brittle and proposals for defence cooperation went on hold with the imposition of US economic and technological sanctions against India. However, prolonged discussions between External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot between late-1998 and early-2000 removed misunderstandings to a great extent. President Clinton's support to India's position on the Line of Control during Kargil and his advice to the Nawaz Sharif government to pull back from the LoC were a positive watershed in Indo-US relations. Clinton's visit to India in March 2000 further improved India's relations with the US.

Prime Minister Vajpayee's discussions with President Clinton in September 2000 and the discussions between Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh and National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra and their counterparts in the Bush administration between November 2000 and March 2001 laid the foundations of the current phase of Indo-US defence cooperation. The military coup in Pakistan, incremental threats of international terrorism and, most importantly, the terrorist bombing inside the US on

September 11, 2001, are factors which have contributed to an expansion of Indo-US cooperation. The rationale of this phenomenon is the broad convergence of interests and consensus on these issues between India and the US. The Bush administration is less didactic and intrusive on non-proliferation issues, compared to the Clinton administration. This has also helped reduce mutual tensions on the issue though differences on non-proliferation still remain.

It would be pertinent to mention the details of the multi-faceted defence cooperation that is evolving between India and the



J. N. DIXIT

Feitch, Under Secretary for Defence Policy in the Department of Defence and the Indian side by Defence Secretary Yogendra Narain. Its first meeting took place after the US removed sanctions against India on September 22 last.

The next meeting of the Group is scheduled to be held in Washington on May 21 and 22. Arrangements for cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries have also been institutionalised. Joint executive steering groups between the army, navy and air forces of the two countries have been created (a separate steering

The US defence involvement with India has broader political and strategic objectives in dealing with power equations in the Asian region and the Indian Ocean

US. Defence Secretaries William Perry and Dick Cheney of previous administrations had interacted with their Indian counterparts during the eighties and the nineties. Visits and exchange of views between senior military commanders of India and the US had commenced in 1992. Joint consultative mechanisms on defence policy and security issues have been established since 1992. Barring the ambiguities and drifts between 1995 and 1998, these mechanisms have not only stabilised themselves institutionally but have increased their scope of consultations. A joint experts group on countering terrorism has been in existence since the end of 1999. Its terms of reference and responsibilities have gained in substance and have expanded since the US launched its campaign against cross-border terrorism and the Al-Qaeda. The Indo-US Defence Policy Group is now fully functional to discuss proposals of cooperation and for implementing them at the policy level. The US side is led by Douglas

group for each branch of the armed forces). These steering committees have met over the last four months. The chairman of the joint chiefs of staff of the US, General Richard Myers, visited India earlier this year. The chief of the US Army, General Henry Shelton, and the Commander in Chief, Pacific, Admiral Dennis Blair, have visited India. The US Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, visited India in November, soon after the US launched its military campaign in Afghanistan. Our Defence Minister George Fernandes was in Washington early this year to continue the interaction on defence and security matters. The US Navy participated in the International seminar 'Bridges of Friendship' organised by the Indian Navy in Mumbai in February 2001. It was the first time the US Navy participated in a Fleet Review organised by the Indian Navy.

There is now an Indo-US agreement on cooperation between the navies of the two countries to secure maritime trade routes between the

Suez and Straits of Malacca. Joint training exercises were held by the two navies as recently as in March. An increasing number of officers from the Indian armed forces are proceeding for training in military institutions in the US as is the case with officers of the US armed forces who come to the National Defence College, New Delhi, and the Defence Services Staff College at Wellington in South India. Cooperation in military training projects is expected to double under the IMET programme of the US in the coming year.

This pattern of cooperation between India and the strongest military and technological power in the world adds an important strategic dimension to India's foreign and defence policies. That Indo-US defence cooperation is increasing on a long-term basis, despite continuous positive involvement of the US with the Musharraf government in Pakistan, is significant. It is clear that while US-Pak cooperation is predicated on the objectives of containing Islamic extremist violence, the US's defence involvement with India has broader political and strategic objectives in dealing with power equations in the Asian region and the Indian Ocean. Future structuring of India's defence cooperation policies with the US has to take place in the context of the expanded military presence of the US from Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan in the north to the Philippines in South East Asia. This includes US military presence in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan and the offer of military facilities to the US by India and Bangladesh.

Our defence relationship with the US has also to be nuanced in terms of our substantive defence cooperation relationship with the Russian Federation and our general political relations with China. While there is no basic conflict of security interests between the US and India, one cannot wish away some differences of approach in the details. For instance, the importance of India's relations with Iran or on the issues of arms control and disarmament.

U.S. panel wants government to resolve Ayodhya dispute

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: Expressing concern over the riots in Gujarat, a blue ribbon U.S. panel that examines issues of religious freedom has urged the Bush administration to lean on the Indian government to resolve contentious domestic issues like the Ayodhya dispute.

In its annual report for 2002 released on Monday, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), which is a statutory non-governmental body, said it has observed with great concern the communal rioting between Muslims and Hindus in India since February 2002 that has claimed more than 800 lives, "primarily Muslims."

The commission urged the U.S. government to press Indian authorities to exercise their power to halt the atrocities and violence, bring perpetrators to justice, and do more to root out the causes of religious intolerance, especially by resolving the impasse over the Babri mosque in Ayodhya destroyed in 1992 by Hindu nationalists who are vowing to construct a Hindu temple on the site.

As it did in its report last year, the commission appeared to lay the blame on increased religious violence squarely on rising Hindu militancy, while praising the overall secular nature of the Indian republic.

Following the carnage in Gujarat, India also had the ignominy of being placed with Pakistan as countries that needed closer monitoring over issues of religious freedom despite the fundamental differences in the basis on which the two countries were founded.

The report from the blue ribbon panel, with NGOs and think tank luminaries in it, is different from the State Department's annual report every fall naming "countries of particular concern" on issues of religious freedom. This panel in fact criticised the administration for failing to take action on countries for egregious violation of religious freedom because of foreign policy considerations.

For three years, five countries Myanmar, China, Iran, Iraq and Sudan have been cited by the administration for violation of religious freedom but no extra sanctions were placed on them beyond earlier U.S. policies, the new report said. It asked the State Department to designate Saudi Arabia and Turkmenistan as the worst violators and to monitor India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam more closely.

Evidently, the panel is not empowered to examine religious freedom issues within the United States itself. Minority groups in the U.S. have accused the administration of perpetuating ethnic and racial stereotypes, including profiling of Muslims in the United States in the aftermath of 9/11.

U.S. panel concerned over Gujarat violence

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 7. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has said that it continues to remain "very concerned" about the violence in Gujarat.

"We remain very concerned about it and we continue to urge the U.S. Government to actually work with the Indian Government to take steps to stop the violence," the Commission Chairman, Michael Young, said at a news conference at the National Press Club here on Monday.

"We have done more than just express concern" about the goings-on in Gujarat, Mr. Young said and made the point that in March the Commission had issued a statement not only taking note with "great concern" the Gujarat violence but also urging the U.S. to help India foster a "climate of religious tolerance".

The panel, a statutory body that advises Congress and the President, has noted in its annual report for 2002 that the communal rioting between Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat has taken a toll of more than 800 lives and that the victims are "primarily Muslims".

"The Commission continues to urge the U.S. Government to press Indian authorities to exercise their power to halt the atrocities and violence and bring the perpetrators to justice, and do more to root out the causes of religious intolerance, especially by resolving the impasse over the Babri mosque in Ayodhya destroyed in 1992 by Hindu nationalists who are vowing to construct a Hindu temple on the site," the report said.

The Commission focussed on India "in the light of the in-

crease in recent years of severe violence against religious minorities in that country — Muslims, Christians and Sikhs nationwide and Hindus in Tripura State."

The Commission also took note of the fact that it was yet to receive an invitation from the Government of India; and the point was being made that it would have to be invited. It disputed a State Department report that said that an invitation had been received and said this was "simply incorrect".

"Notwithstanding requests that have been made since the fall of 2000, the Commission has yet to receive an official invitation from the Government of India", the report said.

"There are only two countries where the Commission has been barred from coming. One is China, the other is India. They are different types of (political) systems and it is a little bothering," remarked Ambassador Shirin Tahir-Kheli, one of the members of the Commission. The bottom line argument is that governments cannot "pick and choose" who among the Commission members can visit.

The Commission, which has sent its report to the President, the Secretary of State, the Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate, has criticised the manner in which the State Department goes about its annual reporting on international religious freedom, one of which being the narrow view of actions taken to promote religious freedom.

"In countries such as India, Georgia and Nigeria where there is substantial connection

between religious freedom violations and inadequate or abusive law enforcement, lack of rule of law and ineffective judicial process, the reports (of the State Department) do not describe in any detail U.S. policies and actions with respect to these deficiencies."

The panel urged the State Department to use the full range of available policy tools to take additional action against countries that may be designated as Countries of Particular Concern (CPCs).

"The State Department should monitor closely religious freedom in India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam and respond vigorously to further violations there that may merit CPC designation at any time throughout the year," the Commission said.

'Indo-U.S. ties on right track'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MAY 3. India today took note of the interview given to *The Hindu* by the National Security Adviser to the United States President, Condoleezza Rice, and said that her views showed that the India-U.S. bilateral relationship was on the "right track".

The views expressed by Dr. Rice reflected the warmth in the ties between New Delhi and Washington, said sources in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Dr. Rice's prompting to India to give "diplomacy the primacy" in its ties with Pakistan was seen here as reflecting the stated position of the United States.

"We are very much aware of the American position," said the sources in an informal reac-

tion to her position that at this stage when the entire world was engaged in the fight against terrorism, "it would serve no one for India and Pakistan to come to military blows".

In line with our thinking, says Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 3. Pakistan today welcomed the remarks made by the U.S. National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, that India should resume the dialogue with Pakistan and work to reduce border tension.

Responding to the observations made by Dr. Rice in the course of an exclusive interview to *The Hindu*, the Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesman, Aziz

Ahmed Khan, said that her remarks were in line with the thinking of Islamabad.

"We have repeatedly been saying that there should be a dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues between the two countries. We are ready for talks any time. "For commencement of a dialogue, India should withdraw its forces on the border. Pakistan believes that New Delhi and Islamabad can pick up the threads from where we left at Agra," Mr. Khan said.

In her observations Dr. Rice had said that "there is a sense in which as the Pakistanis have tried to be responsive — and they have tried to be responsive, we do believe they are doing some things — that it would be good for India to take some steps too."

PPP reaction: Page 11

THE HINDU

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SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2002

A BALANCING ACT

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THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION seems determined to strike a sense of balance while seeking to engage India without alienating Pakistan during the ongoing American campaign against the politics of terrorism on the wider international stage. This and other highly nuanced aspects of America's present worldview, whose focal point is the globalised anti-terror campaign, have been outlined with much clarity and candour by the U.S. National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, in an exclusive interview to this newspaper. Categorical indeed is the position adopted by Dr. Rice that the U.S., which is "working very closely with Pakistan" about an "anti-terrorism agenda" with a global sweep, "want(s) to work very closely with India" too. Amply clear are the circumstances in which Pakistan emerged as a critical ally of the U.S. in its coalition against terror in the context of the terrorist outrage that shook America and the world last September. Now, in Dr. Rice's view, Washington's eagerness to "work very closely" with New Delhi, no less, is anchored to a specific reasoning. The U.S., according to her, is alive to the possibility of "a larger future with India that will be very well served by the work (the two countries) do together in the anti-terrorism campaign". A formulation of this magnitude does not at all imply any suggestion of a zero-sum American game in the India-Pakistan context. More significantly, there is nothing in Dr. Rice's emphatic comments to indicate any intention on the part of the U.S. at this stage to make a definitive intervention of the diplomatic kind in respect of the issues of contention between India and Pakistan. By saying that the U.S. has "tried not to be so involved in the details" as to resolve the running feud between New Delhi and Islamabad over India's list of 20 identified terrorists and criminals, the top-ranking American policy-maker has clearly underlined Washington's anxiety to maintain a degree of balance and fair play as regards the two estranged South Asian neighbours.

It is entirely reasonable that Dr. Rice should have called for a sustained military restraint by New Delhi in its confrontation with Islamabad. No strenuous argument is required to recognise that such a policy will be in India's own enlightened self-interest as well. Moreover, no contradiction exists between the insistence by Dr. Rice that New Delhi should bear "responsibilities" of this order and her own robust appreciation of India's overall demeanour in the context of the terrorist strike against its Parliament House last December. Considerations of realpolitik too demand that the Bush administration's transparent passion for a balanced view of the compounded India-Pakistan rift must be read in terms of America's worldwide anti-terror agenda. Not surprisingly, therefore, the U.S. National Security Adviser is eager to emphasise the proposition that "it would serve no one for India and Pakistan to come to military blows" when Washington "need(s) time to work the anti-terrorism agenda".

Washington's current priorities in regard to Islamabad include the suggestion that "the legitimate concern of India over cross-border terrorism has to be addressed by (President) Musharraf". The U.S. has told Pakistan that the organisations which "associate themselves with the Kashmiri cause" really "need to be put out of business" because "no cause can be served by terrorism". These ideas reveal a vigorous degree of American pressure on Pakistan. However, a measure of symmetry can be seen in Washington's policy of urging New Delhi "to give diplomacy the primacy" on matters concerning Islamabad and "to begin dialogue over the issues that are at (the) root cause" of the India-Pakistan tensions. Now, the India-Pakistan landscape certainly falls within America's glasshouse vision of the global scene. It is no less obvious, however, that Washington addresses each of its many concerns, be it Iraq or the Israel-Palestinian war, as almost a unique case.

India asks USA for aircraft spare parts

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, April 28. — With the Navy still waiting for spares for the Harrier aircraft and the Sea King helicopters, India has "approached" the USA through its embassy in Washington in this regard.

Though the Harrier and the Sea King are made by the British, they have some US-made gadgets. Replacements for these gadgets, defence officials said, have not been forthcoming for nearly two years. The Union defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, has also spoken about the problem.

"We have taken up the issue with the USA through our embassy in Washington. It is next on our list of requirements after the weapon-locating radar. We expect a positive response in a month," a defence ministry official said.

The situation, one official said, is even more intriguing as the USA has promised to provide the spare parts. At present, only about a third of the planes and helicopters are operational. The Navy has around 20 planes

and helicopters of both kinds. Some of the parts went to Britain for repairs about two years ago, and they are still there, he said. These include gear boxes and fuel gauges, which India tried to develop but did not succeed.

Now that the USA has the weapon-locating radar, officials said this problem "can also be sorted out".

The parts are made by private manufacturers. As the Sea King is an old model, it is difficult to get spares and even defence ministry officials admit that the Sea King delays is not the best example of the current relations between India and the USA. The problems have been described as "bureaucratic".

The Harrier and the Sea King are very important for the Navy — the former being the only fighter aircraft the Navy has that can take off from an aircraft carrier and provide air-defence for ships. The Sea King is used in anti-submarine warfare.

With the deployment of troops on the Indo-Pak border and all the services on alert, the operational situation can be a worry, officials said.

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THE STATESMAN

India, U.S. ink \$146 m. radar deal

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: India has concluded a landmark defence deal with the U.S. for the purchase of eight gun-locating radars valued at \$146 million in what both sides say presages a growing military relationship between the two countries.

The agreement was clinched on Wednesday following successful talks between India's newly-established security cooperation group (SCG), led by special secretary in the ministry of defence Ajai Vikram Singh, with officials of the Pentagon's defence security cooperation agency (DSCA). The U.S.-specific SCG has been formed to expedite the purchase of dozens of items worth nearly a billion dollars that New Delhi has sought from Washington.

According to officials, the other items on the list are in various stages of clearance. The gun-locating radar, known as the AN/TPQ-37 fire-locating radar, has been

considered a priority item since its absence was acutely felt by Indian troops during the Kargil battle.

Under the terms of the deal, the U.S. will supply eight counter-battery AN/TPQ-37 Firefinder radar systems along with advanced com-



munications and support equipment, training and logistics services. The radar sets are designed to pinpoint long-range mortars, artillery and rocket-launchers after tracking a shell for only a few seconds. The system then relays pre-

cise information for counter-fire, tracking, correcting and improving the counter-barrage even as it is under way.

Pakistan already has the equipment and the Indian bid to buy the radar has been approved relatively quickly because it is considered a force-equaliser. But other items on the Indian wish-list will have to go through a more protracted process, given the current tension in the region.

The U.S. legislation previously allowed small items of up to \$14 million in value to be approved automatically by the department of defence while all larger items had to go through an inter-agency process. But lately, the Bush administration is said to be putting everything through the inter-agency process, resulting in procurement delays New Delhi had not anticipated. The two sides discussed the interpretation of the legislation at this week's talks and are expected to continue the exercise in the coming weeks.

India seals major arms deal with U.S.

By Sandeep Dikshit HD-1

NEW DELHI, APRIL 18. India today signed the first major weapons deal with the United States in more than three decades.

The \$146-million government-to-government pact for purchasing eight weapon locating radars (WLRs) was signed by a visiting Defence Ministry delegation in Washington.

The finalisation of the deal comes days before the Chief of Army Staff, Gen. S. Padmanabhan, is due to visit the U.S.

The WLR was cited as a critical requirement for the Army by the high-level Kargil War Review Committee.

"This sale will contribute to the

1914
foreign policy and national security interests of the U.S. by helping to improve the security of a country that has been and continues to be a force for political stability and economic progress in South Asia," said a U.S. Defence Department statement.

The sale of the Thales-Raytheon manufactured WLRs is a watershed in Indo-U.S. military ties that picked up momentum after the September 11 terrorist strikes.

It also marks the entry of the U.S. military industrial complex in the Indian market which has so far been dominated by the Russian and European companies. The deal also opens the doors for more sale of American

weaponry to India, which has submitted a 'shopping list' of 21 systems.

The acquisition of eight counter-battery ANTPQ-37 "Firefinder" radar systems fills a crucial gap in India's defence systems.

The radars can track a fired shell within seconds and pinpoint the precise location of the artillery from which it has been launched.

Raytheon's "Firefinder" beat back the spirited competition by Russians, the Ukrainians and the Swedish as well as several attempts at disinformation.

Gen. Padmanabhan is expected to interact with senior Pentagon members and Army officials during his week-long stay in the U.S.

U.S. censures Gujarat violence in mild terms

BY CHIDANAND RAJGHATTA
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: In an indirect and mildest possible censure over the events in Gujarat, the Bush administration on Tuesday regretted the communal violence in the state and urged a peaceful resolution of issues.

Washington, which rarely comments on internal strife in India because of New Delhi's sensitivities and had steadfastly kept mum on the communal conflagration, couched its concern in general terms while praising the country's secular foundations.

"I think you are aware that India has long prided itself on being a multi-ethnic secular nation, accepting of all religions, and it is very important that parties seek peaceful resolution to their differences, because this type of violence doesn't benefit anybody and it

simply results in the loss of innocent life," State Department spokesman Phil Reeker said at his daily briefing, when asked about Prime Minister Vajpayee's controversial comments about militant Islam and its inability to live in peace with other religions.

Mr Reeker also suggested the administration accepted the clarification from the Prime Minister's Office that his remarks were taken out of context, but he revealed that the Gujarat riots had been on the agenda of assistant secretary of state Christina Rocca during her recent visit to the region.

Consumed by the turbulent events in West Asia, Washington's diplomatic radar screen has only

marginally registered the horrific events in Gujarat. But the unending tensions and the BJP government's stand on it have dismayed commentators in the South Asia circuit.

Despite the clarification from the PMO about Mr Vajpayee's remarks and his decades-long political career as the secular face of the BJP, commentators have planned what is widely seen as the ruling party's bid at vote-bank politics.

"In blaming the latest outbreak of communal violence in Gujarat on the country's 130 million Muslims, A.B. Vajpayee has crossed a lethal line in his country's politics. It had been hoped that as prime minister Mr



George W. Bush
A.B. Vajpayee

Vajpayee could rein in the more extreme elements of his BJP and govern in the interests of all Indians. Instead, he now appears to be pandering to his Hindu party's bigots," the *Financial Times* of London wrote on a stinging editorial on Tuesday.

"Those foreign governments that are interested in India's stability should roundly reject Mr Vajpayee's rhetoric.

His incitement to religious hatred has no place in a civilised world," it added. The American press too zeroed in the provocation by the Hindutva brigade and the retaliatory violence that followed the Godhra train carnage.

Newspapers as far apart as Atlanta, Chicago and Los Angeles have run stories about the ineptitude of the federal and state government to contain the violence while on occasion even appearing to condone it.

Pak list in US court

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, April 10: India today sought America's help in getting the 20 criminals and terrorists it wants extradited from Pakistan. The move is being seen as an attempt to make Washington exert pressure on Islamabad to lower South Asia's volatile temperature and normalise relations between the estranged neighbours.

Delhi also wanted access for its intelligence agencies to the al Qaida and Taliban activists captured by American troops in Afghanistan.

Aided with video clips of the IC-814 hijacking, CBI director P.C. Sharma asked visiting US assistant secretary of state Christina Rocca to help Delhi get more information about those involved in the 1999 airbus snatch.

The two countries agreed to set up a politico-military dialogue to broadbase their interactions and co-operate on security and terrorism related issues. The first meeting of the new



Christina Rocca

body will be held in Delhi on April 30.

The US assistant secretary of state for politico-military affairs, Link Bloomfield, has been invited for talks with his Indian counterpart, Jayant Prasad, joint secretary (Americas) in the foreign ministry. The proposed dialogue would not only give the required political content to the military-to-military contact the two sides have started, but also encompass areas like technology transfer, cyber terrorism, re-

gional security, non-proliferation and arms control.

Rocca, who also held talks with foreign minister Jaswant Singh and foreign secretary Chokila Iyer, said Washington was concerned about the situation on the India-Pakistan border. "Any time you have two armies so close to each other, things can go out of hand," she said, referring to the "spark factor" to describe the tense situation in the region. "We are concerned about this," Washington, she added, was keen to see the neighbours resume talks.

Asked how India could return to the negotiating table when infiltration across the Line of Control has gone up, Rocca said: "I am not aware of the figures, but even for this you need to talk to each other."

She also made it clear that Washington did not want to pass a judgment on the referendum in Pakistan by which Pervez Musharraf hopes to get himself elected President for the next five years.

India, Pak. should revive talks: Rocca

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10. Concerned about the military tension along the Indo-Pak. border, a senior U.S. official today advocated the early revival of talks between the two countries. Addressing a press conference at the end of her two-day visit to India, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Christina Rocca, said that with the massing of fully mobilised troops on both sides of the border, the "sparking" of an accidental war between the two countries could not be ruled out.

Asked to comment on U.S. efforts to de-escalate border tensions, Ms. Rocca clarified that without taking on a "mediation" role, the U.S. would continue to remain "closely engaged" with both countries. The U.S. was "carefully" monitoring the situation along the borders.

Reiterating her country's commitment to keep Indo-Pak. tensions contained, she said that Washington would "urge some dialogue to defuse the situation and bring stability in South Asia." She, however,



The External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, with the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Christina Rocca, at his South Block office in New Delhi on Wednesday.— PTI

declined to comment on whether or not an Indo-Pak. dialogue should precede a pullback of forces from the border. On the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's assertion of possible use of nuclear weapons against India as a last resort, Ms. Rocca

stressed that the U.S. was urging both countries to "moderate" their rhetoric. To a question on the wider negative fallout of the riots in Gujarat in the Islamic world, she hoped that "peace and stability" would return after the "horrible" events that were

witnessed in the State. She, however, clarified that the "internal situation" in India, including Gujarat, did not feature during her discussions with the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, this afternoon.

Ms. Rocca also met the Central Bureau of Investigation Director, P.C. Sharma. During the discussions, the Indian side felt that the U.S., as part of its global campaign against terrorism, should urge Pakistan to take action against the 20 fugitives and terrorists wanted in India that might be present on its soil. The Indian side also felt that the U.S. could share with India, information gathered by it while interrogating the Al-Qaeda activists in its custody.

Apart from expressing concern on the border situation, Ms. Rocca made two additional points. First, she stressed that there was no let up in the U.S. commitment to combat terrorism in the region. The U.S. was prepared for a long haul in Afghanistan where its operations had become more specific and localised. She also pointed out that U.S. would continue to target terrorism without making any exception. Asked whether the U.S. will counter terrorists who may have escaped from Afghanistan into Pakistan, Ms. Rocca said that "we will continue to pursue terrorism wherever it comes from." Second, without commenting on the "legality" of the upcoming referendum ordered by Gen. Musharraf, Ms. Rocca asserted that the U.S. was focused on the return of "full democracy in Pakistan."

It was up to the Pakistani courts to determine the "legality" of the referendum, she said and added that the U.S. was "looking forward to free and fair elections in Pakistan."

According to Ms. Rocca, the recent Indo-U.S. agreement to jointly patrol the Malacca straits was a milestone that symbolised the rapid evolution of strategic ties between the two countries.

U.S. help sought for action on list of 20

By Vinay Kumar

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10. India has sought the help of the United States "to do all it can do to get the 20 wanted criminals and terrorists from Pakistan."

A request to this effect was made to the visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, by the CBI Director, P.C. Sharma, here.

Well-placed CBI sources said that Mr. Sharma also made a request to her that U.S. agencies could share with the CBI and other Indian agencies, the information gathered by them during in-

terrogation of several persons in Afghanistan and by conducting probe into the terror network. Mr. Sharma said even if the probe in Afghanistan was not specific to India, it would help the international community, particularly countries like India, in evolving new strategies to put up a fight against terrorism. According to the CBI spokesman, S.M. Khan, the discussion with Ms. Rocca focussed on vital matters of mutual cooperation in various fields. The CBI Director pointed out to her that terrorism was acknowledged as an international problem.

Mr. Sharma also emphasised that the CBI had given a lot of information to the FBI in the IC-814 hijacking case and expressed the hope that the FBI would similarly share information with them as it had also registered a case.

The CBI chief gave details of the cooperation which India had extended to the U.S. since the visit of the FBI Director, Robert S. Mueller, in January and his predecessor two years ago. Later, Ms. Rocca was also given a video presentation on the hijack of the Indian Airlines flight IC-814 to Kandahar in December 1999.

India, U.S. discuss Nepal, Afghanistan

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, APRIL 9. India and the U.S. today held a major brainstorming session on the Maoist insurgency in Nepal and the reconstruction of war-torn Afghanistan. Discussions on Nepal were held between the visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State (South Asia), Christina Rocca, and the Joint Secretary (North) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Meera Shankar.

Afghanistan was the main topic of discussion during the visiting official's interaction with the Special Envoy on Afghanistan, S.K. Lambah. Ms. Rocca will meet the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, who has been in regular touch with the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, over telephone on the developments in the region.

Significantly, Ms. Rocca's talks are likely to be influenced by the day-long visit to India by the Deputy Chief of the Central Intelligence Agency, John McLaughlin, on Monday. Mr. McLaughlin, who is only next to the CIA chief, George Tenet, in the CIA hierarchy, held detailed talks with the Research and Analyses Wing (RAW) chief, Vikram Sood.

Highly placed sources in the Government pointed out that India and the U.S. had been holding extensive "consulta-



The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Christina Rocca, at the office of the Ministry of External Affairs after meeting the Joint Secretary (Nepal), Meera Shankar, and the ambassador to Afghanistan, Lambah, in New Delhi on Tuesday. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

tions" on the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. From the U.S. point of view, the violence in Nepal falls within the ambit of its global campaign against terrorism, sweeping across from Africa and to the mainland of South-East Asia.

Keen to assist Nepalese authorities, a U.S. team from its Pacific Command had visited Nepal in early March to take stock of Kathmandu's military

requirements. The U.S. side had then noted that Nepal urgently required transport helicopters. Significantly, Nepal has recently received around 20 Russian-made helicopters from Ukraine, fast emerging as a close ally of the U.S. These helicopters were transported in large cargo planes that were refuelled in Kolkata en route to Kathmandu. Overstretched by the deployment along its borders, India,

on its part, is not in a position to send helicopters to Nepal.

On Afghanistan, both India and the U.S. are inclined to support raising an indigenous Afghan army that is less dependent on external support. According to the assessment here, the U.S. is likely to stay in Afghanistan for long. Instead of promoting an international security force, the U.S. may prefer to take on additional unilateral responsibilities to stabilise Afghanistan till an indigenous Afghan national army emerges. The U.S. is looking at a possible force of around 60,000 Afghans to form the core of a future Afghan army.

Sources pointed out that India and the U.S. had been holding extensive consultations on Afghanistan prior to Ms. Rocca's arrival. The U.S. has made it clear that it favours Indian activism for institution building in Afghanistan, especially as it is familiar with the Russian made weaponry that a future Afghan army is likely to acquire.

On the question of countering international terrorism, the Indian side is impressing upon the U.S. officialdom that a new round of cross-border terrorism is on the cards this summer, especially as concentration of possible infiltrators between Sialkot and Muzaffarabad had been detected.

THE HINDU

India, U.S. military think-tanks planning regular interaction

9/13
By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, APRIL 8. As part of the continuing efforts to foster closer Indo-U.S. military ties, the think-tanks of the countries have teamed up for regular interaction.

For the first time, the National Defence University (NDU) of the U.S. and the Delhi-based Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) are evolving an institutionalised mechanism to keep in touch. An IDSA team led by its director, K. Santhanam, is already in the U.S. to draw up a blueprint for regular interaction and exchange of information.

The Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CIDS), Pankaj Joshi, is in the U.S. to work out ways to

integrate the three armed services into a unified command and control mechanism. Such an experiment had become crucial after India became a nuclear weapon State after May 1998. After the Kargil experience, Indian security planners also felt the need to integrate the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

Lt. Gen. Joshi would be drawing upon the U.S. experiment of unified commands. Indian defence strategists are aware that the U.S. model would have to be modified considerably to adapt it to the vastly different conditions prevailing here. In this connection, the CIDS, who will be the number two in military hierarchy after the unified command is set up, is understood to

have interacted extensively with senior Pentagon officials as well as leading members of American think-tanks.

Lt. Gen. Joshi is aware that the process of integrating the three services will be as painful as was in the U.S. Already, the Indian defence establishment's sole integrated theatre command in Andaman and Nicobar Islands is experiencing teething troubles.

Closer ties between the Indian and the U.S. militaries gathered steam after the September 11 attacks. As a first step, the Defence Policy Group (DOG), headed by top civilians of both Defence Ministries, was revived. This was followed by service-level interaction under the

aegis of three executive steering groups (ESG).

While the Army and naval ESGs met in New Delhi and Chennai, respectively, the Air Force ESG interacted extensively in Hawaii. The U.S. is also keen on re-establishing itself as a reliable supplier of defence equipment after a three-decade hiatus.

Both countries have done the initial spadework in this direction by approving the signing of General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSO-MIA) which entails a formal acknowledgement not to leak confidential information about each other's military hardware and expertise to other countries.

THE HINDU

Concert of Democracies

India & US at Home in the World

By ROBERT D BLACKWILL

BEFORE a joint session of Congress last month and in front of a global television audience numbering in the billions, George W Bush praised the transformed relationship with India in his state of the union address. The president said that the US is working with India "in ways we have never before, to achieve peace and prosperity". President Bush's words demonstrate the depth of his profound commitment boldly to redefine the US-India bilateral relationship in order to bring these two great democracies into enduring strategic collaboration, based on common democratic values and overlapping vital and important national interests.

The president made the same points to me when I met with him in the Oval Office a little over a month ago. And, as you know, prime minister Vajpayee had earlier come to a similar conclusion with his invention of the phrase "natural allies", to describe the relationship between India and the United States.

As president Bush has said, those who harbor terrorists will share their fate. Every nation has to decide if it is with us — the community of civilised countries, including India and America, that unambiguously condemns terror as a political, ideological or religious instrument — or with the terrorists, the evil ones whose inhuman acts separate them from the society of homo sapiens. In this global war against terrorism, there can be no middle ground. No moral relativism. No policy equivocation. No excuses.

More than 50 American policymakers at the assistant secretary level and above have visited India since I arrived at the end of July last year while many members of the prime minister's senior national security team have travelled to the United States during the same time frame. What have these leaders been talking about with one another? Alfred North Whitehead once observed that, "We think in generalities, but we live in detail". The US-India relationship is now living in exquisite detail.

Bilateral diplomatic exchanges with India are among the most frequent and intense that the United States conducts with any country in the world, allied or otherwise. We have worked together in the UN to pass UNSCR 1373 and to promote the India-sponsored comprehensive convention against international terrorism. These efforts have led to the arrest of hundreds of individuals around the world with possible ties to Al-Qaida and other terrorist networks. With the United States and India moving in unison to strangle the financial assets of terrorists, more

than 112 nations have issued blocking orders and frozen assets used to finance terrorism. And the US government has designated Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba as foreign terrorist organisations.

At the end of last year, India and the United States led the way in assisting the completion of the Bonn conference that established the interim government in Afghanistan. We all know that the tragedy of Afghanistan will not be reversed overnight. At best, it will take many, many years for the people of that blighted land to lead something resembling normal lives. Accomplishing this tremendous task regarding Afghanistan will be exceedingly difficult. Without the closest possible US-India collaboration, it may be impossible.

That brings me to the US-India cyber terrorism initiative, which flows out of the November 9 summit in Washington. We will exchange information about the cyber threat environment, our histories and

IN BRIEF

- Bilateral diplomatic exchanges between India and the US are frequent and intense
- Washington and New Delhi are working together to eliminate terrorism
- Defense ties between the two countries has progressed substantially

methods for dealing with the problem, and our experiences in combating this menace. We will discuss legal cooperation, joint training, regularised cyber attack and assessment notification.

Taking its cue from prime minister Vajpayee's and president Bush's commitment to recast the character of our bilateral relations, the US-India defense policy group has approved broad-based collaboration that includes military-to-military ties and a significant defense supply relationship. In addition to discussions about terrorism, and plans for greater joint analysis and action to combat this danger, we reviewed three subjects of great importance to the future security of both our countries. President Bush's new strategic framework and its fresh vision of the role of nuclear weapons in the international system; energy security and joint operations to protect the sea lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean and the challenges of maintaining strategic stability in the Asia-Pacific region over the long-term.

The program of military-to-military cooperation that has been agreed upon by the service steering groups since the DPG confirms the vitalisation of US-Indian defense ties. We have had the largest number of general officer visits to India ever. The US navy has already conducted five port calls and a search and rescue exercise in the past 15 months. Our two navies will undertake a variety of activities at least once a month over the next two years. Our two armies have already agreed to expand participation in national, bilateral and multinational exercises. The air force agenda, which has just been settled in Hawaii, projects a similarly ambitious schedule of bilateral cooperation focused on joint training and exercises, increased technical cooperation in support of combined operations, and professional and subject matter exchanges.

Our defense supply relationship is also making substantial progress. To date, the US government has received applications for 81 items on the munitions list. None so far have been denied. Of the 81 applications under consideration, 20 have already been approved by the inter-agency process and are in various stages of notification to Congress. These include applications for components for the Agrani satellite launch, helicopter spare parts, micro detonators, specialised electric motors, and the AN/TPQ-37 artillery locating radar. A variety of other high priority items including aircraft engines, undersea remotely operating vehicles, submarine combat systems, multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft, satellite launch vehicle technical data, and equipment for combating terrorism are in various stages of congressional clearance.

This has been a remarkable success story regarding our bilateral relationship over the past year, led by prime minister Vajpayee and president Bush. Of course, this story is not over. How could it be so in such a short time, especially given the way India, with its ancient civilisation and long-term perspective, measures such things. There will be occasional policy differences along the road, as there inevitably are between America and its closest allies. That is to be entirely expected, and to be adroitly managed.

But we have made a great beginning. Our challenge is to maintain this extraordinary pace and substance in our bilateral ties, to continue to understand that the United States and India can truly be at home in the world, together.

(The author is the US ambassador to India)

India, U.S. discuss n-safety issues

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, MARCH 29. India and the United States have begun talks on the safety of nuclear power plants, but are still far away from exchanging related equipment.

Highly-placed Government sources here pointed out that the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Chairman, Anil Kakodkar, visited Washington last month to discuss these issues with the Chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Richard Meserve.

Discussions revolved around emergency procedures, fire safety issues and safety of ageing plants. Analysts here point out that the U.S. signalled to India that it was inclined to advise authorities here on running nuclear power plants safely. It may, however, still not be ready for transferring technology or equipment to India.

Nevertheless, the two sides are taking a fresh look at collaborative nuclear research. Efforts are underway for a tie-up be-

tween a key Indian research institution and the Brookhaven Laboratories of the U.S. India and the U.S. are looking at the possibility of joint forays in the nuclear power sector within the framework of the existing U.S. disposition on climate change. The U.S. President, George Bush, has recently stated that nuclear power production needed to be encouraged as it was a source of clean energy.

The U.S., sources pointed out, had imposed a nuclear blockade on India after the 1974 nuclear tests. Fearing spread of nuclear weapons, international rules on the transfer of nuclear technology were tightened further in the 1990s with the formation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). New Delhi, in future talks, might impress upon Washington the need to introduce greater flexibility in the NSG rules. India, in the meanwhile, has signed an agreement with Russia for two atomic power reactors of 1000 MWs each that would be established at Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu.

THE HINDU

US takes a U-turn on list of 20

HT Correspondent
Washington, March 29

IN A marked reversal of stance, the United States today said India and Pakistan should negotiate on the list of 20 and other bilateral issues by way of a dialogue.

State Department Deputy Spokesman Philip Reeker said New Delhi and Islamabad should solve all their issues through dialogue, including India's demand that Pakistan hand over the 20 terrorists sought by it.

Last week, South Asia Director at the National Security Council, Harry Thomas, had specifically said Pakistan should hand over the wanted men to India or try and convict them in Pakistan.

Reeker said: "We have encouraged both sides to work together

on this. I think this was a subject when the Secretary of State Colin Powell travelled in the region, where we said we thought both sides could resolve all their issues through dialogue, and that includes this one (the list). We made that view very clear again to both sides."

Reeker was replying to a correspondent who equated New Delhi's demand with the US extradition request for Shiekh Omar, prime accused in the Pearl murder case. "The difference is, they are two entirely different situations... Pakistan obviously has legal requirements as well. So we will continue to see and work that as a legal process. In the Indian situation, the demand for the 20 people was made following the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament — who were accused of being in-

involved in terrorist activities."

He said: "Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has spoken out quite strongly against terrorism. He has called upon — as he put it — the silent majority of the Pakistani people to stand up against the minority who perpetrate these types of things. So, the specifics of the list of 20 are something that India and Pakistan have to work out together, just as we and Pakistan will work out together the judicial processes for the murderers of Daniel Pearl."

Poto welcomed

The United States has welcomed Poto as a "more effective tool" against the menace of terrorism, saying its passage is "within constitutional bounds" and "consistent with democratic principles".

FLIP FLOP

LAST WEEK

"Pakistan should either hand over the wanted men to India or try them in Pakistan."

Harry Thomas
Director of South Asia,
National Security Council

NOW

"The list of 20 and other issues are matters of a dialogue between India and Pakistan. The specifics are something that India and Pakistan have to work out together, just as we and Pakistan will work out together the judicial processes for the murderers of Daniel Pearl."

Philip Reeker
Deputy spokesperson,
State Department

U.S. stamp of 'approval' for POTA

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MARCH 28. Even as the Prevention of Terrorism Act has come under severe criticism in India by the Opposition parties, the Bush administration has given its stamp of "approval" to the measure saying that India "seems" to have gone about the whole thing in a

constitutional way".
The State Department Spokesman, Richard Boucher, was asked to comment on the "controversial anti-terrorist bill" and also on the Opposition charge that the Government of India had acted under American pressure.

Mr. Boucher did not answer

the second part of the question. "... we do think it is important for Governments to take steps against terrorism, to do it in a constitutional way... other Governments have also passed legislation that makes clear that they are going to take efforts to strengthen their legal systems, as the Indians have just done, within constitutional bounds,

so that we all have more effective tools to use against the threat of terrorism," Mr. Boucher said.

"We do believe that that can be done consistent with democratic principles. We have done that. The Europeans have done that. And India seems to have done that as well," the Spokesman said.

THE HINDU

29 MAR 2002

U.S. rakes up plutonium past with India

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: The U.S. energy department has suddenly remembered that it gave small amounts of plutonium to countries such as India, Iran and Pakistan under a 1954 Atoms-For-Peace programme and this might need to be reclaimed to prevent possible radiation hazards from a dirty nuclear device.

In the latest instance of America's post-9/11 paranoia, U.S. officials have just woken up to the fact that Washington gave two to three kilograms of plutonium to 33 countries until the 1970s under a government programme to promote the

peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Although the amounts given to each country were small, ranging from 16 to 100 grams, and not sufficient to build a nuclear weapon (which requires at least six kilos), the dispersal of even such small amounts could create a radiation hazard, officials say.

According to an Energy Department report released on Tuesday, the plutonium capsules sent overseas have never been fully accounted for and the government has inconsistent historical data regarding the ownership of the material. Among the other countries that received sealed plutonium capsules were Brazil,

Israel, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Greece, Colombia, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela and Vietnam.

The U.S.-India Atoms-for-Peace deal began in the late 1950s during the Eisenhower years. Narratives from that time suggest that Washington backed the programme after initial hesitation because it believed if the U.S. did not get a foot in the door, the Soviet Union would have helped India develop its nuclear energy programme.

U.S. records indicate that Washington gave some 100 grams of plutonium to India for research purposes between 1968 and 1973.

Indo-U.S. Parliamentary forum formed

HO-11
By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 27. India and the United States today launched a joint forum to increase interaction between Parliamentarians and U.S. lawmakers.

"I am astonished that we have taken so long to think of something like this", the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, said while presiding over a function to mark the occasion.

Mr. Singh described the Indo-U.S. Parliamentary forum (IUPF) as a "historic" development. Supported by the FICCI, the forum, would help both sides understand each other better. "It is important at this juncture to make use of the IUPF where Parliamentarians of both countries can talk, hold divergent views and have differences of opinion on global issues amidst an amiable environment", he said.

Praising the role played by Indian-Americans, Mr. Singh said "they are the best guarantee for building and sustaining a good

relationship between India and the U.S. It will be wise to have them on your right side."

THE HINDU
20 MAR 2002

Indo-U.S. parliamentary forum launched

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Is it a lobby? Is it a caucus? No, its a forum. An Indo-U.S. Parliamentary Forum that purports to be the Indian version of the India Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives was launched on Wednesday. It was inaugurated by FICCI in the presence of external affairs minister Jaswant Singh.

Mr Singh spoke of the ability of U.S. and India to influence global events together and dwelt on the need for understanding rather than

eliminating differences. He pointed out as an example the difference in usage of language in the two countries (lobby and caucus have pejorative implications in India unlike the U.S.) and a parliamentary forum would provide a basis for further exchanges.

While Congressman Jim McDermott, a co-chair of the India Caucus chose to dwell on the differences of sport rather than language (Indian and the U.S. democracies were like cricket and baseball, similar but not the same), he

chose to speak comfortably on Gujarat and Poto.

The question of secular government and religious freedom was not something that was only India's problem as the U.S. also had similar problems. Poto, he said, was very much like the Patriot law passed after September 11 by the U.S.

He expressed appreciation for the prompt, unequivocal support proffered by India after the WTC blast saying India had offered the U.S. a place to put its troops if it wanted to.

India cold to US nudge on list of 20

HT Correspondents
Washington/New Delhi, March 22

IN ITS bid to broker peace in South Asia, the US has asked Pakistan to hand over to India the 20 terrorists wanted by New Delhi, or else try and convict them in Pakistan. But even as it welcomed the move, India refused to budge from its position, saying nothing less than deportation would do.

"The basic focus is on the return of the fugitives and we continue to stand by this," a Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson said today, rejecting the US rider allowing Pakistan to try them there.

Harry Thomas, Director in charge of South Asia in President Bush's National Security Council, told leaders of the Indian community in Washington: "We have asked the Pakistanis to hand these terrorists over to India or try them in their own country and convict them. That is very important and will lead to a reduction in tensions."

Washington apparently believes its compromise formula of sorts will end the face-off, leading to the withdrawal of forces massed on the border and resumption of Indo-Pak dialogue. Curiously enough, the US proposal comes at a time when it is fighting its own diplomatic battle with Pakistan to secure the extradition of Omar Sheikh, who masterminded the abduction of slain American journalist Daniel Pearl.

In seeming disregard for the Pakistani contention that its system is good enough to try the

case, a US federal grand jury has indicted Omar and prepared a case for his extradition.

In his meeting with leading Indian-Americans, Thomas pointed out how the terrorist attacks last year on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly and Parliament have changed the Indo-Pak situation. "We see these as not only heinous and barbaric attacks on the Indian Parliament and its leadership, but acts that would undermine President Pervez Musharraf, who has turned against the jihadis."

Referring to US friendship with both India and Pakistan, he said: "We are not in a zero sum game. But all roads lead to Kashmir: President Musharraf is an ally of the US. He is of tremendous assistance to us in the war against terrorism and he is doing it because Pakistani militants are a threat to him. Similarly, Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee is determined to fight terrorism."

Thomas said: "Our highest priority now is to keep India and Pakistan from going to war. A war is unthinkable. It will be devastating for the global campaign against terrorism."

India would have to sort its problems with neighbours, he said, as that would facilitate Nepal to develop its hydro-electric power and Bangladesh its natural gas sector, which could be of enormous use to India.

He said President Bush was ready for a trip to India when September 11 intervened. "There is nothing we can do about that, but we have to move the dates for the President's trip."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 MAR 2002

India and the US: many roads ahead

Despite differences, the challenge for India is to expand its new relations with the US

■ J N DIXIT

PRESIDENT Bush's visit to Beijing in the first half of February should put to rest unrealistic speculations about a likely strategic consensus between China, the Russian Federation and India to counter the dominant influence of the United States in world affairs. Bush and Jiang Zemin agreed that US and China have a shared responsibility to maintain world peace and stability, particularly in the Asian region. Expressing their views on Indo-Pakistan relations, Jiang and Bush affirmed that they would encourage India and Pakistan to enter into a dialogue and resolve the Kashmir problem which they consider a factor of continuing tension in South Asia.

Bush and Jiang affirmed the position of their countries as great powers which have a higher responsibility to keep peace in this region. This Chinese assertion (with Bush) plus Chinese equations with Pakistan should make Indian analysts desist from irrelevant and irrational exercises aimed at the much bandied about 'strategic equation' theory. This assessment is also rooted in the inescapable reality that the Russian Federation needs to have good relations with the US, given its economic predicaments and security concerns.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's reactions to Bush's Strategic Defence Initiative, to US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and his acquiescence of the dominant role of western powers led by the US in Afghanistan clearly indicate that Russia is not likely to have much of a stomach for a strategic equation with India to contain the US. It is obvious, therefore, that while sustaining a good and broad-based bilateral relationship with China and the Russian Federation, India has to continue focussing on relations with the US. The relationship with China and Russia can only be a balancing factor. It cannot be and should not be an exercise in countering the US or containing it.

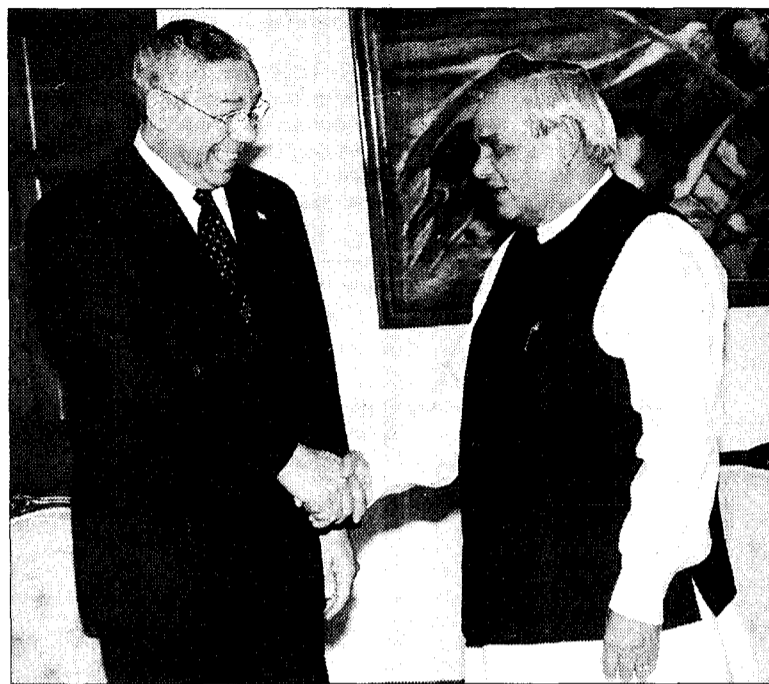
It is pertinent therefore to review the basic pattern of Indo-US relations during the last year. Significant characteristics of this pattern are: The US seeking to intensify collaboration with India on the whole range of issues that currently confront the international community. The initiatives which India took since 1992 to

establish closer relations with the US, particularly those taken after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, have resulted in President Bush being convinced of the relevance of a long-term positive relationship with India. As he said in his state of the union message in January, 2002 "the US is working with India in ways which we have never before to achieve peace and prosperity".

India and the US are agreed on a long-term partnership to counter terrorism and religious extremism, apart from structuring cooperative bilateral policies which have resulted in close collaboration between India and the US at the UN. Both countries contributed to the passing of the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 against terrorism and are now jointly working for the adoption of a comprehensive convention against international terrorism of which India is one of the original sponsors.

India and US working together to turn off the tap of financial resources of the terrorists, Indian advocacies leading to the US Government designating the Jammu-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Toiba as international terrorist organisation exemplify that this cooperation is not declaratory but substantive. This does not mean that Indian concerns on terrorism are fully met. The US is being more patient and gradualistic than India would wish in pressurising General Musharraf to pull back from supporting terrorist secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir. This is logical from the point of view of the US which considers its partnership with the Musharraf government important in its on-going efforts at fighting terrorism in Afghanistan and stabilising the Afghan government.

The US Ambassador in New Delhi, Dr Robert Blackwill, indicated in a speech on February 26 that more than fifty American policymakers at the Assistant Secretary level and above have visited India



since July 2001. There has been a matching number of visits by the Government of India to the US covering a wide-range of bilateral issues from trade and technology, to energy and environment. Leaving aside Pakistan's more active operational role in the anti-terrorist campaign in Afghanistan, India and the US have been active in negotiations aimed at the stabilisation and development of Afghanistan, US's and Indian special envoys Dobbins and S.K. Lambah have been functioning in co-ordination at New York, at Bonn and

Tokyo. India's role in stabilising the political flux in Central Asia and Afghanistan is now acknowledged.

The other spheres where bilateral relations have gained substance are those of intelligence and law enforcement-defence cooperation, including discussions and joint exercises between the armed forces of the two countries, energy security, economic cooperation and significantly, civil nuclear and space cooperation. Another field in which relations have gained momentum is that of science and medical research.

An elaboration regarding prospects of cooperation relating to energy security is relevant. While US multi-national companies are engaged in oil and gas exploration in

the South Asian region, there is a geo-strategic dimension in energy security where the interests of India and the US converge. The US imports 50% of its hydro carbons, from the Gulf. India imports 90% of its crude oil. There is an emerging Indo-US agreement on ensuring the security of the Gulf and the international sea routes carrying these resources across the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Though there is no dilution of opposition of the US to nuclear and missile proliferation, it must be noted that the Bush administration has stopped giving hortatory tutorials to India on nuclear and missile weaponisation. A parallel practical and rational development is India and the US reviving cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and space.

But there two issues on which there is a shortfall and concern. India is concerned about US's relations with Pakistan and the lack of meaningful progress in economic cooperation and US investment in India. Indian public opinion feels that the US should be more vigorous in bringing Musharraf in line with India's concerns regarding his support to separatism in Kashmir. There is also a tendency in India to peg its value judgements on Indo-US relations through negative prism of worries about US-Pak relations. This is an illogical approach. US structures its relations with Pakistan within the frame-work of its perceived interests. If this relationship affects India's interests negatively, the solution is not to demand that the US scale down its

relations with Pakistan. We should have the strategic political capacities and flexibility to counter this negative impact on our own initiative, without making Indo-US relations an hostage to this predicament.

As far as the slow progress in economic and investment cooperation goes, the ball is entirely in India's court. Cooperation in this sphere is not based on abstract political considerations or general goodwill. It depends on the content and efficiency of our economic policies. Unilateral demands cannot be a substitute for performance.

While Indo-US relations are on track, we must have a clear understanding of US priorities in this region. These are: eradication of terrorism and Islamic fanaticism in this region, stabilisation of Afghanistan is an important ingredient of this objective. Secondly, ensuring durable security to the countries of the Gulf and West Asia, where US energy security interests are of paramount importance to them. Thirdly, it is within this context that the US gives high priority of normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan and a political solution to the Kashmir issue. US would be a willing facilitator for negotiations and would be inclined to directly intervene if the prospects are of an actual nuclear confrontation between the two countries.

The US is interested in ensuring access to energy resources and markets of Central Asia, which would serve India interests also in the long-term. But the problem is the US being reluctant to encourage moderate political processes in Iran. The macro-level US strategic objective is to sustain and encourage governments which would be supportive of USA's ideological orientations, security and economic interests, and to establish a network of understandings with such governments.

India is an important factor in this scheme of things. The challenge to India's foreign policy is three-fold: Sustaining and expanding Indo-US relations while there are and there would be differences of opinion on significant security and economic issues. Secondly, to safeguard India's strategic and technological interests vital to security and capacity for economic self-reliance, and third, and most important, while having a close relationship with the unipolar power that the US is, to maintain a balancing relationship with other centres of power in the world for the purpose of ensuring India's freedom of foreign policy and strategic options.

That the US is patient in pressurising Musharraf to pull back from supporting secessionism in J&K is logical from its viewpoint

Blackwill's visit to north-eastern states sparks controversy

By P.P.Singh
Times News Network

GUWAHATI: Nearly a week-long visit of U.S. ambassador Robert D. Blackwill sparked a controversy when questions were raised on his having accepted the hospitality of one of the tea companies in the state facing court cases for its alleged payment and assistance to Bodo and ULFA militants while the United States is talking of coming down on agencies funding terrorism.



Robert D. Blackwill

The U.S. ambassador, while addressing the media when asked to comment on his having accepted the hospitality of such a company which is yet to get its name cleared for having allegedly helped ULFA and Bodo militants, said that he is not aware of any one involved in this and refused to further answer any questions on this.

It may be mentioned that the ambassador had accepted the hospitality of a major tea company during his stay in Assam and the company is still having cases against it in the Guwahati high court for their having allegedly helped or funded the militants operating in Assam.

This while he admitted that insurgency in the region has not only resulted in loss of life but also effected economic development of the region. Mr Blackwill also refused to answer if his government would support any Indian move to attack terrorist bases in neighbouring countries, be it

Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar or Bhutan, and said, "This is a hypothetical question."

Asked why the list of banned terrorists outfits declared by the U.S. government does not contain any outfit from the north-east region despite thousands of people having been killed due to it the ambassador said the list from India was mainly due to emphasis given on Jammu and Kashmir by the Indian government but the list is still growing.

But he admitted that the present law and order scenario in the region due to terrorism is affecting the economic growth of the region besides other actors like accessibility and lack of infrastructure for movement within the region.

He said the tourism sector which has vast potential in the region due to its natural beauty and large number of wild life resorts but due to large number of transit points for a tourist it is not getting its due share of foreign tourists.

Mr Blackwill said there is, "clearly a very big scope for economic development in tourism, agro, food processing, oil and handicrafts field and when he is going back he is more knowledgeable about the region than what he knew from briefings and books in Delhi".

When asked if his meeting with senior army officers of the region, including the Corps Commander was part of the increased Indo-U.S. military co-operation the ambassador said during his visit to different states of the region, he had interaction with state governors, chief ministers and military commanders who gave him a lot of information about the state of happenings in the region.

Youths pull up parts of a tank used by British forces during World War II, in Imphal on Monday. (Right) The canon supposed to be a part of the tank. — P11

Blackwill for end to cross-border terror

United News of India

SHILLONG, March 5. — The US ambassador to India, Mr Robert D Blackwill, today said his country's foreign policy was not Pak-centric and asserted that "cross-border terrorist infiltration confronting India must end".

The US ambassador said his country didn't adopt any equivocal stance with regard to its determination to stamp out terrorism from the world.

Talking to reporters after his lecture on "Indo-US relations" held at the North Eastern Hill University here, Mr Blackwill

admitted that India, particularly the north-eastern region, had been suffering from the menace for more than two decades which had terribly affected the region's economy.

Asked to comment on his three-day visit to various parts of this region, including Tezpur (Assam), Nagaland and Meghalaya, Mr Blackwill said though the North-east had "extraordinary" tourism potential, it failed to attract foreigners because of two impediments — violence and difficulty in reaching here.

Mr Blackwill observed that the print media in the region gave more coverage to insurgen-

cy and violence.

"During my three-day visit to this part of the country, I read in the English papers stories more on violence," he said in his lecture. There was hardly any story on human angle or other developmental issue, he opined.

He said items like one person was killed and three policemen were gunned down got more display in a region, where he would love to stay at least for a decade to study its diverse culture and art.

He, however, didn't respond when asked whether terrorism in the region was being backed by the ISI, Al-Qaida, Harkat-e-Mujahideen and other Pak-spon-

sored organisations, but hastened to say that "cross-border terrorist infiltration must end anywhere in the country".

Earlier during his talk, the ambassador said transformation of US-India relations was "fully underway" but maintained that successful resolution of the current Indo-Pak crisis could give a major boost to the ongoing transformation.

Saying that the 11 September episode had changed the policy makers of his country, he also pointed out how President George W Bush was seeking to intensify collaboration with India on several issues.

THE STATESMAN

6 MAR 2002

Blow for India in US human rights report

S Rajagopalan
Washington, March 5

THE US Human Rights Report for 2001 that harps on "human rights abuses" in Jammu and Kashmir is almost entirely a reproduction of the 2000 report.

Save for minor updating, the report advances the same hypothesis, lists the same charges and reaches the same conclusions, using the same language.

The 2000 report talked of "excessive use of security forces" to combat insurgencies in Jammu and Kashmir and the North-

East, apart from extra-judicial killings, faked encounters and "deaths of suspects in police custody throughout the country". So does the report for 2001, which was ceremonially released by Secretary of State Colin Powell on Monday.

The 105-page India section of the report turns the spotlight, as it did last year, on the continuing attacks on Christians by "some Hindu extremist groups" and "inadequate Government response" in many cases. It points out once again that although the ruling NDA is committed to In-

dia's secular traditions, coalition leader BJP is "a Hindu nationalist party with links to Hindu extremist groups that have been implicated in violent acts against Christians and Muslims".

In another reproduction, the report prominently refers to RSS chief KS Sudarshan's controversial remarks in October 2000 on banning foreign churches and creating a national Christian church. "Of particular concern for the minority groups was the Home Minister's highly publicised participation at the Agra rally and vocal support of the

RSS on his return to Delhi".

It, however, noted the Government's promise not to implement any of these controversial measures. The Congress-mandated exercise is an elaborate annual ritual that puts under scanner the human rights records of all countries of the world except one, the US.

"These (human rights) problems are acute in Jammu and Kashmir, where judicial tolerance of the Government's heavy-handed counterinsurgency tactics, the refusal of security forces to obey court orders, and terror-

ist threats have disrupted the judicial system." This is but one of the very many quotes common to the 2000 and 2001 reports.

The reports are consistent on another count, in their muted references to acts of terrorism. The 2001 report has only a passing reference to the attacks on Parliament and the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. In much the same way, the 2000 report had disposed of the Chatisinghpura massacre of 35 Sikhs.

The State Department, which puts together the reports country by country, draws predomi-

nantly from published accounts and opinions voiced by human rights groups.

In Powell's words, these annual reports are an expression of the American commitment to advance internationally-agreed human rights principles.

While India may not have been singled out, there is a question mark on the US holding the scales even. At a special news briefing, Assistant Secretary of Lorne Craner was at pains to refute suggestions that the US was being soft on violations by its allies like Israel and Saudi Arabia.

10-9
29/2

'Indo-U.S. defence ties here to stay'

By K. Ramachandran

CHENNAI, FEB. 23. Indo-U.S. defence ties are here to stay in the long term and a change in political leadership may not affect the cooperation between the two countries in military and counter-terrorism aspects, says Peter R. Lavoy, Director, Center for Contemporary Conflict, and an academician attached to the Naval Postgraduate school, Monterey, in the U.S.

A counter-proliferation expert, Dr. Lavoy, at a personal level feels there is growing consensus among bureaucrats, planners and the military in India in accepting and supporting the U.S. stand on two major foreign policy issues — countering terrorism and national missile defence.

Although in the post 'September 11' and 'December 13' phase, Indo-U.S. ties, especially defence ties, had indeed strengthened the closer interaction between the two countries even predates these major incidents.

Right from 1998, the U.S. has recognised India's concerns in



Peter R. Lavoy

the region. The latest Indo-U.S. defence cooperation only looked at areas of mutual interest and concern.

The lack of trust on both sides in the 'Cold War' days, because of differences in perception of their mutual foreign policy agenda, is giving way to consensus among the military, bureau-

cratic and planning establishments, especially in India, for meaningful cooperation.

So, even if the political leadership changes, the military and bureaucratic leadership would be assertive, says Dr. Lavoy who was in Chennai to attend a seminar on 'South Asian security'.

On the present state of U.S. ties with Pakistan — seen as a frontline State in the 'war against terror' — Dr. Lavoy, who is a former Director for Counter-Proliferation Policy in the U.S. Department of Defence, says America's ties with the two South Asian countries were quite independent of each other.

The U.S. acknowledges Gen. Musharraf's brave actions against Islamic fundamentalism.

Dr. Lavoy agrees with the notion that the militants and Taliban supporters might be lying low and that the Pakistani leader might not be in full control of the militants.

But the U.S. and India, "I feel should encourage Gen. Mush-

arraf to continue to put pressure on fundamentalists... because to counter terror the best idea would be to keep up the aggressive pressure on the movements, their funding and support mechanism".

Earlier, addressing the seminar, Dr. Lavoy highlighted the need for India and Pakistan to work towards "strategic stability", a concept that recognises the need to curb first strike by any one of the two nuclearised countries.

The civil establishment, with support from the academia, should work closely with the military on what kind of deterrence should be kept in place and its cost, on how to reduce the cost of preparation for war and in case the deterrence fails, how to limit the damage.

Indian military, he feels, is reviewing strategies after the Kargil war, to arrive at better inter-service coordination.

This could be crucial in future both to avert war and in case of a conflict, to make quick and decisive military strikes.

U.S. willing to offer arms to India

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 20. The United States today said its defence equipment manufacturers were preparing to offer arms to India in a big way. It also allayed fears about the probability of another embargo by stating that the international situation had radically changed after the September 11 incident.

"American companies are increasingly interested in exploring possibilities of defence sales to India. But there is a lag time because during the sanctions regime, arms sales to India were prohibited. Since the sanctions were lifted recently, it will take a little time for big U.S. defence contractors to shift course," the U.S. Ambassador, Robert Blackwill, noted. Accompanied by the U.S. military pointman for defence sales, Bruce Scott, Mr. Blackwill was inspecting the low-key American presence at the Defence Exposition here.

Terming defence sales as a crucial element in transforming the bilateral relationship in all dimensions, Maj. Gen. Scott said there was little possibility of another American embargo in the future. "One can't predict the future just as none predicted the September 11 attacks. However, the world has changed since then." Maj. Gen. Scott pointed out that the importance accorded by the U.S. to rebuilding military ties with India was attested by several high-level visits in the recent past including the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, and the senior-most military officer, Richard Myers.

Another indication of the importance attached to military ties is the upgrading of the delegation to negotiate the sales of weapon locating radars — the first American sale of military equipment to the Indian Army in decades. As against the original intention of dispatching a

"low-level" team, the U.S. brought forward the visit by two weeks and sent the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command, Maj. Gen., Scott himself.

Mr. Blackwill also said that Maj. Gen. Scott's visit was "an absolutely crucial part of transforming our relationship". He made a strong pitch for weapon locating radars made by U.S.-based Raytheon by observing that there is "no question" about its superior quality of American defence products. However, "in the end it is entirely up to the Indian Government whether it wishes to purchase that system," he added, indicating that the American option might not be the only one for South Block.

Russia and Sweden, two other major arms suppliers, also made persuasive presentations at the Defence Expo organised by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). While Russia is

attempting to maintain its hold on the Indian defence market, Sweden is attempting a comeback after the Bofors deal controversy.

Russia has offered its new diesel-electric submarines claimed to be the "latest achievements in technology". As compared to the previous models, the new submarines have increased combat possibilities because of new weapons including anti-ship missiles, increased power and improved speed and underwater stay time. This was stated by Victor M. Komardin, Deputy Director-General of Rosboronexport State Corporation, the sole Russian intermediary in military cooperation with other countries.

At a separate news conference, Sweden said it would be presenting to the Indian Army improved versions of artillery guns, advanced ammunition and heavy vehicles.

THE HINDU

21 FEB 2002

Sort out issues, U.S. tells India, Pak.

9/23/02

HD-1
19/2

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 18. Ruling out mediation between India and Pakistan, the United States today suggested that both countries sort out their problems between themselves.

"As you know we don't have a large military presence in the rest of the region. As far as India and Pakistan issues are concerned, we believe they will be worked out by India and Pakistan," said Gen. Richard Myers, senior-most American military officer, when asked whether American military presence in the region would curb belligerence between India and Pakistan.

The principal military adviser to the U.S. President, here on a maiden two-day visit, felt American military presence in Afghanistan had a "fairly big impact" on the Al-Qaeda network and the Taliban. He indicated continuing U.S. military presence in the region by observing that terrorism had not been completely eradicated. "There is still a threat in Afghanistan. It is just the beginning as we know that the Al-Qaeda operates in 60 different countries. Afghanistan was one of

them. We think we have made a major dent in their worldwide operations to some extent," he told reporters after meeting "key players" in the Indian security establishment. Gen. Myers drew attention to the fact that the success against terrorism was not due to military action alone. The other major components were cooperation in intelligence gathering, law enforcement and diplomacy.

Describing his visit as aimed at enhancing bilateral military cooperation, Gen. Myers indicated the American desire to involve India in the global surveillance grid against terrorism. "Military to military ties had started to blossom and grow in the last year or so. We are talking about a lot to do in that (military to military) relationship in the fight against terrorism."

Gen. Myers called on the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, the National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, the Defence Secretary, Yogendra Narain, the Chief of Army Staff, S. Padmanabhan, and the Chief of IAF, S. Krishnaswamy.

THE HINDU
19 FEB 2002

US troops' presence won't affect Indo-Pak ties: Myers

Statesman News Service

New Delhi, Feb. 18. — The presence of US troops in South Asia will make no impact on Indo-Pakistan relations, General Richard Myers, the US chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staffs, said today.

Asked about the US presence in South Asia, he said it would make an impact on the Afghan situation but very little in the sub-continent. He suggested that India and Pakistan would have to solve their problems bilaterally. The USA has some military presence in Pakistan.

General Myers said there is still a threat inside Afghanistan, adding that the war against terrorism was just beginning as the Al-Qaeda, the organisation Osama bin Laden-heads, operates in 60 countries. Later, it was learnt that the US is reportedly keen to go after the Al Qaeda even if they are in Pakistan. All Indian

Intelligence reports suggest a massing of some groups of Al Qaeda and Taliban operatives along the Line of Control.

He said the battle in Afghanistan has been fought by using military, Intelligence and diplomatic inputs but felt the battle would last longer. General Myers felt he anticipates the USA military staying in Afghanistan staying there much longer.

The general, the seniormost military official of the USA, and making his first trip to India at the invitation of the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, today met senior officials including the chairman, chief of staff, General S Padmanabhan, the defence secretary, Mr Yogendra Narayana, the air chief, Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy besides calling on the external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh. He spoke of broadening the military-to-military interaction be-

tween the two countries and said India and the USA are facing global terrorism together.

Defence exhibition: For the first time, US firms will participate in Defexpo, an international exhibition of military equipment organised by the defence ministry and CII.

Bell Helicopters, GE-Marine and the US Department of Commerce are the American agencies taking part in the exhibition, the second of its kind. The three are part of the 140 organisations from 19 countries showing their land and naval defence equipment.

Altogether 39 Indian ordnance factories, eight defence public sector undertakings and 160 private sector industries are participating.

The US participation comes after discussions between the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, and chief executives of about 40 top US defence equip-

ment manufacturers during his recent trip to the USA. He invited them to invest in Indian defence industries.

So far, however, despite the Centre's announcement to allow 26 per cent FDI in new defence sector industries, there has not been a single application by a foreign firm. Officially, the ministry said the guidelines were issued only on 4 January and it will take time for the firms to decide on their investments.

The CII defence committee chairman, Mr Atul Kirloskar's statement also suggested no urgency of the defence firms to invest. He said there was a lot of interest and delegations were going to Britain and South Africa along with other countries. But he said there would not be investments "at the snap of a finger" and investors would put in a lot of study of the requirements before deciding on a financial plan.

THE STATESMAN

19 FEB 2002

India, USA must jointly fight terror: Gen Myers

SNS & Agencies

NEW DELHI, Feb. 17. — India and the USA must jointly fight terrorism, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff of the US armed forces said today.

The senior-most officer in the armed forces (equivalent of chief of defence staff in India when he is appointed), General Richard B Myers spoke of the unprecedented level of military cooperation between the two countries, adding that only a solid military partnership could defeat terrorism.

General Myers, an air-force officer, began his two-day visit to

India today at the invitation of Mr George Fernandes. He is the second chairman of the joint chiefs of staff to visit India, the first being General Henry Shelton who came last year. Significantly, General Myers is not going to Islamabad.

He's likely to meet Mr Jaswant Singh, national security adviser Mr Brajesh Mishra, defence secretary Mr Yogendra Narayan, chairman of chiefs of staff committee General S Padmanabhan, Air Force chief Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy and the Navy vice-chief Vice-Admiral John De Silva. Lieutenant-General Pankaj Joshi, chairman of the integrated staff,

too will meet him. Visits to India Gate and Connaught Place were on Gen Myer's agenda today.

Arriving in the capital, he said Indo-US defence cooperation would lead the way in the continuing transformation of the bilateral relationship. He hoped his visit would strengthen the series of meetings Army and Navy officers of both countries have had a few days ago. Officers of the US and Indian Air Force are to meet in Hawaii this month.

The Vice-Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal SG Inamdar, will lead the Indian delegation while the American side will be led by General William J Berget, chief of the Pacific Air Command.

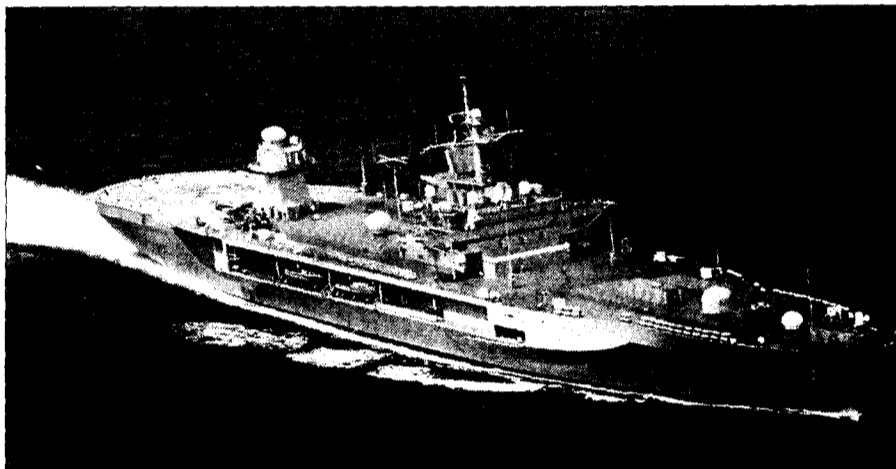
THE STATESMAN

Indo-US agreement on naval cooperation

5/1.6
2/1
Statesman News Service

CHENNAI, Feb. 6. — After three years of a virtual freeze in Indo-US relations following the Pokhran blasts, the two countries today took a crucial step towards reviving joint naval exercises to combat maritime terrorism and ensure safety in the region. "We are very satisfied with the talks," the deputy chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral SV Gopalachari, said after daylong deliberations with his US counterpart aboard the USS Blue Ridge, the flagship of the US seventh fleet, which docked here last morning. It was decided that the two countries would work on an arrangement to be part of the global coalition to counter terrorism.

Vice Admiral Gopalachari said the discussions covered a wide range of issues, including protection of sea-lanes of communication, anti-piracy, search and rescue operations and assistance in the context of the on-going Operation Enduring Freedom (to fight global terrorism). "We also discussed the matter of reviving joint naval exercises (which had stopped after the



The USS Blue Bridge in Chennai port on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

Pokhran blasts in 1999)," he added. The Indo-US military dialogue is seen as a vital step in the thawing of relations between India and the United States in the post-Pokhran II scenario.

Asked if there was a danger of India getting "over dependant" on the U.S. following such moves, Mr Gopalachari

replied: "We have our own sovereign rights. We have to work with various countries and the US is one of them." As for when the joint exercises would begin, he said: "It would be sooner rather than later." The talks, involving about 40 Naval officials from both sides, began at 9.30 a.m. and ended only around 5.30 p.m.

THE STATESMAN

7 FEB 2002

India, U.S. differ on de-escalation

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, FEB. 5. While India and the United States continue to hold extensive consultations, they are yet to bridge their differences on ways to de-escalate Indo-Pak. border tensions.

According to highly-placed Government sources, the U.S. is not insisting on a pullback of Indian forces from the International Border and the Line of Control (LoC) any more. Instead, it has proposed that India, while maintaining its forces on the borders, could consider taking them off from their present "high alert" status.

Essentially, that would mean that the troops close to the border are not kept on a hair-trigger readiness to go to war.

Instead they could, while remaining positioned, adopt a more relaxed profile. For instance, soldiers, instead of remaining fanned out for combat, could take one-step back and converge on what are called "concentration areas."

Some combat aircraft of the Air Force can also be thinned down, or have their bomb loads temporarily removed. Analysts here point out that such steps are mainly symbolic, and may not compromise operations, as these forces can still easily be deployed in core battle zones, at short notice, if required.

India, however, has rejected these proposals, pointing out that they can only be considered after Pakistan takes meaningful steps on checking

infiltrations.

The Government focus, as of now, is mainly on cross-border infiltrations. India, in the future, may not be averse to coordinating with Pakistan on steps to restrict cross-border movements. Contacts between the army authorities of the two sides - for instance, at the level of the DGMOs - for determining modalities to curb infiltrations are possible provided Pakistan sends the right signals.

The messages coming from Islamabad right now are not reassuring, the sources say. Authorities here especially resent the attempt by the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Abdul Sattar, to drag India into the abduction case of the *Wall Street Journal* reporter, Daniel Pearl.

Indo-U.S. military talks revived

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 4. Signalling a return to the pre-Pokhran II era, India and the United States today revived military-to-military interaction, aimed at promoting close ties between the two armed forces.

The inter-Army executive steering group (ESG) began its interaction while the inter-Naval ESG is scheduled to commence its deliberations tomorrow in Chennai. Air Force level discussions will be held in Hawaii, the U.S., from February 18 to 21.

Senior Army officers, led by the Director-General of Military Operations, S. S. Chahal, and the Commander of the American Army contingent in the U.S. Pacific Command, James Campbell, met for the first time in five years to promote greater cohesion between the two forces.

The deliberations over the next two days will cover diverse military issues and will include joint training and exercises, counter-terrorism, Intelligence sharing, peace-keeping operations and disaster management.

The accent for now is likely to be on special training for the Indian officers and Intelligence sharing.

The joint Naval ESG is expected to focus on joint search and rescue operations and training, and explore "areas of mutual cooperation" — an euphemism for the involvement of the Indian Navy in a multi-nation effort to patrol the Malacca Straits and other vulnerable spots for oil tankers in the Indian Ocean. The Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, S. V. Gopalachari, leads the Indian side while the American team is headed by its 7th Fleet Commander, James Wallace Metzger.

Bilateral Naval cooperation had covered much ground in the past but ties were abruptly frozen after the Pokhran nuclear tests in 1998. Besides joining multi-national surveillance grid in the sea — a proposal for which is pending with the Cabinet Committee on Security — the two sides are also keen on joint exercises, the last of which, held in 1998, were termed the 'Malabar series.'

THE HINDU

5 FEB 2002

U.S. presence in south-east Asia is a boon for India, says Blackwill

Times News Network

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:



R. D. Blackwill

U.S. ambassador to India Robert D. Blackwill said on Monday the current American presence in the south-east Asian region, which he termed episodic, should be viewed as an indirect boon for India.

Speaking at a press conference here, Mr Blackwill said America's presence here following the Afghan war had achieved four objectives.

Firstly, the September 11 attacks "changed beyond recognition" the Indo-U.S. relationship politically, socially and commercially. President George Bush's efforts to forge a closer India-U.S. relationship bore fruit. It became the first major policy shift in the past 50 years.

Secondly, it led to the Pakistan President denouncing terrorism and declaring the country an "Islamic welfare state." President Pervez Musharaff's declaration that *jehad* ought to be against poverty, and that Pakistani soil would not be allowed to nurture ter-

rorism were major achievements of American influence.

Thirdly, Mr Blackwill said, the Afghan war banished terrorist Taliban which had been exploding Taliban criminals on India. "We have destroyed their base, their reach, and capacity to strike."

Fourthly, he said America will remain "intensely engaged in Central Asia" for its enormous energy and other resources. He was not willing to elaborate on this point.

Mr Blackwill, however, clarified that America had no intention of setting up a base in the south-east Asian region. America had no proposal to increase its global bases. And, with the country having attained the capacity to strike anywhere with precision, the territorial bases were irrelevant.

The U.S. ambassador made it clear that America had no intention of acting as a mediator in the Kashmir issue.

On Pakistan asking the U.S. or UN to mediate in Kashmir, Mr Blackwill said, India and Pakistan

must sort it out between them. "America has no intention to meddle or mediate in Kashmir."

Earlier, Mr Blackwill avoided giving a direct reply to a media query on the exoneration of Pakistan's ISI by the U.S. consul-general in Kolkata, with regard to the recent attack on the American consulate.

However, he dropped a hint that showed his support to the consul's version. He said, "The crime did not take place in the American soil. It is for India to respond to the doubt whether it was an attack on the police by criminals or by a terrorist organisation. We don't know either."

Blackwill did not take to the common premise that if it was just a criminal adventure targeting the police, the assault did not have to focus on the consulate but could have been anywhere in India.

Mr Blackwill said that the issue of terrorist attack was something that "we discuss frequently with India." "If the government of India takes it up with America, we will respond."

Singh, Straw follow up on Delhi deal

Vijay Dutt
London, January 30

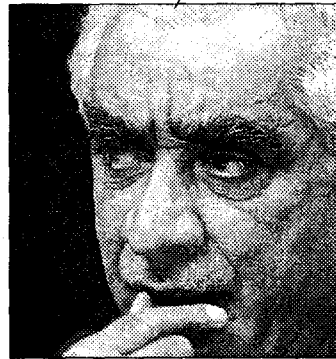
INDIA AND Britain will cooperate and work closely in combating terrorism and rebuilding Afghanistan, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and US Foreign Secretary Jack Straw decided at a bilateral meeting today.

The two leaders agreed to implement the Delhi Declaration "which provides a blueprint for the future partnership between India and the UK".

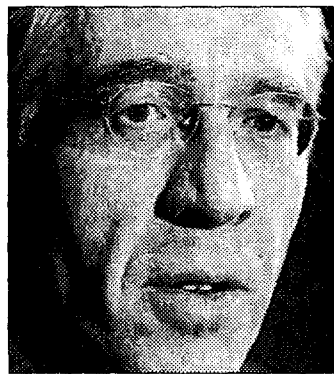
Singh, who is in London for the first meeting of the Commonwealth Committee on Terrorism (CCT), was in a combative mood and effectively refuted the suggestion that India's present tough stand against Pakistan is related to the UP Assembly elections.

During his meeting with the Press at India House, Singh said that such critics are misinformed and belittle the factor of terrorism. When the US took action in Afghanistan no one related it to the Congress elections. India has been committed to combating terrorism for two decades, unlike the action now being taken by the US since September 11.

Referring to the CCT meeting, Singh said that all the 10 foreign ministers in the committee condemned in strongest terms, all forms and manifestations of ter-



JASWANT SINGH AND
(below) JACK STRAW



rorism. The Commonwealth has added its distinctive voice to fight all forms of terrorism. "The CCT will catalyse Commonwealth's cooperation to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1373, which provides an important framework for inter-

national action against terrorism," Singh said.

Singh refuted that the Agni missile testing was in any way related to the present situation in the subcontinent. The test, he said, was part of continuing missile development.

Asked whether he considered the crackdown on terrorists in Pakistan by Pakistan's authorities genuine, Singh said: "Wait and watch." It is not possible to assess whether cross-border terrorism will stop or not in a short period of time, he added. He refused to comment on Vajpayee's statement that PoK should be returned to India, saying it would be "highly impolitic".

On a different note, Singh announced "with a personal sense of satisfaction" the University of Oxford's decision to appoint Dr Sanjay Subrahmanyam as the first professor of Indian History and Culture at its faculty of Oriental Studies. The Chair was set up over a year ago with an endowment of £1.8 million from the Indian Government.

"Dr Subrahmanyam brings wealth of experience and expertise to this position," Singh said. He has worked at a number of highly reputed institutions in India, UK and the US prior to his current position as the Director of Studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Science Sociales in Paris.

Demarche to Dhaka planned

**Nilova Roy Chaudhury
in New Delhi**

Jan. 29. — Anxious to see some action on the ground against continuing atrocities on minority communities, India plans to make a demarche to Bangladesh because top-level bilateral exchanges don't seem to have had any real impact.

A demarche, which is a formal diplomatic communication, would require a formal response from the Bangladesh government. The Indian ambassador in Dhaka would formally present

India's concern on the issue of attacks against Hindus continuing to the minister for foreign affairs and the minister for minority affairs, sources indicated.

The matter of brutal attacks on members of the minority communities has been taken up at the "very highest level", with Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, raising the issue with the Bangladeshi Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Saarc summit in Kathmandu. Mr Brajesh Mishra, as the Prime Minister's special envoy, had also expressed India's con-

cern soon after the BNP government was sworn in.

The Bangladesh government's stand was that these were "Opposition-inspired incidents."

Hindus, however, have traditionally been seen as supporters of the Awami League, and attacks against them escalated after the 1 October elections. The Bangladesh government recently released Mr Shahriar Kabir, who was detained earlier after he protested against the government's inaction on the matter. "But beyond that they have done nothing to stop the attacks," sources said.

'USA against independent Kashmir'

Agencies

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29. — The USA doesn't support the demand for an independent Kashmir, Mr LK Advani said. "I haven't sensed that. I could sense that they (US officials) wanted to see an end to terrorism," the Union home minister told *Newsweek* when asked what impression he got about the US stand on Kashmir.

He said the USA was opposed to Pakistan's policy of using terrorism as an "instrument to get what it wants in Jammu and Kashmir." On India's demand that Pakistan should stop cross-border terrorism, he said Washington didn't want to "turn

the screws further" on General Pervez Musharraf. If it did so, he said, "Gen Musharraf may not be there (any more). Nobody expressed that to me, but that's the feeling I got. I didn't agree with it."

Concerned over the tension between India and Pakistan, the USA has said it is "actively involved" with both the countries to find a solution.

Asked if the India-Pakistan crisis is continuing and if the worst is over, Gen Colin Powell said in an interview on public television during the weekend: "It is continuing to bubble, if not quite boil at the moment... I won't be comfortable until we have found a solution and we can start going down the escalation ladder rather than just staying where we are on the escalation ladder."

THE STATESMAN

30 JAN 2002

Talks on for Orion

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 2. - India has begun discussions with the USA for the acquisition of the P-3C Orion, the anti-submarine and maritime surveillance plane, and the ANTPQ-37 gun-locating radar.

Top defence officials said negotiations were going on but there were worries that the US Congress would not clear the deal. A defence contract can be executed only after clearance by the USA's state department and the Congress. In this case, a senior official said fingers would be kept crossed till the Congress cleared it. "We're worried... and we've already told leading American officials about our apprehensions," the official said.

There was an enormous uproar in India in the mid-'90s when Pakistan purchased P-3 Orion planes from the USA along with 28 Harpoon anti-ship cruise missiles.

At present, Navy officers said, Pakistan has one serviceable Orion and one "half-serviceable" plane,

one having crashed. Islamabad also has the Atlantique.

The Orion, produced by Lockheed Martin, costs about \$36 million and has a range of about 2,700 miles. It can carry cruise missiles and anti-submarine weapons, though it's now 30 years old. Talks about the Orion first began after the defence consultative group's meeting in early December between the USA and India.

A retired service chief said the gun-locating radar was offered to India before the sanctions after Pokhran II in 1998. India refused to buy it then as the Defence Research and Development Organisation said it could rejig the Rajendra radar. Work on the radar is still continuing but the USA, having lifted the sanctions, is offering the radar again.

Army officers are divided about how useful the radar would have been during the Kargil conflict, but Pakistan is believed to have the system. Here, there had recently been some talk about acquiring a gun-locating radar. Other weapon systems being looked for include radar systems and the Blackhawk helicopter.

THE STATESMAN

100-9 23/11

'Indo-U.S. economic ties lagging'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 28. The U.S. Ambassador, Robert Blackwill, today criticised the delay in pushing ahead with second generation reforms in this country even as he warned that the Enron dispute could "spell death to potential investments". In a wide-ranging address covering the entire gamut of Indo-U.S. economic relations, he specially referred to the Dabhol case and noted that its long term repercussions could be "profound".

"The Dabhol dispute feeds chronic misperception among the

overseas investing community that India may not be ready yet for big time international investment", he said. In this context, he said the giants of American business often told him that the "sanctity of contract" may now be in doubt here, a concern that could spell death to potential investments.

Mr. Blackwill highlighted the low inflows of foreign direct investment in India which are estimated at \$ 4.5 billion in 2000 as against \$ 41 billion for China and \$ 316 billion for the U.S. He questioned the need for Government approvals for the FDI. "Is invest-

ment a dangerous external threat that must be carefully limited."

While conceding that some reforms had already been carried out in the area of foreign investment, he maintained that from the foreign investor's perspective, "innumerable rolls of red tape that stretch to the horizon are a major deterrent." For instance, he pointed to the need for 100 additional clearances for a power project even after being approved for investment.

Addressing a meeting organised by the American Chamber of Commerce, the Indo-U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the

U.S. Embassy, he highlighted economic ties as the one area of Indo-U.S. relations lagging behind the "extraordinary advances" made in political, diplomatic, military and intelligence ties over the past few months.

He compared the "creeping" progress in economic reforms to the concepts being voiced about India-Pakistan relations by all Indians whom he met recently - "words are fine but implementation is what really counts." He said this was true in India-Pakistan relations but also true in Indian economic reform.

Agni test will not inflame situation: US

S Rajagopalan
Washington, January 27

IN SHARP contrast to the adverse reaction from some nations, the United States does not believe that India's testing of a short-range Agni missile would aggravate tensions between India and Pakistan.

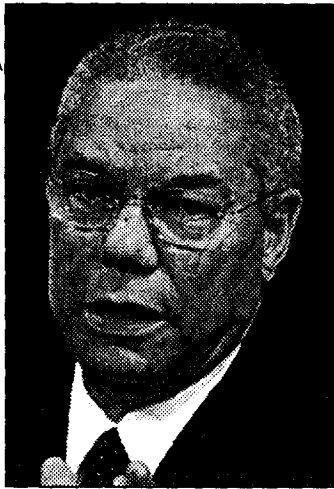
Secretary of State Colin Powell, reacting to a question on India's "provocative action", said he wished Delhi had not conducted the test at this time of high tension, but added in the same breath: "I don't think it will inflame the situation particularly."

Although Powell did not elaborate, the State Department apparently was not taken by complete surprise. An official told the *Washington Times* that the missile test had been expected for a long time. In the official's view, the Friday test did not demonstrate any new Indian capabilities.

From an Indian standpoint, Powell's comments were refreshingly different from the swift and critical reaction from the European Union, Britain, Germany and Japan. He also congratulated India on the occasion of Republic Day and expressed the hope that none of their celebratory activities would be disrupted.

Powell, who is determined to pursue the peace process with India and Pakistan, said the situation was still tense, but he himself was "pleased that both sides are looking for a diplomatic solution" to their stand-off.

After his recent visit to Islamabad, Powell has spoken twice to President Pervez Musharraf amid indications that the US is trying to prevail on Pakistan to turn over at least the Indian nationals among the 20 most wanted terrorists, sought by New Delhi. Washington reckons that repatriation of the terrorists would clear the decks for resump-



COLIN POWELL

tion of the Indo-Pak dialogue and de-escalation of the military build-up. Analysts here believe that the US has separate plans for its current and future ties with India and Pakistan. "These plans will radically shift the balance of relations in South Asia and beyond," says Stratfor, the reputed think tank on strategic studies.

Washington wants to gain India as a long-term strategic partner, while maintaining Pakistan as an ally in the short-run, says Stratfor's senior analyst Rodger Baker. He sees the tie-up with Islamabad as one primarily intended to fight the forces of "Islamic terrorism". This quest will require a broad shift in Pakistan's policies, which Musharraf is carrying out.

The challenge for the Bush administration is to maintain the delicate balance and "satisfy both Indian and Pakistani demands without endangering the broader US strategy". While Pakistan is still looking for an intervention by the United Nations or the US, Baker believes Washington has "little intention of trying to solve the Kashmir issue".

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

28 JAN 2002

US: Phase II of our war will satisfy India

- We'll get to terrorism in India: envoy
- Delhi politely says no to Kofi Annan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 24

AMBASSADOR Robert Blackwill said today that the US has embarked upon a new phase in its war against terrorism with which India would have reason to be satisfied. In the "first instance," he said, Washington had "concentrated...on the Al Qaeda and Afghanistan" and would now "get to the problem of terrorism in India."

Blackwill's statement comes at a time when the MEA politely said no to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's request to visit New Delhi. Clearly, the government believes it's in no mood to listen to some more "preaching" on Kashmir and by implication on the Security Council resolutions on this subject. Kofi Annan was bluntly told that it was "not convenient" for New Delhi to receive him at this time. A UN spokesman told Reuters that Annan had hoped to visit New Delhi "but unfortunately the dates did not prove convenient for the Indian authorities."

Annan, who wished to stop

Pak looking for 14

■ Pakistan today said it was in the process of locating 14 Indians on the list of 20 criminals and terrorists wanted by India. "We are locating them and once they are located they will be dealt with according to the law of the land," defence spokesman Rashid Qureshi said

■ Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said on Thursday elections would be held in October, but only after "checks and balances" were put in place to prevent abuse of power by civilian governments

■ Time correspondent Ghulam Hasnain, who had reported on Dawood Ibrahim's presence in Karachi, returned home today after going missing two days ago. Family and colleagues had feared that Hasnain was picked up by a security agency or kidnapped by gangsters. SEE P2

over from the Afghan donors conference, went onwards to Islamabad, where he has spent the last two days. Congratulating Pak President General Pervez Musharraf for his address to his nation a fortnight ago, Annan said in Islamabad: "It is a step in the right direction. We need to build on it to defuse the current tension."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INDIAN EXPRESS

25 JAN 2001

Phase II in our war will satisfy India, says US

Addressing a joint press conference with Pak Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar, Annan asked Pakistan to press on with action against terrorist outfits and offered his "good offices" in resolving the Kashmir issue if the two countries wished so. "Immediate need is military de-escalation," he said. "For de-escalation and to end the immediate crisis is not enough. The world does not want another crisis in few weeks and few months time."

Annan said the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions, including that of Kashmir, was not possible without the consent of both the parties. "You need parties to co-operate. There were many other instances where Security Council resolutions were accepted as basis but at the end of the day the parties have to talk and resolve their differences." The official line in New Delhi is that the government would be occupied with Mauritian president Cassam Uteem,

who is in town as the chief guest of the Republic Day celebrations, and would have no time to do justice to a high-profile visitor like Annan.

This afternoon, meanwhile, Blackwill was only reiterating Washington's importance for India in a newly realigning world. Blackwill went on to add that the visit by US Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region had "lowered the temperature between India and Pakistan to some degree," and though it was too soon to say so definitely, there were "indications that infiltration (across the LoC) may be down."

The frosty refusal for Kofi, interestingly, contrasts with last week's welcome not only to the Americans, but earlier to the British and next week to the Russians. In fact, Prime Minister Vajpayee even found time to see the special envoy of Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi yesterday.

INDIAN EXPRESS

25 JAN 2002

The Kolkata challenge

It is a test of Indo-US cooperation on terrorism

NOT only must the attack on the American Centre in Kolkata be condemned in the strongest terms, but its significance should be seen in its correct perspective. Questions have been raised whether this was a criminal act of violence or an act of terrorism. This is only an academic semantic distinction. Terrorism itself is a heinous crime against humanity and democracy. The policemen were on legitimate duty, they were neither threatening nor even targeting anyone. To that extent they were the innocents in the process as much as the bystanders who got hit. Even if it is assumed that the attack was perpetuated because of revenge against the police, the reality is that it was the police picket guarding the American Centre that was chosen as the target. This could hardly be a coincidence, especially when there would have been many policemen on duty in Kolkata who would have made an easier target in the early hours of a foggy morning.

It is therefore difficult to understand why the FBI director said the attack and killing of policemen guarding US property and people was not directed at US interests. This approach is hardly conducive to mutual confidence and the morale of Indian security forces assigned to protect the interests and property of foreign governments. This attack is the first act of violence aimed at American installations or assets in India. The earlier act of terrorism involved the kidnapping and killing of American (and other foreign) hostages by terrorist groups so often described as freedom fighters by Pakistan. Coincidentally the fourth meeting of the Joint Working Group on international

24/11 9.5.8
terrorism was being held on the day of the Kolkata attack, which would no doubt have been factored into the deliberations. Considering that we are in the middle of the Third World War which is actually being waged against international terrorism where India, like the US, is a direct victim, it is necessary to continue strengthening mutual cooperation if we want to win this war. This also means that the Central and state governments in India must cooperate fully without getting stuck on lesser considerations.

The Kolkata attack throws up two other issues. One is that we should expect that as the global noose on international terrorism tightens and India's own offensive starts to show results, we should expect religious extremist terrorists to react in desperation at their increasing marginalisation. With decreasing capabilities they are also more likely to seek softer targets, as started to happen during the decline of terrorism in Punjab. The police must be prepared even better than before all across the country since the targeting may not remain limited to J&K. Secondly, it is time that state and Central police took over full responsibility for combating terrorism without looking over their shoulder for the army to take over. Use of the army for combating terrorism within the country, whether perpetuated by outsiders or those within like the Naxalites, is an admission of the failure of the police or of confidence in their capabilities. This must be reversed at the earliest. The police, of course, would need better weapons, equipment and training. And this is where the army should be used to give all possible help.

INDIAN EXPRESS

JWG SPELLS OUT COUNTER-TERRORISM STEPS

India, U.S. prepared for long haul

By Our Special Correspondent

149-1
23/1

NEW DELHI, JAN. 22. Counter-terrorism experts from India and the United States have jointly condemned the attack on the American Center in Kolkata and said they were prepared for a long haul in fighting extremism across the globe.

In a joint statement issued after the two-day Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting, both sides, recognising the need for intelligence sharing, discussed the possibility of accessing their databases on terrorists. While stressing on the need to contain funding to extremists, they agreed that disruption of financial flow to terrorist organisations would be an important component in the counter-terrorism drive.

Both sides "recognised that the campaign will be long-drawn and multi-faceted, involving political, diplomatic, military, intelligence and financial measures."

To improve the capability to counter terrorism, the Indian side welcomed the U.S. offer of training

experts to tackle contingencies arising out of terrorism.

The Indian delegation, while welcoming the U.S. pilot project to counter infiltration and promote surveillance, discussed forensic cooperation as part of the "capacity building" programme to counter terrorism. The U.S. coordinator for cyber-terrorism will visit India to push forward the joint initiatives on the subject. Both sides exchanged notes on terrorism in South Asia, Central Asia and South-East Asia.

The JWG emphasised that international cooperation and national commitment were central to defeating terrorism. Both sides agreed that governed by the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1373, all nations were obliged to bring to book terrorists operating from their soil.

The two sides also agreed to carry forward their consultations on the India-proposed comprehensive convention against terrorism.

THE HINDU

23 JAN 2002

America to help in border management

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Jan. 21. — Mr Francis Taylor, leading the US delegation in the fourth meeting of the India-USA joint working group on counter-terrorism, today spoke of American help to improve India's border management.

Mr Taylor, who also said he was looking forward to Pakistan's response on the list of 20 criminals India has given it, said a US firm, based in Los Alamos (where the first atomic bomb was worked on some 50 years ago), would work on a pilot project with India to improve border security. Mr Taylor didn't mention what the firm would do, but it appears that it would be responsible for hi-tech surveillance equipment.

Indian and US officials have discussed internal or homeland security, the financial aspects related to terrorism, the improvement of forensic capabilities in India, aviation security and cyber-terrorism. The two countries will launch the joint initiative on cyber-terrorism and there will also be cooperation between the armed forces of both countries to curb terrorism. This is the first time the two countries are formally discussing the counter-terrorism issue after the 11 September attack and the 13 December attack on Parliament.

Mr Taylor told reporters that the proposed Indian draft on the UN Comprehensive Convention against international terrorism was discussed as was the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 on terrorism and its implementation. He also spoke about strengthening Intelligence and investigative cooperation. Asked how the USA had good relations with India and Pakistan, he said both countries were part of the global campaign against terrorism.

The Canadian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Manley, today said that the General Musharraf had not refused to hand over the 20 most-wanted terrorists. Mr Manley said he had told Pakistan to address India's concerns over the LeT and Jaish.

Dawood...

THE STATESMAN

US stealth talks on Kashmir operation

FROM SEEMA GUHA AND PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Jan. 21: Alarmed at the possibility of Taliban and al Qaeda activists sneaking into Jammu and Kashmir, India and the US are planning to work together. Cooperation between the two could lead to a joint special operation in the state.

India is comfortable with sharing intelligence with the

US to combat terrorism, but a joint operation raises questions about Delhi's sovereignty.

Aware that hardliners within and outside the ruling coalition will kick up an uproar if the government were to agree to the proposal, the Indian leadership is being very cautious.

Indications suggest that even if a decision is taken, neither of the two governments will describe the mission as a joint special operation.

It is also being debated whether a substantial number of US troops — experts on counter-terrorism — or only a few key personnel should be there with the Indian security forces.

The government is yet to take a decision on any of these issues.

The fourth meeting of the India-US joint working group on counter-terrorism, which began in Delhi this morning, discussed the progress in the

global campaign against terrorism and steps to improve co-ordination.

The US state department's coordinator for counter-terrorism, Francis Taylor, said: "The JWG is solid evidence that India and the US have transformed their bilateral relationship and are today working together on many fronts to defend their common interest."

"Tomorrow, for the first time, the JWG will discuss ways our

militaries can cooperate against terrorism."

Foreign ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said: "The JWG provides an opportunity to share assessment and information on international terrorism, with particular focus on South Asia."

The two sides will also exchange views on "strengthening intelligence and investigative co-operation".

Taylor said the US had dis-

cussed ways to improve border security with Indian security officials, including a pilot project for greater border surveillance.

In the first public admission by a US official of infiltration across the border, he said: "The fact that the people are able to cross international borders and not be identified is a real challenge. We will work with the Indian government in this, in looking at ways to

improve border security."

In another indication of the growing cooperation between the two countries on counter-terrorism, FBI director Robert Mueller arrived here tonight. He is scheduled to hold discussions with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and home minister L.K. Advani.

CIA chief George Tenet is also likely to visit the country in the next few days.

■ **12 killed in Poonch, Page 6**

THE TELEGRAPH

22 JAN 2002

New Delhi, January 21

INDIA AND the US today discussed the progress of the global campaign against terrorism and steps to coordinate their efforts.

In their first meeting since the September 11 terror strikes, the Indo-US Joint Working Group on counter-terrorism discussed anti-terrorism training assistance, terrorism with respect to weapons against mass destruction and capacity building in a number of areas.

The agenda included a brief overview of counter-terrorism cooperation and assessment of the current situation with regard to the fight against terrorism.

The two sides focussed on the lists of terrorist groups in both countries. There was also a discussion on the threat of terrorism

Indo-US panel in terror war talks

in the extended neighbourhood. The two sides exchanged views on strengthening the Intelligence and investigative cooperation.

The implementation of the UN Security Council resolution, passed after the attack and other multilateral issues, also figured at the meeting. It discussed homeland and internal security, cooperation in strengthening forensic expertise in India, including technology for improved border management.

The 13-member US delegation

is led by Francis Taylor while the Indian side is headed by MEA Joint Secretary Jayant Prasad.

Representatives from the Home, Finance and Defence departments, National Security Council, Intelligence Bureau, RAW, CBI, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security and Army headquarters were also present at the meeting.

The two sides decided to launch a joint initiative on cyber terrorism, which will be led by the National Security Councils of

the two countries. This was decided during Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to Washington last november.

Defence officials briefed the delegations on programmes being contemplated for counter-terrorism cooperation on the military side.

The US team includes Ambassador John Craig of the National Security Council dealing with homeland security and Ambassador Ted Mcnamara of the State Department who is coordinating worldwide efforts for implementation of the UN resolution 1373.

The spokesperson said the two sides exchanged views on the threat posed by terrorism in the extended neighbourhood including Central Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Aiming at the arsenal

Defence collaboration key to Indo-US ties 96-8

DEFENCE Minister George Fernandes returns from the United States after what has obviously been a successful visit. In fact, the flurry of high-level visits and contacts between the US and India in the recent past goes well beyond the direct outcome of September 11 and its fallout. The starting point of the growth in bilateral defence ties goes back to 1984 when at the peak of the Cold War and with the Soviet military in Afghanistan the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding for transfer of military technology. This set in motion a series of bilateral cooperation measures ranging from military-to-military contacts to high-level visits. But the disjunction and tension in the strategic and nuclear policies of the two countries had remained a major road-block in forward movement, partly because of American domestic laws.

One of the major handicaps to transfer of technology was the concern regarding security of technology. The US was aware that while nuclear-missile technology moved from 17 countries to Saddam Hussein's Iraq, India was not among them. Not because attempts had not been made by Iraq to use its close and friendly relations with India to get them. India's record of non-proliferation, in fact, has been far more exemplary than that of many ardent proponents of non-proliferation. The General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), therefore, opens the door to military technology by removing one of the major hurdles. The release of systems and technologies like the weapon-locating radars, engine for the LCA, etc, already

agreed upon but held back as a consequence of numerous sanctions and domestic US laws, forms the starting point of a new chapter in Indo-US defence cooperation. The Defence Policy Group set up in 1995 is once again functional and so are the other institutional mechanisms.

A number of high-level bilateral visits and meetings are planned for the near future. The US is the logical source of future military technology. This also has to be seen in the context of increasing access of Indian software capabilities by the US. The mutuality of interests are expected to grow in the coming years, not only in economic-trade areas, but if the welcome that India gave to President George W. Bush's missile defence speech last year is any indication, in areas of strategic and defence cooperation as well. It is reasonable to expect that the Indian side would focus on the upper-end, if not the frontiers of military technology access from the US. But this should not divert our attention from the vast potential of cooperation and collaboration in the mid-low end of less difficult to access military technology for building capacity and mutual confidence. After all, Indian defence forces have had almost negligible access to US systems in the past and a great deal needs to be done in that area. The answer would lie in special emphasis on what could be termed as less sensitive "workhorse" technologies and systems. Our interests, expanded infrastructure and capabilities, and changing patterns of global military industry require that defence industry collaboration should become the core of defence cooperation. We must keep working toward that goal on priority.

U.S. Ambassador, Admiral visit Jammu

By Shujaat Bukhari

JAMMU JAN 20: The U.S. Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, and Member of Joint Staff Committee, Thomas Wilson, today arrived here to assess the situation in the border State in the backdrop of a massive Army build-up along the border.

Mr. Blackwill and Admiral Wilson, with eight other members in the team, had an-hour-long meeting with the Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, who briefed the team about the latest situation prevailing in the State, particularly after the escalation in tension following the December 13 attack on Parliament.

Dr. Abdullah told the team that Pakistan had been continuing support to militancy in the State. Condemning the terrorist activities against which the entire world was now united, the team expressed concern over the incidents in the State and hoped that peace would soon return to the place.

The Chief Secretary, Ashok Jaitly, the Principal Secretary (Home), C. Phonsog, the Director-General of Police, A.K. Suri,

and Commander of 16 Corps, J.B.S. Yadava, were present at the meeting. The team also interacted with senior Army officers.

Pak. asked to furnish list

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 20. As the India-Pakistan stand off over New Delhi's demand for handing over 20 terrorists continued, India has asked Pakistan to furnish a comprehensive list of militant groups which had infiltrated into Jammu and Kashmir in recent times, a move resented by Islamabad which said it was being "pushed against the wall" by New Delhi.

The report in *'The news'* was published a day after the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Abdul Sattar, said that Islamabad would provide India its own list of wanted men for extradition.

The Pakistani daily said the Indian demand for a comprehensive list of militants infiltrated into J and K was conveyed to Pakistan officials during the recent visit of the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell. — PTI

21

21 2002

MONDAY, JANUARY 21, 2002

TOWARDS CLOSER STRATEGIC COOPERATION

THE INKING OF the bilateral agreement on military information exchange underlines sharply that strategic cooperation between India and the United States is rapidly assuming a new and extremely significant dimension. The agreement, under which both sides will share sensitive military information, paves the way for the two countries to embark on a full range of defence cooperation, which suffered a setback after Washington's imposition of military sanctions following the Pokhran nuclear tests. The agreement will go a long way in facilitating technology transfer between the two countries. However, while renewed arms deliveries will be an important fallout of the agreement, it is only a part of the sweeping blueprint in defence cooperation that is being unveiled as India and the U.S. prepare to discuss counter-terrorism strategies, begin joint training for special operations and initiate service-to-service exercises.

The agreement, signed between the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, and the U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, has come at a time when the two countries have made considerable progress in their security relationship. It was only last month that the India-U.S. Defence Policy Group chalked out a road map to radically upgrade strategic ties between the two nations. Apart from the promise that Washington would expedite India's request for certain U.S.-made weapons, the two countries agreed on five specific areas where they would conduct joint training and exercises. The enhanced strategic relationship between the two countries owes in considerable measure to September 11 and its aftermath. India's support of the U.S.-led coalition against terrorism, the lifting of U.S.-imposed sanctions and (perhaps even more im-

portantly) the increased importance of counter-terrorism in the context of global security have deepened and enlarged the relationship between the two countries in a manner which was unimaginable just a few months ago.

In forging closer defence ties with the U.S., India — which for many years was unwilling to sign the General Security Of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) — will be banking on acquiring a wide range of armaments. Mr. Fernandes has not publicly announced a wish list, but — as the statement of the India-U.S. Defence Policy Group noted last month — India's acquisition priorities include multi-mission maritime aircraft, radars and components for jet trainers and high-performance jet engines. The U.S. assurance that licences for some items are in an advanced stage of processing raises the hope that deals for at least some of the equipment that India wants will be closed out quickly.

The two countries have announced that the project for the manufacture of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) has been revived. U.S.-imposed sanctions had virtually stalled the Defence Research and Development Organisation's ambition of building a multi-role fighter — a project that had already been very badly delayed. The U.S.' promise of expeditiously reviewing the supply of modern engines and avionics for the LCA holds out a ray of fresh hope for its development, which has been plagued by a string of problems and hurt the image of the defence research establishment. The U.S. offer of reviving the project might just be what is needed to conclude an experiment which has been both painfully long and extremely embarrassing. India will be looking to hold the U.S. to its promise of moving expeditiously on reviving the LCA project and clearing other pending proposals.

THE HINDU

JOINT WORKING GROUP MEET OPENING TODAY

India, U.S., to work out ways to fight terrorism

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, JAN.20 Within days of the visit of the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, a high-power delegation is arriving here from Washington to expand cooperation on counter-terrorism

The team is led by the State Department's pointman on counter-terrorism, Francis X. Taylor. The 13-member delegation also includes representatives of key intelligence and investigative agencies.

Incidentally, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Robert Muller, will also be here to hold talks with his counterpart in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). He is also expected to meet the chief of the Intelligence Bureau, K.P. Singh.

Besides, the chief of the U.S. Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), Thomas Wilson, is also beginning a visit to India on Mon-

day. Admiral Wilson is expected to exchange views with the Director-General of Military Intelligence. His visit assumes significance in the light of India's decision to develop a tri-service intelligence agency headed by a three-star General or his counterparts in the Air Force and Navy.

The Indian side to the Joint Working Group meeting on counter-terrorism is led by the Joint Secretary (Americas), Jayant Prasad, and includes representatives from the Intelligence Bureau, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the National Security Council, the Defence Ministry, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security and Army headquarters.

Significantly, the two sides will look at the implementation of the U.N. Security Council resolution 1373 that urges all countries to banish terrorism from their soil. According to Indian officials, the resolution has a bearing on Pakis-

tan, as a large number of terrorists are suspected to be operating from there. The U.S. coordinator on worldwide implementation of the resolution, Ted McNamara, is part of the team.

Four key areas

The fourth meeting of the Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group, therefore, will focus on four key areas. First, the two delegations will look at ways to streamline intelligence sharing and carry out joint investigations. India has already started expanding sharing of intelligence. This includes sharing of radio intercepts of Kashmir terrorists and their backers in Pakistan. The U.S. side is also likely to suggest ways to strengthen India's forensic capabilities.

Second, with infiltration emerging as a key problem along the Indo-Pak. border, both sides are looking at ways to improve "border management."

According to a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs, India and the U.S. will launch a "pilot project for improving border management. The Los Angeles-based Sandia Laboratories will be responsible for this project from the U.S. side."

Third, the JWG will launch a joint initiative to counter cyber terrorism. This decision is the result of the Prime Minister's visit to Washington in November last. The national security councils of the two countries will coordinate the programme. The military establishments of the two sides are also expected to be drawn in the counter-terrorism exercise. The two-day dialogue will, for the first time include internal security as a major item for discussions.

Fourth, the two delegations will discuss ways to snap funding of terrorists and expand cooperation in this sphere.

2002
COMMISSIONER REMOVAL SOUGHT

THE HINDU

White House admits it helped Enron lobby with PM and Sonia for Dabhol

DANA MILBANK & PAUL BLUSTEIN
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 19

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96-1
THE White House coordinated a multi-front effort last year to help Enron Corp settle a dispute with the Indian government, which the energy company hoped would deliver \$2.3 billion as it was running out of cash in the weeks before declaring bankruptcy. According to government records released on Friday, the administration's efforts included Vice President Dick Cheney's conversation with Congress Party leader Sonia Gandhi and was to involve a personal appeal by President George Bush to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The efforts appeared to have ended on November 8, the day Enron filed documents with the Securities and Exchange Commission revising its financial statements to account for \$586 million in losses. It's also the day Enron Chairman Kenneth L. Lay talked by phone with Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill about the company's dire finances.

The documents released on Friday provided new details about the Bush administration's attempts to aid Enron, that filed for bankruptcy law protection in December and now faces Justice Department and congressional investigations. The administration intensified government actions just as Enron's financial problems grew severe and the



power plan venture reached a moment of crisis. Those efforts stopped when the scope of Enron's spectacular collapse was becoming known worldwide.

In a September 14 letter to Vajpayee, Lay said he wanted \$1.2 billion for the cost of the company's investment and \$1.1 billion for the purchase of offshore lenders' debt. The \$2.3 billion total, he wrote, "strikes me as exceptionally reasonable when compared to the size of our legal claim," which Enron had put at \$4 billion to \$5 billion.

When Lay wrote the letter, Enron's stock had plunged to \$32.76 from a high of \$90 in August 2000. At that same time, the administration working group was trying to resolve the dispute between Enron and India. "The acute lack of progress in this matter has forced Dabhol to rise to the highest levels of the United States government," Peter Watson, President of lender Overseas Private Investment Corp, said in a November 6 message to Principal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INDIAN EXPRESS

20 JAN 2001

Bush Govt. distancing itself from Enron?

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 19. Even as the Republican administration is trying its best to maintain some distance from the goings-on at Enron Corporation, the White House has confirmed that the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, did intervene with India on behalf of the company to make the best out of a power project.

The Bush administration is making the point that Mr. Cheney's intervention had nothing to do with the fact that the Houston-based company is the biggest political patron of the President, George Bush, or that of the Grand Old Party.

Senior officials of the Clinton administration had also taken up

the case of the Dabhol project in India. The administration is justifying Mr. Cheney's "intervention" on the ground that the project was financed in part by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), where U.S. taxpayers' money was involved.

Mr. Cheney is said to have taken up the Enron case at a meeting with the Leader of the Congress party, Sonia Gandhi, when she called on him during her visit to Washington. He is said to have "mentioned" Enron during the meeting on June 27, 2000. The White House has confirmed this, saying that Mr. Cheney had asked Ms. Gandhi "about the status of the project".

What is being pointed out is that

the Cheney-Gandhi meeting took place just three days after the Vice-President had a meeting with the Enron Chairman, Kenneth Lay, at a forum on energy in Colorado. The Commerce Secretary, Don Evans, said that he and Mr. Lay had spoken about recovering losses from the Dabhol project. It is said that Enron was looking for "help" to recover \$64 million from the Maharashtra State Electricity Board.

The White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said on Friday that there was nothing wrong in anyone in the administration looking out to protect America's jobs and taxpayers' money, noting that Mr. Bush, for example, talked to China on purchasing a Boeing aircraft.

And in the context of Enron, Mr. Cheney and India, the stress was on minimising the risk and loss to taxpayers as a result of OPIC's involvement and it had nothing to do with the campaign contributions of Enron.

The White House said that the exposure of the OPIC to the Dabhol project was \$160 million in loans and \$180 million in risk insurance. The American Export Import Bank had thrown in \$300 million in direct loans.

Only a few days before the Bush-Vajpayee meeting here, the Enron Chairman had called upon the Treasury and Commerce Secretaries to apprise them of the company's financial problems, it is said.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2002

HP 8
19/8 19/11
THE NEW U.S. FACTOR

A DEFINITIVE DE-ESCALATION of the emotionally surcharged crisis across the India-Pakistan divide and a substantive resumption of dialogue between the two countries constitute the exploratory purpose of the Powell mission to Islamabad and New Delhi at this sensitive juncture. The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, seems to have got on well with his official interlocutors in both India and Pakistan even as the two sides, too, allowed him considerable diplomatic elbow room to manoeuvre. In the event, the new strategic space that the U.S. has managed to carve out for itself as regards the undiminished India-Pakistan estrangement is too conspicuous to be missed. To recognise the novelty of this emerging U.S. factor in the India-Pakistan equation is not to debunk Washington's intentions in the present era of its "campaign" against the globalised politics of terrorism. Nor can there be any doubt whatsoever about the moral-political imperative of a meaningful effort by both India and Pakistan to restart bilateral parleys without any further delay. However, New Delhi should not lull itself into a false state of triumphalism that its arguably coercive strategy of exerting diplomatic-military pressure on Islamabad is being vindicated in the context of Washington's current activism. In one sense, the endgame in the present Pakistan-India standoff, traceable directly to last month's terrorist strike against Parliament House in New Delhi, is not in sight yet. In a different and more salient perspective, New Delhi appears oblivious of the possibly long-term political cost of allowing the U.S. to gain, however gradually, a decisive strategic presence insofar as India's Pakistan policy is concerned.

If the Powell mission has attained a diplomatic mystique disproportionate to its portrayal as an experiment with "ideas", the reason springs from the prevailing tendencies of the rulers in

both India and Pakistan to make common cause with the United States. A prime American concern is that Islamabad's pact with the Bush administration to fight the Taliban-Osama axis of terror in Afghanistan and pockets of Pakistan itself should not be endangered by any other event or political manifesto. This explains the general dismay in Pakistan that its Kashmir "cause" may have been tarnished on account of the perceived failure of its President, Pervez Musharraf, to resist the American pressure to denounce terrorism as an acknowledged aspect of the Kashmir "struggle" itself. This should also account for Gen. Powell's lavish praise for the truly positive thrust of Gen. Musharraf's latest moves to reinvent his country's ideology.

In measured doses of public diplomacy in Islamabad as also New Delhi, Gen. Powell has not shed much light on his "ideas" themselves beyond tacitly endorsing the call by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, for a sense of trust and confidence within the complex Indo-Pakistan spectrum. It is in this context that New Delhi has agreed to share with Islamabad some additional "information" and "evidence" so that Gen. Musharraf could quickly process India's demand or "expectation" that he extradite 20 identified terrorists and criminals. Inextricably linked to the U.S.' diplomacy over issues ranging from "evidence" to the renewal of India-Pakistan talks is Gen. Powell's apparent formula that parleys might catalyse a de-escalation of the military tensions between the two. He may have also struck the right note by suggesting that their next phase of talks need not be Kashmir-centric. In a larger sense, though, New Delhi should address the new American paradigm of "friendship" with both India and Pakistan in the evolving context of their relative strategic importance to Washington.

HP 8

19 JAN 2002

Long-term goals score over near-term discord

India, U.S. sign bilateral military pact

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: India and the United States on Thursday agreed to expand their military ties in the long-term despite niggling near-term differences arising from the tensions in the sub-continent.

Defence minister George Fernandes and U.S. defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld held what was described by both sides as extensive and fruitful discussions aimed at securing a firmer footing for a military relationship between the two countries that has been chimerical at best.

In a joint press conference with Mr Rumsfeld, the defence minister harked back to the on-off nature of the ties but said Thursday's talks, which he described as a milestone, had led him to believe the two countries were in forward movement.

Mr Rumsfeld announced that the two sides had signed a bilateral military agreement that would enable the exchange of classified military information. Although questions about the controversial Phalcon deal hung over the meeting, both sides chose to underplay it against the larger agenda of expanded military ties.

Mr Fernandes questioned the authenticity of media reports that Washington was leaning on Israel to defer the sale of the Phalcon airborne warning system to India. "I don't think the U.S. has put any pressure. there is no substance to the report," he said. Mr Rumsfeld, who was standing by his side, did not contradict him.

Mr Fernandes also indicated that New Delhi was interested in procuring other military items and technology from the U.S. He specifically mentioned the light combat aircraft project, which began as a joint effort in the mid-1980s and has since languished, and suggested the two sides could revive cooperation in this sphere.

However, there were some perceptible

areas of disagreement between the two sides although both men chose to express them obliquely. As with other Bush administration officials, Mr Rumsfeld too emphasised the need for de-escalation in the region following Gen Musharraf's speech last week and the actions he is taking as a follow-up.

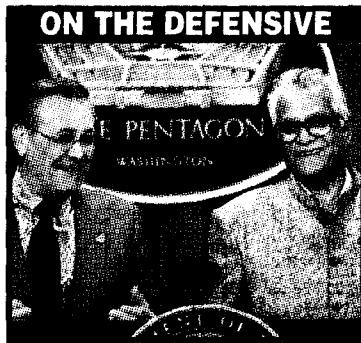
"I am personally persuaded that (Gen) Musharraf is acting on his words," Mr Rumsfeld said.

Mr Fernandes said he had reason to believe that sooner or later issues between India and Pakistan would be on the way to a resolution. But as of now, the situation on the border had not changed. Terrorist attacks were also continuing in Jammu and Kashmir. He offered no commitment to stand down. As a precondition for any de-escalation, Mr Fernandes said New Delhi was prepared to discuss with Islamabad any problem the latter may have in handing over the six Pakistani terrorists on India's 'wanted list', but made it clear that those of Indian origin should be handed in immediately.

He said it was only when India realised that Pakistan had taken specific and concrete steps to end cross-border terrorism that one could discuss the withdrawal of troops from the frontier.

Echoing the words of Secretary of State Colin Powell in New Delhi, Mr Rumsfeld said de-escalation was a decision for India and Pakistan, and not for the United States to make.

Earlier, officials from both sides played down the Phalcon controversy. Ahead of Mr Fernandes' meetings with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and Mr Rumsfeld, U.S. officials said they supported the deal in principle and were only concerned with the timing of the sale and the technological parameters of the system. Indian officials were sanguine about the transaction and said that as far as they were concerned, the deal was as good as done.



U.S. secretary of defence Donald Rumsfeld and defence minister George Fernandes address the press at the Pentagon on Thursday.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

19 JAN 2002

U.S. will not hurt Indian interests over Kashmir

By K. Subrahmanyam

NEW DELHI: If the U.S. does not mediate on the Kashmir issue, it will not be for want of effort on the part of bulk of our media — both print and electronic — to promote such mediation. All the assertions of former president Clinton, President Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell cannot persuade a large number of Indian commentators and TV anchor persons that the U.S. does not have a secret agenda to mediate on the Kashmir issue to which India would sooner or later have to succumb.

The Americans are more familiar with India's stand on various issues than perhaps some of our commentators. They remember that they could not arm-twist India on the Kashmir issue even when India needed U.S. military help in 1963. Indira Gandhi stood firm on her Vietnam stand even when president Johnson was holding back wheat shipments needed by famine-stricken Bihar. India

refused to sign the NPT and CTBT. And India went ahead and liberated Bangladesh when 104 nations voted to stop the war in the UN general assembly.

The U.S. attorney general recuses himself from the Enron case because he received a campaign contribution from them. The U.S. had sided with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue during the four decades of the cold war under pressure from the British, though under

NEWS ANALYSIS

information now released, we know George Marshall, who was U.S. Secretary of State at that time, was of the firm view that the accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to the Indian union was unassailable. Decency and fairness require that a nation with such a long-term partisan record on the dispute cannot play the role of a mediator or facilitator.

Today's India and Pakistan are vastly different from that of the 1950's and '60s. India is even less vulnerable to pressure than in

those days and Pakistan is no longer a cold war U.S. ally. Though General Musharraf may be an ally in the war against terrorism as India is too, Pakistan is today a self-condemned breeding ground of extremism and terrorism. Thousands of Pakistanis, according to Gen Musharraf, have been killed fighting the Northern Alliance and U.S. special forces in Afghanistan.

The U.S. is fighting this war to uphold multi-culturalism. Handing Kashmir over to Pakistan would violate that norm and will be a reward for religious extremism — emboldening the two-nation theory. The U.S. today wants to preserve multi-culturalism in Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia and elsewhere.

When the Americans say they will help in Kashmir if they are requested by both parties, they are aware that they will never get that invitation from Delhi. It is precisely that confidence which makes them comfortable in making such statements.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

19 JAN 2002

Now, US hands India terror list

Chandan Nandy
New Delhi, January 18

THE FBI has given New Delhi the names of about 30 suspected al-Qaida terrorists of Indian origin who were trained in camps in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

The local FBI representative here handed over the list to senior Indian security officials as part of the "incremental" cooperation between Washington and New Delhi in intelligence sharing.

Some of these Indians have been arrested by the Hameed Karzai regime and US authorities in Afghanistan. At least three are known to be under arrest in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. They do not include the Hyderabad duo — Ayub Ali Khan alias Syed Gul Mohammad Shah, and Mohammad Azmath Jaweed — who were arrested at Forth Worth, Texas, soon after

the September 11 attacks.

The list includes the name of Mohammad Afroze who had been arrested by the Mumbai police in October. Afroze had confessed that before September 11, he underwent pilot training in Australia, United Kingdom and the US.

Highly-placed sources said the information supplied by the FBI "is being processed" by Indian security agencies within and outside the country. The al-Qaida's Indian connection will be discussed in detail between US and Indian Intelligence officials at the joint working group on terrorism which meets on January 21 and 22.

During the meetings, Indian officials are expected to impress upon the 20-member US team to apply pressure on Pakistan to hand over the 20 terrorists and criminals wanted by New Delhi.

Early next week, Home Min-

istry officials will "brief" a visiting delegation of British MPs not only on Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir but also in other parts of the country.

In this context, security experts feel that the Indian Government should have pursued leads on the links of Indian nationals, including some non-resident Indians based in some of the Gulf countries, with the al-Qaida. Officials said New Delhi could have sent Intelligence officials to Afghanistan to interrogate the arrested Indians especially when investigating agencies of other countries, including Egypt and Yemen, whose nationals were found to be part of the al-Qaida, did so.

"The move to send Indian officials to Afghanistan which could have yielded vital information did not occur to the political establishment," a top official said.

SS Ray heckled at Presidency

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, January 18

FORMER CHIEF Minister Siddhartha Shankar Ray was heckled by students of the Presidency College today. Ray had gone to the college to donate photographs of the college football team he had in his personal collection.

Late this morning, Ray reached the college and went up to the Principal's room. Some students belonging to the pro-Naxalite Presidency College Students' Association (PCSA) gathered outside and began shouting slogans against Ray, who is credited with crushing the Naxal movement in the '70s.

The small police contingent posted on the campus had to intervene to prevent the agitating students getting to Ray. However, the former Chief Minister remained unruffled.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

19 JAN 2002

Powell puts onus on Pak

New Delhi-Islamabad dialogue can't be Kashmir-centric, says Secretary of State

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, January 18

COLIN POWELL today said the resumption of the Indo-Pak dialogue will depend on "further action" by Islamabad on New Delhi's demands for ending cross-border terrorism.

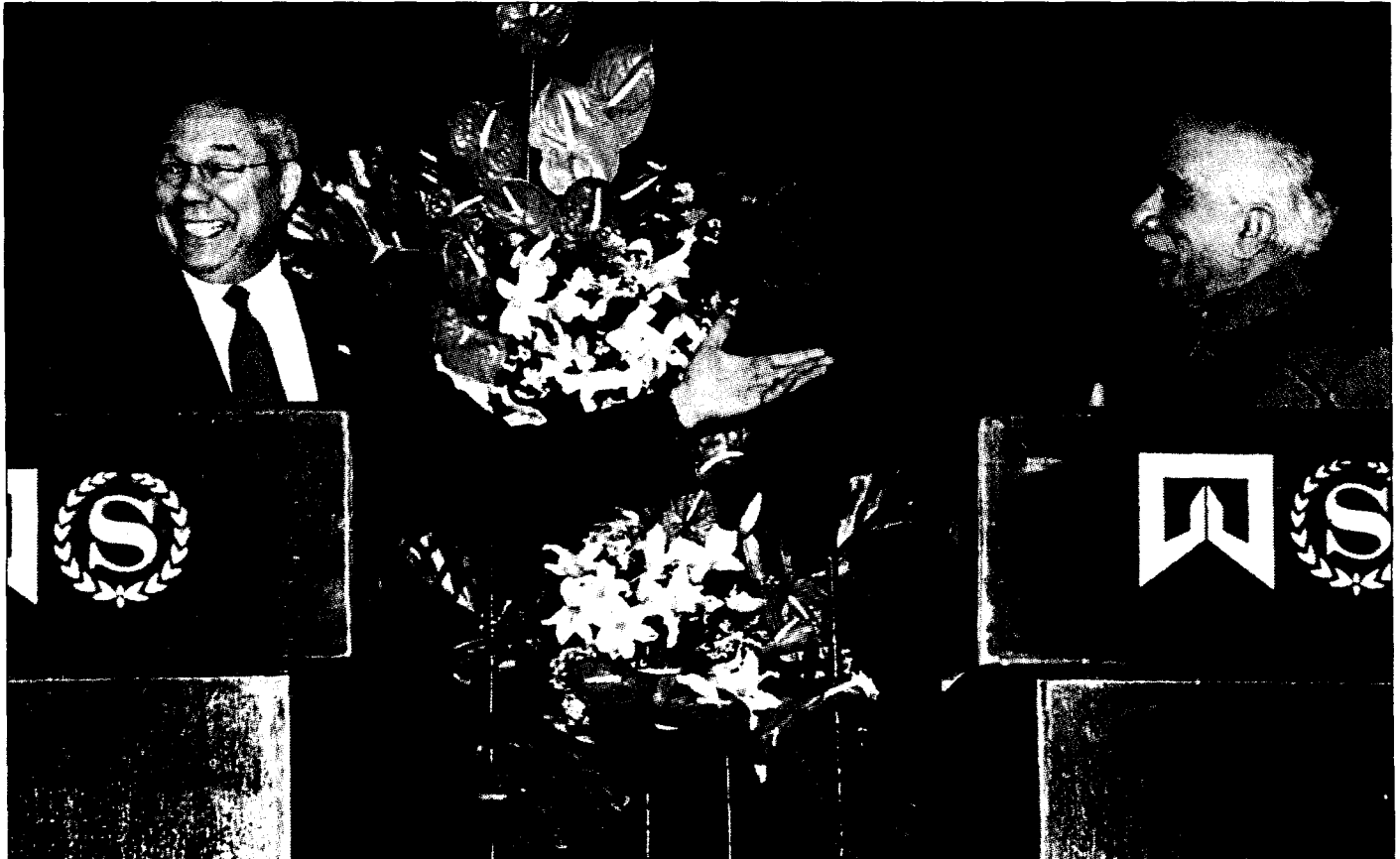
"I think we are on a path that will lead to restoration of dialogue and confidence-building," he said at a joint Press conference with Jaswant Singh. "But it will take further action before we take that path."

Later, he told NDTV that any Indo-Pak dialogue could not be Kashmir-centric. Only hours earlier in Islamabad, Musharraf had repeated his old line that Kashmir was the core issue between India and Pakistan.

India today gave Powell an encouraging sign, hinting for the first time that it was willing to distinguish between officially backed cross-border terrorism and post-January 12 incidents like yesterday's market bombing in Jammu. Jaswant Singh acknowledged that some Pakistani groups may be out to sabotage Musharraf's promises, saying: "We are mindful that in this critical juncture there would be demented elements who would step up violence."

In Washington, George Fernandes too struck a note of reasonableness, saying India is prepared to discuss with Pakistan any problem it might have in handing over the six Pakistani terrorists on India's wanted list. He said he was sure the tension would be defused sooner or later.

Powell said he had a "most productive" meeting with Vajpayee. "I leave here very encouraged that we can find a solution to this troubling situation. We



THEY CALL HIM PM: Colin Powell grins as a foreign journalist addresses a blushing Jaswant Singh as 'Mr Prime Minister' in New Delhi on Friday.

exchanged a number of ideas on how we can move forward."

Asked when the Indo-Pak dialogue could resume, he said it was a matter to be resolved by the two countries.

Jaswant said the central thought shared by the Prime Minister and Powell was the earliest restoration of confidence. The Foreign Minister, however, didn't pass up the chance for a dig at Islamabad.

He said that of the 20 terrorists wanted by India, 14 were Indians. Details of their whereabouts had been given to Islamabad. "These are wanted terrorists, written about in Pakistani journals. It is not they are hiding in caves in Karachi... there are no caves in Karachi."

Powell admitted that the Indian demand for their handover was valid. "A copy of the additional information given by India

to Pakistan on them was given to us. We hope President Musharraf will do all that is appropriate."

But the US isn't setting Musharraf a deadline.

India today handed over to Pakistan additional evidence that the 20 on the wanted list were involved in various crimes and terrorist acts in the country.

The evidence was given to Pakistani Deputy High Commissioner Jaleel Abbas Jilani by

Arun K Singh, Joint Secretary in the Foreign Ministry.

Meanwhile in Islamabad, Musharraf accused India of sending out "fluctuating signals" on easing tensions and outlined his own approach to resolving the Kashmir dispute.

He repeated his formula that both countries should begin a dialogue, followed by the recognition of Kashmir as a core issue.

Kissinger talks Kashmir with Pant and Advani

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: As part of American back-door diplomacy intended to ease Indo-Pak tension, former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger on Thursday met several top Indian leaders. The meetings took place just as Secretary of State Collin Powell was engaging the government.

In the morning, Mr Kissinger held extensive discussions with the Centre's principal interlocutor on Jammu and Kashmir K.C. Pant and later in the evening he met home minister L.K. Advani at his North Block office. Emerging from an hour-long meeting with Mr Advani, Mr Kissinger said, "I am here to

educate myself and not to push through any politics." However, he emphasised that the U.S. favoured a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue and the beginning of a new relationship between India and Pakistan.

Asked bluntly why America was adopting double-standards—when the U.S. was attacked, it declared a

war against Afghanistan, but when India was attacked by Pakistan-based terrorists, it was asking India to observe restraint—Mr Kissinger said, "The U.S. has made it clear that it is opposed to any state-sponsored terrorism, no matter where it emanates from." He said the U.S. extended "strong support" to the Indian

government for playing a constructive role in the fight against terrorism. He then added, "India and Pakistan should join hands to solve the Kashmir problem."

Earlier, Mr Kissinger, accompanied by U.S. ambassador Robert Blackwill, met Mr Pant and discussed the situation prevailing in the Kashmir Valley. The legendary American foreign

policy expert had earlier said he was on a private visit to India and that he did not have any specific agenda.

Sources said Mr Kissinger, who was accompanied by a team of experts, discussed the Kashmir issue extensively with both Mr Pant and Mr Advani besides deliberating on steps to de-escalate tensions on the Indo-Pakistan border.



H. Kissinger

The U.S. has made it clear that it is opposed to any state-sponsored terrorism, no matter where it emanates from

THE TIMES OF INDIA

18 JAN 2002

India, USA sign security pact

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17. — In a major impetus to Indo-US defence cooperation, the two countries today signed an agreement on general security and military information exchange as Mr George Fernandes began his six-day visit to America. The project for the manufacturing of Light Combat Aircraft in India has also been revived, the defence minister said.

At a joint press conference with Mr Fernandes after their talks, the

US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, said the two countries had made "good progress" in their security relationship.

Mr Fernandes said India was looking forward to procuring such items as "we need to procure from here". India, he said, needed engines for the LCA and "we are again working together" on this project.

India has had security relationship with the USA for several years but it had come to a standstill in between.

Mr Fernandes said the discussion with the US delegations had been "fruitful" and "we expect to continue

these meetings in time to come. We believe we are on a forward movement in so far as strengthening and dealing with challenges we are facing in our respective areas."

He said he had intensive discussions on defence and security cooperation and denied there was any pressure from Washington on Israel for the sale of Phalcon airborne warning systems (AWACS) to India.

Such reports put at doubt the credibility in the tripartite relations between USA, India and Israel, he said. There's no substance in such

reports (that USA was pressuring Israel for a temporary freeze on arms sale including the sale of three Phalcon AWACS). Mr Fernandes said. Before leaving New Delhi, he said he had been asked by the media about this. But during his talks here he found there was no substance in it.

Mr Rumsfeld said he discussed with Mr Fernandes issues relating to lowering of tension between India and Pakistan and hoped that it would be reduced. Mr Fernandes is scheduled to meet the US Vice-President, Mr Dick Cheney, and other top American leaders.

JAN 2002

10 JAN 2002

Dialogue only way out: Powell

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Jan. 17. — The "ideas" the US secretary of state wishes to share with India remained unclear today. All General Colin Powell divulged was his anxiety to see a dialogue resume between the two countries on all issues, including Kashmir.

Gen Powell failed to convince India that it should back down on keeping up pressure on Pakistan.

Gen Powell will meet Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and the national security advisor, Mr Brajesh Mishra, tomorrow. Addressing a joint press conference with Mr Jaswant Singh, the US secretary of state said he wants to share his ideas with the Prime Minister and Mr Mishra before disclosing them to the rest of the world.

Gen Powell is on a whirlwind tour of South Asia, (having already visited Islamabad and Kabul over the past two days) and on his way to a donor's conference, scheduled to be held in Tokyo from Monday. After a one-on-one meeting with the external affairs minister, he told reporters late tonight that India would provide more evidence on the list of 20 criminals and terrorists wanted in the country and as he understood it, Pakistan had not ruled out handing them over. "The more evidence we can provide, the better," he said, indicating that Pakistan would have to act in that case.

He reiterated that the USA had no intention of mediating between India and Pakistan.

It was entirely for New Delhi to decide whether Islamabad had created conditions conducive to de-escalating tensions along the border and between the two countries, he said. Gen Powell mentioned some of the actions General Pervez Musharraf has taken against terrorists, including arresting militants and closing down offices of terrorist outfits.

"The question of Kashmir has to be resolved by a direct dialogue between the two countries," he said in response to a question, and "America is always standing by to help our friends."

"We are anxious to see a dialogue resume on all of these issues, including Kashmir," he said.

Asked when "diplomatic sanctions" on Pakistan would be removed, the external affairs minister said he did not know what "diplomatic sanctions" were, but "as soon as we see demonstration on the ground, we will respond positively."

India has welcomed the Pakistani President's speech on Saturday, which largely focussed on reforming internal Pakistani polity and society.

"I wish that his statement does translate into action as it would greatly contribute to the fight against international terrorism," Mr Singh said, when asked whether India would restore air links and full diplomatic relations with Pakistan. "We will not be found wanting."

India to keep up pressure, page 2
Editorial: Not enough, page 4
Powell vows to rebuild Kabul, page 6



Powell arrives in Delhi —AP/PTI

FILE

18 JAN 2002

18 JAN 2002

America favours Israel's Phalcon sale to India

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON/LONDON, Jan. 16. — The USA has said it supports the sale of Israeli Phalcon Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and Arrow anti-missile system to India but was considering the system's capability and timing.

"I will say in response to some of the recent press reports I saw regarding transfer of a Phalcon radar to India, that we actually support the transfer.

We are discussing with the government of Israel on the capabilities and timing related to that," state department spokesman Mr Phil Reeker said yesterday.

Mr Reeker did not totally deny that the USA may advise Israel to consider the timing of the transfer, specially when India and Pakistan are on the brink of war.

He said: "We always encourage other countries, including Israel, to take into account the impact of their weapons sale."

A senior American State Department official flew to Israel yesterday in an apparent effort to delay the projected sale of advanced radar planes to India.

Mr John Bolton, the undersecretary for arms control and international security, plans talks in Israel the rest of the week.

A department spokesman, Philip Reeker, said Bolton had gone to Israel "for regular US-Israel consultations on nonproliferation matters."

Israel would like to sell Phalcon airborne early-warning radar planes to India, with which it has developed a military relationship.

Jan 16 5:16 1971
The technology is entirely Israel's, so US permission technically is not required. Even so, Israel advised the Bush administration and appeared to have US approval, from it as well as the Clinton administration earlier.

But with a tense military stand-off persisting between India and Pakistan, the administration is trying to persuade Israel to defer the sale, according to diplomatic sources who insisted on anonymity.

Reeker hinted as much. He said "we actually support the transfer," but that the United States was consulting with Israel "about the transfer, including the system's capabilities and the timing." Also up in the air is Israel's hopes to sell its advanced Arrow anti-missiles to Turkey and possibly other countries.

The Arrow, which has been tested successfully, was produced jointly with the United States so US permission is required.

IAF deal: The Indian Air Force is reportedly considering adding stealth modifications to its existing fleet of MiG-21Bis fighters in order to upgrade them to MiG-21-93 standard, a leading defence weekly has said.

The recommendations in this regard were made by the Russian Aircraft Corporation. The recommendations came after exhaustive trials 18 months ago at the Sokol aircraft plant in Nizhny, which is located in Novgorod in Russia.

During the exercises both the Indian and Russian officials were witness to the Russian stealth capabilities, which were showcased specially for the visiting Indian defence ministry officials.

THE STATESMAN

17 JAN 2001

Israel urged to defer arms technology transfer to Delhi

Reuters

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15 — The Bush administration has urged Israel to defer selling weapons technology to India in light of the current crisis with Pakistan, a senior US official said today.

He said the message was delivered to Israeli officials last week and added, "I think Israel is listening". "There are some military sales questions that the Israelis have raised that posed problems for us and we've told them about that," said the official, on condition of anonymity.

"These are sales they want to make to the Indians where we've basically said this is not the right time to be selling to either side anything, frankly," he said.

After the establishment of full diplomatic ties in 1992, the two countries — bound in part by concerns about Islamic extremism — have strengthened defence cooperation, with India

buying sophisticated defence equipment from Israel.

The senior US official said one area of American concern involves the Arrow-2 anti-tactical ballistic missile defence system, a joint US-Israeli project for which Washington provided a majority of the development funding.

The Israelis "have talked (with the Indians) about a number of things. Some they have sold and some they haven't. The Arrow anti-missile system is one," the official said.

He said, the Arrow sale may violate the Missile Technology Control Regime, an informal international agreement aimed at preventing the spread of most missiles to unstable regions.

"Other sales they (Israelis) want to make don't involve that but do involve the question of why anybody would sell anything — either to the Indians or the Pakistanis — other than chewing gum," the official said.

THE STATESMAN

Fernandes leaves for the U.S.

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 15. Accompanied by senior officials of his Ministry, the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, left for the United States today as part of a week-long tour to three countries. On his way back, Mr. Fernandes will stopover in London where he might meet senior British policy-makers, including the Defence Secretary, Geoffrey Hoon. In between, the Minister will also visit Canada but no substantial official engagements have been firmed up so far.

Official sources said Mr. Fernandes would have discussions with senior American policy makers and officials on issues relating to defence cooperation and the current scenario in the subcontinent. Among others, he is scheduled to interact with the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, and the National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice.

The intention was to maintain

the tempo of terrorism and security-related dialogue with Washington which received an impetus recently with the arrival of Mr. Rumsfeld here. This was followed by a meeting of the Defence Policy Group, the first in four years. Mr. Fernandes' visit, at the invitation of Mr. Rumsfeld, was aimed at furthering this qualitative change in the field of defence cooperation.

Apart from furthering military ties, the relationship between India and Pakistan would be in the focus, especially during the interaction with the media. Mr. Fernandes is expected to reiterate New Delhi's views that the promises made by the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, must be translated into action. He will point out that the current build-up on the borders was a response to activities from the other side, culminating on the attack on Parliament, and that India, now, wanted a permanent solution.

While conceding the inevitability of disputes dogging international relations, the Minister is expected to cite New Delhi's ties with Beijing. Though progress is slow, headway has been made in solving the Sino-Indian border dispute without causing tensions on the ground. India's desire to develop ties with Pakistan in a similar vein is likely to be highlighted.

Considering the composition of the delegation, discussions on sourcing military hardware from the U.S. is also on the cards. Though Mr. Fernandes has categorically denied that he is going with a "shopping list", he had stated that Washington had been apprised of India's interest in some hardware and hoped that their procurement would be speeded up. The officials accompanying him include the Defence Secretary, Yogendra Narain, and the Additional Secretary, Defence Production, Dhirendera Singh.

THE HINDU

JAN 2002

US team puts Kashmir under global glare

FROM IDREES BAKHTIYAR
AND AGENCIES

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Islamabad/Dubai, Jan. 15: Kashmir today slipped back under international glare after a visiting US delegation said it had become a prominent issue, particularly in America, and called for its resolution through peaceful means.

Islamabad also turned on the heat asking Gulf countries to put pressure on New Delhi to pull back troops from the border and resume bilateral talks even as a top Chinese general warned Delhi not to practise hegemony in the name of anti-terrorism.

"There is a new opportunity for dialogue among the Kashmiris, people of India and certainly the people of Pakistan," Senator Tom Daschle, leader of the Senate delegation told reporters soon after meeting President Pervez Musharraf.

Daschle lauded the speech Musharraf made on Saturday, describing it as the most meaningful, powerful and consequential by any leader of the region in a long time and appreciated the general's declaration of rooting out terrorism.

The senator called for a need to capitalise on the "opportunity" and find ways to spur the peace process along. "It must happen through dialogue," he said.

Daschle said Americans want their government to be more specific about support to Pakistan. He said there was a desire to find ways to assist in solving the Kashmir problem. "There are ways the US can continue to show its gratitude, be the player that needs to be in the region," he added.

Senator Smith said Musharraf told them that Pakistanis want to see a more prominent American involvement in Kashmir. "This is certainly an issue we will be discussing when we return to Washington next week," he said.

"The administration and the Congress needs to find ways to articulate our recognition to the importance of this issue," he added. "This is an opportunity to do it more successfully in the months ahead."

Daschle expressed gratitude to both Pakistan and its President for their support in the fight against terrorism, saying: "We

are not going to be a fair-weather friend but a country indebted and grateful to the people of Pakistan for their extraordinary support."

"We will return this gratitude in years to come," Smith added.

America's assurance coincided with Islamabad's move to send two special envoys to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to brief the three countries on the India-Pakistan standoff.

"We expect our brothers and friends in the Middle-East to put pressure on the other side to enter into negotiations to resolve the problem peacefully and avoid war in the region," minister for communications and railways Lt-Gen. (retd) Javed Ashraf said.

Ashraf, an ISI director during the Taliban's rise in Afghanistan, is accompanied by former minister Ejaz-ul-Haq.

The Pakistani media today termed India's response to Musharraf's pledge against terrorism "positive" but urged the US to impress upon Delhi to resume normal diplomatic relations with Islamabad.

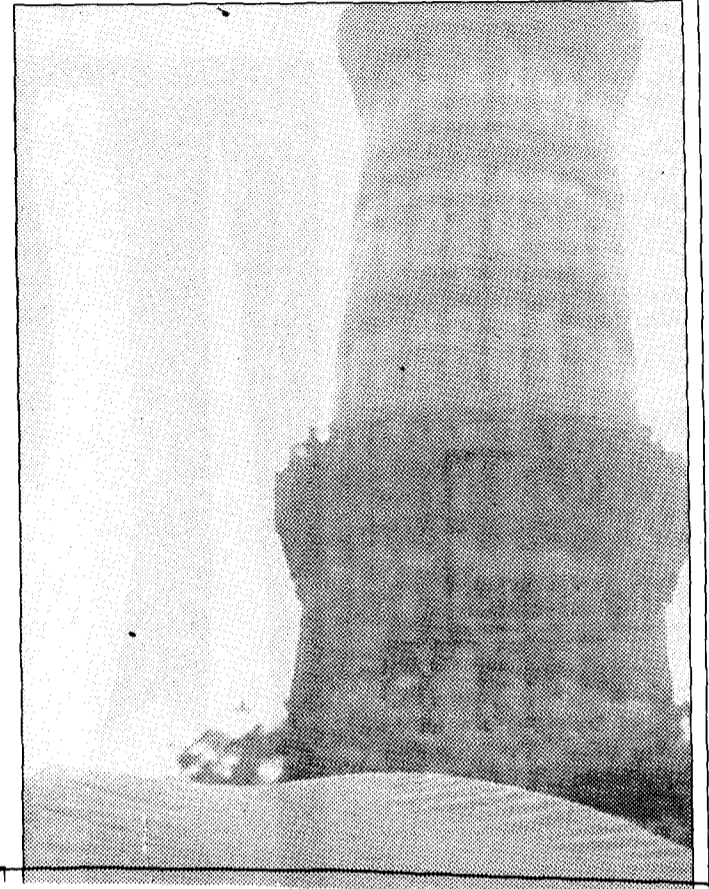
"Washington should urge New Delhi to waste no time to resume normal diplomatic relations, call off other measures it has taken in the meantime, and quickly thin out the troops on the border," *The Nation* said in its editorial.

The US should not disengage itself after the cooling down of tensions and should seriously address its attention to resolving the Kashmir issue, it added.

The *Dawn* said India seems to have been put on the defensive by Musharraf's address and will need a face-saving breathing space before it can begin to react positively.

"There is also hope that the positive response to the address may help dissipate the ominous war clouds that have gathered over the subcontinent," it said.

In Beijing, the chief of staff of the People's Liberation Army, General Fu Quanyou, told Pakistan's General Muhammad Aziz Khan that China hoped the neighbours would ease the current tension and seek solution through dialogue, the official Xinhua news agency reported.



George sees no US role in Kashmir

Minister set for America trip

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Jan. 14: Defence minister George Fernandes leaves for the US tomorrow, a little stiff with Washington because it did not give India the blank cheque of support in its fight against cross-border terrorism.

The defence minister today said there was no room for the US to act either as a "mediator" on Kashmir — because India believed it was a bilateral issue — nor as a "facilitator" of talks because Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and President Pervez Musharraf have spoken.

The defence minister was at pains to dismiss a report that US Ambassador Robert Blackwill had been visiting the defence ministry in South Block frequently in recent weeks to persuade India to de-escalate tension on the border. "The US ambassador expresses his country's point of view. Over a period of several months I have had just five or six meetings with him, Fernandes said.

In the weeks leading to Musharraf's speech on Saturday evening, Fernandes had at least twice expressed his displeasure over a perceived chink in the armour of the "global coalition against terrorism" — that terrorism to Pakistan's west was more targeted than terrorism in Pakistan's east.



Fernandes at the news meet. Picture by Rajesh Kumar

On the eve of his visit, Fernandes was circumspect, confining himself to the task that the coalition must set for itself rather than being critical of the US.

"The global coalition must look at not just Afghanistan but all other areas where terror has become a matter of concern for the people at large," he told a news conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of South Asia.

"You would appreciate that this assumes significance particularly when the terror happens to be perpetrated and/or supported by another country in the neighbourhood. It is the constant effort of India at highlighting these concerns at a global level, that have led finally to not only the admission of cross-border terrorism but also to a tough process in the direction of stopping such mindless terrorism," Fernandes said.

But his wariness in appearing too close to the Americans will not deter him from picking up the threads from US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld's visit to India in November and seek to broaden and deepen military-to-military cooperation.

During his visit, the Fernandes-led delegation will follow up on the revived India-US Defence Policy Group and the executive steering groups on military equipment, sales and supplies. A number of joint exercises by the Indian and US navies are also on the cards. It is possible the two sides might clear the decks for the General Security of Military Information Agreement.

Fernandes said relations with China are "very correct and friendly". "We are on threshold of giving new impetus to these relations during the ongoing visit of China's Prime Minister Zhu Rongji."

Fernandes also expressed the hope that relations with Pakistan can reach the point that New Delhi and Beijing have reached in sorting out mutual disputes, such as those on the border.



Students sit by a barbed-wire fence as they attend school in a village on the international border with Pakistan. (AFP)

BJP split over Pervez address

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Jan. 14: The BJP appeared divided and confused over its reaction to Pervez Musharraf's address to his nation on Saturday. While the party central leadership hardened its stand, the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the BJP termed the address as "courageous and revolutionary" and said India should "reciprocate the hand of friendship".

Forty-eight hours after Musharraf's address, BJP president Jana Krishnamurthi said: "When Musharraf was expected and required to walk a metre towards India, he has chosen to walk a kilometre length for America and other Western countries. India is not going to be convinced by talks bereft of action."

"The BJP is of the firm view that Pakistan must take positive action towards normalising its relationship with India and only then it can expect India to reciprocate it," Krishnamurthi said.

He said the steps Musharraf spelt out to curb terrorist outfits and activities appeared to be intended for consumption by those countries that had been exerting pressure on Pakistan to renounce terrorism.

On Musharraf's stand on Kashmir, Krishnamurthi said: "It is nothing but a repetition of (the) old stand of Pakistan."

The BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit termed Musharraf's address as "courageous and revolutionary," and added that India should reciprocate the "hand of friendship" extended by him, according to an agency report from Srinagar.

"Musharraf's announcement to root out external and internal extremism from Pakistan and his preparedness to resolve all issues, including Kashmir, with India through peaceful dialogue should be encouraged," said state BJP senior vice-president Abdul Rashid Kabuli. "The hand of friendship extended by the Pakistan President towards Prime Minister Vajpayee should be reciprocated."

Kabuli urged the heads of the two countries to adopt a realistic and far-sighted strategy to defuse tension on the border and save the people from war.

Supporting home minister L.K. Advani's statement that Pakistan must act sincerely, decisively, demonstrably and speedily, Krishnamurthi said: "The entire political spectrum of our country has come to the conclusion that it will await Pakistan's action."

Pakistan must realise that India's clear-cut stand on Kashmir has been spelt out in the unanimous resolution passed by Parliament in 1994, he said.

Musharraf must also remember the categorical statement made by Vajpayee that "our war is not against Pakistan and only against terrorism," he said. "A reciprocatory statement that Pakistan will not wage war against India is conspicuously missing in (the) President's address."

Samata tri-axis plan

FROM KAY BENEDICT

New Delhi, Jan. 14: Defence minister George Fernandes' Samata Party has proposed a strategic alliance between India, Russia and China to counter the US, which, the party feels, has gained a toehold in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan using the global coalition against terrorism.

A strategic India-Russia-China alliance is the need of the hour not only for fighting Islamic fundamentalists but also to counter the "dominance of a single power", the Samata feels.

All the three countries, especially China, are worried over the American presence at their doorstep. The US has set its eye on the oil reserves in the region as the situation in West Asia may not serve their interest for long, analysts felt.

"India should develop closer ties with Russia and China so that the region (the Central Asian republics) does not become a future place of single-

power dominance," said Samata spokesperson and chairman of the party's international department Shambhu Shrivastwa, without naming the US.

"We should not lose sight of the fact that the former Soviet republics — Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan — are strategically placed global players," he said. The region has the second largest oil and gas reserve after West Asia.

Way back in 1999, Fernandes had realised the importance of the region and had asked Shrivastwa to prepare a note for the external affairs ministry, the spokesman said.

The note had warned that if India did not take interest in the region, the US and Pakistan will and that is what has happened. It was easy handling them as barring Tajikistan all the other states are secular and literate being formerly under Communist rule, Shrivastwa said.

The US was allowed to set up

base in Uzbekistan on October 2 in return for funds and a promise to fight the Taliban-backed fundamentalists who were trying to destabilise the regime there. Subsequently, the US was allowed a base in Kyrgyzstan.

Party sources said Fernandes has met the ambassadors of some of these republics to sew up strategic tie-ups but did not pursue the matter as eyebrows were raised in the foreign ministry which felt their domain was being encroached upon.

The party sources, however, rubbish reports that Fernandes had differences with foreign minister Jaswant Singh on the handling of the situation in the wake of the terrorist attack on Parliament.

The Samata note had in 1999 suggested setting up an Indo-Central Asia Forum to promote understanding between India and the former Soviet republics. These countries share their international border with China, Afghanistan and PoK.

Militants shifted to Tihar

New Delhi, Jan. 14 (PTI): At least 10 terrorists, including four Pakistanis and two Afghans, have been shifted from prisons in Jammu and Kashmir to Tihar jail for security considerations, police sources said today.

The terrorists were taken out of Jammu and Kashmir after tension mounted between India and Pakistan and authorities did not want to take any chances on security, the sources added.

Some other terrorists were also moved to prisons in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, they said.

There have been several jail-break incidents in Jammu and Kashmir recently.

Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar was lodged in Kote Balwal prison in Jammu from where he was released in exchange for 155 hostages of the hijacked Indian Airlines plane in 1999. Tihar, considered one of the safest prisons, houses 200 terrorists, jail director-general Ajay Agarwal said.

Advani 'happy'
with talks
in U.S.

NEW YORK, JAN. 13. The Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani, has said that the Bush administration had sought more measures from Islamabad in order to de-escalate tensions along the border.

"I'm happy to note that President (George W.) Bush and his colleagues agreed that positive statements against terrorism should be accompanied by additional action by Pakistan," Mr. Advani told a news conference.

He hinted that he was satisfied with the talks held with various U.S. government officials, including Mr. Bush since his arrival in Washington on January 8. The Home Minister said his visit has three purposes — expressing solidarity with the U.S. in its anti-terrorism campaign, thanking Washington for support to New Delhi's struggle against the menace, and chalking out ways to defeat terrorism decisively and speedily.

"I return to India at the end of a six-day visit to this great country with the satisfaction of having accomplished all three purposes... The U.S. and India are the indestructible twin towers of democracy", he said. "The visit has been memorable for me for several reasons. Among them is the opportunity I had to visit Ground Zero, the site of the collapsed twin towers of the World Trade Center," he said.

Mr. Advani thanked Washington for "understanding" how India has suffered because of Pakistan-sponsored extremism for about two decades. — UNI

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

14 JAN 2002

Tactical changes won't do: Advani

gndw
Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11. — After discussions with the US President, Mr George W Bush, and other top leaders, Mr LK Advani said Washington has the power to dissuade Pakistan to give up its support to terrorism but was not sure to what extent it would be done.

Wrapping up his two-day visit to Washington, Mr Advani told reporters India would not be swayed by "tactical changes" in Pakistan's approach to combat cross-border terrorism but would want it to abandon terrorism as an instrument of state policy.

Stating the US influence on Pakistan had forced it to snap ties with Taliban in Afghanistan, the home minister said, "I believe it is possible for Washington to pressure

tactical changes but there has been no stable change in its mindset towards fighting terrorism."

Mr Advani, who has held discussions with Mr Bush, Gen Colin Powell and Ms Condoleezza Rice, said, "Mere statements by Pakistan will not suffice. Its actions to combat terrorism have to be reflected on the ground". Asked if New Delhi was under any pressure to reduce tension along the Indo-Pak border, the home minister said there was no such talk from the US side.

Mentioning that Washington was of the view that a conflict would not serve any purpose, he added that Gen Powell told him in the event of a conflict breaking out, Pakistan would be able to wriggle out of the corner it was in at present.

Editorial: Advani in America, page 4

MOST WANTED

- 1) Dawood Ibrahim
- 2) Ayub Memon
- 3) Ibrahim/Tiger Memon
- 4) Shaikh Shakeel (Chota Shakeel)
- 5) Pathan Aziz
- 6) Athar Ibrahim
- 7) Azhar Yusuf (Mohd Salim)
- 8) Mistri Zahur Ibrahim (Bhole)
- 9) Sayeed Shahid Akhtar (Doctor)
- 10) Shakir Mohammed (Shankar)
- 11) Ishaq Atta Hussain @ Ali Moosa (Dawood gang)
- 12) Sagir Shabir Ali Shaikh
- 13) Mohd. Masood Azhar (Maulana Masood)
- 14) Mohd. Yusuf Shah (Salauddin)
- 15) Syed Abdul Karim (Lashkar)
- 16) Gajinder Singh Khalsa (Dal Khalsa)
- 17) Lakhbir Singh Rode
- 18) Paramjit Singh Panjwar (Khalistan Commando Force)
- 19) Ranjeet Singh (Neeta) (Khalistan Zindabad force)
- 20) Wadhwa Singh (Babbar Khalsa chief)

Islamabad to give the less difficult path of supporting terrorism against India".

Asked if he was still cynical about making Pakistan abandon its support to terrorism, Mr Advani said, "The cynicism and scepticism I had

have lessened after the assurance I got from the US leadership. Washington has the power to dissuade Pakistan to give up its support to terrorism but I do not know to what extent they will utilise it". He added, "So far Pakistan has carried out

THE STATESMAN

12 JAN 2002

'Toxic Texan', tough Advani echo home truths

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: Greeting home minister L.K. Advani with southern charm and praising his candour with disarming words, U.S. President George W. Bush on Thursday firmly but discreetly committed his administration's support to the Indian campaign to force Pakistan into fully renouncing terrorism.

While the diplomatic outcome of the meeting—U.S. backing for India's drive against Pakistani terrorism—was widely anticipated, given Secretary of State Colin Powell's remarks on Thursday, it was the political message from Mr Bush that came as a surprise.

"Your reputation precedes you, Mr Home Minister. I believe you are very direct and blunt. I like that," Mr Bush

told the home minister, after breezing into Mr Advani's meeting with national security adviser Condoleezza Rice.

Mr Bush spent 20 minutes with Mr Advani, and some of his remarks suggested that the administration recognised both Mr Advani's status and his hardline views and was at ease with them.

While it was obvious that Mr Bush had been briefed about Mr Advani by the national security council staff and U.S. ambassador to India Robert Blackwill (who was present on the occasion), he used his own unique Texas brand of humour to send home some messages.

At one point, Mr Bush joked that he had once been called a 'Toxic Texan', but the responsibility

of power had seen him act with great care and deliberation.

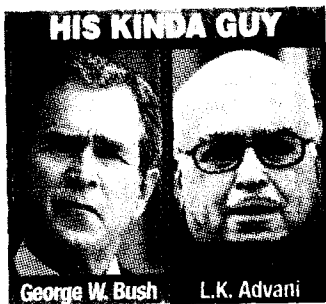
It was not a good day at the office for Mr Bush. Dark clouds of impropriety wafted over his administration on Thursday morning vis-a-vis the bankruptcy of Enron, the Texas firm with close connections to him and the Republican Party. But like his predecessor, Mr Bush appears to have the ability to compartmentalise problems. There was little hint of tension or worry in the 20 minutes he spent with Mr Advani.

The U.S. President told Mr Advani about his favourite world

leader—no, not Tony Blair, but Russia's Vladimir Putin. The two got along so famously during Mr Putin's visit to the White House last November that Mr Bush, with an earnest earthiness that has become his trademark,

told the Russian leader, "You're the kind of guy I like to have in a foxhole with me."

While the Indian leadership is still far from acquiring foxhole companionship status, Mr Advani emerged quite pleased from the meeting and told newsmen that he was happy about the assurances from the highest executive that Pakistan would be pressed to renounce its policy of terrorism against India. A wire service story reported that Mr Bush said that he expected Gen Musharraf to "take all necessary steps in fighting terror...and abandon terror as an instrument of state policy". But officials said he was more circumspect and did not directly endorse the Indian view that Pakistan uses terrorism as a "state policy".



THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 JAN 2002

Advani in America

But can our political class pull together?

Apart from the list of 42 wanted terrorists LK Advani handed over to US attorney-general John Ashcroft, he has included the whereabouts of 14 Taliban leaders currently in Pakistan, which is a good way of making the point that with the demise of the Taliban the locus of Islamic terrorism has migrated east of the Durand line. Some parts at least of Advani's message appear to be getting across, with Washington issuing the strongest statements so far about Musharraf needing to take further action against terrorists and not only to end the standoff with India. US Congressmen visiting Islamabad expressed the view that Musharraf is about to unveil bold new initiatives in order to mend relations with India, but Colin Powell has now added the necessary rider that it is not just a question of what Musharraf says, but also one of whether he follows it up with action. In any case, no announcement has been made of the long-expected speech Musharraf was supposed to deliver today — an indication that he may be haggling for all he can extract from the US. Current indications are that he will give the speech just before Colin Powell's visit next week, which suggests that his audience will be Washington rather than the religious extremists in his backyard. ۹۰۰۰۰۰

Which means that Musharraf's speech will not really address the Indian concern of cross-border terrorism. The standoff, therefore, is likely to continue, but given the US administration's intense levels of interest in and scrutiny of South Asia currently, a shooting war may still be avoided. There could be more diplomatic and economic sanctions by India accompanied by, hopefully, discreet pressure from the US and other Western countries. But India's diplomatic offensive is coming unstuck at a crucial juncture — namely, the haggling between the government and the Congress party about who is to lead what delegation abroad to explain India's position. This is the sort of thing that allows the country's enemies to treat it as a soft target, while even its sympathisers have trouble taking it seriously — if terrorism has indeed brought the country together, how is it that its political class cannot even agree on the composition of all-party diplomatic delegations? Pakistan is responding to India's moves by sending delegations of its own to world capitals, and are likely to be more effective even if they have a worse case, if our politicians fail us again. In which case, things will be much worse than even the current status quo.

12 JAN 2002

India, U.S. to discuss defence tie-ups

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, JAN. 10. India and the United States are expected to hold substantial talks on sharing of military intelligence and explore the possibility of joint production of military hardware during the Defence Minister, George Fernandes' week-long visit to the U.S.

Mr. Fernandes will be leaving for the U.S. after winding up the Army Day celebrations on January 15 and is expected to return after a week.

Given the composition of the delegation and against the backdrop of the Government permitting limited foreign investment in defence production, forward movement could be expected in the area of military hardware exchanges and joint production of weapons.

High-level sharing of military intelligence is also likely to be discussed. Both countries have covered ground in this area, with New Delhi approving the signing of the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) which entails a formal acknowledgement by both countries not to leak confidential information about each other's military hardware and expertise to third countries.

Apart from exchanging views on the tense situation on the western border and discussing security and terrorism-related issues, the delegation is also expected to firm up issues thrown up by the previous Indo-U.S. meet on promoting closer military ties. Apart from sharing of military intelligence and closer ties

in the area of military hardware, the previous meeting had also touched upon joint exercises by the armed forces of both countries and stepped up familiarisation of top level services personnel.

In his scheduled interactions with the U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, as well as the National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, Mr. Fernandes is expected to discuss measures to stop cross-border terrorism by Pakistan.

The official team includes the Defence Secretary Yogendra Narain, the Additional Secretary, Ajay Prasad, the Additional Secretary (Defence Production & Supplies), Dharendra Singh, and the Joint Secretary (Planning and Coordination), B. K. Roy.

The officials are likely to touch on the finer points of Indo-U.S. military cooperation which were extensively discussed at the meeting of the joint Defence Policy Group (DPG) in December last year. The DPG is the recently revived institutional mechanism to promote closer military ties and is headed by top civilian officials from the Defence Ministries of both countries.

The military component of the delegation comprises Vice Admiral S. V. Gopalachari and Major General S. C. Chopra. Vice Admiral Gopalachari is at present Assistant Chief of Naval Staff in-charge of policy and planning while Major Gen. Chopra is in the implementation cell at the Army Headquarters

USA to press Pak for tougher action: Bush

Agencies and SNS

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI, Jan. 10. — President George W Bush today assured Mr LK Advani that the USA would press Pakistan for tougher action against those involved in terrorist strikes on India.

The US President told the Home Minister that he expected General Musharraf to give up terrorism as an instrument of state policy as he had done with regard to the Taliban in Afghanistan.

He said Gen Powell was committed to expanding the depth of the exchanges between the two countries with respect to economic activity, military cooperation and all other areas of interest.

Mr Bush gave the assurance when he dropped in at a meeting between Mr Advani and the US national security adviser, Ms Condoleezza Rice, at the White House.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, the Home Minister said India appreciated the US President's pledge but would otherwise reserve judgment. "In India, Pakistan's acts will be judged not by its statements, but by actions which accompany the statements."

Mr Advani said he had received similar assurance from Gen Powell, but "to hear all this...from the highest executive in the country makes all the difference".

At another press briefing, he said there were some people who were confident that India's

diplomatic moves and world pressure would compel Pakistan to abandon terrorism. "But I'm not that confident."

Mr Advani also held talks with Mr Powell and other top US officials when he put forward a four-point charter of demands Pakistan must comply with to show its sincerity to combat terrorism.

Advani's charter of demands

■ Handing over of the 20 terrorists whose names along with evidence of their crimes against India have been given to Pakistan;

■ Closure of training camps and arms supplies, funding and all direct and indirect assistance to terrorists on Pakistani soil, including areas controlled by it;

■ Stoppage of infiltration of arms and men into J & K and elsewhere in India; and

■ A categorical and unambiguous renunciation of terrorism in all its manifestations and wherever it exists, irrespective of the cause it seeks to further.

Addressing a joint press conference after the meeting, Mr Powell said the US was against all forms of terrorism and it would work with "friends" until the scourge was removed completely. Terming the Indo-Pak stand-off as "dangerous," he said he'd leave for India and

Pakistan on 15 January to try and cool tension between the neighbours. He is expected to make additional stopovers, details of which are yet to be disclosed.

Mr Advani, who also met Attorney-General John Ashcroft, warned Islamabad that India would not take another "betrayal" this time around, adding, "Pakistan must act sincerely, decisively, demonstrably and speedily" against terrorists.

The touchstone of Pakistan's sincerity would be positive response to India's four "legitimate demands", he said.

Praising Gen Musharraf for the steps he had taken so far against terrorist groups, Gen Powell said the Pakistani President could do more. He hoped that the General would act against the 20 terrorists whose names feature on the list India had handed over to Pakistan. Gen Powell said: "I've seen the list and I know Gen Musharraf has the list...We've discussed the list with him (Gen Musharraf). I know he's examining it and I hope he'll take appropriate action ... it's in his hands ... There is room for additional work on his part."

Officials in India eagerly await Gen Musharraf's speech this weekend. Officials apprehend that a grand-standing gesture by him could go down well in the Western countries, who then, could tell India to ease the pressure. The gestures, officials fear, could be flashy and insubstantial.

The UN Security Council today rejected Pakistan's request for intervention in Kashmir.

Bush expects Musharraf to take steps against terrorism

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 10. The U.S. President, George W. Bush, has asked Pakistan to take all necessary steps in fighting terrorism.

Mr. Bush, who "dropped in" during a meeting between the Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani, and the U.S. National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, here today said the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, had taken steps as far as the Taliban was concerned and that he expected Gen. Musharraf to do the same in regard to its problems to India.

Mr. Advani told Mr. Bush that he hoped Pakistan would abandon terrorism as state policy.

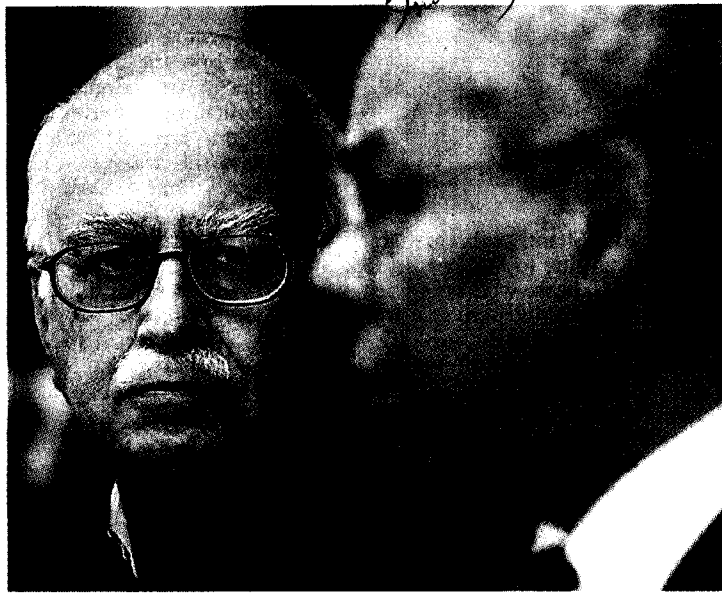
Earlier, Mr. Advani said that the time had come for Pakistan to act "sincerely, decisively, demonstrably and speedily" and that India shall not take "another betrayal" this time around.

He conveyed this message to senior members of the Bush administration during the first day of talks, even while appreciating what Washington had done thus far to make Pakistan abandon its policy on terrorism.

"The touchstone of Pakistan's sincerity will be in its positive response" to the four "legitimate" demands of India, he told correspondents at the Embassy of India following his meetings with the U.S. Attorney-General, John Ashcroft, and the Secretary of State, Colin Powell.

India's demands, Mr. Advani reiterated, were the handing over of 20 terrorists, many of whom were Indian nationals who were being sheltered by Islamabad; closure of facilities, training camps, arms supply, funding and all direct and indirect assistance; stoppage of infiltration of arms and men from Pakistan into Jammu and Kashmir; and a "categorical and unambiguous renunciation" of terrorism in all its manifestations.

Mr. Advani, during his interaction with the press corps, took the



The Home Minister, L.K. Advani (left) watches as the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, speaks to the media, following a meeting between the two at the State Department in Washington on Wednesday. — Reuters

position that he remained unconvinced that Islamabad had taken sufficient steps but held out the prospect of a peaceful resolution of the current tension.

"Pakistan has so far neither shown any sincerity in wanting to end cross-border terrorism against India, nor taken adequate, demonstrable and effective steps in that direction." He reiterated that India had been patiently waiting for Islamabad to act, but could not say how long this could last.

Criticising Pakistan's double standards in dealing with terrorism and ridiculing the distinction being made between terrorists and freedom-fighters, Mr. Advani noted, "we fully agree with President Bush's exhortation that there cannot be good terrorists and bad terrorists. Obviously, President Musharraf seems to think otherwise," the Home Minister said and stressed that to call a terrorist a freedom-fighter was really "incomprehensible and un-

acceptable". Elaborating India's demands, Mr. Advani argued that Pakistan could not have terror as an instrument of state policy. "Even after September 11, every month we have hundreds of terrorists crossing the LoC or the International Border, infiltrating into India to carry out what we describe as a proxy war whose essential ingredients are sabotage and terrorism". "This has been happening even though on both sides of the border we have armies positioned... a situation in which infiltration is impossible unless it is facilitated by one side. Not even a stray dog can come across the LoC or the International Border unless the State that side facilitates its crossing over," Mr. Advani said.

'We will not abandon restraint'

India hoped its own diplomacy and that of the international community would make Pakistan abandon terror as an instrument

of state policy, Mr. Advani said, but "I am not that confident." Asked about the deep concern in this part of the world about something terribly going wrong in the subcontinent that would result in a nuclear showdown, Mr. Advani said India "will not abandon restraint" and the country would stand by its assertion of no-first-use of nuclear weapons.

Maintaining that he had not come to Washington to "seek any

Too much hype

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 10 The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, has declined to speculate on the time and contents of the much-awaited address to the nation by the President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to outline his policy to contain religious extremism and sectarian outfits.

Senior functionaries of the Musharraf Government maintain that it would be unrealistic to expect Gen. Musharraf to make any dramatic announcements. "The expectations of the international community from the address seem to have gone up ever since the delegation of U.S. senators said on Monday that the speech could change the course of Indo-Pak. relations. Well, it is too much to expect any miracles overnight", they said.

assurances" but to share information, resolve and determination, the Minister characterised his meetings with Mr. Ashcroft and Gen. Powell, Richard Haass, Director of Policy Planning at the State Department, and with George Tenet, Central Intelligence Agency Director, as "very satisfactory and strengthening the resolve of the two countries, India and the United States, to carry on a concerted battle against international terrorism".

Room for additional work by Pak.: Powell

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 10. The United States has urged India to find a diplomatic way out of the current tension in the subcontinent, even as it said the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, has taken a number of steps towards de-escalation but there was "room for additional work" on his part.

"I indicated to the Home Minister that the United States was very hopeful that this situation could be dealt with through political and diplomatic means and we were lending all of our efforts to that end", the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, said after a meeting with the Home Minister, L.K. Advani.

"But it has to include a condemnation of terrorism of any kind, because it is no longer acceptable in the 21st century for nations to live under this kind of threat," he said.

Gen. Powell, who is travelling to India and Pakistan early next week, said the purpose was to see "if I can make further contribu-

tion by my presence toward resolving the situation that currently exists, the crisis that currently exists, in a peaceful manner."

Asked if Washington would lean on Islamabad over the 20 terrorists that India is demanding to be turned over, he said: "I have seen that list and I know President Musharraf has the list. We have discussed about it with him. I know he is examining it and I hope he will take appropriate action. But it is in his hands."

When it was pointed out that despite Washington's assertion that Gen. Musharraf was taking credible steps against terrorism, New Delhi did not see it that way, Gen. Powell said Gen. Musharraf had indeed taken some steps. "But I think there is room for additional work on his part. We are looking forward to the speech he will be giving later this week which I think will be a powerful signal to his nation and to India and the rest of the world. But it's not just the speech. We will be looking to see what additional action he has taken."

Pak. to look into Jaish, Lashkar accounts

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 10. Pakistan today announced it would advise the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to look into the accounts of the two outfits which were frozen by the United States for their alleged terrorist links.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, said that on the basis of the U.S. decision on Wednesday, the Government would send an advisory to the SBP to look into the accounts of the two outfits.

After the U.S. began looking into the antecedents of Pakistan-based organisations and individuals for their alleged links to terrorist outfits in the wake of the September 11 attacks, Islamabad followed suit. For instance, only after the U.S. froze the assets of the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) did Pakistan chose to freeze their assets here. However, it is yet to decide on whether or not to follow the U.S. in banning the outfits.

Jaish leader held

As part of its continuing crackdown on Islamic militant groups, the police arrested a senior JeM leader, Hasan Barki. He was arrested here on Wednesday on his arrival from Bahawalpur, a town in Punjab province where Jaish has its headquarters. Most Jaish leaders are now under arrest.

During the past few days, Barki had been speaking to the press about the JeM's resolve to continue its attacks in Kashmir and elsewhere in India.

'Draft DPR ready'

A report in the Urdu daily, *Jang*, said that the draft of the Defence Pakistan Rules (DPR) had been prepared with some amendments in the DPR of 1971 and it would come into vogue in case of Indian aggression. Some rules are also likely to be implemented for internal security.

rein in India

George not happy with Bush steps, asks for more

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 9 JANUARY

THE UNITED States may feel that it is doing enough in pressuring Pakistan to make good its claims of fighting terrorism, but the efforts are clearly not adequate from the Indian viewpoint. The

"disappointment" was articulated by defence minister George Fernandes, who made it plain in a television interview that India was "unhappy" with US efforts. India's feelings are also expected to be expressed by Union home minister L.K. Advani, who reached Washington on Wednesday for a six-day visit during

which he will be meeting bigwigs in the US administration.

That India was dissatisfied with US was evident when Mr Fernandes did not mince any words while referring to US operations in Afghanistan. "Their work was done and now injustice is being meted out towards India on this issue."

Mr Fernandes' assertions are being seen as a clear pointer that India expects much more from the US when it leading the international coalition in the war against terror-

ism. It is obvious that India is distressed by the manner in which the US has been attempting to do a balancing act in trying not to push Pakistan too far and limiting itself to cajoling General Musharraf.

The US has so far been playing by the ear, subtly shifting positions repeatedly depending on the inten-

sity of response from either Pakistan or India. However, it is clear that India is not impressed only with the United States emphasis on statements made by General Musharraf and the importance being attached to them without bothering as much if it was being followed up with action.

India would want to make it clear to the United States that it will not ease the pressure on Pakistan until it is satisfied that sufficient steps are taken to satisfy the first benchmark that has been set. This is obviously in the context of the list of 20 most wanted terrorists and criminals supplied to Pakistan on December 31. Hinting at India's seriousness, Mr Fernandes maintained that "we will be forced to take strong measures" if the problem of cross border support to terrorism is not solved amicably.



GEORGE: TALKING TOUGH

The Economic Times

13 JAN 2002

It's advantage India as Advani begins U.S. visit

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: Home minister L.K. Advani began a landmark visit to the United States on Wednesday amid heightened expectations in the Bush administration — not shared in Indian circles — that Pakistan's military ruler Pervez Musharraf will completely forsake terrorism and change the course of the sub-continent's history.

Mr Advani, the first Indian interior minister to make such a substantial Washington visit, began his U.S. engagements over a luncheon meeting with attorney general John Ashcroft, his official host and counterpart. He was slated to meet secretary of state Colin Powell later in the day.

A White House meeting with national security adviser Condoleezza Rice at which President Bush was expected to drop by was deferred to Thursday because of scheduling problems, officials said. Mr Bush is on tour, promoting a major education bill.

In a brief conversation with this correspondent before he began his engagements, the home minister said he hoped to have substantial discussions with the administration on all aspects of Indo-US ties. He said he had last come to the U.S. in 1992, when he visited the Microsoft facility near Seattle.

The home minister's 2002 journey, besides being politically

weighty, is expected to result in far-reaching agreements in counter-terrorism and law-enforcement, including intelligence sharing.

Accompanied by officials, he is scheduled to meet FBI director Robert Mueller on Wednesday and CIA director George Tenet on Thursday.

Among the tie-ups envisaged is U.S. help in setting up a centre for counter-terrorism in India on the lines of similar operations here.

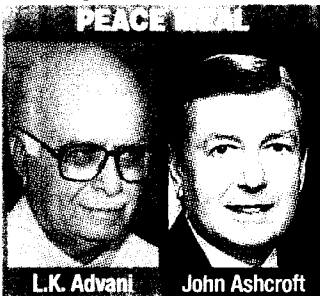
The Indian team is also expected to look up the FBI database model, including the latest advances in

DNA technology. Indian officials still recall with wonder how the FBI helped crack the Purulia arms case on the basis of a single thumbprint lifted from the corner of a passport form.

The two sides are also looking into cooperation in the area of forensic sciences.

A U.S. team from Sandia National Laboratories, better known for work on nuclear technologies, will make a presentation to the home minister on border monitoring technologies.

Mr Advani's visit to U.S. comes at a diplomatically propitious time, given that the mood in this country, notwithstanding expressions of Washington's encouragement and support to Gen Musharraf, is against terrorism by any name, anywhere. There are few buyers for the general's justification of violence in Kashmir.



L.K. Advani

John Ashcroft

THE TIMES OF INDIA

10 JAN 2002

Advani hands over terror list

Agencies & SNS

NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON, Jan. 9. — Mr LK Advani today handed over a list of 42 terrorists operating from Pakistan to the US attorney-general, Mr John Ashcroft, a TV channel reported.

The list includes the names of 20 terrorists that India had recently given to Pakistan and also features 14 Taliban leaders believed to have fled to Pakistan.

Among those on the list were Dawood Ibrahim, wanted in connection with 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar, Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, as well as seven Punjab terrorists. Mr Advani has given documentary proof about the activities of these people, the report said.

The 14 Taliban leaders include Maulvi Noor Mohammed Saqib, Afghanistan's chief justice during the the Taliban regime, his deputy Maulvi Musajam. Both are believed to be in Peshawar.

Mr Advani's meeting with Mr Ashcroft marked the beginning of his engagement with top US officials during his six-day tour of the country.

Shortly before the meeting, the Union home minister said terrorism posed the biggest challenge to democracies in the USA as well as India, and that the menace had to be stamped out from the face of the world. He will meet the US secretary of state, General Colin Powell, later in the day.

Mr Advani is also scheduled to meet the national security adviser, Ms Condoleezza Rice, at the

White House. Mr George W Bush may drop in during the talk.

Gen Powell will leave Washington on Tuesday for India, Pakistan, Japan and a few other places to help ease the Indo-Pak tensions and discuss the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

India today ruled out any role for the United Nations in the Kashmir issue, as demanded by General Pervez Musharraf. "We've always stated that Indo-Pak issues could be resolved only through bilateral dialogue on the basis of the Shimla Agreement, without recourse to intervention by a third party or international institutions," said the foreign ministry spokesperson. The USA, too, has ruled out any intervention in the issue unless India and Pakistan agree to it.

Meanwhile, Gen Powell, at a meeting with *Washington Times* journalists, said there was no certainty that an Indo-Pak war could be averted unless Gen Musharraf stood down and stopped supporting terrorists. China, Islamabad's old friend, too was echoing the stand, he said.

The interview was preceded by his call to Gen Pervez Musharraf, during which the two discussed the Indo-Pak situation. Gen Powell said the progress in the last few days suggested that "we still have time to find a political and diplomatic solution".

Ultra killed in mosque siege

A Hizbul Mujahideen ultra held up in a mosque in Baramullah was killed today and another surrendered after being injured in an encounter with security forces.

US military plane crashes in Pakistan

Agencies

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9. — A US Marine Corps KC-130 air refuelling aircraft carrying seven marines crashed into a mountain in southwestern Pakistan today. The aircraft was approaching a forward operating base when it crashed, a spokesperson for the US Central Command said.

It was not known whether the crew survived the crash. "We don't know the disposition of the crew at this point," the spokesperson said. An investigation was under way into the circumstances surrounding the crash, he added. The aircraft was on a flight from Jacobabad, when it crashed at 8:45 pm (IST) near Shamsi, Pakistan. The White House spokesperson, Mr Ari Fleischer, said President Bush had been briefed on the crash.

In a separate incident, another US plane crashed on the deck of aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt late today. No injuries were reported. The spokesperson for the ship said the two-man S-3B Viking refuelling plane crashed at 9:14 pm (IST) as it landed on the aircraft carrier, which has been launching warplanes toward Afghanistan since arriving in the Arabian Sea in mid-October.

THE STATESMAN

10 JAN 2002

US emissary turns visitor

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Jan. 8: Swiftly responding to Indian sensitivities, the US state department has gone back on the description of an envoy whom the Bush administration is still considering sending to India and Pakistan.

Richard Boucher, spokesman for the department, was asked at his daily briefing yesterday if any decision had been taken on the proposal to send an "emissary" to South Asia.

He replied: "I dispute the use of the word 'emissary' or 'envoy'. Let's just call it a visit to the region by a senior US official. (It) is still a matter under consideration. It remains a possibility. We do want to continue to find ways to urge a reduction of tensions and improve cooperation

against terrorism. At this point, there are no final decisions."

External affairs minister Jaswant Singh had bristled at the idea of an American envoy shuttling between New Delhi and Islamabad, effectively mediating in the Indo-Pakistan dispute, much like General Anthony Zinni, the US President's envoy to West Asia.

Singh said in Kathmandu during the weekend that there were US ambassadors in both capitals and that the question of an envoy came only if their embassies were not up to the job.

The BJP had also rebuffed President George W. Bush's initiative by asking America to send an envoy to Pakistan, not India.

Simultaneously, Bush made it clear that the way to defusing

the military situation on the Indo-Pakistan border was for Musharraf to continue to take steps against terrorists within his borders.

"I don't believe the situation is defused yet. But I do believe there is a way to do so," the President told reporters on his return to the White House from New Year holiday.

"I think it's very important for President Musharraf to make a clear statement to the world that he intends to crack down on terror. And I believe if he does that and continues to do what he's doing, it will provide the — it will provide relief, pressure relief, on a situation that's still serious. And we're working hard to convince both the Indians and the Pakis there's a way to deal with their problems with-

out going to war."

Boucher said he did not know what India's criteria were for judging the sincerity or effectiveness of Musharraf's actions against terrorists.

"We do believe that President Musharraf, the government of Pakistan, has continued to take steps against militant groups over the weekend. We believe that President Musharraf is committed to dismantling these groups which threaten Pakistan as well as its neighbours."

Boucher confirmed, based on information reaching the state department, what Pakistan has been asserting and India denying. "The summit in Kathmandu over the weekend did provide an opportunity for Indian and Pakistani foreign ministers to have some discussions," he said.

ign begins to block Michael Nam...

9 JAN 2002

Advani to brief U.S. leaders on Indo-Pak. relations

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 8. The Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani, is arriving here for intensive and extensive talks starting on Wednesday with senior members of the Republican administration. While the focus of the discussions will be on terrorism and cooperation between the United States and India on meeting this threat globally and regionally, the two sides are also expected to deal with the immediate situation in the subcontinent.

"American leaders will get a very good perspective from Mr. Advani. The Bush administration is very keen on knowing the current state of India-Pakistan relations," said a senior Indian diplomat, making the point that Mr. Advani would spell out India's steps as well as its expectations on the terrorism front.

Diplomats here point out that this is the first-ever official visit of a Home Minister. The last time Mr. Advani visited Washington in an official capacity was about 11

years ago as the Leader of the Opposition.

Coming at the invitation of the Attorney-General, John Ashcroft, Mr. Advani is expected to have wide-ranging discussions with top officials of the administration, including the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and the National Security Adviser, Condoleeza Rice. Appointments with the President and the Vice-President have also been sought.

Aside from his meeting and working lunch with Mr. Ashcroft, Mr. Advani is also expected to confer with the leaders here on a range of issues related mostly with cooperation on terrorism; he will also discuss the tracking down of terrorists with the heads of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

He will take part in a briefing by Sandia Labs, which has rich experience in the realm of homeland security.

He will also meet the American Jewish leadership. Many senior Indian leaders have met Jewish

leaders during their visits here.

Mr. Advani is expected to touch on a number of bilateral issues with a view to fine-tuning the level of cooperation between the two countries. The issues expected to be discussed include the extradition treaty, the Joint Working Group on terrorism, the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty and the Joint Initiative on Cyber Terrorism.

Mr. Advani is also expected to raise with the U.S. Justice Department the issue of Indian nationals who have been detained since the September 11 attacks in Washington and New York.

About 20 persons of Indian origin are under detention in the U.S., most of them for visa violations. Only two are detained on terrorism-related charges, which are yet to be substantiated.

The Bush administration says it is doing everything under the Vienna Convention and that it is not mandatory to inform foreign missions of the details unless the detainees themselves ask for consular access.

THE HINDU

9 JAN 2002

Will U.S. still send 'special envoy'?

gms
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 6. In the face of objections from India, the question now is whether the Bush administration will persist with the idea of sending a "special envoy" to South Asia to defuse the tensions between India and Pakistan.

The objection from India came from none other than the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, and the same sentiments were made known here by the Indian Ambassador, Lalit Mansingh.

There has been some talk in the last two weeks of the administration sending "somebody". In fact, it was talked about at two different levels — the Secretary of State sending an envoy or the President himself appointing one.

Some names were doing the rounds, including those of Richard Haass, Director of Policy Planning at the State Department, Richard Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State, and George Tenet, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and who has had a lot of experience and positive outcomes in dealing with the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Gen. Powell was asked by the BBC if the talk of sending an envoy was still under discussion. He was careful in his response, preferring to use the word "somebody" and not "envoy".

The State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, was pointed when he remarked that the word envoy should not be taken in the sense of an "envoy" to the region. "I wouldn't couch this in terms of an 'envoy' for the region. We have people out there working it. The Secretary has been working it by phone. We may send someone from Washington to continue our activity, to continue working on the situation. I am not sure I would describe that as a special envoy. It may be one of the officials in Washington, who is responsible for the crisis."

Aside from India's known objections, the administration will factor in at least two things before taking a decision. First, Washington's own assessment of the SAARC summit in Nepal and its contributions, directly and indirectly, to the level of tensions in the region; second, what the administration hears from the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who is now in India and travelling to Pakistan on Monday.

Indo-US pact on sharing military Intelligence

Swati Chaturvedi
New Delhi, January 5

DEFENCE MINISTER George Fernandes and US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld will later this month sign an unprecedented agreement on sharing military intelligence. The agreement, to be signed during Fernandes's week-long trip to the US, will ensure intelligence sharing between Military Intelligence (MI) and the Pentagon.

Sources say an advance delegation, comprising senior officials of the Ministry of Defence and MI, has worked out the fine print of the agreement, details of which are with *Hindustan Times*.

The two countries will share intelligence on terrorism, including India's data bank on Pakistan and China. Joint training programmes have also been envisaged.

Detailed plans of joint operations and mock war games have also been worked on. Says a senior MoD official: "The MI is the most secretive intelligence organisation. Before September 11 this (agreement) would have been unimaginable. It shows the seismic shift in our dealings with the US."

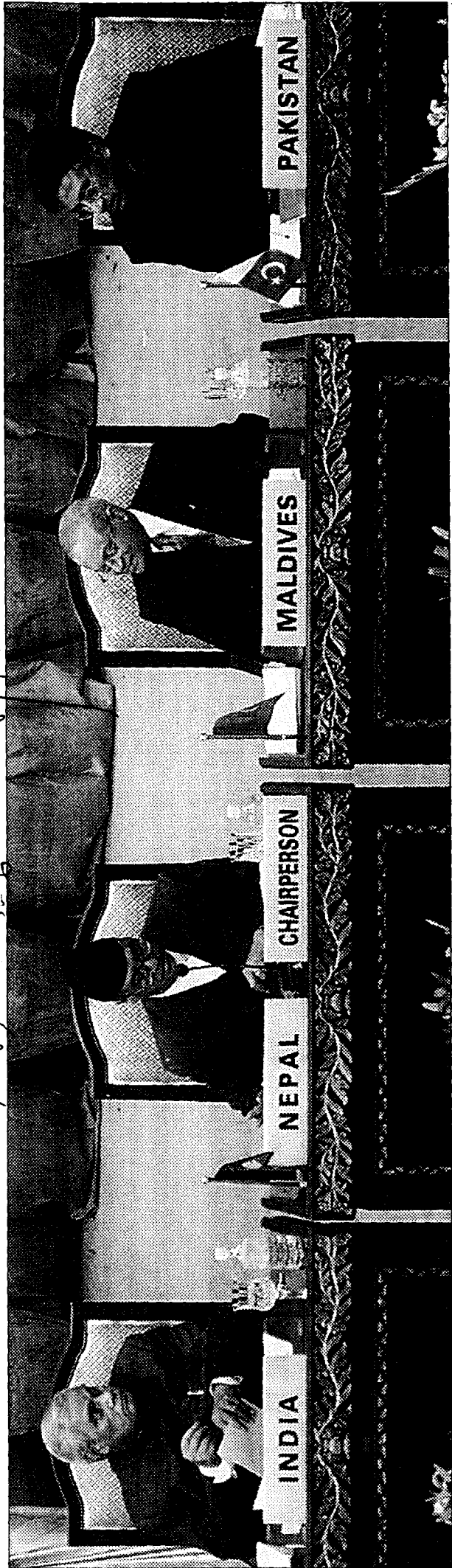
Officials say that while the IB and RAW have shared intelligence with the FBI and CIA this will be the first defence intelligence-sharing arrangement.

Sources say L K Advani is also expected to sign a detailed agreement on intelligence-sharing between IB-RAW and the FBI.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 JAN 2002

Delhi frowns on Powell envoy plan



Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pervez Musharraf with other delegates during the inaugural session of the 11th Saarc summit in Kathmandu. (AFP)

FROM ASHIS CHAKRABARTI

Kathmandu, Jan. 5: India is not pleased with US secretary of state Colin Powell's proposal to send a special US envoy to help India and Pakistan reduce tension.

India's foreign minister Jaswant Singh today reacted sharply to Powell's statement during an interview with the BBC yesterday that the US was

considering a proposal to appoint such an envoy. At an informal media interaction here after the inauguration of the Saarc summit, he dismissed the idea. "The US has embassies in New Delhi and Islamabad. Does it mean their staff in these embassies are not up to their tasks? Where is the need for a special envoy?" he asked.

Indian external affairs ministry officials here wondered

how Powell could make this statement before discussing the proposal with India. His remark is being seen here as one more example of the US trying to put pressure on India to de-escalate tension and the military build-up on the India-Pakistan border.

India seemed particularly unhappy that Powell chose to make the remark in the course of the Saarc summit, on the eve of which the US was suspected of

putting pressure on both India and Pakistan to open some kind of a dialogue between the two countries at the level of prime ministers or foreign ministers.

To the Indian side, Powell's statement looked suspiciously like the Pakistani demand for international mediation which would inevitably involve the Kashmir issue.

India's opposition to third-party mediation in Kashmir is

well known. "Pakistan is an ally of the US and good luck to America," Singh quipped.

India did not accept the thesis that there are good terrorists and bad terrorists", Singh said. "I have told President Bush and secretary Powell that there cannot be any distinction between terrorists west of Pakistan and terrorists east of Pakistan."

Earlier, in her speech at the inauguration of the Saarc sum-

mit, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumartunga also made a thinly-veiled attack on the international community's inconsistencies in dealing with terrorism.

"We cannot encourage and finance friendly terrorist organisations in one place and attempt to defeat the others. Double standards cannot work any more and will not solve the long-standing problem of terrorism," she said.

6 JAN 2001

“India offered full support to the USA’s operations in Afghanistan yet Washington has not responded adequately enough to check Pakistan’s sponsoring of terrorism in India” – this has been our standard refrain after the 11 September World Trade Center incident and our tempo has risen post-13 December.

However, our complaint is loaded with caprice! It is indeed regrettable that the two biggest democracies of the world have constantly been sniping at each other.

Some introspection on Indo-US relations over the past 50 years is warranted.

Soon after Independence, Jawaharlal Nehru opted to get close to Moscow for reasons that are suspect; one school of thought suggests that this had something to do with Netaji Subhash Bose’s incarceration in Russia. Be that as it may, the unfortunate flip side was, Nehru encouraged his prime henchman VK Krishna Menon to denounce the USA in public, especially, at most international meets.

Thus, Indo-US relations began on a warped footing. 1962 saw China humiliating India militarily and politically over the border dispute and placed in a state of helplessness, New Delhi beseeched Washington to help out which the latter readily did.

This was a good opportunity to pick up the threads but strangely, we ignored it all and began our cold shouldering tactic once more. This resulted in the USA supporting Pakistan in the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war and sadly, our relations reached a nadir in 1971.

Over the subsequent years, India made a few half-hearted attempts to improve the relationship but these lacked sincerity. By this time, we were firmly in the Russian camp.

A weird mindset ensconced our leaders to wit, we were at liberty to berate the USA whenever we felt like it but if we wanted the USA’s assistance in anything, they were expected to jump at it! Our Communists in particular excelled in this. Obviously, such double

Quibbling bystander

It would make ^{5/19} ^{6/1} immense sense for India to initiate a comprehensive strategic alliance with America and a military pact could be its principal component, writes JK DUTT

shuffle backfired on us.

Not only did Washington and New Delhi separate, but we also went deeper into Moscow’s ambit to the extent that today, Russia virtually controls India’s military where-withal, having successfully lamed-ducked our indigenous production.

How much politically subjugated we have become to Moscow was evident from our surrendering to its diktat to release five convicted Russian terrorists involved in the infamous Purulia arms drop case. This act was obnoxious because it laid bare our ersatz claim to tackling terrorism.

We also backed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in all its activities. The USA has been watching all this closely and drawing its own conclusions. Five and a half decades into Independence, and we are yet to learn the pragmatic contents of diplomacy.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the USA became the sole dispenser of developmental requisites in the world but we plainly refused to come to terms with this truism.

We merrily kept up our old prank of rubbing the USA the wrong way yet demanding relief of all types from US-monitored institutions



Above: US Secretary of State Colin Powell (left) at a press conference in Islamabad with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf in October. Top: Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh and his ministerial spokesperson, Nirupama Rao. – AP/PTI

like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank at will.

Our antics did not bear fruit and this enraged us. We ended up with the thin end of the stick apripos

globalisation since the USA was in no mood to listen to our anti-US barbs day and night.

Our shrill protestations against the US-coordinated coalition forces

during the Gulf War brought us just one thing – shooting our own foot!

It never occurred to us that had we placed our cards correctly, we would have gained vastly as the USA was always keen on establishing a broad-based, omnibus interactive connection with us.

In the event, our loss became China and Pakistan’s gain.

Operation Enduring Freedom presented the chance of a lifetime to us to be one up on Pakistan vis-a-vis the USA.

However, true to our defunct foreign policy, we failed to exploit this opportunity, something that Pakistan did and rather deftly too.

Today our crib is, Pakistan has moved up in the USA’s reckoning, while India remains where it has always been – a quibbling bystander whose sole contribution has been unwanted pontification and criticism.

A sensible step would have been for us to contribute a substantial military quantum to the coalition group, something which would have raised India’s visibility like never before.

India is on Al-Qaida’s hit list and it is possible that in a heightened recast of 13 December, the North-South Blocks in New Delhi, the Stock Exchange, Mumbai and the Howrah Bridge get demolished; what are we to do?

It would make immense sense for us to initiate a comprehensive strategic alliance with the USA at the earliest with a military pact forming a principal component.

Our leadership must shed its archaic Nehru-Gandhi psyche and imbibe Chanakya’s maxim of Statecraft: “In trans-border relations there are no permanent friends or permanent enemies or even permanent borders; there are only permanent interests”.

In order to achieve these interests, we have to exercise what is termed as “designer diplomacy” in current international relations mandates.

It is entirely in our interest to maintain equanimity with the USA in place of our heretofore animosity.

(The author is Lieutenant-Colonel, retired, Indian Army.)

THE STATESMAN

6 JAN 2002

STABLE FRIENDS

Even contrarians will concede that there are few relationships that are as critical for India today as the one with the United States of America. The last year has demonstrated that both New Delhi and Washington, despite tactical differences, recognize the importance of forging a strategic partnership. What is also becoming clear is that there is an obvious convergence of New Delhi and Washington's interests on a variety of issues and this could with imagination and initiative position Indo-US relations on a firmer ground in the future. While India and the US had sustained a high-level dialogue for nearly two years during the Clinton administration, there were apprehensions that this momentum would not be sustained during the tenure of the new Republican administration under Mr George W. Bush.

Much of the groundwork needed to firmly situate bilateral relations was completed within the first hundred days of Mr Bush's office. In April, the US president signalled through his unprecedented meeting in the Oval office with the Indian external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, that he took the relationship with India very seriously. This meeting, although ostensibly spontaneous, could not have taken place without careful thought, and without a considered evaluation by Washington of the signal that it would send to south Asia and beyond. No less significantly, as part of Mr Bush's "outreach to allies" on the National Missile Defence, the deputy secretary of state, Mr Richard Armitage, was dispatched to have consultations with key allies in Asia, including India. Mr Bush also moved with remarkable alacrity in making key appointments that had a bearing on India. Both Mr Robert Blackwill's appointment as the new US ambassador to India and Ms Christina Rocca's as the assistant secretary of state for south Asia were made within the first three months of the new administration. Later in the year, most of the sanctions that had been imposed against India after the nuclear tests of 1998 were removed. Quite clearly, the initial momentum was provided by the overarching concern about stability in Asia, and the role that India can play in generating a balance in the continent. And the belief that it is in the mutual interest of Washington and New Delhi to construct a stable order in Asia.

But the one key issue that has united India and the US is the fight against terrorism, particularly in the wake of the attacks of September 11. However, there were apprehensions in India that Islamabad's close cooperation with Washington in the fight against al Qaida and the taliban, may renew the US tilt towards Pakistan. These fears are unwarranted. Only an extremely shortsighted US administration would give up its stated aim of eradicating terrorism, or of abandoning its growing relationship with India in favour of an unstable Pakistan. India and the US have often been viewed as natural allies, yet estrangement rather than engagement defined relations between New Delhi and Washington over the last 54 years. This is now beginning to change with India and the US becoming more sensitive to each other's concerns than ever before.

THE TELEGRAPH

3 JAN 2002

US message: give General a chance

■ **Jamaat criticises Musharraf for crackdown, more arrests and raids nationwide**

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, ISLAMABAD, JANUARY 1

ACKNOWLEDGING Pakistan's steps to crack down on the Lashkar and the Jaish, Washington has urged New Delhi to "give all of us a chance to work with Musharraf" to bring the terrorists to justice.

"He's cracking down hard and I appreciate his efforts," Bush said in Crawford, Texas, where he is on vacation. "Terror is terror and the fact that the Pakistani President is after the terrorists is a good sign."

In his conversations with Musharraf and Prime Minister A B Vajpayee, Bush appeared to place more of the onus on Pakistan to defuse tensions in the region and he voiced sympathy for India's anger in response to the attack on its Parliament.

"I urged President Musharraf to do everything he could to crack down on the terrorist networks that had ... raided the Indian Parliament," Bush said. "I told him (Vajpayee) I understood how he feels. If someone attacked the US Capitol, I'd feel angry too," Bush added. "However I ... explained to the Indian Prime Minister (that) while I understood his anger, I was hoping they were not headed for war."

"I said give us all a chance to work with President Musharraf to bring the terrorists to justice," he said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's largest Islamic party, Jamaat-i-Islami, said the crackdown on the militant groups would harm what it called the "freedom struggle" in Kashmir. "The current policy of the government has broken the hearts of freedom-loving Kashmiris," Jamaat spokesman Amirul Azeem said.

There were reports in Urdu newspapers in Pakistan that the police have intensified their crackdown arresting 100 more activists of the Lashkar and the Jaish. According to the Karachi police chief, Tariq Jameel, the offices of both the groups have been sealed.

Senior Pak officials are said to be interrogating Lashkar chief Hafeez Muhammad Saeed who was taken into custody two days ago.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The Prime Minister at his residence on New Year's Day. PTI photo

Blair on his way

■ **British PM Tony Blair** returns to the sub-continent on Friday for the second time in 3 months, this time trying to prevent a war. He will be in Bangalore on Friday, Hyderabad the next day, Delhi on Jan 6 and will leave for Bangladesh on Jan 7, say MEA officials. A report from Pakistan, however, says he will fly from Delhi to Pakistan.



■ **Blair's foreign secretary Jack Straw** called his Pakistani counterpart Abdul Sattar on Monday and, welcoming the crackdown on militants, urged Pakistan to hold talks with India to end the standoff.

■ **China** has said it hopes India and Pakistan can take effective measures to protect regional peace and stability, pointing out that both are important countries in the region with the responsibility to act as such.

■ **UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan** has "strongly" urged India and Pakistan to "seize the opportunity" provided by the Saarc summit to reduce tensions in South Asia. He also welcomed Pakistan's crackdown on militants, saying it could help reduce tensions with India.



■ **King Abdullah II** of Jordan spoke to President Musharraf on Monday and urged him to enter talks on the crisis between India and Pakistan, Jordan's Petra news agency reported.

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 2 JAN 2002