

Empowering J&K

5/4 Sincerity is the key 30/7

An open mind is a pre-requisite to any headway being made in the exercise Arun Jaitley has undertaken to explore avenues for greater empowerment of the government of Jammu and Kashmir. Getting bogged down in the intricacies of the "pre-1953 position", other previous agreements, or what was spelt out in the autonomy resolution adopted by the state legislature is to proceed on the road that leads nowhere. Devolution of power to that particular state has to be seen in an entirely different light from somewhat similar demands from other political quarters — the Anandpur Sahib resolution of the Akalis, for example — for reasons historic as well as the basis on which the instrument of accession was framed. Whether the political heartland likes it or not the people of J&K, not just its Muslim populace, have always considered their status to be distinct from the rest of the country — but that should not automatically suggest that they are "separatist." The ground reality is that if the local political leadership is to be popularly accepted it has to project itself as not being too close to New Delhi, even though it is fully aware that its survival is critically dependent on the Centre. Which explains why in the run up to the polls M/s Abdullah & Abdullah have been striking seemingly strident postures. An understanding, if not appreciation, of such sentiment is vital to the task now entrusted to Jaitley. It would also be essential for him, and the officials and others who play a supporting role, to attach importance to the demand for autonomy being a marked dilution of the screams for *azadi* that reverberated through the Valley a decade ago. Above all, a sense of trust will have to be built up: Narasimha Rao had said that "the sky is the limit" as far as autonomy was concerned, Vajpayee had spoken of dealing with the issue in the spirit of *insaniyat*. Yet the autonomy resolution was summarily rejected, and at Vajpayee's last media session in Srinagar he countered a query by saying he wanted to know how developmental activity was hindered by the lack of autonomy. Just what the doctor did not order.

It will not be easy for Jaitley to earn the confidence of the people with whom he will be discussing the devolution of authority. Sure he possess a blend of legal expertise and political acumen, but he carries a lot of baggage with him — the BJP's long-standing demand for the abrogation of Article 370 for starters. Even before being entrusted with the job there were rumblings in the Sangh Parivar over what it saw as the re-opening of a chapter which it wanted permanently sealed. The RSS was quick to further queer the pitch by demanding the trifurcation of the state. It would be premature to speculate on the prospects for success of this latest Central initiative, yet there can be no doubt that the consequences would be tragic if at the end of the day it gets written off a mere pre-poll ploy.

Hurriyat will not take part in polls

Srinagar: The Hurriyat Conference on Monday ruled out participating in the forthcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, ignoring pleas by US Secretary of State Colin Powell and saying that India had rejected the basic tenets of the visiting American official's suggestion.

"How can we accept participation in the polls when the external affairs ministry of India has rejected the first and foremost part of Mr Powell's suggestions?" Hurriyat executive member Moulvi Abbas Ansari asked.

Queried about whether the Hurriyat would participate in the polls if the Centre had acted on Mr Powell's suggestion, Mr Ansari said, "The conglomerate will meet and decide on it."

Meanwhile, former chief minister and president of the Jammu and Kashmir Awami National Conference G.M. Shah on Monday laid down pre-conditions for his party's participation in the polls, demanding a presidential assurance that the election would be free and fair in all respects.

India rejects call for J&K observers

29/7
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell on Sunday called on India to free political prisoners in Kashmir and allow independent observers to travel to the state ahead of the assembly elections there, while acknowledging that further de-escalation and a dialogue depended on steps to end cross-border terrorism and the undisrupted conduct of the polls.

Unhappy with the formulation, India rejected the call for designated observers, disagreed with the comments on political prisoners and focussed only on "infiltration and terrorism", where there was a "considerable degree of similarity of thinking".

In a departure from the recent past, Gen Powell's visit saw the U.S. focusing on the need for India to take specific steps on Kashmir with him saying, "We look forward to concrete steps by India to foster Kashmiri confidence in the election process. Permitting independent observers and freeing political prisoners would be helpful" as would encouraging moderate elements.

The U.S. was encouraging India to make it easy for people to travel to the region because it would give "greater credibility to the results even if it isn't an official global-sponsored monitored regime," he said.

Saying "Kashmir is on the international agenda", Gen Powell added it was time to "get started on making regional stability permanent". The U.S. would "extend a helping hand to all sides so that they can achieve a more peaceful, less divisive future."

Elections alone could not solve the problems between India and Pakistan or erase the "scars of so many years of strife", but they could be the first step in a broader process, he said. It was necessary for Pakistan to "take every effort to avoid disturbing these elections", Gen Powell said, adding that it was important to ensure that those who would like it spoiled were not allowed to interfere.

Gen Powell also spoke of the useful role played by the U.S. in bringing down tensions even though much more remained to be done. "We look to India to take further de-escalatory actions as Pakistan makes good on its pledges to permanently cease support for infiltration," he said.

Briefing the media after Gen Powell's meetings with the Prime Minister, the deputy Prime Minister and the National Security Adviser, the external affairs ministry spokesperson said India had made it clear that infiltration had not stopped and "no action has been taken to

We have done all we should: Musharraf

Islamabad: Pakistan President Gen Musharraf said on Sunday that infiltration of Pakistan-based militants into Kashmir had stopped and asked India to stop making "baseless" allegations and start talks to resolve all issues, including Kashmir.

"It (infiltration) has certainly stopped. It is not taking place and whatever the Indian side is saying is absolutely baseless," Gen Musharraf said.

On further steps his government would take on Kashmir, he said "I don't have to do anything because we have already done it".

Gen Musharraf's comments came even as the US said it could not conclude that infiltrations by Islamic militants into Kashmir have fully stopped.

"We're monitoring this carefully. We still are not able to say that they have been stopped, although they have gone down," Gen Powell told a press conference after talks with Gen Musharraf. "But we'll be watching this very carefully and assessing the points of view of the two sides as we move forward." AFF

dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism". India expected that steps would be taken before it could take any consequential steps, start any dialogue and what Pakistan did in the run-up to the elections would be its litmus test.

On the issue of 'observers', India, she said, did not object to "diplomatic representatives or representatives of the media or visitors in an individual capacity wishing to come to the state during the elections but not to investigate or certify them." Anyone who obtained visas was free to travel to any part of the country, including Jammu & Kashmir, "but NGOs and others which may seek formal status as observers will not be permitted". This had been made clear to all, including the U.S. On the description of "political" prisoners, the spokesperson said Gen Powell's remarks expressed a certain point of view. Those being described as political prisoners were actually those who had clearly contravened the provisions of Indian law for their complicity in terrorist activity, she said, adding in response to repeated questions that India and the U.S. could "agree to disagree on certain issues".

DEVOLUTION, SAYS BJP; IT'S AUTONOMY: FAROOQ

Jaitley begins talks with J&K representative

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 25. The Union Government's designated "representative", Arun Jaitley, had the first round of "devolution of powers/autonomy" talks with Ghulam Mohideen Shah, the seniormost Minister in the Farooq Abdullah Government, representing the Government Jammu and Kashmir. Today's round was described as preliminary and the two sides are to meet again in the second week of August.

Mr. Jaitley and Mr. Shah had one-on-one talks, which lasted 40 minutes, while their official aides waited in another room. It is learnt that apart from an historical account of the quest for autonomy, it was agreed that the State Government would come armed with some "talking points" at the next meeting.

Most observers believe that the "autonomy dialogue" is not likely to lead to any resolution of differences between the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir Government as the Union Cabinet has already rejected the demand for restoration of the "pre-1953" status. It is understood that the current dialogue is merely to provide the ruling National Conference a campaign issue. The National Con-



Arun Jaitley

ference had contested the 1996 Assembly election on the slogan of restoring the eroded autonomy and Dr. Abdullah resurrected the issue in 2000.

The very fact that a hardliner such as G.M. Shah has been named the State Government's representative is an indication that the Chief Minister is not looking for an easy solution. But the Vajpayee Government also understands that it is imperative that the Chief Minister is seen as taking on the Centre, af-

ter all these years of a rather cozy relationship with the NDA Government.

Even today the National Conference and the BJP continue to strike different postures. While the BJP secretary, Sunil Shastri, insisted that Mr. Jaitley was bound by the party's view that only devolution of powers, not autonomy, was to be discussed, the Chief Minister maintained that the two things were the same.

"How does it matter if you hold the ear directly or from across your head. Both are one and the same thing," argued Dr. Abdullah, while talking to presspersons after a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, L.K. Advani.

Dr. Abdullah also told reporters that during his interaction with Mr. Advani he had asked for more security forces during the coming Assembly elections. His argument was that more security forces were needed to ensure a free and fair poll.

He challenged the Hurriyat leaders to take part in the elections.

"This is a good opportunity for them to show whether they are representatives of the people. The polls will give them an ample opportunity to prove their representative character."

हिन्दी

26 JUL 2002

Hurriyat for 'unconditional talks'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 24. The All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) is ready to hold "genuine and unconditional talks" at the highest level with the Centre on the Kashmir issue. Stating this here today, the former Hurriyat chairman, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, said the APHC was willing to hold sincere talks with New Delhi to resolve the problem. Disagreeing with the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani's views that talks were on with the Hurriyat to persuade it to participate in the coming Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir, the Mirwaiz said polls were not the solution.

"We are not for elections as this is purely an administrative exercise and not a political one. We are interested in dialogue because that is the solution to the Kashmir problem. We do not believe in gun-culture. We believe that a genuine, unconditional dialogue with New Delhi at the highest level of the Prime Minister can pave the way for a solution. Let there be a sincere and genuine effort on the part of New Delhi to hold a dialogue, we will respond." The Mirwaiz said the

organisation was not interested in the mission of the former Law Minister, Arun Jaitley, who had been appointed by the Centre to hold talks on greater devolution of powers to the State.

Meanwhile, Mr. Jaitley is scheduled to hold talks with the representative of the State Government, Ghulam Mohideen Shah, here tomorrow to discuss the issue of devolution of powers.

Qayyum denies report

B. Muralidhar Reddy reports from Islamabad:

The Chairman of the Pakistan Kashmir Committee and former Prime Minister of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Sardar Abdul Qayyum, dismissed the reported statement by a member of the Pak. chapter of the Hurriyat, that he had appealed to the All-Party Hurriyat Conference to participate in the coming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, as "utter nonsense".

Speaking over phone from his village in PoK, Mr. Qayyum said, "I have not spoken to the APHC chairman, Abdul Ghani Bhat, for months. It is a mischievous report. There is something fishy about the whole thing."

A cure for Kashmir's inequities

515 2578 TJK

Nehru and Gandhi encouraged the Great Divide solely for their political expediency. JK DUTT suggests how the matter should be addressed in its totality

Mohammad Ali Jinnah is credited with having introduced the infamous Two-Nation theory on the basis of which Partition took place, with Jawaharlal Nehru humouring him on this theory because independent India's first Prime Minister had his own axe to grind. Jinnah's axiom was "Hindus and Muslims cannot co-habit". Many of us ridicule him over his belief — notwithstanding the fact that Jinnah used this as a powerful manifesto to obtain his Pakistan — by periodically reflecting that India has much more Muslims than Pakistan.

But we have conveniently forgotten that it is India, not Pakistan, which has abundantly proved Jinnah's axiom, and no greater proof of this exists than Kashmir. Nehru, in his weird concept of secularism, conjugated that since Muslim-majority Kashmir had "graciously" acceded to Hindu-majority India, we had to do everything possible to ensure the "integrity and well being" of Kashmir's Muslim population. The contribution of the other states of India towards our secular credentials had no value for Nehru.

Thus began the unwarranted pampering of Kashmir under Article 370 that many cynics compare with Aurangzeb's pattern of lifestyle: summer and winter capitals, own laws and rules, heavily subsidised living, unchallenged blowing up of funds that India religiously provides, and, most of all, instituting a psychological divide between "We" (Kashmiris) and "They" (Hindustanis, as the Kashmiris disparagingly call us.) Nehru, himself a diehard Kashmiri, invariably identified more with his clan than with the rest of the country. His blanket stipulation was, India's mission in life was to keep sacrificing for Kashmir so that the latter could reap the benefits without contributing anything in return. Nehru was caught out in his duplicity by Shyama Prasad Mookherjee, with dire consequences for this son of Bengal.

Nehru also consolidated the country's Muslim votes through Kashmir very successfully. His deliberate creation of the Kashmir problem was a masterstroke of Machiavellian skulduggery.

Muslims apart, Kashmir also has a minority Hindu community that by their own definition claims to be of a higher brand than the Hindus living in India. To differentiate betwixt the two — the higher Kashmiri and the lower Hindu — the Kashmiri Hindu adopted the term "Pandit" to replace the word Hindu in their context. While serving in Kashmir, I made the grave error of addressing a Pandit as a Hindu and was roundly criticised for it, being categorically told, "We are Pandits, you are Hindus and don't you dare equate the two."



Indian security forces have been shedding blood for the Kashmiris even while they continue to be treated as second class citizens in that state

The most ludicrous thing about it all is that a Hindu from Hindu-majority India is debarred from buying property and settling in Kashmir lest Kashmir's pristine purity gets soiled; and yet some 200,000 of these very Hindu majority people have been protecting Kashmir from the Pakistani threat for the past 55 years. The Indian security forces comprising both the regular Army as well as the paramilitary forces have been shedding blood for the Kashmiris even while being treated as second class citizens in that state!

Historically, the Indian Hindu has been subjugated by a succession of

outsiders like the Mongols, the Mughals, and lastly the British. Worse, the Hindus resignedly accepted the treatment of being kept one-down by the Kashmiris. However, the worm eventually turned and the resultant fallout of this Great Divide began to appear in the shape of rising Hinduva.

A fillip has been progressively given to Hindu communalism as a defiance to being dominated by Muslims, the inference to Kashmiri Muslims acquiring lodestar proportions. This insidious movement has now permeated all parts of the country with nary a differentiation between Kashmiri and other Muslims.

Encouraged by our ersatz secular politicians, a horrific backlash started to burst on the national scene in the form of pogroms in areas far removed from Kashmir. Gujarat is one such case.

Unable to even the scores in Kashmir proper with the resident Muslims plus the Pandits who have refused to adjust with Indian Hindus, this leveling is seen to be wrought elsewhere. Today it is Gujarat, tomorrow it may be some other state. Surely it is unimaginable that Nehru and his mentor MK Gandhi were unaware that such a destabilizing wave would engulf India if Kashmir's inhabitants were not brought at par with those in the rest of

the country. Yet not only did these two founding fathers of our Independence abjure from removing inequities between the two segments of our motherland but encouraged the Great Divide solely for their political expediency. The nation is paying dearly for it now.

More astounding is the attitude of the powers that be to terrorist acts being perpetrated in Kashmir especially on the Hindus. The latest one at Qasim Nagar was crowned with the inauguration of a golf course costing 90 crores on the banks of the Dal Lake, aptly captioned by the media, "Golf blooms where guns boom!" This must do Nero proud!! In an earlier

incident at Chhatisingpura where thirty six Sikhs were massacred in a single terrorist strike, our man of the moment variously described as Kashmir's NRI chief minister casually dropped by at this hapless village surrounded by his commandos, aired the usual hyperbole about how a bad Pakistan was doing incorrigible things to an innocent India, and rushed off to keep a social engagement with the then US President Bill Clinton who had just arrived in India on a formal visit. Hinduva has noted these omissions and has spared no pains to employ these as adverse propaganda for creating an anti Muslim mindset among its cult's growing disciples. The byline most visible is, "When Kashmir sneezes, India panics!" and this is quoted as a living example of the tail — aka Kashmir — wagging the dog — aka India.

A development oriented society, as India is trying to be today, is not going to tolerate this bizarre set up much longer. Our educated youth in particular have not taken kindly to such machinations.

How should the matter be addressed in its totality? For starters, the Kashmir problem needs to be physically isolated. This can best be achieved by trifurcating the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir into three separate states of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh respectively much like as we have done with the formation of three new states ex Bihar, MP and UP. This step will halt Srinagar's inequities in administration from adversely affecting the development as well as the security of Jammu and Ladakh. The trifurcation should be carried out well before the October elections. Second, Article 370 must be scrapped as this political weapon has caused immense damage to India's polity. Surprisingly, the current government in New Delhi had promised to rescind this destructive article once they came to power but have quietly fallen in line with Kashmir's vice like grip on the article in question. Third, the Kashmiris must be served with an unequivocal diktat to shed their pseudo supremacy stance (some unflattering scribes refer to it as Kashmir's version of Hitler's Aryan race upmarketism!) and join the national mainstream as Indians first and Indians last. They must also be made accountable for every paisa that India shells out to them, golf courses withstanding of course! And lastly, if the Kashmiris still want autonomy, it should be given to them with an explicit term of reference — they can have their autonomy provided they fend for their own security and release the Indian Army from this thankless task.

(The author is a retired Lieutenant-Colonel of the Indian Army.)

Battles within J&K

By Balraj Puri

40-10

WHATEVER INDIA may have gained through "coercive diplomacy" and international support in reducing the level of cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir may be offset if the war of words over the demands for larger autonomy and division of the State ruptures inter-community and inter-regional relations. There will never be peace in Kashmir, the nation is warned by the National Conference, if autonomy is not conceded. The opponents of the demand, particularly leaders of the BJP in Jammu, warn equally sternly that autonomy is another name for Azadi and that those who demand it are anti-national.

The demand for the separation of Jammu and Ladakh from Kashmir is justified on the ground of a long list of grievances the two regions have accumulated under what is called Kashmiri Raj for the last 55 years. The opponents of the demand call it an expression of the two-nation theory.

One may recall a similar acrimony in the arguments of the leaders of Kashmir on the one hand and those of Jammu and Ladakh on the other in the early 1950s, which resulted in the first emotional breach between Kashmiri Muslims and the rest of the country. The dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah — architect of the State's accession to India — on August 9, 1953, and his long incarceration symbolised that breach. The breach has lingered. For, the underlying causes were never addressed. It lends credence to the theory that terrorism is not the sole cause of the crisis in the State; it is also the consequence of internal developments.

A little reflection and patience should convince anyone that autonomy and secession are two different concepts. In fact, the autonomy of the component parts in a federal set-up is the best guarantee of its unity. The question of the precise degree and form of autonomy of the units in a federation is open to debate. Demands for greater autonomy have been raised, for instance, in Punjab,

Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and the Northeast. A similar demand in Kashmir, as such, cannot be called anti-national though some form of it may do more harm than good to its people. Similarly, the grievances in Jammu and Ladakh are quite legitimate. Those who feel that the separation of these regions is the only remedy state that when the divisions of so many States in the country, recently and in the past, were not communal or anti-national their demand cannot be so

Whatever the claims of leaders of the trifurcation campaign, in practice it will amount to communal division of the State.

branded. They can be engaged in a debate on the risks involved in the case of a State such as Jammu and Kashmir and on better ways of redressing their grievances.

Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh are racially, culturally and geographically distinct and different. They belong to three different families of languages. It is the urge for identity and empowerment of each of them, which is quite legitimate and which has remained unfulfilled, that causes tension among them and seeks expression in divergent directions. It is mainly due to the lack of support from the other two regions that the Kashmir region — rich in its heritage of Kashmiriyat — has not been able to defend its identity and autonomy. In frustration, some sections sought refuge in the demand for separation from India. Others seek it in the plea for more autonomy. Both these expressions — secession and autonomy — add to the fears of the other two regions. Both camps — pro-Azadi and pro-autonomy — have opposed trifurcation of the State. But if the pro-Azadi camp is convinced that nothing short of separation from India can protect Kashmir's identity, its logic is simply imitated by those seeking to protect the identity and interest of Jammu and Ladakh in separation from Kashmir. The Na-

tional Conference has gone a step further and proposed to break the regional identities of Jammu and Ladakh on a religious basis. According to the proposal, the Muslim-majority districts of Doda, Rajouri and Poonch would constitute separate regions. Likewise, the Muslim-majority Kargil district would be a separate region in Ladakh. No concrete measures in terms of devolution of political power or funds have been suggested. Whatever differences exist between the

people of Kargil and Leh in Ladakh and those in Rajouri, Poonch and Doda and in the rest of the Jammu region, the differences between the rest of Jammu and Leh on the one hand and the people of the Kashmir region on the other are several times more in terms of ethnic, linguistic and geographical distance and administrative and economic grievances. Separation of the former thus validates that of the latter.

The logic of separation works in the reverse too. Those who argue that nothing short of separation can remove the grievances of Jammu and Ladakh provide a rationale not only for separatists in Kashmir but also for those seeking separation within these regions. It is a classical case of how extremes meet. The first step to resolve the tangle is to recognise the ground realities. The three regions, though distinct ethnically and geographically, cannot be separated easily. First, the demand is being made from a platform of a community — the RSS, the VHP and the Ladakh Buddhist Association — forum and is being projected as a Hindu and Buddhist demand respectively and not as a regional demand. Second, though the Muslims of Jammu and Ladakh share common grievances and a sense of neglect with the region's majority communities, they

may be reluctant to change their present status as citizens of a Muslim-majority State to a minority status after the separation of the two regions. Whatever the claims of leaders of the trifurcation campaign, in practice it will amount to communal division of the State with repercussions for India's international position on Jammu and Kashmir and for the country's secular fabric.

A system has therefore to be devised that recognises and satisfies the urges of all identities in the State. In a report submitted to the Government as head of the Regional Autonomy Committee, I proposed a five-tier set-up of devolution of power from the State to the regions, districts, blocks and panchayats. It is meant not only to meet the requirements of democratic decentralisation but also as a means to safeguard the interests of all ethnic and religious communities. For, there are wheels within wheels in the State. It is a Muslim-majority State with a Hindu-majority region of Jammu in which there are Muslim-majority districts. In each such district, there are Hindu-majority blocks comprising Muslim-majority panchayats.

Besides measures for safeguarding and promoting every ethnic identity, I also suggested an objective and equitable formula — based on the needs and the level of development of each area — for allocation of funds to various regions and districts, to be implemented by an autonomous State Finance Commission. This could be the basis for an inter-regional and intra-regional dialogue to reconcile all diversities of the State. It would then be a stage for initiating a dialogue on the external status of the State; autonomy or any other variant of it. If a part of the attention and energy that is devoted to preventing external threats and winning over dissenters in the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and separatist camps is devoted to tackling internal tensions in the State, which pose no less a threat, the outcome may be better.

The Anglo-U.S. agenda for Kashmir

By K.K. Katyal 22/7

710-12

What are the pointers, thrown up by the latest round of the Western diplomatic effort — the just-concluded visit to the sub-continent of the British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, and the trip later this week of the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell? At least three. One, sustained pressure on both India and Pakistan to proceed with de-escalation; two, even-handedness in the dealings with New Delhi and Islamabad; and, three, accelerated steps to resolve the Kashmir problem. The last, the most significant, will be the newest addition to the Anglo-U.S. agenda (as a matter of fact, it had been there for a long time but may be pursued seriously now). The two Western Powers will call it "continued engagement" with India and Pakistan. India will describe it as "facilitation" while, to Pakistan, it will be mediation or third-party role.

Whatever the label, it will confront New Delhi with a major challenge which will require mature, creative handling. India could not afford to sacrifice any of its core concerns but it would do well to shed some of the clichés, that have been over-used, causing irritation even to, its sympathisers abroad. True, India's Pakistan policy is shaped by the Government, as a whole, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and now also the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, apart from the foreign office but the presence here of a new Minister, Yashwant Sinha, could well be an occasion for a new style. This is not intended to be a reflection on his predecessor, Jaswant Singh, but is meant to make a case for new beginning.

The stage when India and Pakistan would possibly be "encouraged" to address the

substantive aspect of the Kashmir issue will be reached after a while and this gives time to New Delhi to formulate its strategy with greater care.

At the moment, the main concern of the two Western powers is de-escalation. They are reconciled to delay — till October this year — in any major reversal of the steps, taken by India and Pakistan, that had taken them to the brink. The period till then is intended to be utilised to ensure that the gains, accruing from small measures, are not lost and that a climate of hope is created to

NEWS ANALYSIS

guard against a slide-back. The idioms currently used by the U.S. and the U.K. are meant to achieve this objective. "Infiltration is down across the Line of Control but it needs to be made permanent and further steps need to be taken." With such words, the momentum towards easing of tensions is meant to be kept up. This was the purpose of Mr. Straw's visit as also the thinking in Washington about Mr. Powell's plan for the trip to the region.

Washington's even-handedness, evident of late, was reflected by two pronouncements last week — rejection of a plebiscite as a way out of the Kashmir tangle, on the one hand, and "No" to India's plea to declare Pakistan a terrorist state, on the other. Likewise, the U.K. (in the words of Mr. Straw), on the one hand, saw a case for further steps by Pakistan to check infiltration (and to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism) and, on the other hand, pinpointed the centrality of the Kashmir issue. New Delhi is justified in deriving comfort from the U.S. view against a

plebiscite and the argument adduced in support — "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 this issue." It, thus, vindicated New Delhi's position that the Shimla Agreement had had an over-riding effect on the U.S. resolutions, adopted more than two decades earlier. There was reason for India to be happy on another count — the positive view of Washington on the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, of course, with stress on its transparency and fairness. Pakistan has dubbed the electoral exercise a "stunt".

As against that, New Delhi found itself in an embarrassing position, with rejection by the U.S. of the plea to declare Pakistan a terrorist state. Dealing with the demand by India — by Mr. Advani — a State Department spokesman emphasised that "Pakistan has been a very stalwart ally in the fight against terrorism. President Musharraf has announced some fairly bold measures and our interest is in helping Pakistan." New Delhi invited this snub unnecessarily.

The U.S. stand against a plebiscite has a significance far beyond the balancing exercise of the Western Powers. It could be an important element in the solution of the Kashmir tangle, whenever it is attempted — bilaterally, with their "facilitation". An end of terrorists' infiltration from Pakistan's side, de-escalatory steps by India and dialogue between India and Pakistan to settle outstanding issues, including Kashmir — that is the sequence the two Western "facilitators" have in mind. This is what their diplomatic moves are about. And New Delhi has to prepare itself for all the three phases.

'WE ARE NOT SLAVES; I WILL FIGHT LIKE HELL'

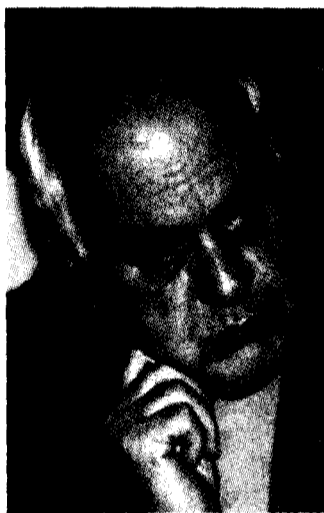
Farooq blasts 'move' for Governor's rule in J&K

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JULY 21. The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, today came down heavily on the Central Government and questioned the calls for imposition of Governor's rule in the State in order to have "free, fair and transparent elections". He threatened to fight against any such move like a "tiger's son" and said that they should not play with the future of the State. Or else, they should be ready to face the "consequences".

"Are we their (New Delhi's) slaves that we accept everything from them? Do not threaten us. I will fight them like hell," he told presspersons after the prize distribution function at a golf tournament here.

Taking strong exception to reports about the possibility of imposition of Governor's rule ahead of elections in the State, Dr. Abdullah said, "I am tiger's (the late Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was also known as the Lion of Kashmir) son and they should know it." Being a member of the ruling National Democratic Alliance, he was not aware of such plans but "if they



Farooq Abdullah

want to play with the future of the State, they should also be ready for the consequences. I think they should not play with the Constitution. Will you dismiss all the Chief Ministers of the country," he asked.

Continuing Dr. Abdullah said: "Why do they (New Delhi) think that J and K is their baby? Why should they have Governor's rule here? What kind of transparency do they want?

Why is there no Governor's rule in Gujarat? Are we crooks? We fought elections under Governor's rule in 1996", he pointed out. Dr. Abdullah said that elections would be held in time. The House would be dissolved before the elections. To a question, he said his party did not agree to his desire to quit as Chief Minister and wanted to fight elections under his leadership.

The Chief Minister took strong exception to a statement made by some Congress leaders in Anantnag on Saturday that the Governor, G.C. Saxena, was partial. "I feel deeply hurt as Mr. Saxena was the chief of RAW when their leader Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister and he rang me up in London" he said. The Congress had never been fair and who were they to talk about partiality, he asked.

BJP split in J&K

By Our Staff Reporter

JAMMU, JULY 21. The Bharatiya Janata Party Legislative Party in Jammu and Kashmir has split with five of the seven party MLAs formally writing to the Assembly Speaker for a "change of the leadership".

The five MLAs have expressed no-confidence in the leadership of Shiv Charan Gupta and, in his place, elected Pritivi Chand. The members who have revolted are Hans Raj Dogra, Prem Kumar, Choudary Pyara Singh, Ashok Khajuria and Pritvi Chand. The Speaker has, meanwhile, not taken any decision so far. Party sources told *The Hindu* that the decision of the five MLAs was in a way a revolt against the lobby led by the Minister of State for Defence, Chaman Lal Gupta, MP from Udhampur district. Mr. Gupta had been able to get his followers accommodated in the election committee formed by the central high command, which will decide the candidates for the coming Assembly elections.

98, 8v YASIN MALIK RELEASED, REARRESTED 110-1

Hurriyat leaders held in Srinagar

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JULY 20. While three senior leaders of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, including its chairman, were placed under house arrest, Javed Mir and Bilal Lone and 10 women were among dozens taken into custody when they tried to take out a march against the Qasim Nagar massacre.

In Jammu, the senior Hurriyat member and JKLF chairman, Yasin Malik, was released by a POTA court but rearrested under the Public Safety Act.

The Hurriyat had plans to take out a procession in Srinagar to protest the massacre of labourers in Qasim Nagar a week ago. However, police, as alleged by the alliance, placed the Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Moulvi Abbas Ansari under house arrest.



Javed Mir, acting chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, being arrested during a demonstration in Srinagar on Saturday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

Policemen were also deployed outside the Hurriyat headquarters at Rajbagh, an allegation denied by police.

Over a hundred Hurriyat activists took out a procession but police resorted to lathicharge and prevented them from going

ahead. Some activists were injured.

Later, police fired tear gas shells to disperse the activists before taking into custody the JKLF acting chairman, Javed Mir, the Hurriyat executive member, Bilal Lone and the People's League leader, Khalil Mohammad Khalil, and 10 women activists, among others.

A senior police officer said the activists had violated Section 144, which was in force in the city.

Condemning the police action, Prof. Bhat said that the Government did not allow them to use democratic means.

The Qasim Nagar massacre was an attack on humanity and "such human tragedies will continue unless the Kashmir issue is not resolved in accordance with the wishes of the people."

See also Page 7

Confusion over 'Kashmir policy'

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, JULY 20. Amid signs of confusion over the "Kashmir policy", the Central Government's "designated representative", Arun Jaitley, today met officials of the Jammu and Kashmir Department in the Union Home Ministry. He was briefed on the history of negotiations on the long-pending issue of "autonomy" for the State.

Even though the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, made the announcement of Mr. Jaitley's new responsibility in the Lok Sabha on July 16, till this day there has been no official "notification" of his mission. Perhaps, the delay has to do with the fact that while Mr. Advani talked of greater "devolution of powers", the Farooq Abdullah Government has been pressing for "autonomy".

The BJP president, Venkaiah Naidu, contributed to the confusion by prescribing a much-reduced role for Mr. Jaitley. In a newspaper interview this morning, Mr. Naidu was quoted as citing the authority of (the non-existing) "notification", according to which Mr. Jaitley's role "will be limited to speaking to the Jammu and Kashmir Government on behalf of the Centre".

Moreover, according to the BJP president, Mr. Jaitley (who is also a general secretary

of the party) would have to conform to the BJP stand, which rejects the "autonomy" demand.

To add further to the confusion was the decision of Mr. Advani to attend a negotiation session with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which has now come out openly in support of its long-held demand for a trifurcation of the State along communal lines. Mr. Advani's presence at this BJP-RSS negotiation has sent out conflicting signals, both in and outside the Kashmir valley.

'Role' for Jethmalani

Reports from Srinagar indicate that the Centre may constitute yet another panel, probably to be headed by another former Law Minister, Ram Jethmalani, to talk to the non-National Conference parties and groups. Mr. Jethmalani was recently in Srinagar (presumably with the Prime Minister's blessings) to "talk" to individuals and groups.

On the other hand, the officials are perplexed over the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah's announcement that he would not be stepping down before the Assembly polls. This is being seen as a kind of "reneging on an understanding" between New Delhi and Srinagar. There appears to be a suggestion of a quid

pro quo: the Chief Minister would step down, making possible a spell of Governor's rule in exchange for an "autonomy negotiator", giving the National Conference a kind of "victory". A spot of Governor's rule was considered a pre-requisite for a "free and fair poll", as promised repeatedly by the Prime Minister.

A section of the officials dealing with Kashmir, however, suspects that the National Conference leadership was once again on the "verge of double-crossing the Centre". The State Government is increasingly suspected of doing everything possible to provoke the separatist camp into boycotting the election, thereby paving the way for the return on the National Conference.

The high-handed use, for example, of police personnel against a handful of the Hurriyat demonstrators today (who wanted to protest the Qasim Nagar massacre in Jammu) is a case in point. Instantly, Pakistan Television flashed images of a large police posse pitted against a few hapless protesters. Or, take the release and re-arrest of Yasin Malik under the Public Safety Act. There is suspicion that the action against Mr. Malik was designed to make it difficult for the moderate voices within the Hurriyat to spur Pakistan's calculations.

Farooq wants to stay CM, will fight polls

Majid Jahangir
Srinagar, July 19

SETTING ASIDE all speculation about his retirement from active politics, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah today said he would contest the upcoming Assembly elections as Chief Ministerial candidate.

"I am going to participate in elections as Chief Minister," said Farooq on the last day of the State Assembly here today. This statement is a complete U-turn from Farooq's earlier stand where he had said that he would retire from State politics.

In a number of interviews over the past two months, Farooq had clearly said that he wanted to step down as a Chief Minister so as to pave the way for his son and National Conference president Omar Abdullah.

In fact, a few days ago, Farooq had told the Assembly that it was his last address.

However, today's statement is being viewed as an important shift in the National Conference's election plans just before the Assembly polls.

On the upcoming Assembly polls, Farooq reiterated that the elections would be free and fair under the National Conference Government. "If the Election Commission wants observers, forces or any other agency, let them come and see how the elections are held free and fair," he said.

He said that no rigging in elections would take place. "The elections will be totally democratically fought elections and National Conference will do nothing wrong in the elections," the Chief Minister said. However, he hoped that National Conference would again come to power after the Assembly polls.



Farooq Abdullah
Still in the fray

Asking Pakistan not to scuttle the democratic process in the State, Farooq said there was a serious threat to the polls from across the border.

"Pakistan is not interested to see the revival of democratic process here," he opined, adding there was a threat to his life and other MLAs too.

Farooq's change in plans for his political life may have something to do with the way the NDA passed him over while choosing a vice-presidential candidate. This even provoked public outbursts from both father and son.

Both Farooq and Omar Abdullah alleged that the NDA had treated the National Conference shabbily and that it should stop taking the Jammu and Kashmir ruling party for granted.

They also made some noises over autonomy, only to later welcome the Centre's move to start talks on the subject.

There were also reports that said at one point that Farooq Abdullah hoped for an ambassadorial post.

20 JUL 2002

US rejects Pak plebiscite demand in J&K

Washington, July 19

REJECTING ISLAMABAD'S persistent demand for a plebiscite in Kashmir in accordance with the UN resolution, the US today said it favoured the settlement of the problem bilaterally between India and Pakistan in keeping with the Simla Accord.

"The US earlier did support the UN resolution calling for a plebiscite in J&K. But in 1972, India and Pakistan reached an agreement that it would be a bilateral issue. We support India and Pakistan for settling the issue bilaterally. We are

working towards getting the two countries to the talks table," US Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca said.

At a hearing to the House International Relations sub-committee, she expressed for the first time the US belief that the coming elections in J&K could serve as a first step towards resolution of the issue.

Rocca also stressed the importance of Pervez Musharraf ending cross-border infiltration permanently. She said the encouraging progress in South Asia towards prosperity and democracy was too often overshadowed by the spectre of

war between the two nations. "We remain deeply concerned over the tension between India and Pakistan, particularly because of the continued deployment of forces along their border and in J&K," she said.

A surge in violence could spark a military confrontation, with devastating consequences, Rocca said. "The enemies of moderation in the region are aware of this fact and are trying to exploit it through high-profile terrorist attacks," she said. Rocca said as Secretary of State Colin Powell, who is slated to visit India and Pakistan this month, has put it:

"War is just not an option for the two nuclear nations. The only way forward that offers a prospect of genuinely resolving their differences is the path of dialogue."

The US, she said, was working to help the two sides find mutually acceptable ways to begin de-escalation. "Musharraf has pledged that infiltration into Kashmir will end permanently. Pakistan needs to keep that pledge in order to begin a process of resolution for the immediate crisis and for its more fundamental differences with India," she said.

Rocca said once tensions be-

gin to subside the process should be continued by New Delhi agreeing to resume talks with Islamabad.

"We are also supportive of Indian efforts to conduct free and fair elections in Kashmir scheduled for later this year," she said, "such elections could proceed with much greater chance of success in an atmosphere free of violence and intimidation and serve as a first step towards resolution of the issue. Finally, we will continue to offer our good offices in helping the two sides resume dialogue to resolve their differences."

PTI

20 JUL 2002

HD-1
19/7

3 militants killed in J&K encounter

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JULY 18. Three foreign militants were killed and nine security personnel injured in a day-long encounter at Banihal on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway today, while three soldiers, including a JCO, were killed in another encounter at Bandipore in north Kashmir.

Police sources said that on specific information, a search operation was launched by the Rashtriya Rifles, the CRPF and the State police at Banihal on the 300 km-long highway early today. Militants, hiding in a house owned by Mohammad Anwar, hurled grenades and started firing indiscriminately at the search party.

In the exchange of fire, three policemen and six RR soldiers were injured and three militants killed. The gunfight continued for about eight hours, disrupting normal life in the area. The highway was also closed to traffic. The IGP (Jammu zone), P.L. Gupta, said the militants were hiding in a house and not a mosque, as believed earlier.



A policeman walks by a battered house destroyed in the Banihal gunbattle on Thursday. — AP

The house was damaged and five shops gutted in the gunbattle. Two of the foreign militants had been identified as Abu Dujan of the Harkat-e-Jehadi Islami and Mohammad Idris of the Jaish-e-Mohammed from the identity cards recovered. Three AK rifles had also been recovered, he said.

Mr. Gupta said traffic had been restored on the highway

late in the afternoon and life was returning to normality.

In the Bonakot area of Bandipore, a fierce gunbattle took place between militants and security forces.

Reports said that an Army patrol was ambushed by militants on Wednesday night and a JCO, Suba Lakshmi Yadav, and two soldiers, Ramesh Chander and Yushwant Singh, were killed.

Form Jammu, Ladakh councils: RSS

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, July 18. — The RSS today sought a clarification from the Centre on the Kashmir issue and demanded that autonomous councils be granted for Jammu and Ladakh on the basis of its demand for trifurcation of J&K into Srinagar, Jammu and Ladakh.

The Centre has rejected the trifurcation demand but expressed readiness to discuss the issue of autonomous councils. The RSS reportedly agreed to allow the BJP's J&K unit to contest Assembly polls as the BJP and not as a member of the collective front mooted by the RSS.

At a meeting with Mr LK Advani, BJP president Mr M Ven-

kaiah Naidu and the government's negotiator on Kashmir, Mr Arun Jaitley, the RSS joint general secretary, Mr Madan Das, is understood to have said that the parameters of talks with the parties in Kashmir must be settled before Mr Jaitley embarks on his mission.

One more such meeting is

planned between the RSS and Mr Advani before an RSS team meets the Prime Minister. Mr

Insurance for Amarnath yatis

NEW DELHI, July 18. — An insurance scheme for pilgrims for the Amarnath yatra has proved popular. The yatra begins tomorrow and nearly 50 per cent of the yatis have opted for the scheme. A yatri has to pay Rs 20 as premium to the Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd. and if he dies during the pilgrimage, the next of kin gets Rs 1 lakh from the centre where he had been registered. — SNS

more funds to areas.

"We were told that Mr Jai-

Advani and Mr Jaitley later briefed the Prime Minister about the meeting at the BJP president's residence. The government side assured the RSS that steps would be taken to either grant autonomous councils to Jammu and Ladakh or provisions would be made for diversion of these backward

tley's appointment was to discuss devolution of power and not autonomy. Mr Jaitley said the Centre can even consider creating a regional council to redress the grievances of the people of Jammu," Mr Madan Das said after the meeting.

Among others present were RSS leader from J&K Mr Indresh, chairman of the newly-formed Jammu State Morcha, Mr Shrikumar, the Jammu and Kashmir Nationalist Front President, Mr Tilakraj Sharma, and RSS deputy spokesperson Mr Ram Madhav. Union minister Mr Chaman Lal Gupta was present.

The delegation opposed autonomy for the state though it said it had no problem if devolution of powers was discussed.

THE STATESMAN

19 JUL 2008

987
28K

VISITS JAMMU MASSACRE SITE

Centre, J&K Govt. to blame: Sonia

By Our Staff Reporter

JAMMU, JULY 17. Accusing the Central and State Governments of failure to prevent terrorist attacks in Jammu, the Congress president, Sonia Gandhi, today said the Qasim Nagar massacre, which came barely two months after the one in Kaluchak, was an eloquent testimony to the insensitiveness and incapability of both the Governments.

Ms. Gandhi, who arrived here in the morning, drove straight from the airport to Rajiv Nagar. She received an enthusiastic response from the crowd, which was in sharp contrast to the hostile reception the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, and the Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, received two days ago.

Striking an emotional note, Ms. Sonia said it was at the initiative of her husband that people belonging to the weaker sections were settled at Rajiv Nagar. For that reason, she had felt "a personal shock" over the merciless killing of women and children in the colony.

"How long will innocent people die from the bullets of terrorists," she asked. "The Central and State Governments need to evolve a permanent solution to the problem."

Deriding the Central Government for its claim that it was doing its best to curb terrorism, the Congress president said, "The Central Government does not waste any opportunity to make promises but events such as the recent massacre expose the Government's claims."

Taking a different line from that of Mr. Advani, who had differentiated between the Kaluchak and Rajiv Nagar massacres, she said, "It was a



The Congress President, Sonia Gandhi, talking to a person injured in the recent militant attack in Jammu on Wednesday. — PTI

repeat of Kaluchak. There is no difference between the two."

Later, Ms. Gandhi visited the border town of R.S. Pura, where border migrants presented a memorandum listing their tales of woe. Addressing a large gathering of migrants, she said their plight was due to lack of a clear policy at the Centre.

She assured them that her party would agitate for a solution to their problems, in Parliament and the State Legislatures and also outside.

She announced that the Punjab Chief Minister had agreed to

send relief material for the border migrants of Jammu and Kashmir.

She demanded that the migrants be allotted land in safe areas in lieu of the land they had left behind, as done by the Punjab Government. Her party would take up the issue during the monsoon session of Parliament.

Ms. Gandhi was accompanied by the party general secretary, Ambika Soni, and the State PCC chief, Ghulam Nabi Azad. She returned to New Delhi in the afternoon.

THE HINDU

7 8 JUL 2002

'Security forces killed civilians'

By Shujaat Bukhari

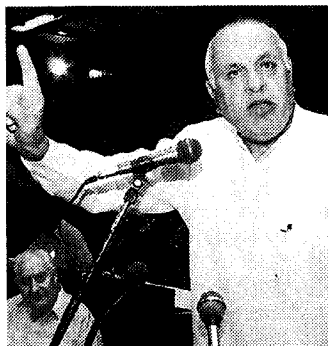
SRINAGAR, JULY 16. Putting the security forces in the dock, the DNA test by the Central Forensic Laboratory, Kolkata, has established that the five persons killed by security forces in an "encounter" in Panchalthan following the massacre of 35 Sikhs in Chattisinghpora on March 20 were civilians and not foreign militants as claimed by the forces. The Jammu and Kashmir Government has recommended an investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the incident.

The Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, today tabled the forensic report in the Assembly and said that he would take up the matter with the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, when he meets him on Saturday. "As per the assurances given in this House, representatives from CFSL, Kolkata, and CDFD, Hyderabad, were requested to collect blood samples from the relatives of the deceased and the DNA samples of the deceased. The representatives of both Institutes collected the samples on April 1."

"The report from CFSL, Kolkata, has established their identity as Juma Khan, son of Fakir Khan, Juma Khan, son of Sher Ali, Zahoor Ahmed Dalal, Mohammad Yousuf Malik and Bashir Ahmed Bhat. It has been clearly established that the de-

ceased were not foreign terrorists as claimed by the forces, but innocent civilians."

Dr. Abdullah said, "In view of



The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, tabling a report of the DNA test in the Assembly on Tuesday.

— Photo: Nissar Ahmad

the gravity of the offence as well as the attempt made by certain officials to destroy evidence and to ensure fair investigation, I have recommended that the case be investigated by the CBI, who would be requested to expedite the investigation to bring the accused to trial." He said the next of kin of the victims would be paid ex-gratia relief within two days and provided a Government job within a week. He announced the reopening of the Chattisinghpora massacre case, saying that he would ask the Central Government to nominate a judge for the same. "I am

meeting the Deputy PM on Saturday and will take up the issue with him."

The 7 Rashtriya Rifles unit of the Awantipora-based Victor Force had lodged an FIR with the police on May 25 saying that they had killed five terrorists in an encounter at Panchalthan. The security forces and the police claimed that "five foreign militants, responsible for the massacre of Sikhs" had been killed. As the bodies were charred, they were buried on the directions of the police. However, people resented this and thousands came out on the streets, alleging that the five were civilians picked up by security forces between March 21 and March 24 and who were killed and burnt by them. During a protest demonstration in Brak-

pora, personnel of the CRPF and the police opened fire, in which nine more civilians were killed. A retired judge of the Supreme Court, S.R. Pandian, investigated the incident and fixed the blame on the CRPF and the police. Though the policemen involved were suspended, no action has been taken by Central Government against the CRPF personnel.

Meanwhile, another controversy erupted after it was reported that the DNA samples had been tampered with. The Government then requested the laboratories to get fresh samples and appointed a retired judge, Justice A.Q. Parry, to inquire into the allegations; the report is awaited. Five doctors who took the samples were also suspended.

Farooq bids goodbye

By Our Special Correspondent

SRINAGAR, JULY 16. "This is goodbye to politics and all of you. The person who will replace me here will be from the National Conference," the 66-year-old Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah, said in the Assembly today.

Dr. Abdullah has been hinting at quitting office for the last several weeks, saying the Union Minister of State for External Affairs and National Conference president, Omar Abdullah, would take over the reins of Government. Today, he told the MLAs it was the last Assembly session he would attend and also the last term of the Government he would presiding over. He feared more militant strikes during the coming visits of the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and the British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw.

THE HINDU

17 JUL 2002

'MOVE TO ENGAGE SEPARATIST GROUPS IN J&K'

Jaitley is negotiator for talks on devolution of powers

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, JULY 16. In a major initiative, the Central Government today appointed the former Union Law Minister, Arun Jaitley, as the negotiator for talks on devolution of powers/autonomy for Jammu and Kashmir. Mr. Jaitley will talk to the Jammu and Kashmir Government as well as political parties and leaders. An announcement to this effect was made by the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, in the Lok Sabha.

The Vajpayee Government has already rejected the National Conference's "autonomy" stand, a demand for the restoration of the pre-1953 relations between the Centre and the State. However, by appointing a negotiator for talks on "devolution of powers", the Centre has provided the NC leadership with a slice of political satisfaction. The NC now can legitimately claim to have extracted a "concession" from the Centre.

Mr. Jaitley emerged as the front-runner for the job some

time ago when he was still in the Union Cabinet. However, it is believed that while the State Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah was agreeable to Mr. Jaitley, his son, Omar Abdullah had reservations, which held up the announcement. Meanwhile, Mr. Jaitley moved out of the Government. But last Sunday, Dr. Abdullah conveyed his Government's consent to Mr. Jaitley's appointment.

The legal crux of the Jaitley mission would be anchored in Para Four of the 1975 Sheikh

Abdullah-Indira Gandhi Accord. Para Four concedes that "with a view to assuring freedom to the State of Jammu and Kashmir" in welfare measures,



We will tackle militancy on our own: Advani

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, JULY 16. The adjournment motion on the Jammu massacre ended on a somewhat tame note today after the Opposition parties walked out before the vote in the Lok Sabha, leaving the field wide open for a rejection of the motion by a voice vote.

The Opposition attack was strong and unrelenting — Shivraj Patil (Congress), who moved the motion, forcefully argued that despite the full support by the Opposition for the steps taken by the Government to tackle terrorism, the latter had, in fact, not come out with any plan or strategy to deal with the situation. He charged the Government with depending too much on Western powers to put pressure on Pakistan to stop infiltration and cross-border terrorism.

The Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, said the Government would tackle the menace of terrorism on its own and that it also recognised that all countries acted in their own national interest.

His claim that the world was slowly understanding that Pakistan was the epicentre of terrorism failed to impress the Opposition, which found his re-

ply "inadequate", as it had not unfolded any strategy to deal with the ugly situation. The Opposition found his reply "extremely disappointing" leading to a walkout. The motion was then put to vote by the Speaker and rejected.

Mr. Advani spelt out the larger Jammu and Kashmir policy. The State, he asserted, was "not a disputed territory" and that it was in fact "an integral part of India" on which "there can be no compromise". He also allayed the fears expressed by the Opposition of "growing interference" by Western powers, saying that there would be "no mediation" on the issue. He also rejected the demand for a trifurcation or bifurcation of the State along communal lines, but said there was a need for an equitable development.

'No return to the pre-1953 status'

He defended the Government's earlier rejection of the demand for autonomy as it was for a return to the pre-1953 status; the Centre was though willing to talk about additional powers for the State.

While Mr. Advani was unable to say exactly how the Government planned to tackle terrorism, he indirectly claimed as an

achievement the "big difference" between "Agra and Almaty" — in the language emanating from Pakistan and the Western countries. Today, instead of talking about terrorists as freedom-fighters, Pakistan was forced to recognise that the killing of innocent people was an act of terrorism. The Western nations were also beginning to see Pakistan as the "epicentre of world terrorism". However, "their assessment" was — with which India did not agree — that "Musharraf was the best bet to stop terrorism" originating in Pakistan.

The National Conference president and Minister of State for External Affairs, Omar Abdullah, lamented the "impulse" to communalise terrorist incidents — in fact, it was a Shiv Sena member who had earlier wanted to know whether the Congress was protesting the killing of Hindus — pointing out that of 13,000 deaths recently more than 11,000 were those of Muslims. He alleged that the Congress was trying to "play politics with the blood of innocents". Mr. Patil responded angrily, saying the Minister had failed to notice the waving of BJP flags in Jammu and that the party was "playing politics".

'Govt. helpless': Page 11

cultural matters, social security, personal law and procedural law, "it is agreed that the State Government can review the laws made by Parliament or extended to the State after 1953 on any matter relatable to the Concurrent List and may decide which of them, in its opinion, needs amendment or repeal."

Because of the reasonably amicable relations between Sheikh Abdullah and Indira Gandhi, Para Four was never seriously sought to be implemented. The NC raked it up in the run-up to the 1996 Assembly elections and the Farooq Abdullah Government got the State Assembly to pass a resolution to this effect in June 2000, which was promptly rejected by the Vajpayee Government.

The decision now to appoint a negotiator on autonomy/devolution of powers is part of a larger strategy to signal the Centre's willingness to engage groups, besides the NC, in a dialogue. The thinking is that the Jaitley mission is not going to be completed in a few weeks or even a few months, and should the "separatist camp" decide to test — and establish — its claims of being the "sole representative" of the Kashmiri people, then the negotiations would continue with the newly-elected representatives, whoever they may be. It is in this context that the Vajpayee Government has been stressing its commitment to hold "free and fair" elections.

DNA test nails Kashmir lie

OUR CALCUTTA BUREAU

Mandible and teeth of source (Grave I) belong to the biological son of Mrs Raja Bano; Humerus of source (Grave II) cannot be excluded of being brother of Ghulam Rasool; Humerus of source (Grave III) belongs to the biological father of Abdul Rasheed; Teeth of source (Grave IV) belongs to the biological father of Shakoor Khan; Femur of source (Grave V) belongs to the biological father of Aijaz Ahmad...

A "confidential" document concluding with these lines left Park Circus, Calcutta, earlier this month. On Tuesday, it took centre stage in the Kashmir Assembly, with the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) report being tabled by chief minister Farooq Abdullah.

The DNA findings "clearly established" that the five people killed by securitymen following the Chattisinghpura massacre of 35 Sikhs in March 2000 were all local civilians and not foreign militants. "The deceased were not foreign terrorists as claimed by the forces who led the operations, but they were innocent civilians," said Abdullah.

"In view of the gravity of the offence as well as the attempt made by certain officials to destroy the evidence and to ensure fair investigation, I have recommended that the case be taken up by the CBI," he added.

Abdullah also assured "ex-gratia relief as per rules within two days" to the next of kin, with "one dependant of each victim to be absorbed in government service within a week".

CFSL sources say the findings were "conclusive" as the tests were carried out "as per international standards". It was one of the "toughest cases" as "the bodies were burnt, buried, exhumed and buried again before being

finally exhumed, over a period of two years".

This, they say, brings the curtains down on the DNA drama that began soon after the killing, on the eve of then US President Bill Clinton's visit.

The police had blamed the attack on the Harkat-ul Mujahideen and the Lashkar-e-Toiba. Ashok Bhan, inspector-general of police of Kashmir, had said that "terrorists hiding in Gujjar 'kothas' opened indiscriminate fire on a joint party of police and Rashtriya Rifles at Pathribal Panchalthan in Anantnag district on March 25, 2000".

He later claimed that "five foreign terrorists" were killed in retaliatory action, but it was impossible to identify the victims as the "kothas" were completely gutted and the bodies charred beyond recognition.

Under pressure to identify the victims, Jammu and Kashmir police sent bone and tissue samples to Calcutta. But CFSL officials found "several discrepancies" and sent back the samples, stating that they had been "tampered with".

For months, the Kashmir government kept the CFSL snub under wraps, say sources in the Calcutta laboratory. When the "DNA fudge" became public, it caused a furore in Kashmir with residents of Pathribal-Panchalthan and adjoining areas claiming the five victims had gone missing a day before the security forces claimed to have killed the "five foreign mercenaries".

In March this year, the government requested the CFSL and the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics, Hyderabad, to "personally collect" the samples. Dr A.K. Sharma and S. Sathyan from the CFSL went to Kashmir in April to bring back the samples.

QUOTE

The deceased were not foreign terrorists... they were innocent civilians

FAROOQ ABDULLAH

Dangers of dividing J&K

By Amitabh Mattoo

Trifurcation will send a dangerous message to the whole nation. If Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists cannot live together in one State, can they do so in a larger entity?

10-10
11/7

A VISIT to Jammu and Kashmir is a reminder that one of the most vital parts of the Union of India continues to wait for an imaginative political initiative, which can ensure that the upcoming elections to the Legislative Assembly are credible and inclusive, in letter and in spirit. In the last month, however, a dangerous new tendency, backed by powerful forces, has begun demanding that Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh be divided into separate political units.

On June 22, at Haridwar, the Kendriya Margdarshak Mandal of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad called for a division of the State, including the creation of a separate Union Territory for Kashmiri Pandits carved out from within the Valley. Similarly, on June 30, at Kurukshetra, the Akhil Bharatiya Karyakari Mandal of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh sought separate Statehood for Jammu and Union Territory status for Ladakh. In addition, the Jammu Mukti Morcha and the Ladakh Buddhist Association are leading the local campaign for this demand.

Posing as a prudent solution, this demand, if conceded, could lead to — apart from political chaos — violent social disruption in the State and create a communal polarisation that would not just irretrievably destroy the cultural and social fabric of the State, but have dangerous consequences for communal relations in the rest of India. In addition, trifurcation would forever end the possibilities of reviving the plural traditions of communal harmony in the State that had once made it a symbol of the very idea of India.

The demand for a division of the State, per se, is not new. The United Nations mediator, Sir Owen Dixon, had recommended a partition of the State in 1950, and elements within the Praja Parishad agitation of the early 1950s had also sought that Ladakh and Jammu be detached from the Valley if full integration of the

State was not achieved quickly. But, in its new avatar, several factors have coalesced to produce a potentially explosive situation.

Most important is the widespread feeling within Jammu and Leh of deprivation as well as political and economic discrimination by politicians from Kashmir.

While this feeling of deprivation may have some grounds, it is being exploited, as is clear, by sectarian political groups who are demanding separate Statehood for Jammu and Union Territory status for Leh. They argue that not only will separation from Kashmir ensure better governance, more economic opportunities and a greater share of political power, but Jammu and Leh will also be able to distance themselves from the militancy. In its most extreme form, ideologues of this demand suggest that it is in the national interest to limit the "area of operations" of the security forces, and that division will ensure that only one-sixth of the whole State will then remain troubled.

This logic is dangerous for at least four reasons. First, trifurcation will destroy the composite identity of the State, which has existed as one unit since 1846, and send a dangerous message to the whole nation. If Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists cannot live together in one State, can they do so in a larger entity?

Second, it will most probably lead to a transfer of Muslims from various parts of Jammu, including parts of the city, but also from Doda, Rajouri and Poonch, assuming that the whole province is made into a separate State. Third, it will lead to such deep communal polarisation that

bloody communal riots will inevitably follow. It is no coincidence that the only force in the Kashmir Valley that has traditionally supported the idea of a division of the State are sections of the Jamat-e-Islami. Finally, any plan to carve out a separate enclave for Kashmiri Pandits will not just create a dangerous precedent, but ghettoise one of India's most cosmopolitan and dynamic communities.

Two other factors, it needs to be conceded, have fuelled these regional tensions. First is the Regional Autonomy Committee (RAC) report released by the State Government in April 1999. Vastly different in scope and imagination from the State Autonomy Committee (SAC) Report, the RAC recommends the reconstitution of Jammu and Kashmir's existing provinces into eight new ones. The most controversial part of the recommendations is the manner in which Jammu province is sought to be broken up along communal lines. All majority Muslim areas are sought to be detached from Jammu ostensibly because they share a different ethnolinguistic character. Although no action has been taken on the report as yet, it created an impression within Jammu that the State Government is seeking to increase its political marginalisation even further. Indeed, given its controversial nature, an expert committee had been appointed by the State Government to study the RAC's findings, but the committee was wound up even before it had completed its task.

Second is the controversial Kashmir Study Group Report, 'Kashmir: A Way Forward', released in February

2000. Members of the Study Group include a number of prominent academics and former diplomats from the United States and Europe and three prominent American Congressmen. Painstaking in its details, and imaginative in many of its ideas, the report suggests, as one of its plans, the creation of a hypothetical Kashmiri State, sovereign but without an international personality, which includes the Kashmir valley, but also Doda and potentially also Gool Gulab Garh tahsil of Udhampur as well as Poonch and Rajouri (all within Jammu) and even Kargil. While the report argues that areas outside the Valley have been included because these areas are imbued with the cultural traditions of Kashmir, is it a mere coincidence that all parts included are Muslim majority areas? While the report itself has not been widely circulated, many of its recommendations are being widely discussed in the State.

Regional harmony, it should be clear from experience, cannot be ensured through partitions, but through a decentralisation and devolution of financial and economic power that will treat the panchayat as the primary unit of governance. Jammu and Kashmir is not Assam or Uttar Pradesh where the carving of smaller States will provide for better governance, it is in fact a recipe for disaster.

Moreover, what is needed is the return and rehabilitation of the Kashmiri Pandit minority community to the Valley, to revitalise the traditions of pluralism and communal harmony there, not their segregation into separate enclaves or their continuation in migrant camps.

In other words, there is as much need for a devolution of powers from New Delhi to Srinagar as there is for a transfer of authority from Kashmir to Jammu and Ladakh, and beyond to the grassroots level. Only then can empowerment and autonomy have any real meaning.

10 JUL 2002

JAMMU MASSACRE TOLL 27; 'LASHKAR RESPONSIBLE'

Terrorism in its most naked form, says Advani

By Luv Puri

JAMMU, JULY 14. The Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, today described the massacre of 27 persons in Jammu as terrorism in its most naked form and said that whoever planned it deserved strong condemnation.

Talking to reporters this evening at the Governor's residence here, he said Saturday's attack and the Kaluchak incident two months ago were different, though both attacks were a crime against humanity. In Kaluchak, the jawans and their families were targeted and the latest attack was aimed at poverty-stricken people.

The Jammu and Kashmir Governor, G.C. Saxena, and the Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, were also present.

Mr. Advani said the purpose of his visit was to study the ground situation and that the Cabinet Committee for Security had assigned him the task of collecting inputs on which would be based a strategy against cross-border terrorism. The strategy would be announced in Parliament.

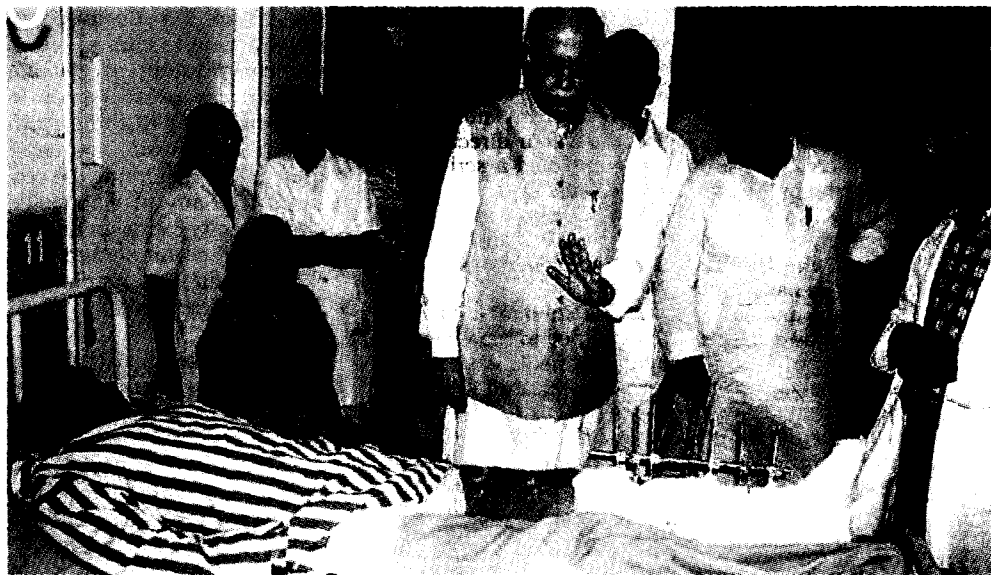
He said he had detailed discussions with Lt. Gen. Saxena, Dr. Abdullah, the DGP, A.K. Suri, and Army officers.

Asked whom the Centre blamed for the attacks, Mr. Advani said, "at the moment, I cannot comment and I am collecting information. We make our announcements on the basis of evidence such as intercepts and other leads. We are looking into the details of the event and who is responsible for it and we will soon make a statement."

The Deputy Prime Minister arrived in the city this afternoon with Home Ministry officials. He went to the Government Medical Hospital, Jammu, along with Lt. Gen. Saxena, Dr. Abdullah and Mr. Suri, and met the injured people.

Tensions run high

Emotional scenes were witnessed when Mr. Advani was



The Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, and the Minister of State for Defence, Chaman Lal Gupta, visiting those injured in Saturday's militant attack, in Jammu on Sunday. — PTI

holding discussions with Army officers and other senior police officials at the Rajiv Nagar colony. At least 1,000 people staged a demonstration and demanded that Mr. Advani meet the slum-dwellers and listen to their problems. They raised slogans against the BJP and the National Conference.

After some time the crowd was pacified and Mr. Advani was allowed to speak. He said, "I have come here to share your grief and the Central Government is very much aware of the

pain you have undergone". He said the entire country was behind them in their hour of crisis.

"We are trying hard to get the support of the international community in our fight against terrorism and we have been successful in this respect. But we certainly have to do something so that this senseless violence against innocent people is stopped once for all."

The slum-dwellers blocked Mr. Advani's cavalcade and police dispersed the crowd. Government sources told *The*

Hindu that in the evening a delegation of the slum-dwellers was allowed to meet Mr. Advani at the Governor's House and it is learnt that he assured them of full security and all possible relief.

There are conflicting reports on the number of terrorists involved in the incident.

Even the eyewitness accounts are contradictory. But there is agreement that it could have been between four and seven. PTI reports:

Mr. Suri said the Pakistan-based militant outfit, Lashkar-e-Taiba, was responsible for Saturday's attack.

"The Lashkar is responsible for this. There was definite information that the Lashkar has been planning attacks in Jammu and this is in pursuance of that information that we have this incident," he said.

Ex-gratia

An ex-gratia of Rs. 1 lakh would be given to the next of the kin of the victims, the Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, Rohit Kansal, said today.

Reactions on Page 11 and 12

Bid to enhance tension: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 14. Pakistan today condemned the killing of 27 civilians in Jammu on Saturday night by unidentified gunmen and concurred with the assessment of the Indian Government that it was a terrorist attack.

A spokesman of the Pakistan Foreign Ministry said the "motivation behind the attack seems to be to enhance tension" in the region. Implied in the statement was the suggestion that whoever is behind the heinous act is an enemy of both India and Pakistan. Of course, the statement of Pakistan came before it was known that the Foreign Minister, Yashwant Singh, had pointed fingers at Islamabad for the gory attack. Pakistan is bound to refute the allegation.

15 JUL 2007

An Islamic whack for Sangh Parivar

Aloke Tikku in New Delhi

157 51-6
9 87 23K

July 14. — The attack in Jammu last night could have been an answer of Islamic ideologue groups to the RSS and VHP strategy to secure a foothold in Jammu and Ladakh by demanding division of the state.

Official sources said it appeared that the attack was aimed at creating a fear psychosis amongst fence-sitters who may have supported the RSS and VHP demands and participated in functions organised by outfits associated with the Hindu radical groups.

The RSS had recently demanded division of Jammu and Kashmir with statehood for Jammu and Union Territory status for Ladakh. The VHP sought division of the state into four parts, adding an enclave for displaced Kashmiri Pandits within the valley to the RSS list of three.

The RSS also declared the J&K Nationalist Front — a group supporting the RSS ideology — was in conference with other like-minded political parties to form a front to work for reorganisation of the state. The VHP announced that religious leaders would fan out across Jammu and create a *dharma jagran* (religious awareness) on the division of the state.

It was in this context, officials said, reports of the militants clad in saffron, should be seen. "It's natural that the people in the state would be wary of *sadhus*," an official said, adding "Jihad is not camouflaged".

Visible public support is important to the plans of the RSS and VHP. The exchange of militants to secure the release of the daughter of the then home minister, Mr Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, more than a decade ago is being described as the turning point in separatist movement in Kashmir, not because the government buckled under pressure but because of the massive visible support that militancy received from the people of Kashmir, officials said.

The significance of the timing of the declarations of the Hindu hardline groups goes further than making the division of the state as a poll plank in the forthcoming Assembly elections.

The idea, an official said, did not only appear the division of the state, but to create a group that has a distinct identity as a non-Islamic front. Apart from sending a message to the international community that there are a number of people opposing the agenda of Muslim separatists, the proposal could also come in handy for the Centre when the NC demands the pre-1953 level of autonomy.

THE STATESMAN

1 5 111 2002

Survivors spit venom at Advani & Abdullah

TIMES NEWS NETWORK & PTI

New Delhi/Jammu: A day after the Qasim Nagar massacre which left 27 dead, Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani and chief minister Farooq Abdullah received a hostile reception from the survivors when they visited the site of the attack.

Advani had rushed to Jammu on Sunday soon after a Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) meeting in New Delhi. The meeting had decided to take an official stand on Monday, when the monsoon session of Parliament starts.

On his arrival at the massacre site, Advani was being briefed by Army officials, when the Qasim Nagar slum-dwellers started a commotion shouting slogans.

They demanded that Advani talk to the people instead of taking an official brief. "*Bahar aao Advani, Farooq ka saath chhor do...Farooq ko bhi bahar lao...Farooq in sabhi ke liye jimmedar hai...27 lashen jalai hain humne...Bahar aa ke humse baat karo,*" they shouted. "Article 370 ka kya kiya," they demanded (Come out Advani... and bring Farooq... he's responsible for this... come and talk to us...).

Advani tried to pacify them, but the crowd gheraoed him and asked him to impose Governor's rule in the state. Union minister of state Omar Abdullah and Governor Girish Chandra Saxena, who visited the spot earlier, too, faced the anger of the crowd.

A massive combing operation has been launched for the three militants who had attacked the lo-



Advani



Abdullah

"Bahar aao Advani, Farooq ka saath chhor do...Farooq ko bhi bahar lao...Farooq in sabhi ke liye jimmedar hai...27 lashen jalai hain humne...Bahar aa ke humse baat karo"

cality in the guise of *sadhus*. The toll is likely to go up as some of the injured are in a critical condition. Several organisations have called for a bandh in Jammu on Monday.

Earlier in the day, the CCS, which had an emergency meeting to take stock of the situation, condemned the incident as "horrendous".

Pakistan has condemned the massacre, saying it was aimed at escalating Indo-Pak tension. The US and France conveyed their outrage over the attack. Russia asked Pakistan to stop infiltration into J&K immediately.

- See Edit: Divisive Unity
- More reports on page 6

THE TIMES OF INDIA

1 5 101 2002

Advani stops short of slamming Pak

TIMES NEWS NETWORK AND AGENCIES

Jammu/Delhi: Deputy prime minister L.K. Advani on Sunday termed Saturday's massacre of 27 people by militants in Jammu as terrorism "in its most naked form" and said the objective was to spread fear through indiscriminate killings.

Speaking to presspersons after visiting the massacre site at Qasim Nagar and the hospital where the injured are being treated, he equated the killings with the May 14 attack at Kaluchak. "The objective is clear: to spread terror by killing people without any discrimination," he said. "When a woman asked one of the killers what he wanted, he said: 'Nothing, I am just here to kill you'," Mr Advani said.

Although he spoke about Pakistan's promises to end cross-border terror, Mr Advani did not directly blame Islamabad for Saturday's attack. He made it clear that he did not want to say anything before he had collated and processed all the inputs received from the army, various intelligence agencies and the state government.

Asked who he thought was responsible for the attack, he said, "You will appreciate there are assessments the government has to make and I can't make that assessment. I will file a report to the Prime Minister." Asked if the attack was the handiwork of Pakistan-backed terrorists or someone working independent of Pakistan, Mr Advani said this was what he wanted to assess.

"However, I would not like to comment on it at this juncture," he said. Since this was the task assigned to him by the cabinet committee on security, which met earlier in the day at the PM's residence in New Delhi, it would be in the fitness of things that he inform the CCS first and foremost, he said.

The meeting was presided over by the PM and attended by Mr Advani, defence minister George Fernandes, external affairs minister Yashwant Sinha, finance minister Jaswant Singh and several top security officials.

"Besides, the monsoon session of Parliament will begin on Monday and I would like to share my assessment with the House first," Mr Advani added.

"Those sponsoring cross-border terrorism want to create panic among the Hindus living in Jammu and Kashmir and create divisions between the majority and minority communities not only in J&K but all over the country," sources said in Delhi.

The sources also said Pakistan-backed terrorists were bent on creating hurdles in the way of the assembly elections in the state, to be held in October.

Although no militant group has claimed responsibility for the attack, director-general of J&K police A.K. Suri said the Lashkar-e-Toiba was responsible.

Earlier, Mr Advani received a hostile reception when he visited Qasim Nagar along with state chief minister Farooq Abdullah. "Farooq Abdullah *murdabad*," they shouted, condemning the CM for failing to provide security, even as Mr Advani was being briefed by a senior army official. "Advani *ji bahaar aao, hamari suno, inki nahin* (Mr Advani, come out and listen to us, not them)," they shouted as they felt that the deputy PM might not interact with them although he was in their midst.

Meanwhile, several organisations have called a Jammu bandh on Monday to protest the killings.

- See Edit: Divisive Unity, Page 16
- Related reports, Page 7



I am horrified at this attack..terrorism, be it in Jammu, Kashmir or anywhere else, only serves to renew the determination of the free world to fight the evil.

—British foreign secy J. Straw

The government of Pakistan condemns the killing of a number of civilians..the motivation behind the attack seems to be to enhance tension in the region.

—Pak foreign ministry statement



Such acts of barbarism have no place in any civilised society..it shows the desperation of the perpetrators, who stand isolated.

—Sonia Gandhi, Congress chief and leader of the opposition

We underscore that consistent fulfilment of the obligations taken by the authorities of Pakistan to check the activities of the terrorist organisations based in Pakistan-controlled territory is the foremost condition for ending terror in J&K.

—Russian foreign ministry spokesman Alexander Yakovenko



Cross-border terrorism will continue unless the international community wakes up and unitedly fights it.

—J&K chief minister Farooq Abdullah

RANDOM ATTACK ON SLUM-DWELLERS ✓

25 killed as militants strike near Jammu ✓

40-1
14/7

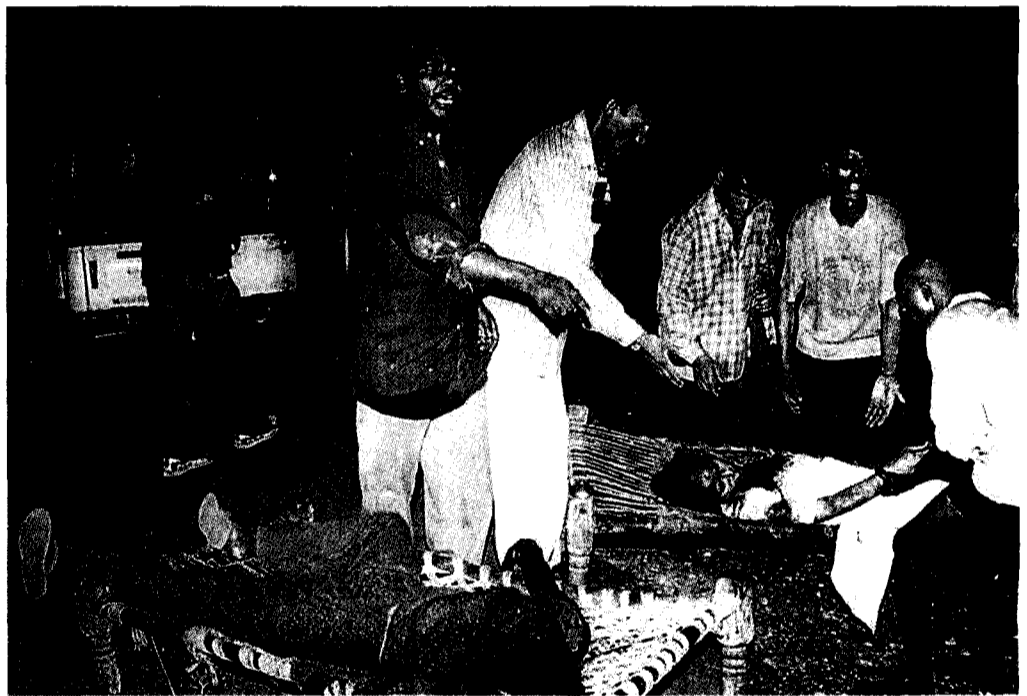
9.8
58K

By Our Staff Reporter

JAMMU, JULY 13. Twentyfive persons were killed and 21 injured, a number of them critically, when militants attacked a slum locality, near here this evening. The dead included 10 women, nine men, and a three-year-old boy. The militants lobbed grenades and opened fire at random on civilians, in an area inhabited by slum-dwellers, police sources said. Some of the victims were killed on the spot, they said, adding that there was a temple in the vicinity of the militant strike. A few killed were near the temple. The toll is likely to go up.

An unspecified number of militants struck at the predominantly labour colony, near Narwal by-pass after coming from the nearby hills around 7.30 p.m. "There were at least three militants who were armed with automatic weapons and fired at a thickly populated labour colony", according to the Union Minister of State for Home, I.D. Swami.

Police and security forces rushed to the area and engaged the militants, who fled into the neighbouring forests, in a gun battle. The encounter was reported to be continuing even four hours after the massacre. Till the filing of the re-



Residents look at the bodies of two women killed in a militant attack near Jammu on Saturday. — AP

port no militant had been nabbed. The attack comes almost two months after the gruesome Kaluchak attack in which 32 persons were killed.

Eyewitnesses told *The Hindu* that the militants in their early twenties, with carry bags, entered the locality, and had refreshments at a local shop,

before launching the attack. There were conflicting reports on whether the militants were dressed in sadhu robes.

Senior police and security officers have rushed to the area and were monitoring the situation. The traffic on both sides of the by-pass and its adjoining areas has been stopped. Mean-

while, a high alert has been sounded in the entire Jammu city and patrols instructed to carry thorough searches of vehicles.

As a precautionary measure, hundreds of slum-dwellers in and around the scene were evacuated to safer places, police said.

Rebel group punishes scribe for 'IB link'

Majid Jahangir
Srinagar, July 10

UNIDENTIFIED GUNMEN today critically wounded Rashid Shahid, editor of the Urdu daily *The State Reporter* in Srinagar today.

This is the second attack on a journalist within two months in the trouble-torn Valley.

According to sources, Shahid, whose real name is Abdul Rashid Tantray, was stopped by gunmen at Chanpora while he was going to his office on a scooter around 9.45 am.

They fired two shots at him from point blank range. Shahid was rushed to the SMHS hospital, where he was operated upon. His condition is stated to be "out of danger".

Save Kashmir Movement, a hitherto unknown militant group has claimed responsibility for the attack on Shahid Rashid.

Tajamul Islam, who claimed to be the outfit's spokesperson, told news-

paper offices on phone that Shahid was an IB operative and journalism was just a cover. He said that Shahid was operating under the name of Rubby in the IB. The spokesperson said the action against him should not be viewed as attack on Press but on those who are acting as IB agents under the garb of journalism.

Shahid was presently residing in Government quarters at Chanapora. He had also served a two-year jail term prior to launching his own newspaper and a news agency-Associated Press of India, three years ago. Shahid later closed the news agency.

Six killed

Six people, including two Army jawans and special police officers (SPOs) were killed and a ruling National Conference block president was injured in separate incidents in Jammu and Kashmir since Tuesday night, an official

spokesman told PTI on Wednesday.

A former SPO, who had joined militancy, was among four persons arrested over the last 24 hours, the spokesman said. Two army jawans — Lance Naik Nand Lal and sepoy Chaman Singh were killed and another sepoy Om Singh was injured in an explosion at Kahuda in Kathua district on Tuesday, he said.

SPO Naresh Kumar was found dead in the bunker at Kota post in Gandoh area of Doda district early on Tuesday. The body bore bullet injuries, the spokesman said.

Militants gunned down an SPO identified as Mushtaq Ahmad in his house at Arin in Bandipora on Wednesday, the spokesman said.

He further said a civilian, Ghulam Mohammad Mir, was killed when he was caught in a crossfire between militants and security forces at Sonerwani in Bandipora on Wednesday.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

1 111 2072

RSS against polls under Farooq Govt.

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, JULY 4. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh said today that in view of the past experience it did not think that elections in Jammu and Kashmir under the Farooq Abdullah Government could inspire confidence.

While it was not demanding the imposition of President's rule, "our view amounts to that (*bhavna wahi hai*)", the RSS spokesman, M.G. Vaidya, said. If elections were held without the present Government in power, the response of the people would be good.

Another issue that is exercising the RSS — the mother organisation of the Bharatiya Janata Party — is the new Government policy on foreign direct investment in print media.

"We are against unrestrained FDI in any economic activity in principle. We are totally against FDI in education and information," Mr. Vaidya said in a statement. However, there was a catch. "We can have a different point of view if non-resident Indians want to enter this segment," he added.

There is a view that the Government policy on FDI in print media is not wholly transparent as it has reserved the right to clear proposals on a "case-to-case basis". The RSS view made clear today raises the suspicion that the Government would like FDI to flow through the various friends of the BJP and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and similar organisations of NRIs.

The Sangh Parivar had pointed out that if the Government thought it fit to cap FDI in print media at 26 per cent with further safeguards on editorial control and even management control built in it, "similar

restrictions should be applied to the electronic media." But it was on Jammu and Kashmir that the RSS was especially exercised — its working committee had passed a resolution on the issue at the just concluded meeting in Kurukshetra.

Rejecting the argument that the trifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir favoured by the RSS would be playing into the hands of Pakistan, Mr. Vaidya said the demand was not along communal lines. "The Jammu region comprises three districts which are Muslim majority areas and it is wrong to suggest that our line helps the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf."

He did not deny that the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, L.K. Advani, when in the Opposition, favoured trifurcation using arguments identical to those extended by the RSS. "Ask him why he has changed his views, you are addressing the question to the wrong person," Mr. Vaidya said to a query. The RSS also said it was against laws in Jammu and Kashmir, which allowed Pakistani Kashmiris to settle there, become citizens of the State and get voting rights even when they do not have Indian citizenship. "This should be challenged, and I believe the Home Ministry is challenging this in the courts."

NC will not accept elections under Governor's rule: Omar

By Our Staff Reporter

JAMMU, JULY 4. Jammu and Kashmir cannot be a ground for experiment and the coming Assembly elections cannot be held under Governor's rule, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Omar Abdullah, said today.

Addressing a public rally in Poonch district, Mr. Abdullah said, "if in other States Governor's rule can be imposed for holding elections then let them to do it here. But, J&K cannot be the first State where this principle can be applied. It simply seems to be an illogical concession and nobody should expect this charity from us."

Lashing out at the VHP-RSS proposal for division of the State, the Minister said, "this is simply unacceptable and we will oppose

it in whichever forum it is raised. The founder president of the party, Sheikh Abdullah, stood for the unity of the State and we will never deviate from the path shown by him no matter what compulsions confronting us are".

According to him, nobody should have any misgivings that the National Conference belongs to only one region of the State.

"We are a State-level party and we want equitable development of all the regions and we are working in this direction for the last six years of our rule."

Raising the issue of reservation to the Pahari people, he said the top leadership had made a representation to the Central Government.

Polls not a substitute for plebiscite: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 4. Pakistan today maintained that an election in Jammu and Kashmir under the "Indian Constitution and the shadow of the barrel of Indian guns" could not be a substitute for a free and fair plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations. It was not immediately clear what prompted the Pakistan Foreign Office to issue a statement on the subject since there has been no formal announcement of the election plan by New Delhi.

Of course, there has been a great deal of debate within the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, in the context of the visit of a U.S. Embassy delegation to the

Valley last week and the conflicting and contradictory statements attributed to the Hurriyat leaders on the coming Assembly elections.

Two days ago, the United Jehadi Council, a conglomerate of Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir-based militant outfits operating in the Valley, issued a stern warning to the Hurriyat to stay clear of the proposed election, and said if any constituent of the Hurriyat contemplated participation in the process, it would face the wrath of the people in the Valley.

A statement said a Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, in response to a question on New Delhi's plans to hold elections in Kashmir, had recalled the Se-

curity Council Resolutions on the Kashmir dispute. He claimed that the Resolutions clearly stipulated that the "final disposition" of the State of Jammu and Kashmir would be in accordance with the will of the Kashmiris expressed through a "free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the U.N. auspices."

The spokesman also referred to a recent statement by the Chief Election Commissioner in which he had said that no one would be compelled to vote and coercion would not be allowed to increase the voter turnout in the State.

"This statement, by implication, accepted the unwillingness of the Kashmiris to

participate in the fraudulent elections in Indian-occupied Kashmir." Claiming that it appeared as if the Indian Government intended to "manipulate" the elections, he said "to this end important members of the executive committee of the APHC have already been arrested under trumped-up charges."

The statement said that as far as the participation in the elections to the Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was concerned, the decision rested with the Hurriyat and the people of Kashmir. The Hurriyat had already announced its intention to boycott these "sham elections. The Government of Pakistan respects the decision of the APHC leadership."

Mirwaiz rejects Jehadi 'diktat'

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JULY 4. The All-Party Hurriyat Conference has reacted strongly to the United Jehadi Council's directive that it should either initiate a poll boycott campaign or quit the leadership of the movement.

The UJC, a conglomerate of 14 Pakistani-based Kashmiri militant outfits, in a statement on Tuesday asked the Hurriyat leaders to reject the coming elections in Jammu and Kashmir or face the "wrath" of the people in the Valley, and urged the leadership to quit if it failed to oppose the electoral process in the State.

The former Hurriyat chairman, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq,

said the umbrella organisation was not guided by anyone and "whatever decision we take will be in accordance with the need of the hour." The Hurriyat's decisions were not taken on the basis of "dictates" from India, Pakistan or anyone else.

"We are open to suggestions but we won't be guided by anyone. The Hurriyat is a political forum and whatever we feel is needed for strengthening the movement, we will do that."

Taking a dig at the UJC chief and leader of the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Syed Salahuddin, who is in Pakistan, Bilal Lone, chairman of the People's Conference — another Hurriyat constituent — asked him to return to Kashmir.

"I am ready to concede my

place, if anyone is keen on coming here and enforcing a poll boycott," said Bilal Lone, who represents his party in the Hurriyat executive after his father, Abdul Gani Lone's assassination.

"Especially after the death of Lone sahib, we need senior and experienced persons. Syed Salahuddin is most welcome, provided he comes here and enforces what he wants us to enforce."

Another Hurriyat heavyweight, Abbas Ansari, too criticised the UJC statement saying the "UJC has its own strategy and we have our own ways and means. As they don't need to obey our dictates, we too are not obliged to listen to them."

5 JUL 2002

THE HINDU

Dividing J&K

Is the NC out of the reckoning? A/7

A very unhappy duo after the Cabinet reshuffle must be the father and son from Kashmir — Farooq and Omar Abdullah. The father who dreamt of occupying Rashtrapati Bhavan had his hopes dashed. He had hurriedly handed over the mantle of the National Conference to his young and bright son, Omar, for the shift to Delhi that never came. Farooq then angled for the vice-president's slot and rammed straight into the prejudice that two Muslims could not hold both posts. So Abdullah senior set his sights on a Cabinet berth. But even that did not materialise. The sting in the tail was that Abdullah junior, the only minister of state in External Affairs now has to share the portfolio with another minister of state, Digvijay Singh pending a total shift to Srinagar. The Abdullaha must be disappointed, particularly as this comes right after the Prime Minister's threat of imposing Central rule in Kashmir to 'ensure a free and fair election'. A fuming Farooq rightly asked under what constitutional mechanism could the Centre act thus and if it does, shouldn't Gujarat, also headed for the polls, be treated the same way.

The Abdullaha and the National Conference have obviously lost their importance in BJP calculations. Kashmir's so-called first family should do some introspection. The BJP seems headed for its strident Hindutva plank. Immediately after the Prime Minister's comments on Kashmir, the RSS held a two-day national executive where it demanded a three-way split of Jammu and Kashmir. According to their map of India Ladhak would become a separate state, as would Jammu which would include some of the Muslim majority areas like Poonch and Doda. Kashmir would be the third and only Muslim dominated state. Dividing the state along religious lines would be a retrograde step and the impact on the rest of the country would be negative. The other wings of the RSS like the VHP and the Bajrang Dal would feel encouraged. On the other hand, Advani joining the call to stop the rathayatra is sensible and it is to be hoped that the demands of his new office have helped. The method in the madness of the cabinet reshuffle must be contained and the demands of good governance stressed. Reliance on the communal card must be banished for all time if the country is to progress.

13

2002

No trifurcation of J&K: Advani

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 2. The Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, today outrightly rejected the demand of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) for the division of Jammu and Kashmir, saying the Government would continue to focus on the integration of the entire State and its people with the rest of the country.

"We have time and again made it clear that there was no question of division of Jammu and Kashmir. This has been our stand and there is no change in it," he said here.

At its national executive meeting in Kurukshetra this weekend, the RSS adopted a resolution rejecting autonomy for Jammu and Kashmir, calling for holding the October Assembly elections under President's rule and demanding a separate State of Jammu and Union Territory status for

Ladakh. Asked if the Government was taking any initiative towards holding talks with separatist leaders or outfits in the Kashmir Valley, Mr. Advani said that efforts were on in that direction though he did not name any organisation.

The Jammu and Kashmir Governor, G.C. Saxena, also called on Mr. Advani earlier in the day. The two are learnt to have discussed the law and order situation in the border State and various aspects relating to the coming Assembly polls.

Asked if the infiltration from across the border had stopped, Mr. Advani said the Government had information that it was still going on in fits and starts.

"We are keeping a watch on the situation. Pakistan has given certain commitments before the international community. We are keen on seeing that Pakistan fulfils its promise of stopping infiltration," he said.

3 JUL 2002

THE HINDU

Dividing Jammu and Kashmir: When Sudarshan met Geelani

The RSS's trifurcation demand echoes some demands of Kashmiri separatists—minus the Pakistan factor. MUZAMIL JALEEL reports

WHEN the RSS posited the trifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir as the Sangh Parivar's prescription for solving the Kashmir problem, there are many among the separatist camp who actually looked at it as a positive development. For, the resolution substantiates its belief that Kashmir is an unfinished agenda of the Partition, and a key to its resolution lies in the two-nation theory.

Although the RSS has suggested carving out separate states for Jammu and Ladakh, the aim actually seems to get rid of the main problem: the Valley. In the separatist camp, this is seen as an acknowledgement from India's biggest politico-social organisation that the separatist sentiment in Kashmir is unmanageable.

The pro-Pakistan lobby among the separatists has always been suggesting a similar trifurcation, although on its own terms. It was the pro-Pakistani Hurriyat leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who suggested a division of J&K as a compromise and thus, a solution, to the problem. He believes that since religion is at the core of the issue, the Hindu dominated regions of the state can be carved out to stay with India while the Muslim dominated areas should go to Pakistan. Although the RSS doesn't pencil in Pakistan in their trifurcation plan, their proposal is clearly a step in that direction.

The only—and the key—difference between Geelani's sug-

gestion and the saffron brigade's resolution, however, remains the issue of geographical boundaries of Muslim Kashmir. The RSS suggests Jammu as a state along with the Muslim dominated districts of Rajouri, Poonch and Doda, besides the whole of Ladakh, including the Muslim dominated Kargil. Geelani suggests a Muslim Kashmir that excludes Hindu dominated Jammu district, Kuthua district, half of Udampur and Buddhist Leh.

In fact, a similar proposal was

mooted by Hurriyat chairman Professor Abdul Gani Bhat as well. Bhat had been publicly supporting the Dixon Plan—a United Nations proposal put forth in the '50s. This involved division of the state on similar lines by making the Chenab river the boundary, thus separating Muslim dominated areas from Hindu dominated regions of the state.

The Hurriyat, whose official stance is that the Kashmir dispute can be resolved either through UN resolutions, a vote or a tripartite dialogue, did not comment on the RSS proposal. "We have nothing to say at this point," Bhat told *The Indian Express*.

This proposal, though, has struck at the very core of the ruling National Conference ideol-

ogy, which holds that Kashmir's accession to India was a rejection of the two-nation theory. In fact, Omar Abdullah remarked that the RSS proposal was as good as suggesting that Kashmir be handed over to Pakistan. Although the NC will oppose such a move, the party too had suggested such a division, but in a far more subtle manner: the NC's regional autonomy plan indirectly suggests division of the state on communal lines.

How does this proposal help Kashmir's separatist movement, especially those seeking Kashmir's merger with Pakistan? If the Valley is ever carved out of the J&K, its geographical boundaries cannot be limited the way the RSS wishes. While it's true that

Untying the Kashmir knot: some proposals

■ **International border:** Turn the LoC into an international border. Has the backing of political parties as well as Farooq Abdullah, but is unacceptable to Pakistan and many Kashmiris living on either side of the LoC.

■ **UN resolutions:** This would lead to a plebiscite. But Centre fears that a plebiscite could set a precedent, fuelling the calls for similar referendums in places like the North-east.

■ **Independence:** JKLF leader Amanullah Khan suggests a five-phase formula for independence, to be overseen by a UN committee which will work towards a referendum in 15 years, following a phased withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani troops and disarming of militants. But apart from being unacceptable to the Centre, wouldn't not be welcomed by all even within Kashmir, given the different, and conflicting, political aspirations.

■ **Religious segregation:** In 1950, Australian diplomat Sir Owen Dixon proposed redrawing the boundaries of Kashmir on religious lines with the Chenab river as a natural border. This would mean that most Muslim-dominated areas in Kashmir would go to Pakistan, but the Hindu-dominated area would remain with India. Opposed even by pro-independent separatists.

■ **Partition:** According to recently declassified British

Foreign Office files, the US and Britain were urging India and Pakistan to search for a partition solution in the mid-60s after the Indo-China war. The US supported the creation of an independent Kashmir Valley, but Britain feared that Russia and China would exert influence over the new state. The Soviets were equally wary of an independent Kashmir, fearing that the US would use it as a base. The plan, though, fell through.

■ **The Andorra model:** In 1998, a Kashmiri American businessman assembled a group of western policy-makers and academics to set up the Kashmir Study Group. The resolutions include an arrangement on the lines of Andorra, the tiny state which lies on the borders of France and Spain. It involved the reconstitution of part of J&K as a sovereign entity with free access to and from India and Pakistan. This would be determined through an internationally supervised agreement involving the Kashmiris, India and Pakistan.

The resulting entity would have its own secular democratic constitution; distinct citizenship; a flag; and a legislature which would pass laws on all matters other than defence and foreign affairs. There would be no change in the LoC, but the whole entity would become a demilitarised zone.

2 10 2002

Carve J&K into three parts: RSS

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kurukshetra: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has demanded the trifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir to carve out a separate state of Jammu and a Union territory of Ladakh, on the basis of the findings and suggestions of a three-member committee it had formed in March last. It has also demanded the imposition of President's rule in J&K for holding peaceful and impartial elections there.

On the concluding day of the Sangh's two-day Akhil Bharatiya Karyakari Manch (all-India executive) meeting here on Sunday, RSS spokesperson Madhav Govind Ved told reporters that any doubts about the impartiality of the forthcoming assembly elections in J&K could be removed by imposing President's rule there.

The resolution on J&K alleged that the National Conference government headed by Farooq Abdullah was "discriminatory" and had "sinister motives" against the Hindu community in the state.

Hence, according to the executive, the people of Jammu believed that the only solution to their problems lay in separate statehood for the Jammu region. The executive also demanded Union territory status for the Ladakh region. Besides, it announced its support for those forces in the Kashmir valley that favoured full integration with the country.

The executive expressed its deep concern at the fate of the Kashmiri Hindus who had been hounded out of their homes by 'jehadi' Muslim elements and who had been living as refugees in different parts of the country for over a decade. It called upon both the Union and the J&K

governments to initiate a dialogue with them to find a way for their safe and secure rehabilitation in the Kashmir valley.

The executive said that every precaution should be taken to ensure free and fair elections in J&K. In view of past experience, it seemed unlikely that the present NC government would be able to help conduct free and fair elections, it alleged.

In its second resolution on J&K, the RSS spokesperson pointed out that people living along the border and the Line of Control in J&K were being exposed to repeated shelling and, as a result, had to shift to safer places for shelter. The executive expressed its deep concern for the residents of those areas. Even as the army had planted mines on 17,000 acres of land along the borders, in reality the farmers had lost access to nearly 70,000 acres of their land, it said.

110-1
25/6

Kashmir is our national interest: Musharraf

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 28. The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, says that the Kashmir cause is the "national interest" of Pakistan and that there is no question of compromising on the issue.

Speaking at the National Defence College here on Thursday, Gen. Musharraf said that his Government would never compromise on the "national interest." It was wrong to presume that the Kashmir issue had been "buried" in the recent talks with the United States and the Western Governments.

"No question of any compromise on Kashmir" has been Gen. Musharraf's refrain in the last few days, particularly since the U.S. made it known that he had committed himself to permanently ending infiltration across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. He is emphasising at every available opportunity that his Government has not compromised — nor will it do so — on the Kashmir issue.

Clarifying that Pakistan was pursuing its Afghan policy in the light of the changing circumstances, Gen. Musharraf said "but Kashmir is our national interest and we will never compromise on that." Policies could be changed but the "na-

tional interest" could not. To a question from the audience, he said that Pakistan and Kashmir co-existed. The issue needed to be resolved amicably through peaceful means, in accordance with the United Nations resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Gen. Musharraf, who was given a presentation on the "suggested National Security Strategy for Pakistan" strongly defended the package of constitutional amendments proposed by the National Reconstruction Bureau.

Rejecting a proposal to make the Prime Minister the head of the National Security Council instead of the President, Gen. Musharraf said the Council would have to be headed by the President to ensure strong checks and balances among the three "power brokers" — President, Prime Minister and Chief of Army Staff. "I don't have any political agenda and ambitions, and that is why I feel that the President should head the NSC." He justified the proposed restoration of the presidential power to sack the Prime Minister if he or she acted against the "national interest." The main objective of the NSC would be to facilitate the Prime Minister and "not" create hurdles in his way as was wrongly perceived by some.

29 JUN 2002

Abdullahs' Autonomy

From Abdullah to Abdullah to Abdullah, possibly to the next Abdullah. Perhaps this was the message the Abdullah family wanted conveyed; indeed placed prominently next to father Omar Abdullah at the latter's installation ceremony was little Zameer, Omar's elder son and a fourth generation Abdullah. Unfortunately for Kashmir's unofficial royals, India is still a democracy, with dynastic successions necessarily having to be legitimised by elections. And that must surely explain why the otherwise amiable father-son combination has lately been preaching fire and brimstone sermons. Had things gone their way, Abdullah senior would have been in line for vice-presidency, and elections to the state assembly held under the stewardship of Omar. With Abdul Kalam destroying Farooq's hope for at least the next five years, the elder Abdullah must find other ways to kill time. It is nobody's case that Farooq and Omar Abdullah are not entitled to feel aggrieved or that their autonomy demands are unjustified. If anything is amiss here, it is the timing of their grievance and the manner of conveying it. The last time the Abdullah duo had gone on the warpath was exactly two years ago, when the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly formally adopted the autonomy resolution.

Back then, Farooq Abdullah's National Conference had all but pulled out of the Vajpayee government. The autonomy demand was put on the backburner, as soon as the differences were sorted out. The NC, in fact, went on to become one of the staunchest supporters of this government. The partnership continued unhindered till the Gujarat riots signalled a change of tack. Though a minister in the Union government, Omar lambasted the Centre and even declared his readiness to resign from the council of ministers. It was another matter that the aggressive stand coincided with the NC's plans to move Omar to Srinagar as party president. Typically again, the quarrel proved to be short-lived, with Omar continuing as minister of state for external affairs and official whispers suggesting that Farooq was due to be promoted to vice-president. That the renewed demand for autonomy follows Farooq's missed date with the vice-presidency is not a coincidence, and indeed, as much has been admitted by the two Abdullahs. Omar is on record as saying that his father has not been suitably rewarded for services rendered to the nation. The Centre needs to heed Kashmir's cry for autonomy. However, autonomy for the state must not be confused with autonomy for its 'first' family.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

27 JUN 2002

FAROOQ, OMAR MEET VAJPAYEE

'Centre willing to discuss devolution of powers'

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, JUNE 26. At a meeting with the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, the two Abdullahs — the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, and his son and Minister of State for External Affairs, Omar Abdullah — raised the issue of autonomy for the State this evening, an issue which their party, the National Conference, is expected to use as a main election plank.

It seems that at the 35-minute meeting, Mr. Vajpayee did not reject the demand outright but hinted that the Centre could talk about "devolution of more powers" to the State Government. Later, talking to the press, Omar Abdullah made it clear that the NC would like to open a dialogue on this with a representative of the Centre so that specifics could be discussed.

Clearly, the start of a formal dialogue with the Centre on "autonomy" or "devolution of more powers" would come as a welcome break for the NC which will be fighting Assembly elections later this year.

Yesterday, at a convention in



The National Conference president, Omar Abdullah (left), talking to presspersons outside the Prime Minister's residence in New Delhi on Monday even as his father and the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, looks on. — PTI

Srinagar where the younger Abdullah took over the responsibility of president of the NC from his father, the two had lashed out at the Centre for failing to rein in the "terrorists" in the Sangh Parivar and going back on a promise to nominate Farooq Abdullah as the Vice-President.

Omar Abdullah today told re-

porters that while he had not offered to resign from his job as Central Minister — nor had the Prime Minister asked for his resignation — he had told Mr. Vajpayee that he could not do justice to his job as Minister of State. There was also a hint that as the NC president, it would not be proper for him to hold a junior portfolio in the Council

of Ministers although he refused to comment on the possibility of his elevation to Cabinet rank. It may also be recalled that Farooq Abdullah had yesterday rejected the idea of serving as a Minister in the Vajpayee Government, and this has led to speculation that he could continue as the Chief Minister and his son could be elevated to Cabinet rank.

The earlier expectation in the NC was that Omar Abdullah would be projected as the Chief Ministerial candidate in the Assembly elections later this year — it would be an advantage to present a new face to the electorate — and the senior Abdullah would be "accommodated" as the Vice-President when elections for that post take place in August.

Now, with A.P.J. Abdul Kalam as the Centre's candidate for the President's position, Dr. Abdullah's chances have virtually disappeared as it is not considered politically wise to have a minority candidate for both the posts, and it seems that a new "formula" is being worked out.

No going back on demand: Page 12

25 JUN 2002

KASHMIR FRAGMENTS

25/6 11-12 8803R
There is considerable merit in the demand for autonomy made by the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mr Farooq Abdullah. It is unfortunate that the Centre has rejected the idea without giving it serious consideration. Simultaneously, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's revival of the call for a division of the state along communal lines signals that extremist forces may be taking advantage of the dangerous drift in the Centre's policy on Kashmir. There is, of course, bound to be cynicism regarding Mr Abdullah's strident expression of support for autonomy at the event in Srinagar organized to appoint his son, Mr Omar Abdullah, the president of the National Conference. Critics will relate the chief minister's declaration that "peace was not possible without autonomy" to the forthcoming assembly elections in the state. This criticism misses a larger point. Autonomy carries a tremendous resonance with the people in Jammu and Kashmir because it is felt that puppet leaders from the state colluded, over time, with the Centre and eroded the autonomy promised by the Constitution. Restoration of autonomy will go a long way in reviving the people's confidence in the Indian Union.

Granting autonomy to the state will not weaken its relationship with India. Autonomy must be viewed in terms of empowering people, making people feel that they belong, and increasing the accountability of public institutions and services. It is synonymous with decentralization and devolution of power. Indeed, there is no contradiction between wanting Kashmir to be part of the national mainstream, and the state's desire for autonomous self-governance. Separatism grows when people feel disconnected from the structures of power and the process of policy formulation; in contrast, devolution ensures popular participation in the running of the polity. What, however, is a recipe for disaster is the VHP's demand for a division of Jammu and Kashmir into four parts. Not only does it want a separate statehood for Jammu and Union territory status for Ladakh, but it is also seeking to partition the Kashmir valley to create a special enclave for Kashmiri Pandits. This could lead to violent social disruptions in the state and create a communal polarization that would irretrievably destroy the cultural and social fabric of Kashmir. Division would forever end the possibilities of reviving the plural traditions of communal harmony in the state. It is imperative for the Centre to not just pay greater thought to the question of autonomy, but also immediately reject the preposterous idea of the division of the state.

THE TELEGRAPH

25 JUN 2002

28K

BJP says no, Left for debate

HD 1 29/6

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JUNE 23. Political parties have diametrically opposite views on "autonomy" for Jammu and Kashmir, an issue that was opened again today by its Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, and the newly-anointed president of the National Conference and Minister of State for External Affairs, Omar Abdullah, at their party convention in Srinagar.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rejected any demand for autonomy, taking its cue from the Vajpayee Government which rejected it outright when the State Assembly adopted a resolution to give voice to this demand two years ago. The BJP stand was and continues to be that there was no question of going back to the State's pre-1953 status. The party spokesperson, Sunil Shastri, pointed out that the State enjoyed a special status and that several times in the past "special packages" had been announced for it.

The Left parties maintained that the question of autonomy should have been considered and that it was a political blunder not to do so. They pointed out that even in 2000 — when the Assembly passed the resolution — the Left had articulated its dis-

agreement with the Vajpayee Government's decision rejecting it. "The Left parties had condemned the move and said that the autonomy resolution should have been discussed instead of being rejected outright," the CPI national secretary, D. Raja, said.

The Congress has taken note of the noises from Srinagar and its spokesperson, Anand Sharma, said it would give its reaction after the party's Kashmir Committee meet tomorrow to discuss the issue. The Congress has for long favoured autonomy within the package of the Sheikh Abdullah-Indira Gandhi pact; also the former Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, had talked about full autonomy, "short of *azadi*".

Several parties also see the shenanigans of the NC leaders as nothing but pre-election gimmicks. The Congress did not want to comment on the "internal affairs" of the NC and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), pointing out that despite the harsh criticism of the Centre by the NC leaders Mr. Omar Abdullah continued to be a Minister in the Vajpayee Government.

Although the BJP has been taking the pronouncements of the two Abdullahs with more than a pinch of salt — after all they have to prepare the ground for the coming

Assembly elections, the party has argued — today it was taken aback by the ferocity of the attack on the Centre and the Sangh Parivar.

The comparison by the Abdullahs of terrorists in the State to the 'terrorists' of the Sangh Parivar was quickly denounced by Mr. Shastri as an "irresponsible statement". Nor was the BJP prepared to accept that the communal carnage in Gujarat and the demolition of the Babri Masjid 10 years ago were terrorist acts involving the Sangh.

Mr. Raja did not mince words when he described the NC leadership as "opportunistic". He said the Farooq Abdullah-led NC continued to be part of the NDA even after the Vajpayee Government rejected its autonomy resolution. "It shows that Dr. Abdullah's party is opportunistic. Its representative remains in the NDA Government even after Ayodhya (issue being raked up again by the VHP) and the Gujarat violence."

The CPI(M) held the position that the State should be given maximum autonomy. It said that without assuring the Kashmiri people of their identity and fulfilment of their democratic aspirations within the Indian Union, the separatist and fundamentalist force could not be countered.

THE HINDU

24 JUN 2002

'VERDICT AGAINST OUR SCRIPTURES UNACCEPTABLE'

HO-1 24/6 9 SA - 23K

VHP for division of Kashmir

By C.K. Chandramohan

HARDWAR, JUNE 23. The Kendriya Margdarshak Mandal of the VHP concluded its meeting here today, with a call to Hindus to ensure the success of its crusade to safeguard the interests of the minorities (Hindus) in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting demanded the division of the Kashmir valley and creation of a Union Territory for Kashmiri Pandits. Similarly, Ladakh should be made a Union Territory. A five km-wide belt along the border with Pakistan should be handed over to the Army and Article 370 of the Constitution which conferred special status on the State withdrawn immediately, it said.

Describing the Godhra incidents as a manifestation of Islamic atrocities against Hindus, the meeting urged the majority community to "beware of Godhra-type incidents that may

take place anywhere and at anytime".

It registered its "strong protest" against the politicians and "so-called secular forces" for maintaining silence over who set ablaze the Sabarmati Express even after the whole world condemned it as an act of Islamic militancy. These very forces had raised a hue and cry when Graham Staines was killed in Orissa, it said.

In another resolution, it criticised the Government for 'taming' the Ganga by constructing the Tehri dam. Perhaps the Government would preserve the sanctity of the Ganga by constructing a canal to bring water from the upstream of the reservoir to the river downstream, it said. The VHP international general secretary, Praveen Bhai Togadia, said sadhus would reach Jammu on August 11 and organise a meeting for the abolition of taxes im-

posed on pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi and Amarnath. The tax imposed by the Farooq Abdullah Government was like 'jazia' and should be withdrawn before it is too late, he warned.

Later addressing presspersons, the Ramjanmabhoomi Mandir Nirman Samiti president, Ramchandra Paramhans said he saw nothing wrong in the Government amending the Constitution to pave the way for the construction of the Ram temple just as the Constitution was amended following the Shah Bano case.

No talks with Muslims

PTI, UNI report:

A day after retracting on its commitment to maintain status quo at the disputed site in Ayodhya, the VHP today said it would oppose a court verdict on the issue only if it went against the Hindu scriptures. It asserted that the temple would be

built at the disputed site without any bloodshed.

"We have never said we will not listen to the court. However, we will not abide by its verdict if it goes against our dharamshastras (scriptures)," Mr. Paramhans told reporters here.

The VHP international working president, Ashok Singhal, said he would meet the Kanchi Shankaracharya in New Delhi on June 25 and urge him to take back from the Government the written undertaking given by the Nyas to the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, ahead of the March 15 'shila daan' programme.

The VHP said it would also not hold talks with the Muslim leadership to resolve the tangle.

They said the VHP was least concerned if its stand on the Ayodhya issue affected the stability of the Vajpayee Government.

THE HINDU

24 JUN 2002

Delhi vetoes Fernandes on Hurriyat talks

FROM SEEMA GUHA

New Delhi, June 21: Senior government officials in the capital today ruled out any back-door role for Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir politics.

The government believes that the Hurriyat Conference's offer of triangular discussions with India and Pakistan is an attempt to carve out a role for Islamabad in the Valley.

While Delhi has welcomed the Hurriyat decision to begin negotiations, it is determined to ensure that Pakistan has no role to play.

The Centre will not clear the travel plans of any Hurriyat

leader who does not possess a passport.

The message is simple: the Hurriyat leaders' suggestion made earlier this week — of holding separate talks with India and Pakistan — is a non-starter so far as the government is concerned.

Despite defence minister George Fernandes welcoming the Hurriyat move to broker a ceasefire between militant groups based in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and Indian security forces, officials here are not keen on the suggestion.

"This is nothing but another ploy to get Pakistan into the picture. There is no role for Is-

lamabad here and we mean to keep it that way," a senior official said.

Fernandes today said: "There is no proposal with the Central government to have dialogue with them (the Hurriyat)."

When faced with a barrage of questions on the statement he made in Srinagar yesterday — "if they want a dialogue with the Centre, it can be considered" — the defence minister said he got an impression that the Hurriyat was keen on the talks.

The Centre has taken a strong stand on the Hurriyat as it had not responded to "our earlier invitation for talks", he said.

The government's priority at

the moment is to hold a credible election in the state. The diplomatic pressure it has mounted on Pakistan to stop infiltration and violence in Kashmir is all part of a strategy to conduct the polls smoothly.

The government wants the Hurriyat leaders to participate in the election.

"But the price they are asking for is too high. We certainly don't want the Hurriyat if it means getting Islamabad, too."

Ironically, while India is willing to hold discussions with Pakistan on all issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, it is unwilling to allow the Hurriyat

an opportunity to hold what the outfit calls "triangular discussions".

A senior official said there is a clear distinction between holding talks with Pakistan on Kashmir and getting Islamabad involved in the internal discussions with the Hurriyat.

Talks with Pakistan can include issues like the boundaries of Kashmir, the UN resolutions — which Islamabad will bring up — and India's claim to many areas in PoK, sources said.

"With the Hurriyat, our discussions will centre around the problems of the state, how to revive its economy and an autonomy package, which the Prime

Minister himself talked of. The Hurriyat certainly will not negotiate the status of Kashmir with New Delhi," an official said.

Delhi believes that giving in to the Hurriyat on Pakistan will be tantamount to losing the gains it has made in its diplomatic and military standoff with Islamabad.

Pervez Musharraf has been persuaded by the international community to prove his sincerity by bringing militancy in Kashmir to a stop.

He is ready to comply, at least for a while, by which time India hopes to complete the elections and start a fresh initiative in the state.



George Fernandes visiting forward areas in Jammu. (PTI)

Centre to consider Hurriyat proposals

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, June 20. — The All-Party Hurriyat Conference today got a shot in the arm when Mr George Fernandes said the Centre would consider its peace proposals. "We will consider those" proposals, the defence minister said.

The Hurriyat yesterday made proposals, including involvement of Pakistan in talks on Kashmir and sending the Army deployed in the state back to barracks.

He told reporters in Srinagar today on the sidelines of the exhibition, Kashmir Vision 2020, Mr Fernandes said though there was a "decline" in infiltration, there was no respite in terrorist attacks resulting in civilian deaths everyday.

"Terrorist attacks in J&K continue. Militants continue to strike and kill innocent people. The Army and other security forces are engaged in

Kashmir seminar

UNHQ, June 20. — India is pleased with Mexico for organising a seminar on Kashmir today, in which the list of speakers is weighed in favour of Pakistan, sources said here. "The meeting has not been publicised and is being arranged quietly. The UN Journal which lists the events to take place every day does not mention it," they said. — PTI

neutralising the ultras here", he said.

Ruling out any immediate de-escalation, Mr Fernandes said they would have to wait for few more months in view of the bitter experience with the neighbouring country. He refused to give any time frame to completely eliminate militancy.

"Troops would remain mobilised on the border as long as it is essential", he said.

Mr Fernandes said tempora-

ry militant training camps still exist on Pakistan's soil. "After the 11 September attacks, the neighbouring country changed the strategy and closed down the big and strong camps due to the fear of attack from India."

The BJP today rejected the Hurriyat offer to hold talks separately with the governments of India and Pakistan, adds SNS from Delhi. The party urged the government to reject the offer and said that the APHC was free to talk to the Indian government within the framework on the Constitution.

Hizb finance chief held: The district finance chief of the Hizbul Mujahideen, Md Ramzan Bhat, was arrested in Doda yesterday and Rs 6.96 lakh, meant for disbursement among the outfit's activists, seized from his possession. Police said he was operating in Doda for two years in the garb of a teacher in a school earlier run by a Jamaat-e-Islami activist.

THE STATESMAN

23 JUN 2002

Hurriyat for triangular talks

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JUNE 19. The All-Party Hurriyat Conference today floated a new idea to begin the process for resolving the Kashmir issue. Instead of tripartite talks, its chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat, favoured triangular talks simultaneously with New Delhi and Islamabad.

He also put in abeyance its "election commission" given the "stubborn attitude of the Government of India".

"It will be triangular talks instead of tripartite. Modalities for such a process can be worked out," Prof. Bhat told a news conference here, adding "we can talk to India first and then go to Pakistan for a dialogue".

Referring to the Hurriyat general council meeting on Monday, he said "all members favoured talks to resolve the Kashmir issue peacefully".

Reiterating his demand for allowing the Hurriyat leaders to visit Pakistan to build a consensus, he hoped that "that can ultimately lead to a breakthrough on the vexed Kashmir issue". "We had proposed to the Government of India to allow some leaders to visit Pakistan for building a consensus, but they

did not agree. Then we mooted a plan called 4:3. That means that four executive committee members would talk to New Delhi and three talk to Islamabad simultaneously to break the ice on Kashmir. This too was not accepted. Now we are saying let them allow us to visit Pakistan and talk to the militant leadership for the cessation of hostilities."

Outlining the proposals, Prof. Bhat said that all the forces, including the Army, should be withdrawn and sent to the barracks, the role of gun should be stopped, human rights violations put to an end and all the detainees released.

Efforts should be made for the safe return of the Kashmiri Pandits. Besides, the ban on public meetings should be lifted, and restrictions on the movement of leaders removed.

"These proposals are necessary for creating a conducive atmosphere. If they are accepted, we may go for rapprochement and start this exercise afresh."

He said the Hurriyat had set up a "people's election commission" on January 28, for holding polls to determine the representative character of the separatists, but it was rejected on the floor of Parliament.

20 JUN 2002

World free to watch J&K polls: CEC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK & AGENCIES

Jammu: Chief election commissioner J.M. Lyngdoh on Monday warned the security forces of legal action if they tried to force voters to exercise their franchise in the coming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

He also said he was not averse to allowing in foreign observers but that they would not be part of the official team.

This assumes significance in view of Mr Lyngdoh's assertion that the coming elections will be "more fair and transparent than the elections in 1977" (when the Janata government was in power at the Centre), which are widely considered as the fairest so far in the state.

He told mediapersons that there would be no compulsion for anyone to exercise his or her franchise and that the job of the security forces would be restricted to reassuring voters in the state, not interfering in the poll process.

"Uniformed forces are not there to rig elections or increase the voting percentage. Their job is to sanitise the area, reassure the voters, who should go on their own to cast their votes," he said.

"No Indian can be compelled to vote. Anybody indulging in such activity will commit an electoral offence which will be prosecuted under the law," he said, adding that the security forces would also not provide any transportation for voters.

On the issue of allowing foreign monitors, he said, "Anybody from anywhere in the world will be given access to polling stations, but they cannot be part of our official observer team and we will not invite them.

"We will be sending the

- CEC not averse to foreign observers
- Lyngdoh warns security forces not to indulge in rigging
- 'No Indian can be compelled to vote'
- Mediapersons will be allowed free access to polling stations

best of our observers and handpick those who are not afraid of anybody," he said, adding that mediapersons would also be allowed free access to polling stations. "We are doing this deliberately and the media from all parts of the world will be given facilities to cover the polls as they are the best observers."

He said the Election Commission had taken several steps to ensure free and fair polls in the strife-torn state. "We have issued directions to the Union home ministry which, in turn, has directed the state administration on providing security to candidates and political parties."

He said at least one district-level representative of every political party would be provided with protection and that there would be no discrimination between the ruling and opposition parties on this count.

Also, for the first time, voters' slips would be given to the public by the election staff and not by political parties, he said. Although photo ID-cards would not be compulsory this time, they were being made on special currency paper to avoid tampering, he added.

The CEC said that he would examine carefully the complaints voiced by representatives of opposition parties that the ruling National Conference might rig the elections.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

18 1111 2002

19/6 9-8A-18K SFI Ultras kill 11 in Jammu

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, June 16.— Militants killed at least 11 people, including five members of a family, in three separate incidents in Jammu region since last night.

A group of militants attacked the house of one Shobha Ram in Udhampur district's Badar village early today. The militants fired indiscriminately killing Ram, his wife and two daughters aged 18 and 15 and a male member. Ram's son and two other daughters aged 10 and eight were seriously injured and have been admitted to a nearby hospital.

In another incident, three chil-

dren were killed when militants attacked a group of pilgrims headed for Hud Mata at Khora village in Doda district yesterday. Six others were injured, one seriously, in the attack.

Police said the militants threw grenades and fired from automatic weapons on the 200 pilgrims from a hill-top. Police and paramilitary personnel escorting the group retaliated, but the militants managed to escape.

The attackers later had an encounter with security forces in which two village defence committee members and a PHE staff were killed.

Police and Army have launched a search operation.

Pak shelling: Several houses and shops were damaged in mortar fire and shelling by Pakistani troops in Rajouri district's Laam, Larokha and Kampla villages last evening, adds PTI. Some cattle were killed and a government building was partially damaged in the shelling, but there was no report of any other loss of life.

Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged fire along the International Border at Garkhal, Old and New Kanachak, Golpattan, Chinore Form, Pargwal, Pallanwala and Londi in Jammu and Kathua districts last night.

Lashkar plan to set up bases foiled, page 2

THE STATESMAN

17 JUN 2002

MILITANTS FIRE RIFLE GRENADES

Farooq escapes attempt on life

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JUNE 15. Militants today made an attempt on the life of the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, by firing two grenades at the venue of a function attended by him at Hamza colony in Bemina near here.

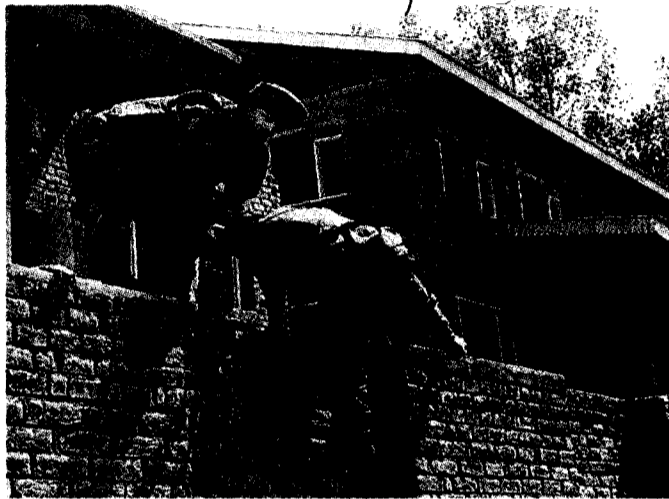
Mr. Abdullah, who was inaugurating the new complex of the State Board of School Education, escaped unhurt when the grenades missed their target and exploded almost 300 m away. There were no casualties. Senior police officials rushed to the spot and the locality from where the grenades were fired was sealed off.

"Mr. Abdullah was attending the inauguration ceremony at Bemina bypass when the grenades were fired at around 1 p.m.," the IGP, Kashmir range, K. Rajendra, said. "Militants fired two rifle grenades from Hamza Colony, around 700 m away from the venue. As the grenades were fired from out of their range, they landed some 300 m short of their target.

"One of the grenades hit the corner of the highway that divides the housing colonies from the area where the function was being held and exploded in the adjacent marshy land. The other failed to explode and was later defused by us."

Mr. Rajendra said the militants were unable to get closer to the venue because of the strict security measures. "We followed the sanitisation drill carefully and the area around the venue was checked meticulously. The grenades exploded so far away from the venue that it did not even disrupt the function. The Chief Minister did not even move and continued with the function."

Police had information that a new group called Al-Madina



Soldiers in search of militants who fired grenades at a venue where the Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, was attending a function, in Srinagar on Saturday. — AFP

was behind the attack. "Al-Madina is in fact a pseudonym for Al-Umar Mujahideen," he said. The group was led by Mushtaq Zargar, one of the three terrorists released in 1999 in exchange for the passengers of an hijacked IA plane.

Two pilgrims killed

UNI, PTI report:

Militants fired indiscriminately and lobbed grenades on a procession of pilgrims, killing two and injuring two others in the Khora-Kanthwara area of Kishtwar tehsil in Doda district this afternoon, official sources said here.

The militants fired from a hilltop in the area when the procession was on way to the Kud Mata Devi. Two of the four injured pilgrims later died, they said. Security personnel accompanying the procession retaliated, forcing the militants to retreat into the forest.

Heavy Pak. shelling

Indian and Pakistani troops

are locked in a fierce mortar duel at Paharpur and Pansar border outposts along the International Boundary (IB) in the Hiranagar sector of Kathua district since this morning, while both the armies exchanged mortar and artillery fire at the Drass, Batalik and Davar sectors along the Line of Control (LoC) throughout last night.

A senior military officer of the Northern Command said the Pakistani troops began sudden and heavy mortar shelling on the Drass, Batalik and Davar sectors and pounded forward Indian formations for some time.

In retaliation, Indian soldiers opened fire from similar calibre guns and the exchange of fire continued for several hours.

Thereafter, the Pakistani forces fired shells from heavy artillery guns to which the Indians retaliated. Soon after, the Pakistani guns fell silent. But the exchange of mortar and artillery fire continued at irregular intervals throughout the night.

16 JUN 2002

THE HINDU

Police recover classified papers at Geelani home

Srinagar: The police on Monday claimed to have recovered some classified documents from the residence of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani which showed the details of deployment of army and para-military forces in Jammu and Kashmir.

Inspector general of police (Kashmir range) K. Randendra Kumar said that a five-page document was recovered during the raids which continued for the second day on Monday. The documents contain information about the deployment of the army, paramilitary forces and the armoury, he said.

The police had slapped yet another charge under the Official Secrets Act on the former chairman of the Hurriyat Conference, he said and added that the matter was being investigated and anyone found guilty would be punished.

About the documents, he said they related to the pre-1999 Kargil war and had been sent to Pakistan. Mr Kumar said the police, along with income-tax authorities, were in the process of examining Mr Geelani's bank accounts and lockers. Regarding Ayisa Indrabi, chief of the Dukhtaran-e-Millat, Mr Kumar said the police had not been able to locate her but the search was still on.

Mr Kumar said the information stored in the computer seized from Mr Geelani's residence revealed funding of terrorist organisations.

Besides this, he said six packets of Rs 5,000 each were also recovered from separate envelopes apparently meant for disbursement to families of slain terrorists. Earlier on Monday, Iftikhar Geelani, son-in-law of Mr Geelani, was remanded to five-day police custody by a Delhi court following his arrest under the Official Secrets Act on charges of possessing classified information, including that on troops movements in Jammu and Kashmir.

Chief metropolitan magistrate Sangita Dhingra Sehgal handed over the custody of Iftikhar Geelani to the police till June 15 after the accused was produced before her on Monday afternoon by the special cell of the Delhi police. Iftikhar Geelani was arrested on Sunday after a search party recovered some classified documents from his residence here, official sources said.

Iftikhar Geelani is the resident editor of two Pakistan-based newspapers The Nation and The Friday Times besides being the bureau chief of the Jammu-based Kashmir Times. PTI

THE TIMES OF INDIA

11 JUN 2002

Tricky Turn in Valley

It's been a bitter-sweet weekend for Hurriyat leaders in Srinagar. On the one hand, the wedding of the charismatic Mirwaiz Umar Farooq. And on the other, the arrest under POTA of the alliance's most vocal ideologue, Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Expectedly, the arrest has sparked off protests, though the government claims it has a watertight case against Mr Geelani. The predicament of the Kashmiri political parties is clear: After the brutal murder of Abdul Gani Lone, to have sided with the government's action would have meant inviting the wrath of the jihadis. The timing of the arrest also complicates the ongoing Central initiative to seek the participation of separatist Valley leaders in the coming elections. Yet, there is no denying the track record of Mr Geelani, a self-proclaimed Pakistani sympathiser and member of the conservative Jamaat-e-Islami party. The Jamaat's military wing is, in fact, the Hizbul Mujahideen. Mr Geelani would most certainly be guilty, should it turn out that he channelled funds from the ISI to Srinagar-based insurgent groups. Significantly, the arrest coincides with a widely-perceived turn in the tide of Kashmiri opinion against Islamabad. 9.8.02

In other words, it is a tricky road ahead for New Delhi. One wrong turn, and it could be a dead end. It is of utmost importance, then, that the government submit incontrovertible evidence of Mr Geelani's guilt. Other than dampening the popular mood, failure to do so could also weaken the Centre's stand on Kashmir, which after 9/11 has gained a modicum of international legitimacy. Conversely, if handled judiciously, the arrest could even become a major component of India's ongoing diplomatic offensive against Pakistan. It would be worth New Delhi's while to rope in intelligence agencies from the US and UK to investigate the charges against Mr Geelani. This could usefully unearth the financial channels that New Delhi insists pass through Islamabad and fund jihad in Kashmir and elsewhere. At the same time, the Centre would do well to soften the blows from its stick by dangling the carrot of goodwill and friendship before the more moderate Kashmiri political leaders. Towards this end, prime minister Vajpayee must also differentiate between the various constituents of the Hurriyat. The JKLF's Yaseen Malik and the Awami League's Mirwaiz Farooq are by no means dyed-in-the-wool jihadis. At all costs the Centre must desist from viewing the 'secular' Abdullah family as the only available option for Kashmir.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

11 JUN 2002

CASH, DOCUMENTS SEIZED IN RAID

Geelani, son-in-law arrested under POTA

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, JUNE 9. The former All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) chairman, Syed Ali Geelani, and his son-in-law, Mohammad Altaf Shah, were arrested under POTA during the wee hours of Sunday, following raids by police and Income Tax officials at nine places in the Kashmir Valley to choke the channels of militant funding. Rupee notes worth lakhs, \$ 10,000 notes and a large number of documents have been seized from Mr. Geelani's residence.

Sources told *The Hindu* that Income Tax personnel and police raided Mr. Geelani's Hyderpora residence and arrested him. Around 4.30 a.m. he expressed a desire to offer morning prayers but he was told to offer them at the airport. Before the search at his two-storey bungalow began, he was taken to the Air Force airport where a BSF plane was kept waiting. Senior cardiologist, Khurshid Iqbal from the Soura Medical Institute travelled with Mr. Geelani (who has a heart condition) while he was flown to Ranchi to be lodged in the Central Jail there.

The search at the residence was continuing till late in the evening. Police and paramilitary forces have been deployed in the area. The modus operandi for conducting raids was worked out at a high-level meeting between I-T officials and a police team led by the Inspector-General of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, K. Rajindra Kumar. The officials have been flown to Srinagar in a special flight from Delhi.

The Director-General of Police, Ashok K. Suri, at a hurriedly-convened news conference said the arrest of a Kashmir-based detective agency owner, Imtiyaz Bazaz, on May 25 had brought to light Mr. Geelani's involvement in channelising finances from Pakistan's ISI through a U.K.-based Kashmiri expatriate and president of the World Kashmir Freedom Movement, Ayub Thukar, for militant leaders including the Dukhta-



Syed Ali Shah Geelani being taken into the Birsa Munda Central Jail in Ranchi on Sunday. — PTI

ran-e-Millat chief, Asiya Indrabi. Interrogation of Bazaz and also investigations in the case revealed that Syed Salahuddin, Pakistan-based supreme commander of the Hizb-ul Mujahideen, had been sending money to his commanders through Dr. Thukar and Mr. Geelani.

The police officer said that in

India may seek deportation; More raids in Delhi; Change in Centre's thinking; Page 11

the beginning of 2001, Mr. Salahuddin had sent a consignment of Rs. 48 lakhs to Mr. Geelani through Dr. Thukar. The arrest of Asiya's husband Qasim Faktoo who was financial chief of the Jamiatul Mujahideen, led to a severe financial crunch and Asiya started getting money from Thukar through Imtiyaz Bazaz to provide funds for the JuM and the DeM.

A joint team of police and I-T officials raided nine places, including those of Mr. Geelani and his son-in-law, Asiya Indrabi and Abdur Rashid Saraf in Baramulla.

The recoveries from the search of the Hyderpora residence of Mr. Geelani include cash of Rs. 10,25,000 and \$10,000, vouchers relating to the purchase of a large quantity of jewellery, documents relating

to the purchase of properties in Srinagar, one diamond-studded watch with an inscription 'From the Pakistan Government', three vehicles, passbooks of several bank accounts, locker keys, two computers with details of transactions and a list of militants, and secessionist propaganda literature.

According to an initial assessment of I-T officials, the monthly income of Mr. Geelani is more than Rs. 1,50,000 which is against his declared income of Rs. 7,100 as pension for being a former MLA and Rs. 10,000 from agriculture. From the residence of Mr. Fantoosh too, several documents relating to the purchase of properties have been seized. During the raid conducted at the residence of Mr. Geelani's driver, G.M. Baba, the latter has been found in possession of a truck and a drilling machine worth Rs 1.3 lakhs. Searches are on to arrest Asiya Indrabi and others.

APHC calls for strike

The APHC has strongly reacted to the arrest of Mr. Geelani and called for a general strike protesting against it on Tuesday.

PTI reports from Islamabad: Pakistan has strongly criticised India for arresting Mr. Geelani in "utter disregard" of fundamental rights and demanded his immediate release.

HD-8 Infiltration across LoC in Kashmir has come down: U.S. 9/6

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 8. The United States is saying that it has detected a significant reduction in the infiltration across the Line of Control into India. At the same time there is the reluctance to commit itself on whether this infiltration is "enough" to set off expectation that India should take a step on its part to lower tensions.

"In terms of what we see going on, I would say we have growing indications that infiltration across the Line of Control is down significantly. But I would also say we can't at this point say that this change has been done on a permanent basis. And that's what President Musharraf has promised; that's what we're looking for," the State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, said.

Asked if what he had seen so far was enough to "trigger your expectation" that India take a

step on its part to lower the tensions, Mr. Boucher replied, "I'm not quite in a position to say that at this point".

He pointed out that the Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, was working in "some detail" with both India and Pakistan and reporting back regularly to the Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Mr. Armitage, on his return back to Washington, will be fully de-briefing the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, in Estonia. Mr. Rumsfeld is due in South Asia next week.

"We are looking with an end to infiltration across the Line. We'll be looking for reciprocating steps by the Indian Government. And that's the way we're talking about — we look forward to India taking these kind of steps at the appropriate time," Mr. Boucher said.

The administration in calling for India and Pakistan to step back and reduce tensions is also making the point that there are

various ways in which it could be done, including methods to monitor the Line of Control.

At the same time, the Bush administration is not prepared to disclose publicly how it is that the Line of Control be monitored.

"We would support any mechanisms agreed to by India and Pakistan to reduce tensions. This could include methods to monitor the Line of Control. And I realise there are various specific proposals out there about how this might be done; at this time I am not prepared to commit to any particular method of doing so. But if that's what the parties agree upon, that might be helpful," Mr. Boucher argued.

Mr. Armitage returns here over the weekend after what appears to be a constructive visit to India and Pakistan. The senior Bush administration official is said to have done some plain-speaking in South Asia

even while listening attentively to what is being said in the sub-continent.

"He (Armitage) conveyed to the Indian leaders the full tone and tenor of his discussions in Islamabad including President Musharraf's commitment to the United States to stop infiltration across the Line of Control permanently. We welcome Foreign Minister (Jaswant) Singh's statement that his Government is committed to carrying forward on the path of peace, and we look forward to India taking visible and concrete steps to lower tensions," the State Department spokesman said.

Now Mr. Rumsfeld is expected to "pick up" from where Mr. Armitage left off and is expected to focus on a number of issues including mechanisms to monitor the Line of Control.

One perception here is that the Bush administration is inclined to get involved in this along with Britain.

6 9 JUN 2002

THE HINDU

No infiltration taking place across LoC, says Hurriyat

Srinagar: The separatist Hurriyat



A.G. Bhat

Conference claimed on Wednesday that no infiltration was taking place across the Line of Control and maintained that it would not enter into a dialogue with India till New Delhi agreed to include Islamabad in the parleys.

"We outrightly reject the charge of cross-border terrorism or infiltration. There is absolutely no infiltration or cross-border terrorism and the ongoing freedom struggle in Kashmir is indigenous in form and content," Hurriyat chairman Abdul Gani Bhat told reporters here.

"No border exists in Kashmir. It is the Line of Control that divides the two parts of Kashmir. Why should the question of cross-border terrorism come up?" Mr Bhat said at a hurriedly-called press

conference.

The statement comes in the wake of international pressure on Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism and infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir. In the backdrop of a statement by British foreign secretary Jack Straw refusing to term the violence in Kashmir as a "freedom struggle", the Hurriyat Conference chairman said the international community should draw a line between a freedom struggle and terrorism.

Mr Bhat termed "balanced" the Almaty declaration adopted on Tuesday and claimed that it recognised the people's right to self-determination and made it clear that while seeking the settlement of disputes "we should be guided by the UN charter".

He refused to budge from the Hurriyat's earlier stand of tripartite talks. "Bilateral talks between India and Pakistan, and India and the peo-

ple of Kashmir have failed to address the issue (of Kashmir) so far. Therefore, we demand that when talks are held the people of Kashmir should be involved in to achieve a breakthrough," he said.

To a question about the parallel election commission set up by the Hurriyat, Mr Bhat said, "We have completed two important stages—its formation and nomination of members." With regard to the third stage, he said some important decisions would be announced soon.

Firebrand Jamaat-e-Islami leader and former Hurriyat chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who was also present at the press conference, alleged that political prisoners lodged in prisons outside the state were being subjected to mental and physical torture and demanded their return to valley jails.

He also appealed to the International Red Cross and Amnesty International to visit the prisons. PTI

AFP

0 1 2002

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Violence in the valley

5/4 Infiltration just one element 21/5

Given all the hype about sanctity of the Line of Control it is perhaps inevitable that the current focus, both domestic and international, is on pulling the plug on the infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir. Yet any meaningful attempt to curb violence in the state will have to be an exercise more comprehensive than preventing cross-border movement of jihadis. Even if that were possible now it would not guarantee an end to the killings because there is evidence to point to the level of induction already strong enough to strike hard. Contrary to common perception, the winter snows only limit the movement across the LoC — they do not block it. Intelligence reports speak of an estimated 450 hard-core “foreigners” having entered J&K this year, operating with local members of the various tanzims they constitute a substantial force of terror. Between now and the elections to the state legislature a massive internal operation is required to thwart their endeavours. What both India and the international community will have to demand from Pakistan — and ensure that the demand is met — is a lot more than sealing off routes of ingress. An end to the funding, recruiting, training, arming and controlling of militant outfits must be insisted upon. The intercept of radio communications, the sophistication and quantum of weapons seized over the years, and what interrogation of the captured militants has revealed should leave no one in any doubt about it being a well-planned, full-fledged operation under way in J&K — not just several groups of armed fanatics pursuing their own gory agendas. Musharraf might find it possible to create an impression of cracking down on infiltration, well aware that the number of militants currently holed up in the state will last for quite a while. A case of willingly shutting the stable door in the knowledge that the horse has long bolted.

The Americans and their partners in the so-called coalition against terror have already unearthed in Afghanistan solid proof of how the Pakistani authorities provided both men and material to the religious fanatics there. They are fully in the know of how Pakistan has been nurturing and exporting militancy throughout the region — and beyond, as the Russians will confirm. That proof and awareness must come into play if they are serious about de-escalating sub-continental tensions. It cannot be weighed against the “assistance” Pakistan has provided by allowing American planes to use its airfields and facilities. Pressuring Musharraf to crack down on infiltration will have only cosmetic value, the assembly-line of terrorists in Pakistan has to be dismantled. In that larger picture the Line of Control is a mere reference point, infiltration only one component of what the army has, for some years now, been calling the “fourth Kashmir war.”

THE STATESMAN

31 MAR 2002

'Farooq should answer who killed my father'

MUFTI ISLAH
HANDWARA, MAY 27

SLAIN Hurriyat leader Abdul Gani Lone's younger son, Sajad, has reiterated his accusation against Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, labelling him as his father's "assassin". He has also demanded an impartial inquiry into the killing.

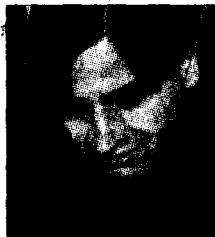
Addressing a rally for the first time since his father's death, Sajad said: "There are two kinds of people who killed my father — the one who actually shot him dead and the other who helped in plotting the killing...I started thinking who benefits and who loses from his death. Today, it has struck me that the only person who will benefit from his killing is Farooq Abdullah. He is my father's assassin." Over 15,000 people attended the rally, one of the biggest in the last decade. "*Mera baap ek siyasat ka mohra ban gaye* (my father became a pawn in politics)," said Sajad, who has taken over as the new chairman of the People's Conference.

Stating that his father was attacked thrice in the last one year, Sa-

jad added that the Abdullah government had dismissed the attacks as stage-managed. "I want to tell him now, was he faking the attacks," he said, adding, "Abdullah should now answer how my father was killed. Why was there a security lapse? He should own up to the murder and call for an impartial probe."

Sajad said his party would continue to pursue his father's strategy to fulfill his vision for the betterment of Kashmir and Kashmiris. "My father was a thinking politician. He would devise strategies which would claim minimum lives in Kashmir, and yet keep alive the issue (of Kashmir)," he said, adding, "he would adopt a strategy which would be acceptable to the world. I think that is why he was killed." Telling his supporters not to lose heart, he said: "Lone's death is a great loss but we have to take his initiatives forward."

Lone's other son, Bilal, added: "Those who accused him of selling out the cause should understand how fiercely he was supporting the Kashmir cause. This gathering is an answer to them."



INDIAN EXPRESS

Countering terror in Jammu

By Balraj Puri

HD-100 27/5

THE KALUCHAK massacre and the attack on the Raghunath temple two months earlier reinforce the need for rethinking the security strategy for the Jammu region. So far, the approach has been to treat the violence as a mere extension of the militant movement in the Valley; when due to the mounting pressure of the security forces, militants on the run took shelter in the Jammu hills. This has proved to be a fatal miscalculation.

The differences in the topography as also the character, composition and objectives of the militant groups active in the two regions have to be factored in while evolving a game plan.

The shift in strategy by those across the border in trying to convert the Kashmiri movement into a Muslim one and the consequent introduction of non-Kashmiri militants saw new depths of brutality being plumbed. For example, the killing of 25 Kashmiri Pandits at Wandhama and 35 Sikhs at Chhattisinghpora. But this created a far more adverse reaction among the Kashmiri Muslims than the perpetrators and their masters had anticipated. Unfortunately, the killing of five innocent Kashmiri Muslims by the security forces after declaring them killers of the Sikhs and later unsuccessful attempts at fudging the evidence caused confusion among the local people on the question of the culprits' identity.

Another factor in the shift in the militants' strategy was the expectation of a better response from the Muslim-majority parts of Jammu because the people there were ethnically closer to the new cadre of non-Kashmiri militants mostly hailing from Pakistan's Punjab province. There was also better access geographically and linguistically, to the Muslim-majority parts of Jammu. Moreover, unlike the Kashmir Valley, most parts of the Jammu region are hilly where people live in sparsely populated and scattered hamlets that

cannot be easily defended.

The new brand of militants started mass killings in the unprotected hilly areas of the region. About 25 innocents were cut to pieces at Prankote in Udhampur district, and about the same number at Chapnari in Doda district where two marriage parties were fired upon indiscriminately. A bus near Kishtwar was stopped and Hindu passengers were segregated from the Muslims and killed. About

colleagues and I have visited many sensitive spots. Our experience everywhere was that such visits invariably succeeded in removing misunderstandings and in restoring traditional relations between communities; which also brought down the level of violence. Thus, peace workers have as vital a role in containing militant violence against innocent civilians as the security forces. For, without local support militancy

Any measures being contemplated will be of little avail if the civil administration is paralysed and the political discourse remains vitiated.

20 Hindus were similarly separated near Padar in the northernmost part of Jammu and done to death. The list of innocent families brutally killed in fives or tens in the last three years is too large to enumerate here.

Of course, many Muslims met a similar fate when they were suspected to be informers of the security forces or pro-India. At Kalakote, 15 members of a Muslim family were roasted alive. Muslims are liable to be victimised by both sides. At places, security forces ignorant of local situations and personalities accepted the guidance of those seeking to settle personal or communal scores. Such lapses proved costly. In one case, 19 members of a big Muslim family were killed in Sallan in Poonch for which the State Human Rights Commission held the security forces responsible. In April alone, 30 members of four Muslim families in the same district crossed over the LoC to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

In the hilly areas of mixed population, militant activity sometimes provoked communal tension and vice versa. In such situations, Hindus seek security with the forces while Muslim youth swell the ranks of militants. Thus, one of the foremost objectives of militancy in the Jammu region is to deepen the communal divide. My

cannot survive.

Though, on the whole, the people of Jammu have behaved remarkably well, certain political developments have weakened their resolve. After the National Conference joined the BJP-led coalition at the Centre, both parties became more aggressively hostile to each other at the local level. For, their *raison d'etre* was threatened by this alliance. To reassure its followers that it had not given up its traditional role of opposition to what it called Kashmiri domination, the BJP would repeatedly demand the dismissal of the National Conference Government and find it indistinguishable from the militants. The National Conference leaders, to assure followers that the alliance with the BJP did not mean surrender of the secular agenda, at the local level expose the communal and anti-Muslim role of the BJP. Both parties are trying to consolidate their spheres of influence on a communal basis.

Moving a step further, the NC Government proposed to divide the Jammu region along communal lines. In a panic reaction, the RSS sponsored a movement for separate Statehood for Jammu. Without the support of the Muslim-majority parts of Jammu, it, in practice, reinforces the proposal of Farooq Abdullah.

The division of Jammu along communal lines is in no sense complete at the ground level. Nor would it be fair to term the entire Muslim following of the NC communal or sympathetic to the militants. But the signs of distrust was enough signal to encourage the militants to expand their area of operation till they started hitting Jammu city and adjoining areas.

The Government reacted by giving extra powers to the security forces through extension of the Disturbed Areas Act and the Special Powers Act to the entire Jammu region. But, reducing the powers and functions of the civil administration, has only added to the difficulties of the anti-militancy operations. For, only civil officers have the knowledge of who's who in every area. Security forces cannot acquire this during their brief stay.

Some of the loopholes in the security system that have been hinted at in the reports on the Kaluchak massacre — e.g. lack of coordination between intelligence agencies and the various security forces — need to be plugged. The reasons for the delay in fencing the international border have also to be addressed. Fresh pressure on Pakistan through "coercive diplomacy" and America's good offices to stop cross-border terrorism, should of course, be tried.

Any measures being contemplated will be of little avail if the civil administration is paralysed and the political discourse remains vitiated, and if frustration, insecurity, mutual distrust and alienation — from each other and the Government — among the people continue to grow.

At a time when the premier militant organisation of the Kashmir region and various separatist leaders are debating on a dialogue for a solution of the Kashmir problem, complete lack of thought about the situation and the people in the Jammu region can upset whatever progress is expected to be made on the peace moves in the Valley.

THE HINDU

27 MAY 2002

✓ ✓
YASIN MALIK REMANDED IN POLICE CUSTODY FOR SEVEN DAYS

Hurriyat Delhi office raided

9213 98 JUK

Statesman News Service 5/6

JAMMU, March 26. — The JKLF chief, Mr Yasin Malik, arrested under Poto, was today remanded in seven days' police custody while the police raided the Hurriyat Conference office in Delhi in connection with the seizure of one lakh dollars allegedly meant for the separatist outfit.

A team of police officials from the state's crime branch and Delhi Police searched the Hurriyat Conference office premises at Malviya Nagar in South Delhi looking for a friend of Mr Malik as also some documents, police sources said.

Reacting sharply to the raid, Hurriyat spokesman in Delhi Mr Abdul Majid Bandedy said that "we believe that the whole exercise is to scuttle the voice of Hurriyat.

In fact the vested interests in this country have always tried to sabotage any process aimed at peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue."

Mr Malik was today remanded to seven days' police custody by Udhampur's chief judicial magistrate, Mr HK Hanjura.

He was brought to Udhampur early this morning from Srinagar where a case had been registered against him under section 3 of Poto.

The CJM Udhampur also directed the principal of the Government Medical College, Jammu to constitute a team of experts to examine Mr Malik in custody who has a number of health problems and has undergone three surgeries. Mr Malik was brought to the GMC Jammu late in the afternoon where a team of doctors examined him.



Mr Yasin Malik being treated in a Jammu hospital on Tuesday. — PTI

In the Valley, police fired teargas shells to disperse JKLF activists throwing stones at vehicles and security personnel to protest against Mr Malik's arrest.

Meanwhile, the JKLF and the Hurriyat Conference called for a general strike in the Valley tomorrow to protest against the arrest.

Mr Malik was taken into custody in Srinagar yesterday following arrest of Shazia Begum and Mushtaq Ahmed Dar with one lakh

dollar, which they claimed was meant for him. **Qadri denial:** Altaf Qadri, the man who reportedly handed over the money in Kathmandu to a woman to be passed on to JKLF chairman Md Yasin Malik, has denied his involvement in the deal and threatened to complain to the UNHRC.

Speaking to the *BBC (Urdu)* last night from PoK, Qadri claimed he had never met Shazia Begum nor did he go to Kathmandu, adds UNI.

THE STATESMAN

27 MAR 2002

Hurriyat stand same as before

98 10 26 5
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

May 25. — Hurriyat hardliners' stand on the Centre has remained the same as it was before the Kaluchak killings and Abdul Gani Lone's murder. Even Western concerns over Pakistan's aid to militancy have not affected the hawks in the organisation.

Syed Ali Shah Geelani still rejects the fact that Pakistan sponsors terrorism, justifies the entry of foreign militants in Kashmir and maintains that the conflict in the Valley is a "struggle for self-determination", for "the just cause of a suppressed nation".

Mr Geelani said: "India has been supporting the Palestine cause. East Pakistan used to be a genuine part of Pakistan. When erstwhile East Pakistan started the struggle, India not only supported it diplomatically, politically and morally, but sent its troops to back them. Today, with the blessings of India there is no East Pakistan, it is called Bangladesh."

THE STATESMAN

7 6 MAY 2002

SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2002

IRTING THE MAIN ISSUE

X10-10
25/5

~~T~~HE ONLY TANGIBLE outcome of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's much-hyped three-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir is perhaps the announcement of a Rs. 6,100-crore-plus development package aimed at employment generation, more assistance for migrants and creation of crucial rail/road links. To be noted, however, is that a few of its project-specific components have figured in an equally impressive Rs. 7,200-crore package unfolded on the eve of the 1996 Assembly elections by the then Prime Minister, H.D. Deve Gowda. The rationale for such a massive economic support is unquestionable, given the crippling effect that the as-yet-uncontrolled scourge of insurgency has been having on the State's economic matrix and exchequer. Since joblessness and neglect of development imperatives themselves fuel insurgency, any initiative that seeks to address them needs to be welcomed. But also daunting is the stark reality that such massive doses of Central aid go substantially to benefit the unscrupulous politicians and power-brokers, leaving the targeted groups high and dry, and that several of the promised schemes never take off at all. Given this context, such grandiose announcements made ahead of the impending elections, as now, are bound to be seen as no more than gimmicks or sops.

If the primary purpose of Mr. Vajpayee's visit was to boost the sagging morale of the armed forces that remain mobilised along the LoC and the international border in Jammu and Kashmir for over five months now, it must be said to have been served by and large, what with the Prime Minister indulging in a binge of war rhetoric at Kupwara where he talked of a "decisive battle" ahead, a "new chapter of victory and triumph" waiting to be written and of "teaching a lesson" to the perpetrators of proxy war.

Where Mr. Vajpayee has strikingly failed to send positive signals, during his visit, is in critical areas of more immediate concern, and they have to do with political initiatives to end the longstanding

alienation of the people. Far from coming up with a political roadmap, so to say, indicating how the Centre proposes to go about cracking the core issues of the Kashmir conundrum, the Prime Minister did no more than stating rather blandly that his Government's doors are always open for "talks" and reiterating his "resolve" to ensure a free and fair election this time. As far as the poll exercise is concerned, apart from ensuring its smooth conduct, there is the question of enlisting the participation of Kashmiri nationalist groups that have hitherto chosen to remain outside the pale of the democratic process but now, in the changed global context and due to compulsions from within, at least several of them are known to be inclined to join the mainstream. The concerns of these elements, brought into sharp focus by the brutal murder of Abdul Gani Lone, a 'moderate' Hurriyat leader, were left unimaginatively unaddressed by the Prime Minister.

In fact, Mr. Vajpayee's responses to the media's queries on vital political issues carried no suggestion of any new initiative by the Government rendering unclear whether the Government's inclination was for the largely unfocussed and conceptually-flawed 'K.C. Pant mission' or a restoration of autonomy to the State. While the 'Pant initiative' ended up, not surprisingly, as a glorified 'grievances cell', the 'autonomy' issue, which is a matter of solemn constitutional commitment, is being treated rather lightly, with the Prime Minister tossing the ball into the court of the State Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah. For its part, the Centre has been calculatedly vague and prevaricating on the issue for reasons that have much to do with the BJP's ideological plank of abrogating Article 370. Dr. Abdullah's own blatant opportunism as reflected in his non-seriousness in pursuing the 'autonomy' objective has eminently suited its purpose. It must be realised that there can be no real solution in the absence of a devolution package that recognises the ground realities and is also consistent with the special provisions under Article 370.

25 MAY 2002

25 MAY 2002

PM, ADVANI MEET UNIFIED COMMAND BRASS

Rs 6,165-cr shot in the arm for J&K

Statesman News Service

SRINAGAR, May 23. — The Prime Minister announced a Rs 6,165-crore economic package for Jammu and Kashmir here today.

He also presided over the Unified Command Headquarters meeting this morning. It was attended by the home minister, Mr LK Advani, the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, the chief

minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, and Mr Omar Abdullah. Senior police and Army officers, including the corps commanders of the 16 and 15 Corps, were also present. Dr Abdullah later said aspects of security and the border escalation were discussed.

Later in the day, at a crowded press conference near the Dal Lake, the Prime Minister said he was disappointed with Gen. Musharraf for not fulfilling any of his promises of 12 January:

"Words must be matched by deeds ... that has not happened."

Mr Vajpayee termed the situation on the borders both "serious" and "challenging". "There is much tension ... We would meet the challenge. War clouds have receded, but sometimes clear skies, too, emit lightning." Asked about the possibility of war with Pakistan, the Prime Minister refused to commit to anything new, saying he had nothing to offer other than what he had said yesterday at the Kupwara camp. But he added in the same vein that India has been fighting a proxy

war in J&K for the past 13 years.

Reiterating the call to Pakistan to see reason, he said: "What I have observed here is that the people are yearning for peace ... there is a desire for normalcy ... they expect conditions to improve. The people want development...."

The Prime Minister's economic package outlines Rs 6,165 crore for projects on development and security, with the thrust on employment generation. It also covers relief for migrants and victims of border shelling.

The package envisages the completion of the Rs 3,600-crore 287-km Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail line in five years. "On 15 August 2007 the first railway will be flagged off for the Kashmir Valley."

He also promised the Jammu Tawi-Jalandhar line will be doubled in the next five years at a cost of Rs 385 crore. The completion of the Nimu-Kanged-Padam-Darcha Road link with the Manali-Sarohit

Road was announced for within the next four years at Rs 195 crore, as also the construction of the Rohtang Tunnel. The project would be flagged off on May 26 during his visit to Manali. The Batala-Kuhtwar-Simthan-Khanbal road will be completed in 2007 instead of 2013.

Another Rs 70 crore has been allocated for the textiles sector and Rs 200 crore for agriculture. Kashmir's traditional cottage industries of wool, pashmina, sericulture, handicrafts and carpet-weaving will be bolstered and revival

Turn to page 6

Pak promises under CCS scanner

NEW DELHI, May 23. — General Musharraf's recent assurances on fighting terrorism were discussed at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security this evening. India wants to see the statements being translated into action.

"The Pakistani President's promise that he would not allow his country's soil to be used for terrorism was merely a repetition of his 12 January assurances which had not been translated into action," the External Affairs Minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, told reporters after the hour-long meeting.

Mr Singh would not say whether Gen Musharraf's statements were conciliatory or a comedown. He pointed out that the situation on the ground was not very different despite the assurances.

Asked about the possibility of conflict, Mr Singh, who was accompanied by the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, said such questions were merely "speculative". He refused to discuss plans. Asked about military "temperatures" rising, he waived it aside: "Delhi was warm." — SNS

Polls won't help: Geelani, p6

Shelling in Punjab

BATALA, May 23. — Pakistan fired mortars at a village in Batala sector last night, damaging a house on the outskirts of Kotli Jawahar village near the border. No one was injured in the shelling which lasted an hour.

The Ferozepur DIG has directed police officers in border areas to be alert over subversive activity. The Punjab chief minister has also sounded an alert in border districts. — PTI

Editorial: Yes Prime Minister, p4

THE STATESMAN

24 MAY 2002

Kashmir is unfinished business: Straw

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, MAY 23. In remarks that are not likely to amuse New Delhi, the British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, has called Kashmir "unfinished business" and stressed that the question as to "who should run Kashmir was never fully resolved".

While his statement is consistent with Britain's official position that Kashmir is disputed territory, observers questioned the timing of Mr. Straw's statement coming, as it did, on the eve of his visit to India and Pakistan. It was deemed to be "undiplomatic" of him to make a comment that might be seized by critics to undermine the credibility of his "peace" mission.

"At a time when every little nuance is important, he should have been more cautious in his choice of words even if he was simply reiterating a familiar position," one seasoned commentator said, recalling how Mr. Straw's predecessor Robin Cook triggered a bitter diplomatic row with his remarks on Kashmir during a visit to India a few years ago.

In recent weeks, Mr. Straw, who has a good rapport with the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, has been extremely careful to recognise Indian sensitivities on

third party intervention in Kashmir, saying that ultimately it was for India and Pakistan to resolve their differences. But his reference to Kashmir as "unfinished business" is likely to revive New Delhi's old fears about the Labour Party's perceived pro-Pakistani tilt on the issue.

Mr. Straw made the remarks in response to a question on BBC's 'Newsnight' programme on Wednesday on whether he believed that Britain bore some "responsibility" for the current state of Indo-Pakistani relations, a fallout of the dispute over Kashmir. He acknowledged Britain's culpability, saying: "Who should run Kashmir was never fully resolved."

Indian diplomatic sources here said that they did not regard it as a "departure" from the British position.

Situation grave: Blair

The statement came as the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, described the situation along the Indo-Pak border as "very serious and grave" and urged both countries to "pause and reflect" before taking any action. In a balancing act, he asked Pakistan to stop supporting "any form of terrorism in Kashmir or anywhere else in the region", and wanted India to "offer a proper system

of dialogue to resolve all issues between the countries, including disputes over Kashmir".

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's address to troops, in which he said that the time had come for a "decisive battle", has fuelled British fears of war, with commentators terming the remarks "bellicose" and "unhelpful". The remarks have been sought to be compared with the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's "pledge" that he would not allow the Pakistani territory to be used for terrorist activities.

The Times called Gen. Musharraf's statement as an "eleventh-hour concession... to avert all-out war with India". In an editorial, it described him as "the most nearly reasonable leader India has had to deal with in decades".

Despite widespread sympathy for India's case on cross-border terrorism, New Delhi is now seen to be upping the ante — a perception reflected in newspaper headlines.

'India's war cry over Kashmir' read the banner headline in *The Independent* while *The Times* noted that 'Pakistan moves back from brink' and *The Daily Telegraph* said 'India sends warships to Karachi as a warning'.

24/5

24 MAY 2002

ECONOMIC PACKAGE:

(Continued from page 1)

of exportable tweed and the famous Kashmiri shawl focussed on. Agro-export zones for apples and walnuts and eco-restoration of degraded catchments of the Chenab, Jhelum and Shivalik are also on the anvil.

The Planning Commission will increase the Border Area Development Programme Fund by Rs 500 crore for five years. The package also provides for the Union home ministry raising two additional Indian Reserve

Police battalions for Rs 26 crore.

The Special Operations

Group of the

Kashmir Police

that is grappling

with the insurgency

will be provided Rs 25

crore for its

4,000 men over

the next five

years. Another

Rs 5 crore goes

for training and

arms for the

J&K Volunteer

Force, the elite group of special

policemen. Ex gratia payments to

families of special police officers

has been raised to Rs 2 lakh from

Rs 1.25 lakh each. Rs 8 crore will

be provided this year for the

Police Welfare Fund to upgrade

police hospitals, rehabilitate

widows of police personnel killed

in encounters and for schools of

orphans of police personnel.

A provision of Rs 10 crore has

been made for civic amenities of

migrants, and foodgrain and cash

assistance for them increased.

The upper limit of financial

assistance for Kashmiri migrants has been raised from Rs 2,400 per month per family to Rs 3,000.

At the evening press conference, responding to a question about the reaction of the separatist lobby after he did not meet any of its representatives, Mr Vajpayee invited them to New Delhi for talks with him. He said he had met a cross-section of the state's political leadership, but if any separatist leader wished to meet him in particular, he should come to Delhi.

Though the Centre was open

to dialogue with

the Hurriyat and

other organisations,

the Prime Minister

said these groups

were not ready

for talks as their

pre-condition

for dialogue was

to involve Pakistan.

Rejecting

Pakistan's inclusion

in any such

talks, he said:

"We had send

KC Pant for

dialogue with

Kashmiri groups, but the

Hurriyat boycotted him."

The forthcoming Assembly

polls could herald a new chapter

in the state's history. "People

can vote for a government that

will work for their development

without fear."

Mr Vajpayee also promised

free-and-fair elections. "The

Election Commission is on the

job for the smooth conduct of

the exercise. Voters' lists are

being revised... I met members

of some political parties and all

are craving for peace."

Nuke command

LONDON, May 23. — India's strategic nuclear command is expected to be in place by next month, four years after the country conducted underground tests and declared itself a nuclear-state. The SNC, to be commanded by the Air Force and based at Thiruvananthapuram, will function under the aegis of the integrated defence staff, the *Jane's Defence Weekly* has said. — PTI

THE STATESMAN

24 MAY 2002

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2002

LONE'S MURDER

EVERYTHING ABOUT THE brutal murder of the moderate and peace-inclined Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone, is a chilling pointer to the sort of challenge the nation is up against in Jammu and Kashmir both on the anti-terror and conflict-resolving fronts. First, its timing, on the eve of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's crucial visit to the Valley amidst heightened tension on the border; then, the occasion chosen for perpetrating the despicable act, the 12th death anniversary of Mirwaiz Mohammad Farooq; and above all the target itself — a leader who had distanced himself from the jihadis and had been a staunch advocate of a political solution through tripartite dialogue. The objective of Lone's assassins was obviously two-fold. One, to push India and Pakistan further along the mistrust-driven, dangerously confrontationist route they have chosen to take in the wake of their stand-off over the sensitive issues of cross-border terrorism and infiltration. And, two, to warn the Kashmiri nationalists, whether within the Hurriyat umbrella or outside it, against entertaining even the remotest idea of participating in the State Assembly elections due to be held a few months from now. It stands to reason therefore that any response to the cold-blooded gunning down of Lone or, for that matter, any other extremely provocative attack by subversive elements should be such as not to result in falling into the trap of the saboteurs.

True, the section of the Hurriyat leadership perceived as 'moderate' has not so far come out openly in favour of participation in the electoral process. On the contrary, in all its public statements, it has been as firm as the pro-Pakistan hardliners in rejecting the idea and rubbishing the process itself. What has, however, set it distinctly apart from the other groups is its apparent readiness to ask the jihadi and foreign mercenary elements to keep off the Kashmir 'struggle', and this positive attitudinal shift may be traced to the mainly Al-Qaeda-focussed global war on terror-

ism post-September 11, 2001. For quite some time now, there have indeed been authentic even if somewhat tentative signals beamed through informal channels that this centrist segment may not be totally averse to taking part in the impending electoral exercise. The sharp divide in the Hurriyat leadership, a predictable consequence of this 'soft' line, got accentuated after last month's Sharjah conclave attended by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, besides Lone, from this side of the LoC and Abdul Qayoom, head of the Kashmir Committee, from PoK. Against this backdrop, the physical liquidation of Lone must be seen, by the political establishment as well as the Kashmiri nationalists, not so much as a setback to the peace and electoral processes but as a challenge to their endeavour to uphold the democratic principle and establish a truly representative system of governance that answers the aspirations of the populace; it should indeed steel their resolve. In practical terms, this would require the Vajpayee Government to make the pro-peace Kashmiri nationalist leadership — a class most vulnerable to attack by terrorists — feel really secure, drawing right lessons from the case of Lone, and, more importantly, to ensure that the poll process is transparently free and fair.

Set in the larger perspective of the still unfinished tasks in the prolonging Al-Qaeda-centric anti-terror war and their implications for the vexatious militancy problem in Jammu and Kashmir, the murder of Lone would appear to be a part of the destabilisation game the pan-Islamic fundamentalist jihadi elements — desperate as they are because of the global campaign — have been playing in the subcontinent. Witness the fact that both India and Pakistan have suffered outrageous terrorist attacks. It is time the two neighbours, instead of indulging in gamesmanship and retributive actions, realised the unwisdom of allowing their relations to be held dangerously hostage by the insidious designs of these deadly jihadi terrorist groups.

THE HINDU

23 MAY 2002

'His fate was sealed at the Dubai meet'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MAY. 22. A section of the Indian intelligence establishment has sufficient reason to discern the direct involvement of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) in the assassination of the Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone. This judgment has apparently been reached on the basis of preliminary inputs from the Srinagar-based officials.

According to information available with the intelligence agencies, the decision to get rid of Abdul Gani Lone was made at a meeting of the "United Jihad Council" on May 17, four days before the killing. The meeting

was "attended by two senior ISI officers," besides representatives "of Pakistan-based and sponsored terrorist organisations such as the Laskhar-e-Taiba, Hizb-ul Mujahideen, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Al Badr."

The decision to liquidate Lone was passed on to the cadres in Srinagar and they promptly carried out the mission. It is pointed out that on March 18 a Pakistan-based militant "commander," Arif Jahangir, had threatened that the "mujahideen" would go after the Hurriyat leaders who dared to think in terms of the electoral process.

Intelligence officials are con-

2305
410-11
fident that they would be able to put together the clinching evidence once the investigation in to the Lone murder gets under way. But, for now, a conclusion is firming up that the assassination could not have been carried without clearance from the ISI brass.

The Kashmir watchers are convinced that Lone's fate was probably sealed when he took an uncompromisingly independent stand at a Dubai conference in April third week. The gathering was attended by Kashmiri leaders from all over the world and included Lone and Mirwaiz Umer Farooq from India, Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan from Pakistan, and Nazir

9-6-2002
Geelani, Gulam Nabi Fai, and Mustaq Geelani, all based in the U.S. and the U.K.

It is being recalled that at the conference, Lone had stridently argued that the people of Jammu and Kashmir were tired of militancy and those who did not live and suffer in Kashmir should stop romanticising "militancy"; according to him, the people of Kashmir wanted peace, though not necessary participation in the election process. The ISI officers who were monitoring the meeting are believed to have tried arm-twisting Lone into changing his line, but reportedly remained firm. "He signed his death warrant in Dubai," said an official.

23 MAY 2002

Hurriyat: A crowded house, a divided house

A brief history of the Hurriyat and its key players

THOUGH the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was formed on July 31, 1993, its essential idea predates 1989, when the first sounds of guns began to be heard in Kashmir. This disparate conglomerate which claims to represent the wishes and will of the Kashmiri people is a mixed bag of ideologies and personalities. Not surprisingly, then, contradictions and infighting have dogged the Hurriyat and have often slipped out from behind closed doors.

In its earlier avatar, the Hurriyat was a political front called the ten-member Tehreeki Hurriyat Kashmir (THK), headed by advocate Mian Qayoom. At the time, its members included the Jamat-e-Islami, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Muslim Conference, Islamic Student's League, Mahaz-e-Azadi, Muslim Khataween Markaz, Bar Association, Itehadul Muslimeen, Dukhtaran-e-Milat and Jamiat-e-Ahlihaadees:

■ The **JKLF**, whose founder Maqbool Bhat who was hanged in Tihar Jail on charges of killing an Indian Embassy official in London on February 11, 1984, represented youth disgruntled with India, especially with the National Conference.

■ The **Islamic Students League** headed by Shakeel Bakshi, a religious organisation, deemed Kashmir's accession to India as forced and "un-Islamic". Its cadres, generally radical youth, have always demanded Kashmir's accession to Pakistan.

■ **Mahaz-e-Azadi**, led by Inayatullah Anrabi, Kashmir should accede to Pakistan on the basis of religion, geography and emotions.

■ **Muslim Conference**, led by the present Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat, also wants Kashmir's accession to Pakistan.

One front closes, another opens

THE THK dithered along and was unable to exert too much influence until 1992, when Mirwaiz Moulvi Umar Farooq, chairman of the J&K Awami Action Committee (J&KAAC), called a meeting of religious, social and political organisations at Mirwaiz Manzil on December 27, 1992. The upshot of this meeting: In July 1993, the APHC was born.

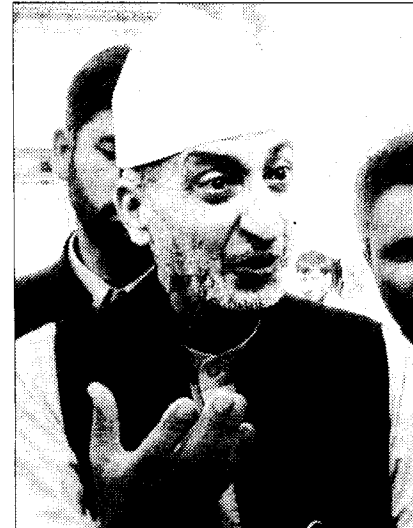
The APHC's executive council consists of seven members from seven executive parties. They are: Syed Ali Shah Geelani of Jamat-e-Islami, Umar Farooq of Awami Action Committee, Sheikh Abdul Aziz of Peoples League, Moulvi Abass Ansari of Itehad-ul-Muslimeen, Prof Abdul Gani Bhat of Muslim Conference, Yasin Malik of the JKLF and Abdul Gani Lone of Peoples Conference, who was assassinated on Tuesday. Apart from the executive

council, the Hurriyat working committee comprises 21 members. This include two members each from the seven parties besides one member who represents the party in the executive council.

The General Council has more than 23 parties as members including traders, employee unions and social organisations. While the membership of the executive council cannot be increased as per the APHC constitution, the general council can accommodate more members if it needs to. The Hurriyat also enjoys an observer's status in the Organisation of Islamic Countries.

Hurriyat Executive: The Big Five

Abdul Gani Bhat, Hurriyat chairperson



IT'S another one of those contradictions that Kashmir's politics is capable of throwing up: Hurriyat chairman Prof Abdul Gani Bhat's brother was killed by the pro-Pakistani Hizbul Mujaheddin; yet Bhat is staunchly pro-Pakistan, and supports Kashmir's accession to Pakistan.

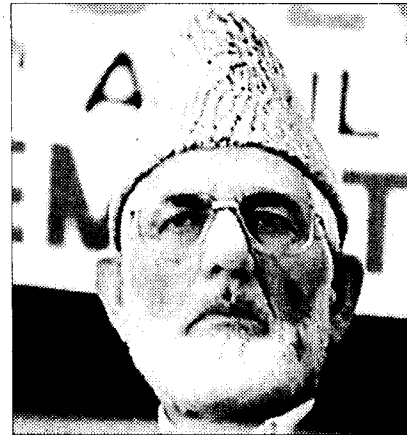
Perceived as an honest and simple leader — Bhat's son works as a driver for the Hurriyat — Bhat heads the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Front Conference. His party had led the movement in Kashmir against Dogra rule before the National Conference was carved out of it in 1938.

Born in the northern Kashmir village of Botengo, 10 kms from Sopore, Bhat studied Persian, economics and political science at Sri Pratap College in Srinagar, and then migrated to Aligarh Muslim University to pursue his post graduation in Persian and a law degree. He joined the bar in Sopore on his return, but then switched to teaching Persian at the Government College in Poonch. In February 1986, Bhat was dismissed from service for "constituting a threat to the security of state" — his Persian lectures

were often peppered with politics. He formed the Muslim United Front in 1986. It's believed the MUF's defeat in 1987 was the trigger for militancy.

Syed Ali Shah Geelani

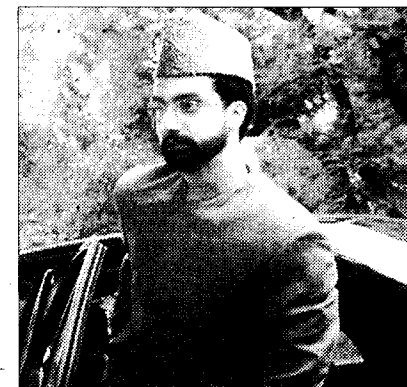
HIS is the loudest anti-establishment and anti-Indian voice in the conference. Also, the only leader whose stand on



militancy and talks has remained unmoved by upheavals in the Valley. This rightwing Jamat-e-Islami leader and teacher from Sopore has participated in elections and was elected to the State Legislative Assembly thrice. Geelani has also clocked more than 10 years in prison — he was first arrested as a 30-year-old on August 28, 1962. Geelani has never accepted that accession of Kashmir by Maharaja Hari Singh, with the Union of India was final, and wants the implementation of UN resolutions on the issue.

Geelani's acclaimed oratory has been instrumental in wooing youth to take up guns for a "jihad" against the "continued occupation of Kashmir by India". He remains the only separatist Hurriyat leader who still publicly pitches for militancy and opposes any peace initiative which doesn't sketch in Pakistan.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq



KASHMIR'S head priest has a great deal of weight on his young shoulders. The head preacher of Jamia Masjid Srinagar, Umar was anointed as head of the Awami Action Committee (AAC), a constituent of Hurriyat, at just 17, after the assassination of his father, Moulvi Mohammad Farooq, in May 1991. Considered a moderate, Umar favours res-

What the Hurriyat Constitution says

According to the APHC's constitution, it shall be a union of political, social and religious parties of the state of Jammu and Kashmir with its head office in Srinagar:

- To wage a peaceful struggle to secure for the people of Jammu and Kashmir in accordance with the UN charter and the resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council. The exercise of the right to self-determination shall include the right to independence
- To make endeavours for an alternative negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute amongst all the three parties to the dispute — India, Pakistan and people of the Jammu and Kashmir — under the auspices of the UN or any other friendly country, provided that such settlement reflects the will of the people
- To project the ongoing struggle in the state before nations and governments of the world in its proper perspective, as being a "struggle directed against the forcible and fraudulent occupation of the state by India"
- To make endeavours, in keeping with the Muslim majority character of the State, for promoting the build-up of a society based on Islamic values, while safeguarding the rights and interests of the non-Muslims
- To make endeavours for the achievement of objectives which may be ancillary or incidental to the objectives specified above

olution of the Kashmir issue through peaceful negotiations. Though he has never denounced the armed struggle, he maintains a safe distance from militant groups. Umar, who enjoys tremendous support in downtown Srinagar, is the only Hurriyat leader who accepts the restoration of autonomy as a step towards resolution of the Kashmir issue. Though the AAC was once considered as being pro-Pakistan, Umar has preferred to remain non-committal on whether he supports accession to Pakistan or prefers independence.

Moulana Abbas Ansari

THIS 65-year-old Shia leader represents the Itehadul Muslimeen. Since then he has been enjoying veto status in the Hurriyat executive. His political career spans over five decades, and he's regarded as being among the more hardline anti-India leaders. Born in Srinagar on August 18, 1936, the Moulana is from a reputed religio-political clan of Kashmir — the Ansaris — and studied at Lucknow's Islamic Theological School. He pursued his higher education at Najaf, in Iraq, in 1954, and counts Arabic, Persian and Urdu as among his spoken languages.

Ansari was the spokesman of the Holy Relic Action Committee in 1963 during the disappearance of the holy relic of Prophet Mohammad from Srinagar's Hazratbal shrine. He later formed a political party — People's Action Committee — along with the late Mirwaiz Moulvi Mohammad Farooq and Sofi Akbar. Soon after, the Moulana was arrested, released and re-arrested during the 1965 Indo-Pak war under the National Security Act. Let off two years later, he floated Anjuman-e-Itehadul Muslimeen. Ansari is also a founder-member of the State Plebiscite Front, which was wound up after the 1975 Indira-Sheikh-Accord, and of the founding members and later convener

of the Muslim United Front, which gave the National Conference a good run for its votes in the 1987 Assembly polls.

Yasin Malik, JKLF

POSTER boy of the militancy generation, Malik was one among the several Kashmiri youth who crossed to Pakistan in the late '80s for arms training. Malik was one among four area commanders — including Hamid Sheikh, Ashfaq Ajid and Javid Mir. The



'HAJY' group, as it was known, was allegedly tortured in police custody for its support to Muslim United Front (MUF) candidate Mohammad Yousuf Shah in the 1987 elections. Shah, of course, is now better known as Syed Salahuddin, chief of the Hizbul Mujahideen. Malik's stint as a militant was rather short-lived: In 1991, he was arrested and jailed for three-and-a-half years.

After his release on May 17, 1994, Malik was a changed man. Just four days after being released, he spurned violence and declared a unilateral ceasefire. Over time, though, Malik has lost his ground in the Valley. His credibility received a major blow after he was arrested for his alleged involvement in a hawala racket under POTA on March 25 this year. Malik denied the charge, but the dirt has stuck.

9-9/2002 Not Alone (11-14 2005)

Hurriyat leader Abdul Gani Lone's brutal assassination is a desperate attempt by the jihadi elements to keep the Kashmir pot boiling. That they targeted the softest face of the Kashmiri struggle is proof indeed that today the constituency for peace is growing in J&K. Undoubtedly, the intention of the assassins is to terrify the Kashmiri people and silence all voices of sanity before the September elections. If this diabolic design is to be thwarted by the Kashmiri people, they would need every assistance from the Centre. It is a characteristic of the Kashmiri movement that it was based, not so much on religious separatism, as on the composite identity of Kashmiriyat. This essential feature of the movement changed towards the end of the '80s, coinciding with Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism. At the height of this phase, there was arguably a measure of Kashmiri support for Pakistan. However, in recent years, there has been a marked shift away from Pakistan in the Valley. The cry for azadi may not have entirely died down, indicating continuing alienation from the Indian Union. But equally, it was clear that disillusionment had set in vis-a-vis Pakistan.

Not surprisingly, the popular mood got reflected within the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, which split between pro-Pakistan hardliners, represented by Syed Ali Shah Geelani, and moderates such as Lone and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq. Lone paid with his life for insisting that Islam was not an issue in the Kashmiri movement, a view that brought him into direct confrontation with the Geelani-led hawks. At a recent meeting of Kashmiri leaders in Dubai, Lone and the Mirwaiz had sought to end the use of violence as a strategy in the Valley, arguing instead for a political resolution of Kashmir. The needle of suspicion in the Lone assassination points across the border, as is clear from the reaction of Sajjad Lone, the slain leader's son: "I want to tell the world who did it. It is ISI, Pakistan and Geelani". For the moment, who killed Lone is not as important as why he was killed. The dastardly mission was carried out with the single aim of derailing the peace process in Kashmir. Not for long. Even the jihadis will ultimately learn that no campaign can be sustained without popular support. In the short term, though, they can only be defeated by an Indian government that acts with purpose to end the alienation of the Kashmiris.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

7 3 MAY 2002

SECURITY OFFICER KILLED, 7 INJURED; SON BLAMES ISI

Hurriyat leader Gani Lone assassinated at rally in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, MAY 21. The senior All-Party Hurriyat Conference leader, Abdul Gani Lone, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen here today, ahead of the visit of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, to the Kashmir Valley.

One of Mr. Lone's gunmen, Mushtaq Ahmed, was also killed and another injured when the assailants opened fire during a rally to mark the 12th death anniversary of the former Mirwaiz of Kashmir, Maulvi Mohammad Farooq, father of the senior Hurriyat leader, Umar Farooq, at Idgah Ground in old Srinagar city.

The 70-year-old Mr. Lone was rushed to the Soura Medical Institute, where he was declared "brought dead". He was shot in the heart, abdomen and thigh.

His driver said that two masked men, wearing police uniforms, approached and shot him and two bodyguards. A television reporter, Deepak Chaurasia, said that another man threw a grenade into the crowd, but it did not explode.

Official sources said that the attackers first hit Mr. Lone's personal security guard and then showered bullets on him from a distance. The Hurriyat leader collapsed on the spot.

At least seven persons were injured in the attack, which took place as the ceremony was about to end at 6.15 p.m. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack. In New Delhi, Mr. Lone's son, Sajjad Lone, said later that the ISI was behind the killing.

The Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat, who was present at the rally attended by a 5,000-strong crowd, said that he was escorting Mr. Lone after the ceremony but was separated from him because of the crowd. Shortly thereafter, he said, he heard the sound of gunshots and later realised that Mr. Lone and his gunmen had been shot.

Eyewitnesses said that earlier during the day a group of youths arrived at the Idgah Ground raising pro-Pakistan slogans. After Mirwaiz Omar Farooq said that "those raising pro-Pakistani slogans are government agents", a clash erupted between them and the Mirwaiz's supporters. However,



Wailing relatives of Abdul Gani Lone at the Idgah ground in Srinagar on Tuesday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

normality was restored after the youths fled the area.

It was only at the end of the meeting when the leaders and members of the public were leaving that two persons suddenly appeared and fired upon Lone, they said.

Mr. Lone's body was later brought to his Rawalpura resi-

dence, where hundreds of people had assembled.

Mr. Lone is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. One of his sons is married to the daughter of the Pakistan-based Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front leader, Amanullah Khan.

A founder executive committee member of the 23-party

Hurriyat, Mr. Lone had been a critic of 'jehadi' and foreign mercenaries and had indicated his desire for holding talks with the Centre for resolution of the Kashmir issue. He, along with Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, recently held talks with the leaders of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) in Sharjah, which created a con-

troversy and led to some differences within the grouping. Incidentally, he returned to Kashmir only last weekend after a month-long tour of the United States.

Lone, born in 1932, had served in the State Government before joining the separatist Hurriyat, where he was known as a moderate, open to dialogue, opposed to violence, and committed to the Kashmiris' right to determine their own future. Dialogue with the Government "does not mean heresy," he said. "We should always be open to a dialogue."

On Monday, Mr. Lone had given a lecture organised by Hurriyat, saying he was "not averse to talking with India or anyone else, and Kashmir, like any mature political struggle, should be innovative in its strategy".

Earlier, on April 1, Mr. Lone was manhandled by a Shiv Sena leader during a press conference in Jammu. He had said in November last that an Islamic militant group had threatened him. He had repeatedly said that the State and Central Governments, and the Jammu-Kashmir police had tried to kill him, in bomb explosions and gunfire at his house. — PTI, AP, UNI

Pakistan sees Indian hand

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 21. Pakistan has accused "operatives of Indian intelligence agencies" of killing the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leader, Abdul Gani Lone.

The killing was the main story of the nine-o'clock Pakistan Television news bulletin and the newscaster began it by announcing that he was murdered by "operatives of Indian intelligence agencies."

"Immediately after the announcement, the Additional Secretary in the Pakistan Foreign Ministry, Kamram Naiz, told PTV that the killing was yet another instance of "continuing reign of terror unleashed" by Indian forces in Kashmir.

He, however, did not mention it as an operation of the Indian intelligence agencies.

SON ACCUSES GEELANI & BHAT ■ PRICE FOR PEACE INITIATIVES, SAYS PM

Lone shot dead at Hurriyat rally

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, May 21. — Two militants in police uniform shot dead the Hurriyat Conference leader, Mr Abdul Ghani Lone, at a rally organised by the conglomerate in Srinagar this evening. One of his guards, Mustaq Ahmed, also died in the attack.

The incident, a blow to the moderate voice in the separatist alliance, occurred around 4.25 p.m. and coincided with the Prime Minister's three-day visit to the state that started today. It came amid heightened Indo-Pak tension and a couple of months before the Assembly polls.

Mr Lone was shot near Mazar-e-Shohda, the graveyard near Idgah where all prominent militants killed during the last 12 years were buried. The rally, attended by about 10,000 people, was organised to commemorate the 12th death anniversary of Mirwaiz Moulvi Mohammed Farooq (father of Hurriyat leader Umar Farooq), who was killed by unidentified men 12 years ago in Srinagar.

One of Mr Lone's sons, Sajjad, who married the daughter of JKLF's Pakistan-based leader Mr Amanullah Khan, accused Hurriyat hardliner Syed Ali Shah Geelani and the group's chairman, Prof Abdul Ghani Bhat, of being responsible for his father's killing. Sajjad reportedly manhandled Syed Geelani when the latter went to Mr Lone's Rawalpura house to pay homage to the slain leader. The last rites will be performed tomorrow.

The Prime Minister, who arrived in Jammu in the evening, said Mr Lone was killed because he was working for peace in J&K. Admitting that the incident would have some effect on the peace process, he said: "It shouldn't derail. We should pursue the process with more vigour." Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee is scheduled to visit Srinagar tomorrow.

Mr LK Advani said in Delhi: "I think the terrorists and enemies of the country didn't want that more people should participate in the polls and scare



The grieving wife (centre) of Abdul Ghani Lone being comforted by relatives in Srinagar on Tuesday. (Inset) A file photograph of Lone. — AFP

those who were coming forward."

Witnesses said the Hurriyat leaders were walking towards their vehicles after the rally ended when two masked men fired at the two guards of Mr Lone — Mushtaq Ahmed and Ghulam Hassan. Both fell on the ground while a militant snatched the service weapon of one of the guards and sprayed bullets on Mr Lone. He was taken to Soura Medical

Institute where he was declared dead. In the melee on the ground, some people reportedly slapped Mirwaiz Farooq.

The division in the Hurriyat ranks came to the fore right through the rally when the activists broke into two groups — one that wants independence for J&K and the other that favours going with Pakistan. As soon as the leaders took their seats on the dais, a group of people stood up and shouted "Soude bazzi nahin chalegi (No secret deal will be allowed, no further sell-out)" and "Hurriyatwale gaddar hai (Hurriyat leaders are traitors)".

Mirwaiz Farooq, chairman of Awami Action Committee, shouted back: "Yeh Kashmir hamara hai, iska faisla hum karenge. Jis Kashmir ko khoon se sicha, woh Kashmir hamara hai (Kashmir is ours, we've shed blood for it, we'll decide its fate)". Sloganeering continued for some time till Farooq's supporters took control.

Gujarat troops head for border, page 3
Editorial: Are we ready? page 4

Turn to page 6

THE STATESMAN

22 MAY 2002

P.T.O.

Lone shot dead:

(Continued from page 1)

Mr Lone formed the J&K People's Conference in the 1970s and came in contact with other separatist leaders in Jodhpur Jail where they thought of forming an umbrella group of separatist parties. The All-Party Hurriyat Conference was formed in 1993 and Mr Lone had been a member of its executive committee since then.

He, however, had made enemies in the Hurriyat itself because of his reported willingness to contest the polls. Parties such as the Muslim Conference, the Jamaat-e-Islami, the Peoples' League and the Itihadul Muslimeen wanted Mr Lone out of the conglomerate.

He had been targeted several times and received threats from various militant groups. Last month, he had been roughed up by Shiv Sena members during a press conference at a Jammu hotel.

Mr Lone is survived by wife, two sons and a daughter.

Chief minister Mr Farooq Abdullah condemned the killing, saying Pakistan wouldn't allow those who want peace in J&K to live.

The Hurriyat said the murder was the result of a "deep conspiracy" aimed at scuttling the "saner voice" of Kashmiri people and its leadership. The group's spokesman, Mr Abdul Majid Bandey, said the incident would have a "far-reaching impact" on the state's politics.

Delhi was apprehensive: The Centre had reportedly anticipated that a leader could be attacked during Mr Vajpayee's visit to the state to deflect attention from the "substantive content" of his visit, SNS adds. The killing might also have been aimed at sending a message that despite the security arrangements for Mr Vajpayee, militants could strike with impunity.

Pak reaction: Islamabad, on the other hand, said the "murder was yet another incident in the continuing reign of terror unleashed" by Indian security forces.

Security review: The Chief of Army Staff, General S Padmanabhan, today reviewed the border security at the Northern Command headquarters in Udhampur, PTI adds from Jammu.

THE STATESMAN

Farooq briefed on security

H Bula Devi in New Delhi 9.12.84

May 17. — Dr Farooq Abdullah has been given a detailed brief on Jammu & Kashmir security. The directions came during yesterday's high-level meeting at North Block, presided over by Mr LK Advani.

The J&K chief minister was asked to "take an holistic view of the security situation while deciding counter measures against militants' attacks, keeping in mind events coming up in the next four-five months".

Dr Abdullah apparently assured the Centre that he would convene a high-level meeting next week in the Valley and its outcome would be communicated.

The government is extremely worried on Intelligence assessment that in the next few months the state is likely to face a bad phase. While anticipating a fresh strategy by the ISI-supported militant organisations in their attack plans, the government feels that the security forces need to "refine" their strategy and tactics.

Sources said militant organisations have been trying to communalise the situation in the state for quite sometime following the Gujarat riots. Militants attempted to communalise the situation by attacking Vaishnodevi and Raghunath Temple but failed to evoke enough emotions.

The government is concerned about the security in the coming months, beginning with the Amarnath Yatra on 22 July. Tight security would have to be maintained during the yatra which would end on 24-25 August. On the Independence Day, the Valley generally witnesses violent incidents.



The body of a man killed in the Srinagar blast. — AFP

While discussing the security issue during the yatra, the administration is expected to look into all aspects. The Centre is also concerned about the economic impact of militant attacks during pilgrimage.

Serious concern was expressed at yesterday's meeting over the fact that the security forces would hardly recoup from strict vigil on the yatra when the assembly elections would be due. Intelligence assessments have already indicated that militant organisations would attempt all kinds of options to disturb the process of elections.

THE STATESMAN

18 MAY 1984

Chandrika for third party mediation on Kashmir: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COLOMBO, MAY 16

SRI LANKAN President Chandrika Kumaratunga has supported third party mediation to resolve the Kashmir dispute, a local daily here reported today, but her office said it was trying to ascertain whether the remarks attributed to her had truly been made.

"Of two parties involved cannot resolve it, then what to do?" she asked, in an interview with *The News* at the United Nations Correspondents' Association

Club, *The Daily Mirror* said in its report.

The report, datelined United Nations, was attributed to *The News International*, a Pakistan-based news agency. It also carried a comment that her remarks were bound to trigger some angry reaction in India.

The President's Director-General (Media), Janadas Apeiris, however, said he was not sure whether she had made those remarks.

Former Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, who advises the President on foreign af-



fairs, said he was also seeking to ascertain the veracity of the report. Kumaratunga is in Britain, while Foreign Minister Tyrone Fernando is away in the Mal-

dives. Some Foreign Ministry officials here also expressed surprise at the remarks.

The report claimed that responding to a question on the Kashmir issue, the President "clearly said she supported its resolution through third party mediation, as both India and Pakistan had failed to resolve it."

If the report is true, this will be the first time that Sri Lanka has openly supported third party mediation on Kashmir.

However, Kumaratunga declined to play the mediator herself, even if she was invited by

Pakistan or India, as the mediator should be someone from outside the South Asian region, the report said.

She conceded that Sri Lanka had internationalised its internal problem of Tamil militancy by accepting Norway as a mediator, it said.

India's was supportive of Norway's role, she added. At this point, the report adds a comment that Sri Lanka's decision to bring in a third party "has caused anger in New Delhi as Pakistan can be encouraged to demand international mediation (too)."

The report said she merely smiled when reminded about her "quiet diplomacy to bring Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to the dialogue table" (perhaps a reference to Kumaratunga's role in getting them to have a brief interaction in Kathmandu in January during the SAARC summit).

"She said she was willing to do more for a dialogue between India and Pakistan in the interest of peace in the South Asian region", it said.

INDIAN EXPRESS

17 MAY 2002

Govt set to unveil new terror plan

98 J&K
11/1 1975
J.D. Abdullah (1)

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The government will reveal its new anti-terrorist strategy in Kashmir on Friday in parliament. On Thursday, the government held a series of high-level meetings and discussions to sort out the best means to respond to Tuesday's massacre in Jammu.

Home minister L.K. Advani chaired a meeting to refine the security force's counter-terrorist strategy and tactics and to take additional measures to check infiltration from across the border.

Emerging from the meeting, J&K chief minister Farooq Abdullah said that the government would formulate its response to the attack in parliament on Friday. "Pakistan is not going to stop the war it has unleashed on India," Mr Abdullah said. However, he refused to say anything more as the houses were in session. Defence minister George Fernandes, too, refused to make any statement. Those who attended the security meeting included Mr Fernandes, Mr Abdullah, ministers of state for home affairs I.D. Swami and Vidyasagar Rao and senior intelligence and military officials.

Intelligence inputs were sought during the 90-minute meeting from both the defence and civil intelligence wings. The meeting took stock of the recent trend of increases in suicidal attacks by terrorists, sponsored from across the border. "It was decided to take special measures to check infiltration from across the border, provide hinterland security and measures for sustained operations against the terrorists and action against their support bases," sources said. A source indicated that

- A high-level security meeting takes stock of the increase in suicide missions sponsored from across the border
- Pakistan's hand in the Jammu carnage has been confirmed from the food items found with the three terrorists who were killed

a suicide squad of at least five terrorists was pushed into Jammu via the international border from a special launch pad in the Zafarwal belt of Pakistan, using full logistic support from the Pakistan army's Special Service Group, to execute Tuesday's attack.

Among other issues that figured at the meeting were changes in strategy to counter such suicide attacks, and an increase in paramilitary forces in the state without disturbing army deployment on the Indo-Pak border. The meet also discussed the security arrangements to be made for the Amarnath Yatra starting from July 22, I-Day celebrations and assembly polls in J&K.

Meanwhile, army chief Gen Sunderajan Padmanabhan was quoted by news agencies in Kathmandu as saying that "the time for action has come", with the defence ministry claiming on Thursday that Pakistan's hand in the Kaluchak carnage had been confirmed beyond doubt. "Pakistan's hand in the May 14 carnage has been confirmed from the food items found with the three terrorists who were later killed by the army in the encounter. All three have been identified as Pakistani nationals."

● See Edit: Response to Terror, Page 14

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Jammu shuts down to protest militant attack

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 15

BOTH Hindus and Muslims observed a complete bandh in most parts of Jammu division in protest against Tuesday morning's militant attack that left 31 people, including women and children, dead.

Barring stray incidents of stone pelting or burning of tyres, the bandh remained peaceful throughout the day. Markets in Jammu city, which normally brim with activity, wore a deserted look as shopkeepers kept shutters down.

Educational institutions also remained closed in response to the bandh called by major parties, including the ruling National Conference, the BJP and the Congress. Government offices and PSUs were open, but attendance was thinner than usual.

Early in the morning, some matadors were seen plying on the road near Jewel Chowk. However, BSYM workers pelted stones on them and broke their panes, forcing all private commuter services to go off the roads.

Pilgrims and tourists had a tough time with hotels and restaurants closed due to the bandh. People were seen walking long distances on foot for want of commuter services. Even the Vishwa Hindu Parishad postponed its Parshuram Jayanti rally scheduled for a day.

Later in the afternoon, Shiv Sena workers took out a procession from their party headquarters towards the Resi-



Jammu's streets remained deserted as people stayed at home. Express photo

dency Road area. The processionists raised slogans against Pakistan.

They did not spare Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, whom they held responsible for the deteriorating law and order situation. Later, they also burnt the Pakistani flag.

Since morning, police and security forces were deployed in strength in sensitive areas of the city, official sources said, adding no untoward incident was reported from anywhere till evening.

Deployment of forces was more in ar-

reas such as Gujjar Nagar, Talab Khatikan and other areas. "Though Jammu residents have foiled militants' designs by maintaining communal harmony, we cannot take chances," said a police officer on duty near Talab Khatikan, a predominantly Muslim locality.

As a precautionary measure, the Jammu, Divisional Commissioner, Anil Goswami had ordered closure of all educational institutions in the division. A complete bandh was observed in various other parts of Jammu as well.

Sonia solidarity show for victims

RAKESH ROCKY
JAMMU, MAY 15

CONGRESS president and leader of the Opposition Sonia Gandhi today described the Kaluchak incident as barbaric, saying the Congress is always prepared to cooperate with the government in its fight against terrorism.

Speaking to reporters after her visit to the Military Hospital at Satwari on Wednesday, Sonia said "Mein ghayalon se mili. Jis ne bhee yeh kaha, ve irsariyat ke dusman hain. Upper sabhat-ihos karabae hovi choyie (I met those injured in the attack. The people behind this are enemies of humanity)."

When asked about her party's stand on terrorism, she said: "From the very beginning, Congress has been co-operating with the government. During the terror strike on the US and the attack on Parliament, we cooperated with the government. We are against the terrorists." Adding, "The Congress cooperated with the government during the ceasefire. We want peace in the region and are always with those who oppose terrorism."

She also expressed her sympathy with the bereaved families. She arrived at Jammu airport at 1.40 pm amid tight security and visited the site of yesterday's attack at Kaluchak. She was accompanied by her political secretary Ambika Soni and JKPC president Ghulam Nabi Azad.

BUS PASSENGERS, ARMY CAMP INMATES TARGETED

30 killed in Jammu suicide attack

By Luv Puri

KALUCHAK (JAMMU), MAY 14. In a gruesome attack, three members of a suicide squad of terrorists killed 30 persons, including seven bus passengers and 23 others in the family quarters of the Army, near Jammu today. Thirtyfour persons were injured in the attack, and some of them are in a critical condition.

The attack on the bus took place around 5.35 a.m. at Kaluchak on the Jammu-Panthankot National Highway, a few kilometres from the Indo-Pakistan International Border. The three terrorists, who were dressed in Army fatigues, had boarded the bus, bound for Jammu from Kulu in Himachal Pradesh, at Samba, 30 km. from Jammu.

Eyewitnesses, and later the General Officer Commanding, Tiger Division, Mohan Pandey, said that when the bus reached Kaluchak, the terrorists forced the driver to stop and started firing indiscriminately at the passengers. Seven persons, including four men and three women, were killed on the spot.

The terrorists then got down and threw grenades, which exploded near the bus. While fleeing, they also fired at a jeep but the driver sped away.

The terrorists then ran towards the camp of the 196 Artillery unit of the Army — its personnel have been posted at the border — scaled the wall and entered it. A guard challenged them and opened fire. The terrorists lobbed grenades on two vehicles, which caught fire.

In the melee, the terrorists entered the family quarters inside the camp. In the exchange of fire, one terrorist was shot dead. The other two ultras wired the surrounding area with booby traps and entered houses



Army men standing by the bodies of the three militants lying in Army camp near Jammu on Tuesday. — PTI

one after the other.

They fired indiscriminately at the inmates, killing 23 persons, including 10 children, eight women and five Armymen. The age of all the children killed ranged from four to 10 years.

Even as reinforcements were rushed to the camp, the terrorists took positions on the roof of the family quarters. An encounter followed for four hours and a fierce exchange of fire took place. At around 10.30 a.m., Army commandos carrying rocket launchers and other sophisticated weapons were called in and they killed the terrorists. The injured were taken to hospital in ambulances.

Panic gripped Jammu city as news of the attack spread. Personnel of the Jammu and Kash-

mir police were deployed at various places in Jammu, and vehicles entering the city were subjected to checks.

A red alert has been sounded in the Jammu division and the National Highway was closed to civilian traffic for six hours.

The Governor, G.C. Saxena, termed the attack "one of the most gruesome acts on the part of terrorists in the 12-year long turmoil in the State". Addressing a press conference at the Raj Bhavan, he said that the world should know that there was a limit to the patience of the people of the State.

The Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, who was also present, expressed his sympathies to the bereaved families, and in an emotional tone said, "Now the

terrorists have not spared even a two-year old child". He refused to answer questions on the strategy to be adopted by the Government to strengthen security in the region.

Immediately after his arrival from New Delhi, Dr. Abdullah attended a meeting at the Raj Bhavan, in which Mr. Saxena and top security officials also took part. Sources said it had been decided to beef up the security in the Jammu region, especially on the National Highway.

Dr. Abdullah and Mr. Saxena also visited the site of the encounter. They also went to the military hospital and enquired about the condition of the injured civilians. They were accompanied by the GoC, 16

Corps, J.V.S. Yadava. The Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party leader, Shabir Shah, also condemned the attack, calling it "a blot on civilised society". He told *The Hindu* that no cause of the people was served by those who killed innocent women and children.

The State units of the BJP and the Shiv Sena have called for the dismissal of the National Conference Government, alleging that it had failed to take adequate steps to beef up security in the Jammu region and this was responsible for an increase in the number of suicide attacks.

Shujaat Bukhari reports from Srinagar:

A hitherto unknown militant outfit, Al-Mansoorien, has claimed responsibility for the attack. One

Irfan Kashmiri, who identified himself as the spokesman of the outfit, told two local news agencies, NAFA and CNS, that "we own responsibility for the attack, which was carried out by three of our 'fidayeen', Abu Mursad, Abu Jaffar and Abu Shail." He said that the organisation would carry out more such attacks in the State.

Officials, however, refused to accept Al-Mansoorien as a new outfit, saying that it could be a new name for either the Lashkar-e-Taiba or the Jaish-e-Mohammad. The IG, Kashmir zone, Rajindra Kumar, said that going by the modus operandi, "it could be either of them or a blend of the two." Since both outfits were under scrutiny after the September 11 attacks, they might have taken a new name to mislead the world.

Meanwhile, the Jamiatul Mujahideen spokesman, Jameel Ahmed, also claimed responsibility for the attack but refused to give any details.

THE HINDU

15 MAY 2009

Centre wants resettlement Act scrapped

Syed Liaquat Ali
New Delhi May 12

FEARING LEGAL entry of militants into Jammu and Kashmir, the Vajpayee government has demanded the abrogation of the controversial Jammu and Kashmir Resettlement Act.

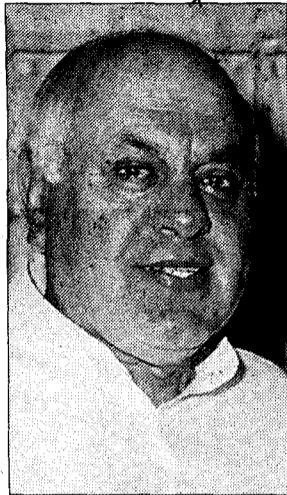
The Centre said the operation of the Act in the state, which is a victim of cross-border terrorism, would compromise national interest. "This will endanger national security and public order."

The Farooq Abdullah-led National Conference government decided to enforce the Act after a five-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court refused to answer a presidential reference on it last year.

The legislation, passed by the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in 1982 would allow migrated Kashmiris, including their descendants, to claim evacuee properties and to settle down in the state.

However, the apex court in February stayed the implementation of the legislation on a bunch of PILs and sought responses from the Centre and the state government.

An affidavit filed recent-



FAROOQ ABDULLAH

ly by the Union Home Ministry said the legislation encroached upon exclusive powers of the Centre to regulate entry and stay of foreign nationals in India. Moreover, the legislation was contrary to the provisions of the Constitution, the Citizenship Act and the Foreigners Act, it added.

The affidavit said a person who was not a citizen of India could not become a permanent resident of Jammu and Kashmir.

However, the state government refused to buy these arguments. A count-

er-affidavit filed through counsel Anis Suhrawardy said the state assembly was empowered to enact a law to regulate the return and resettlement of Kashmiris, who had migrated to Pakistan after March, 1947.

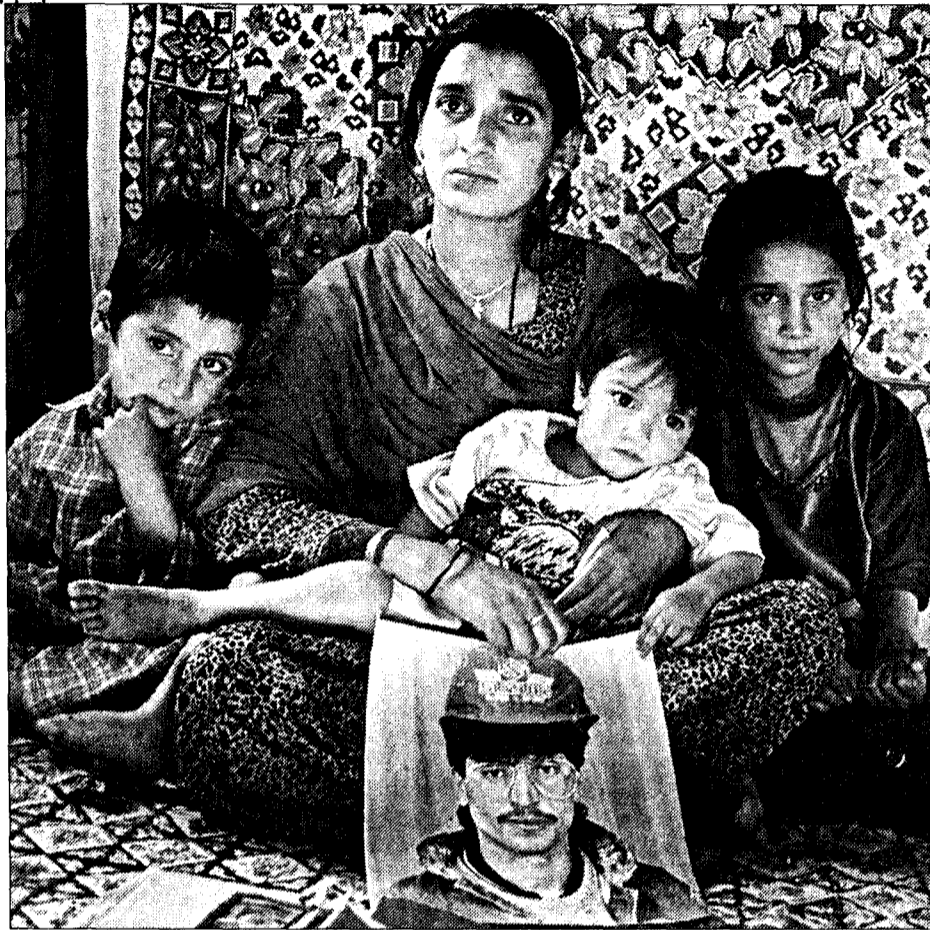
The Centre said the legislation would enable migrated Pakistani citizens, who had even served in the armed forces and fought against India, to return at any time to resettle in the state.

The affidavit said the Act does not have a provision for verifying the antecedents of an applicant. There was nothing in it to prevent the applicant from misusing the provisions of the legislation by reclaiming evacuee property and returning back to Pakistan, it added.

The Home Ministry said: "At the best of times, no nation permits migration in this manner to anyone without scrutiny."

The state government rejected the contention, saying that the Act has sufficient provisions to prevent entry of unwanted elements and to allow only the genuine migrated Kashmiris to resettle.

The apex court will hear the PILs in August.



A Kashmiri woman holds a picture of her missing husband as she poses with her children in Srinagar on Sunday.

Five killed in J&K violence

Srinagar, May 12

FIVE PEOPLE were killed and three were abducted by militants in separate incidents in the Kashmir valley since last night, a police spokesman said today.

A group of militants attacked village Butshungni-Winder in Kupwara district last night and opened indiscriminate fire, killing two and wounding another, he said. Another person who was also reportedly injured in the incident was found missing and is believed to have been abducted by ultras.

The spokesman said special operations group of local police apprehended a militant of Hizbul Mujahideen from the outskirts of Srinagar last night and seized a gas cylinder fitted with explosive material, two detonators, a grenade and one under-barrel grenade launcher from him, the spokesman added.

PTI

Modi bows to Gill, Pande goes

DARSHAN DESAI
GANDHINAGAR | MAY 11

CHIEF Minister Narendra Modi may have spurned many a directive from the Centre, but this was advice he just could not ignore. Supercop K.P.S. Gill is believed to have been behind the decision to transfer Police Commissioner P.C. Pande and other IPS officers of riot-ravaged Ahmedabad.

Gill took office on Thursday, and by midnight Pande — who survived the post-Godhra shake-ups in the city police, despite the Naroda Patiya and Gulbarg Society massacres — was transferred.

On the first day of his taking charge, Gill called the chief secretary and additional chief secretary (home) of Gujarat — senior-most bureaucrats of the state — for a discussion. Then he had a one-to-one meeting with Modi. The transfer orders were signed past 2:30 am on Friday. Facts suggest Modi never wanted these transfers, at least not of Pande.



PTI photo

K.P.S. Gill with one of the police officers transferred on his Day 1, M.K. Tandon

Modi and his Minister of State for Home Gordhan Zadaphiya had patted Pande on the back for good policing in Ahmedabad even when the city was seeing its worst killings and arson. While some transfers were ordered in the police department, they were of officers who were seen as having done good work in their areas.

Pande survived at his post even when rioters targeted shops sharing a wall with the police commissionerate, though the director general of police was told the next day to oversee policing in the city. Only now has Pande been transferred — with Gill's arrival — when the violence toll since Godhra hovers around 1,000.

Also, though the government would have us believe that it was Modi himself who asked for Gill, facts suggest the Chief Minister never wanted him here.

The day before Gill came and till the night after he had come, the state had a stock reply that it had no official intimation about why the supercop was in the state. Right from the chief secretary and principal secretary to the chief minister and the minister of state (home), all expressed ignorance about Gill's arrival.

With Pande's removal, Gill has shown he means business. K.R. Kaushik, Satish Sharma and Satish Verma — the men in charge of Ahmedabad now — are all known to be no-nonsense officials.

Centre meddling in Gujarat with Gill: VHP

NEW DELHI: The VHP has opposed the appointment of K.P.S. Gill as security advisor to the Gujarat CM, saying it amounts to Central control over law and order in the state.

Reuters



A wounded man being assisted in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

Gujarat violence not acceptable: Jaswant

NEW DELHI: Describing the Gujarat violence as "unfortunate and unacceptable", External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh has sought to dispel apprehensions that India's credibility in the international community had plummeted.

Gill meets minority community leaders

AHMEDABAD: K.P.S. Gill on Saturday held a marathon meeting at Gandhinagar with minority community leaders.

Rift in Hizbul over Salahuddin's decision

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, May 7. — In a significant development in Kashmir, the field commanders of the Valley's largest militant outfit Hizbul Mujahideen have refused to accept the decision of the United Jihad Council and the outfit "supreme commander", Syed Salahuddin, to expel three top former commanders — Abdul Majid Dar, Zafar Abdul Fateh and Asad Yazdani — from the outfit. They were recently ousted from the outfit "for violating group's policies and for their defiant attitude".

In an interview with CNS here this afternoon from a Srinagar city hideout, two top commanders — Abu Amir and Asgar Ibne-Rehman — openly defied Salahuddin's orders.

"Hizb is no individual's or a commander's property. It's the

representative outfit of the Kashmiri people and those who sacrificed their lives for the organisation and for the movement. Those sitting across the border are not only oblivious of the situation here but also they have no right to take such decisions," they said.

They said Salahuddin had taken the decision without taking the field commanders in the Valley into confidence, while indicating at the huge support base of Majeed Dar and other commanders.

"They don't know the ground situation in Kashmir. Salahuddin has been breathing in open air in Muzaffarabad and thus has been issuing such orders. We do respect him, but he refuses to understand the situation," Asgar said.

All the three expelled commanders had played significant role in the July 2000 cease-

SC notice to Kashmir

NEW DELHI, May 7. — A Supreme Court Bench, comprising Mr Justice GB Patnaik and Mr Justice Brijesh Kumar, today issued notice to the Jammu and Kashmir government on a petition challenging the state's decision to classify OBCs on the basis of their geographic locations rather than on the social, education and economic criteria. The Bench admitted the petition filed by the convenor of the Backward Class Union of Jammu and Kashmir after hearing brief arguments from senior advocate Mr Ram Jethmalani.

The petitioner said under the present rules framed by the state government, 20 per cent of the 27 per cent posts reserved for OBCs have gone to people residing in backward areas, three per cent to those residing within eight kilometres of the LoC and two per cent has been awarded to those belonging to Other Social Castes, a new category. Mr Jethmalani said this runs counter to the recommendations of the Mandal Commission report upheld by the Supreme Court in 1992. — PTI

fire in the Valley. New Delhi had reciprocated the Hizbul peace call by ordering troops not to target the outfit's militants. But, the ceasefire was withdrawn by

based "supreme commander" Salahuddin and the Valley-based "chief commander operations" Majeed Dar to the fore.

Considered to be moderate face, Dar had said that any positive outcome between India and Pakistan would help the group in shunning the path of violence. He, who was the operational chief of Hizbul in Kashmir, was replaced by Saiful Islam in October last year. Yazdani and Fateh were also relieved of their responsibilities along with Dar.

Earlier, in a statement, the right-hand man of Majid Dar, Zafar Abdul Fateh, said that the outfit is not a fiefdom of any individual or a commander. He said: "Those sitting across the border are not the real and genuine representatives of the group as they are unaware of the situation here. Therefore, the decision would be taken by those

engaged in the struggle for several years who have been sharing trials and tribulations of the people." Besides that, he had also said the expelled commanders are going to float their own group next week. The details of which are being worked out and will soon be announced.

Mircha killing: For the first time since the mysterious disappearance of Hizbul Mujahideen district commander Farooq Mircha — part of the four Hizbul commanders appeared before the media for the Centre-Hizbul Mujahideen talks in August 2000 — the field commanders of the Hizbul today alleged that he was killed by the outfit's men owing allegiance to its Pakistan-based supreme leader Syed Salahuddin.

Abu Amir, Hizbul leader, said he had solid evidence into the killing of Mircha on the instruction of Hizbul chief.

Jamaat follows Hizb expulsion lead

H Bula Devi in New Delhi

May 5. — It is not just Hizbul Mujahideen supremo Syed Salahuddin enforcing his diktat on commanders. Expulsions have rocked the Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), too, with political bureau chief Syed Ali Shah Geelani expelling party's political secretary Mr Khaliq Hanief.

Mr Khaliq earned Mr Geelani's wrath for defying the party's traditional norm of opposing participation in Assembly elections, sources said. Mr Khaliq, who used to be the chief's confidante, has recently been canvassing against militancy.

Trouble began last month around the time JeI held its annual Majlis-e-Shoora in the Valley. The Majlis-e-Shoora is consid-

ered important as it sets guidelines for the coming year.

This year, Mr Geelani could not attend the meet due to illness. Mr Hanief attended.

Eight resolutions were passed; of this, two were political: The first was that the Jamaat-e-Islami (Jammu & Kashmir) would not oppose participation in Assembly elections. Second, as the largest APHC constituent, it would oppose any Hurriyat call for poll boycott, assuming that like in the past the APHC

would issue such a call this time, too.

Apparently, Syed Geelani was livid when he came to know of it. And after several rounds of consultations, Mr Khaliq Hanief was expelled.

Mr Geelani, an APHC executive member, was critical of the recent Hurriyat over the recent Dubai meet of some Kashmiri leaders, London-based Nazir Geelani, in a letter to the APHC chairman charged the Hurriyat leadership with being clad "in an attire of arrogance".

Vehemently opposing the decision taken at the meeting to stop *jihad*, Mr Geelani supported its continuation in J&K, it being the "cause for the armed struggle". Mr Khaliq's supporters have reportedly questioned Mr Geelani's decision. They said Mr Khaliq had not violated the JeI (J&K) or APHC constitutions by supporting participation in elections and hence there was no reason for expulsion. They have accused Mr Geelani of "double standards", saying he himself had contested polls in the 1970s.

Amidst growing differences within the Hurriyat over the recent Dubai meet of some Kashmiri leaders, London-based Nazir Geelani, in a letter to the APHC chairman charged the Hurriyat leadership with being clad "in an attire of arrogance".

Sickbed fears for Malik, page 6

Ouster challenged

NEW DELHI, May 5. — Expelled Hizbul commander Zaffar Abdul Fateh challenged yesterday's order expelling him and two others. Fateh, along with former chief Abdul Majid Dar and Asad Yazdani, were expelled from the organisation for "violating" policy and "defiant attitude". Fateh, accusing the leadership of ignoring ground realities, said: "It is for the Kashmiris to decide who remains or who is to be expelled." — SNS

"secret" meeting of two moderate faces of the Hurriyat, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Mr Abdul Ghani Lone, with Pakistan's National Kashmir Cell head Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan, in Dubai.

SPURT IN J&K VIOLENCE

Pak 'design' to sabotage polls

By Harish Khare

9-87
D&K

S/S

NEW DELHI, MAY 4. The Vajpayee Government is concerned over the stepped-up militant violence in Jammu and Kashmir, and these incidents of infiltration from across the border and the Line of Control are seen as part of an emerging "Pakistani design" to sabotage the Assembly elections, scheduled to take place in September this year.

As per the tabulation here, April alone has seen as many as 300 incidents, resulting in almost as many deaths. This is in sharp contrast to the relative lull of February, and the violence was seen as going up slightly in March. But April has made many people sit up. In the first four days of May, already 28 persons have been killed in militancy-related incidents.

The understanding at the seniormost level here is that it is the deployment of the Indian forces along the LoC that has slowed down the infiltration from across the border. But there is no dilution in Pakistan's policy of infiltration, with a view to stepping up violence, all with the objective of sabotaging the proposed election exercise. In this context, the continued deployment of forces is deemed necessary.

The "disquieting but not unexpected" development, according to one senior official, is that the militant camps have been "re-activated" in the Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir. The Government is also believed to have information that a number of Pakistan Army "regulars" are being palmed off as "new recruits"; some of the "militants" killed in the recent encounters have been identified as belonging to the Pakistan Army "regulars".

The inference the Vajpayee Government has drawn is that Pakistan would do its best to derail the electoral process. Hence, the Centre's keenness that the National Conference (NC) should refurbish its image. The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, has been per-

sueded to step down as the NC chief in favour of his son, Omar Abdullah. The Chief Minister was expected to hand over the baton to his son last month but last-minute anxieties had to be addressed. Now Abdullah the Junior is scheduled to take over the party leadership this month-end as a necessary prelude to the electoral battle later this year.

The Vajpayee Government is proceeding on the information, culled out from intercepts and other intelligence inputs, that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence or "rogue elements" within the ISI have been threatening the moderates within the Hurriyat leadership against any kind of direct or indirect participation in the elections.

According to intelligence reports, the Pakistani intentions were spelt out at the recent meeting in Dubai, which was attended by two Hurriyat leaders, Abdul Gani Lone and Mirwaz Umar Farooq. The POK leader, Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan was also there, as were the ISI chief and another senior functionary, "brigadier Abdullah." The two Hurriyat leaders are believed to have conveyed to the Pakistani intelligence officials that they should be left to their own devices and ideas.

If the Vajpayee Government's strategy is to find ways of securing the direct or indirect participation of the Hurriyat in the election process, Pakistan's effort would be to force the Hurriyat to stay away from the poll process. The Centre is reported to be prepared to use the presence of the Army at the border to send out a message to the people within and outside Kashmir that Pakistan-trained and inspired "militants" would not be allowed to intimidate and influence the poll process.

Government sources insist that India has been candidly sharing this assessment and perception with the international community, particularly the United States, about Pakistan's designs and that there is no ground for any withdrawal of forces from the LoC. Nor for any anxiety over a possible clash between the two countries.

THE HINDU

MAY 2007

Senior leaders skip Hurriyat meet

Rashid Ahmad
Srinagar, April 29

9/8/02
THE CRUCIAL meeting of All Party Hurriyat Conference's executive council ended inconclusive today as some senior members failed to attend it.

Syed Ali Shah Geelani, the most vocal pro-Pakistan leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, is down with cardiac problems. Doctors have advised him seven days' rest. Advocate Shaikh Ali Mohammed represented him in the meeting. Khalil Mohammad Khalil, acting chairman of Peoples' League, too could not attend. JKLF chief Mohammed Yasin Malik is in jail. Javid Mir represented Malik. Abdul Gani Lone is in the US. He was represented by Peer Hafizullah Makhdoomi — a close confidant of his.

APHC chairman Prof Abdul Gani Bhat, Mirwaiz Ummer Farooq and Moulvi Abbas Ansari were the only members to participate in the meeting. No serious matter could be discussed due to the absence of the senior leaders, sources said. The meeting was likely to be a stormy one after last week's controversial Sharjah meet among Hurriyat leaders Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, Abdul Gani Lone and Pakistan's Kashmir Committee chairman Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan.

The Sharjah meeting had caused serious differences in the amalgam with chairman Abdul Gani Bhat, Syed Ali Shah Gilani and JKLF alleging that they were kept in dark about it. The rift widened further when Lone and Qayoom at the end of the meeting opposed foreign militants operating in Jammu and Kashmir and asked them to leave. Mirwaiz Ummer Farooq, too, was in the thick of controversy, when on his way back to

4 killed in blast

FOUR PERSONS, including two ultras, were killed and 26 injured in a grenade blast and subsequent operation by security forces in Surankote town of Poonch district on Monday, an official spokesman said. Ultras hurled a grenade in the main bazar of Surankote around 11:40 am when a security convoy was passing. Twenty-three civilians and five securitymen were injured, he said. Two civilians later succumbed in hospital, the spokesman said, adding, security forces shot dead one ultra.

PTI, Jammu

Srinagar from Dubai he said Hurriyat might participate in the Assembly elections if the Centre took a new initiative to resolve the Kashmir problem. Hurriyat chairman took a serious note of his colleagues' statements and said he would seek explanation from Lone and Mirwaiz. He had also threatened disciplinary action against them. However, on Friday, Mirwaiz backtracked on his statement and said the amalgam wouldn't take part in the polls.

He was quite defensive in today's meeting and said the Sharjah meet was not a planned one. He shared the contents of the meeting with chairman and other members and is reported to have told them that it could be a good beginning towards the resolution of the Kashmir problem. The other members, however, reserved their comments, sources said.

The issue would come up for discussion next week, when the executive meets again.

30 APR 2002

30/4

An attempt to split Hurriyat?

By Shujaat Bukhari

HD-12
9.6.82
27/9

SRINAGAR APRIL 26. The recent meeting of separatist leaders from both sides of Kashmir has led to serious differences within the All-Party Hurriyat Conference. It is also seen as an attempt to divide the Hurriyat which could serve the purpose of both India and Pakistan in the changed scenario.

So far, the Hurriyat has been the alliance of separatists officially recognised by Pakistan, but the latest developments, which include the high-level meeting of the Hurriyat's two executive members, Abdul Gani Lone and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, with the Kashmir Committee (of Pakistan) chairman, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, has sent different signals. Does Pakistan also want to break the Hurriyat to serve the interests of its Government which has allied itself with the U.S. after the September 11 attacks and wants to contain jihadi elements is the question lurking in the minds of analysts here. So far as India is concerned, a divide in the Hurriyat was always seen as a possible route to woo the separatists to elections.

Attended also by Ghulam Nabi Fai, Nazir Geelani, Mushtaq Jeelani and Syed Yusuf Naseem, separatist leaders based in the U.S., U.K., Canada and Islamabad, the meeting has created a furore among the ranks of the separatists. Two senior leaders of the conglomerate — the Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat and Syed Ali Shah Geelani — have openly come out against the meeting. "They had no mandate of the Hurriyat," said Prof. Bhat. Mr. Geelani on Tuesday said there was no question of putting an end to jihad as long as repression continued. "Those who think on those lines are mistaken," he said.

With Mr. Lone and Mirwaiz Farooq ostensibly "creating indiscipline" in the alliance, the Hurriyat has decided to seek an explanation from both the leaders and a two member committee will question the latter as Mr. Lone is away in the U.S.

What has irked the Hurriyat hardliners is the report that the meeting had the blessings of both India and Pakistan and that officials from New Delhi and Islamabad had been camping in Dubai to monitor the progress. For the past several

months, particularly after September 11, battle lines have been drawn among the leaders in the Hurriyat executive on the issue of participating in the elections. As Prof. Bhat has of late joined the hardliner group of Mr. Geelani and Yasin Malik, the divide is clear.

In the latest development, the United Jihad Council (UJC) has declared Syed Ali Geelani "leader of the freedom movement" and supported his stand on jihad. It was Mr. Geelani's parent organisation, Jamat-e-Islami, which on Thursday had differed with his views on continuing with jihad saying that these were his personal views. But the Muzaffarabad-based UJC today not only came out openly in his support but also declared him leader.

Mirwaiz clarifies

Another former Hurriyat Chairman, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who has been in trouble for his reported remarks about militants in the latest issue of *Time* magazine today used the his Jamia Masjid platform for clarifying his position.

"In the interview, one of statements has been misinterpreted and I had criticised the renegades and not Mujahideen" he told the Friday congregation adding that he had written a letter to those responsible at the magazine.

The Mirwaiz also made it known that he had an opportunity to meet Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan and other leaders from PoK and discuss the possible solutions to the Kashmir problem.

"I think those suggestions could be highly beneficial and I would like to put those before the Hurriyat Conference after which those could be known to the people as well" he said, adding that for the resolution of the problem all organisations in and outside the Hurriyat would be taken into confidence.

"But it is an admitted fact that only dialogue can resolve the issue" he said.

The Dubai meet had been criticised not only by some separatist organisation but the Hurriyat leaders as well as it was reported that it had decided to put an end to armed struggle and pave the way for electoral process.

27 APR 2002

THE HINDU

Kashmiri Pandits to contest Assembly polls

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, April 21. — Kashmiri Pandits have decided to contest the forthcoming Assembly elections. They will be backed by many separatist parties in the Valley.

They have also demanded representation in the Lok Sabha in the manner provided to the people of Sikkim, Assam and Manipur under Article 331, 371-(D) and 371-F(f) of the Constitution.

Mr Ratan Lal Bhan, All India Kashmiri Hindu Forum chief, said the Forum would field at least 25 candidates in the polls. The final list of candidates would be announced soon. He seemed confident the forum would win many seats if the polls were free and fair.

Mr Bhan said he would contest the elections from Habba Kadal Assembly constituency. He expressed fears that the ruling party would try to rig the polls and sabotage their votes also. In that case, Mr Bhan said, they would submit their postal ballots to the Chief Election Commissioner in Delhi. The

conglomerate had started collecting postal ballots (displaced Kashmiri Pandits who are scattered all over the country cast their votes through postal ballot system), he added.

On the Forum's poll manifesto, Mr Bhan said they would try to ensure that Kashmiri Pandits were able to return to their homeland. The Forum would also raise unemployment as one of the issues.

He castigated the Centre for appointing Mr KC Pant the interlocutor for Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmiri Pandits do not find any place in Mr Pant's agenda, he regretted. "We do not take out noisy rallies ... We also do not march to the Assembly or Parliament. But that does not mean we have forfeited our rights to existence and living in our homes."

He said parleys about Kashmir sans Kashmiri Hindus would be insolent and incongruous. He cautioned the government to stop the artful campaign about the Kashmiri Hindu community they were a divided group of varied ideologies.

Encounters claim 10, page 6

22 APR 2002

THE STATESMAN

Police detain Geelani, Mir in Valley No rift with alliance, says NC

Statesman News Service and PTI

JAMMU, April 19. — Police today arrested JKLF acting chairman Javed Ahmad Mir and seven of his associates when they were on their way to present a memorandum to the United Nations Military Observers Group local office at Sonwar in Srinagar. Police also put former APHC chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani under house arrest in the city.

Mir's memorandum was to be presented to protest against the harassment of JKLF chief Yasin Malik and alleged atrocities, including custodial killings, by security forces in Jammu and Kashmir. While being arrested, Mir accused the state government of resorting to political vendetta.

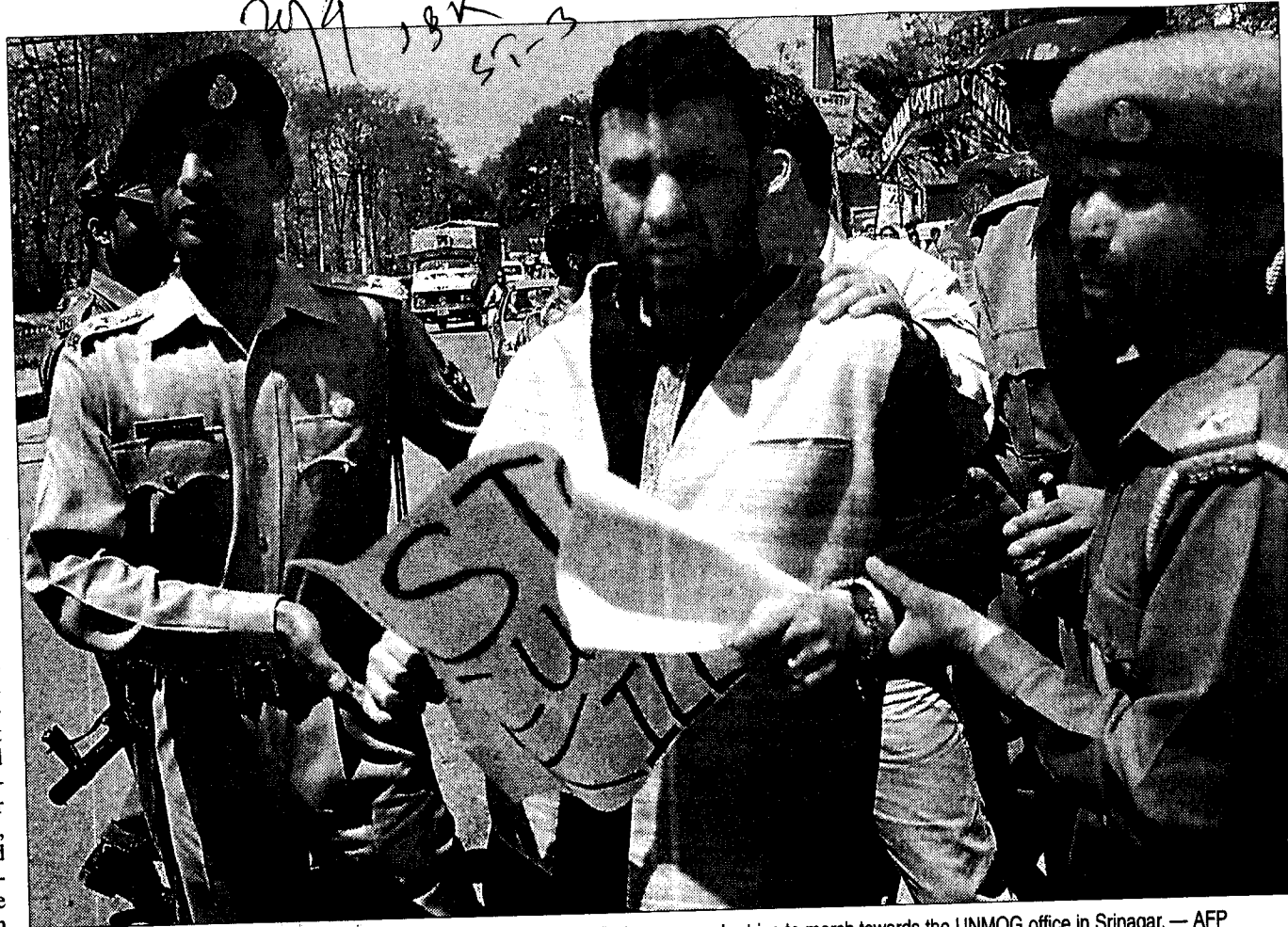
JKLF activists led by Mir assembled at the Dalgate area shortly after Friday prayers and tried to march towards the UNMOG office, sources said. But police swung into action and took Mir and his associates — Nissar Ahmad Bhat, Zahoor Ahmad, Mohammad Maqbool, Adil Bashir, Imran Zarger and Abid — into custody for violation of prohibitory order in the city. They have been lodged in the Ram Munshibagh police station.

Earlier in the day, a posse of policemen encircled Mr Geelani's house at Hyderpora and restricted his movement.

Mr Geelani was scheduled to visit Bandipora in Baramulla district and address a Friday congregation in the main mosque there.

Security for pilgrims: Security for pilgrims visiting the Vaishno Devi shrine has been tightened following a spurt in militant activities in the area, police sources said in Jammu today.

An additional police booth is being set up at Ban Ganga, the base camp in Katra town, as a



JKLF vice-chairman Javed Mir being arrested by the police on Friday, even as he tries to march towards the UNMOG office in Srinagar. — AFP

part of the drive. "This is being done in view of encounters between militants and security forces around the shrine, the movement of militants and explosions at Ban Ganga and Katra areas", the sources said.

Identity verifications of people settled in and around the town will be conducted. Round-the-clock patrolling, surveillance and monitoring of sensitive areas will also be done.

Authorities in the state have decided to regulate the movement of auto-rickshaws in the area and carry out anti-encroachment drives.

Ultras gun down labourer in Anantnag

SRINAGAR, April 19. — A labourer, Bashir Ahmad Lone, was shot dead by militants at Hiwuddar near Kapran in Anantnag district early today.

Militants also targeted security camps at two places in the Valley since last night, police said. Lone was killed on the suspicion of being a police informer.

Ultras also opened fire on special operations group camps at Waripora in Baramulla, and at Khalil in Pulwama district last night. No one was hurt in the shooting.

One injured in blast: A Bangladeshi national lost his leg in an IED blast set off by militants near Jammu city last night. The person was on his way

to the border for crossing over to Pakistan when the device went off in the Nikki Tawi area.

Hizbul ultras held

Jammu and Kashmir police have arrested eight Hizbul Mujahideen militants involved in six cases of grenade attacks in Badgam district. The arrests were made from different parts of Badgam, a police spokesman said, but he did not reveal the identity of the arrested ultras.

However, the spokesman said Hizbul group leader Mohammad Yousuf Sheikh alias 'Sajad' of Ratsuna village in Beerwah could not be arrested during the operations. — PTI

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, April 19. — Putting all rumours about its differences and possible withdrawal from the BJP-led NDA government over Gujarat, the National Conference central executive — which met here today under the chairmanship of party president Dr Farooq Abdullah — said that the party had no differences with the NDA government at the Centre and that the alliance was bound by a common minimum programme.

"We are not annoyed with the Centre as such and bound by a common minimum programme, wherein each one of us have kept our agenda under the carpet for a while," said Mr Ghulam Mo-hiuddin Shah, veteran NC leader at a press conference after its meeting here this evening.

"As two individual parties outside the NDA, both the BJP and the National Conference are poles apart, and have different ideologies, but as far the development of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, the working committee adhere to the views of the chief minister and party president Dr Farooq Abdullah that we have to have an amicable relationship with the Centre," said Mr Shah.

Besides, he said that they are placed in such a situation where they could not take up cudgels against the Centre or choose a path of confrontation with the Centre. Only dialogue can resolve dispute, he added.

Saying that the NC consid-

ered the alleged statement of the Prime Minister about the Muslims which had hurt the sentiments of many in the country in today's meeting, he added that the working committee was also satisfied with the clarification made by the Prime minister.

Party president Dr Abdullah warned the working committee about communal forces — once again raising their ugly heads in the country — and said that every Indian will have to rise about petty considerations and frustrate their nefarious designs in the interests of the nation, informed Mr Shah.

Regarding the coronation of the Union minister of state for external affairs and Mr Omar Abdullah, he said that the central executive committee has requested him to take over the party reins as its president and a delegation session will be held in this connection in May-end this year in which Mr Omar Abdullah would be made the party president.

However, Mr Shah refused to comment as to when he would be made the chief minister of the state as his father had desired to become the President of the country.

Responding to a question on the conduct of Assembly polls, he said that it's the party which has to decide on it.

Asked to comment on the issue of Mr Narendra Modi's resignation as Gujarat chief minister, he said it's an internal issue of the BJP and only they only could take a decision in this regard.

Khalistan shadow on J&K

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, April 7. — The ISI is revitalising the Khalistan Zindabad Force in Kashmir. Disclosing this at a conference here this morning, the J&K DGP, Mr Ashok Suri, told reporters that with the arrest of a KZF hitman, Virender Sharma alias Chhotu, the police had aborted a KZF plot to destroy key installations in and around Jammu.

Virender has been to Pakistan several times and is a close aide of KZF leader Neta, who is among the 20 militants India has asked Pakistan to hand over. Virender is also a trans-border arms and narcotics smuggler.

The DGP said police had received inputs on the revival of KZF, following which they carried out operations to track down the ultras and break their nexus.

Aided by Jammu Police, the special operations group of the state police raided a terrorist hideout at Jewel Chowk late last night and booked Virender under Pota. Forty two revolvers were seized from his possession. The DGP said a major tragedy had been avoided as KZF militants had the Jammu railway station, the airport, bus terminuses and other vital installations on their hit list.

From his interrogation, police were able to know the whereabouts of the self-styled operations chief of KZF, Amreek Singh alias Bittu, who was later arrested.

It has been established that the People's Democratic Party's Udhampur district president Surinder Singh alias Fauji, detained by the SOG last Thursday, also had links with the KZF.

This is the first time that a political leader

of Udhampur has been detained for his links with subversive elements. Singh will be booked under Pota, police said. Three revolvers, all belonging to the KZF, have been seized from Singh.

14 Hurriyat leaders in detention

Fourteen Hurriyat leaders are currently being detained in various jails in Jammu and Kashmir for activities prejudicial to national security.

Replying to a query by Mr Javaid Hussain Shah in the J&K House, state minister for revenue Mr Abdul Qayoom said that APHC leaders had been detained several times in the past under the Public Safety Act for activities prejudicial to security.

The APHC leaders were openly challenging the integrity of the country and were also supporting militant activities tacitly, he said. Mr Abdul Qayoom alleged these leaders were acting at the behest of Pakistan and were receiving money from it to keep up the "struggle against sovereignty and integrity of the country".

He said it has also been alleged that the Hurriyat brass had received money for reconstruction of the Charar-e-Sharief shrine, but not a penny was spent by them on this count. Instead, the fund seems to have been spent on keeping militancy alive in the Valley.

High Court Chief Justice: The Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court, Mr Justice Hotoi Khetoho Sema, has been appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court, a Union law ministry notification said. Mr Justice VK Jhanji, J&K High Court judge, will act as the Chief Justice with effect from the date Mr Justice Sema relinquishes charge.

Escape to freedom

JAMMU, April 7. — Four members of a family, abducted by militants, escaped from captivity in Doda hills today and came back home safely.

Armed militants had last evening barged into the family's house at Sowie-Bagi village in the Ramban belt and kidnapped the four. The ultras later took them to the upper reaches of the hills. Police had launched a search operation and cordoned off the area to rescue them.

Bid to blow up camp: Six militants and a jawan were among eight people killed in Jammu and Kashmir where ultras made an abortive attempt to blow up a security camp and a grid station since last evening, an official said. Militants made an attempt to blow up a security camp at Barbarshah in Srinagar today. Sources said the ultras fired a rifle grenade towards the BSF camp, but it missed the target. No casualties were reported. Security forces also foiled a bid to blow up a grid station when they detected an IED planted near the Gangoo-Lajoora station in south Kashmir. The device was immediately defused.

Pakistani troops fired on forward areas along International Border in Jammu sector injuring a woman, officials said.

Elsewhere in the Valley, ultras kidnapped two persons, including one who had opposed the marriage of his sister with a militant, while security forces smashed a militant hideout and seized four mines.

BJP leaders resign en masse in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, APRIL 3. In yet another blow to the BJP in the Kashmir Valley, the party office bearers today resigned "en masse" and dissolved the party in support of the resignation of senior leader, Abdul Rashid Kabuli, from its State unit vice-presidency.

The executive body, district office-bearers and workers met at the Barzulla office of the party and passed a resolution to this effect, a release said.

The resolution, announcing the resignation of the Kashmir unit of the BJP en masse and dissolution of the unit was moved by the convenor, Ghulam Qadir, while labour leader, Harbinder Singh, seconded it and was passed unanimously, the release said.

They termed the resignation of Mr. Kabuli from the party as "timely" and appreciated his action and expressed full confidence in his leadership.

Another resolution expressed concern over the loss of life and property in the communal riots in Gujarat and other parts of the country and urged the Centre to dismiss the Modi Government for its alleged failure to stop communal riots and hindering investigations carried out by the National Human Rights Commission there. — PTI

Pilgrimage to Kashmir

It's been said that Indian and Pakistani leaders "talk Kashmir" only when they need to wriggle out of political tight spots. It isn't in the least bit surprising, therefore, that Atal Behari Vajpayee — who is currently going through perhaps the most vexatious period of his premiership, thanks to the mandir issue, POTO and Gujarat — should have announced all of a sudden that he was going to undertake a "historic yatra" to Srinagar to "review the situation there as things are looking up". In principle there is nothing objectionable about the prime minister's Kashmir yatra; on the contrary it would afford him an opportunity to view ground realities in the chronic trouble spot. However, the assumption underlying this latest initiative gives cause for concern. If Mr Vajpayee is convinced that the vicious cycle of cross-border terrorism leading to repression and alienation is being broken, how does he explain the many contradictions in his government's Kashmir policy? If, as he says, "after 9/11 the world has begun to appreciate India's stand on Kashmir" and "dissidents in the state, deprived of Pakistan's cross-border support are amenable to participating in the formal political process", why aren't they being engaged? Why are draconian laws such as POTA being used to persecute the state's political adversaries?

It's possible that these contradictions in the government's stand vis-a-vis Kashmir have arisen out of a view that has been gaining currency in Indian policy-making circles: That because Islamabad has been enlisted by Washington as a "front-line state" in the US-led war against terror, India has come to enjoy a 'military advantage' in Jammu and Kashmir which allows it to dictate terms in the Valley. These 'terms' of course have remained unchanged and provide little cause for optimism: That all separatist Kashmiri leaders, including those that belong to the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, a 23-party conglomerate, can enter mainstream politics only when they accept that the problem in Kashmir is a result of Pakistan's subversion and the proxy-war it has unleashed there. Though undeniably Pakistan-sponsored terrorism is at least partially responsible for the sorry state of affairs in the Valley, there can be no doubt that the Kashmiris have legitimate grievances that need immediate redressal. At a time when many hardliners in the Hurriyat Conference have publicly announced that they would like to participate in the state assembly elections and are amenable to a "unconditional dialogue", New Delhi ought to seize the initiative and formulate an alternative vision that addresses their genuine concerns. Perhaps during his yatra, the prime minister could consider making an announcement — aimed at winning back public confidence — that his government had committed mistakes by ignoring claims of electoral manipulation and by being a witting or unwitting accomplice in the recent 'DNA fudge' episode. Less than six months from the assembly elections, the Union government has an opportunity to convince dissident political actors in the Valley that it is serious about according them their political rights and the space to articulate their aspirations. However, the criminal assault in Jammu by a Shiv Sena activist on Hurriyat leader Abdul Gani Lone while policemen looked on indulgently is not a propitious augury for Mr Vajpayee's pious pilgrimage.

Farooq condemns attack on Lone

By Our Correspondent

JAMMU, APRIL 2. Strongly deploring the manhandling of the Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone, by a Shiv Sena leader, the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, today said such attacks embarrassed India and they should be condemned in strong words.

Making a suo motu statement in the Assembly, he said, "As a leader of the House, I condemn the manhandling of Mr. Lone but I openly admit that I do not have love for people like Mr. Lone. Anyhow, India is a free country and these type of acts are not permissible here and should also not be tolerated."

"We do not believe in goondaism and such behaviour should not be tolerated in any democratic country," he said and assured the House that the persons responsible for the attack would be dealt with in accord-

ance with the law of the land. No guilty person would be spared.

The CPI(M) leader and MLA, M.Y. Tarigami, at a press conference demanded strong action against the Shiv Sainiks involved in the attack.

'Sena conspiracy'

PTI reports:

The Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference (JKPC) alleged that the "murderous attack" was the result of a conspiracy hatched by the Shiv Sena to eliminate Mr. Lone.

'A sentimental reaction'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, APRIL 2. The Jammu and Kashmir Shiv Sena chief, Kalki Maharaj, today justified

his attack on the senior Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone, on Monday.

Addressing a press conference, organised at short notice, Mr. Maharaj said the assault was a "sentimental reaction" to the militant strike at the Raghunath temple in Jammu. He said the temple was one of the most revered places of worship in the city and the attack was aimed at creating trouble.

He claimed that his action was acknowledged even by the Shiv Sena supremo, Bal Thackeray, with whom he spoke on telephone after the incident.

Mr. Maharaj warned of a "similar response" from the people in case of further militant strikes in Jammu. He said that by attacking the temple, the militants had crossed all limits and claimed that this had provoked his "sentimental reaction" against those who did not recognise the Constitution.

Lone assaulted by J&K Shiv Sena chief

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR APRIL 1. The senior All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leader, Abdul Gani Lone, was assaulted by the Jammu and Kashmir Shiv Sena chief, Kalki Maharaj, when he was addressing mediapersons in a Jammu hotel this afternoon.

Mr. Lone had called the press conference to express his concern over "police excesses against the JKLF chairman, Mohammed Yasin Malik, in custody". Even as he was surrounded by a group of videographers from various TV networks, Mr. Maharaj barged into the hotel, pushed Mr. Lone and slapped him.

Mr. Maharaj was accompanied by a posse of personal security officers who, according to Mr. Lone, helped him in the assault.

"My personal security officer,



The Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone, (left) is confronted by the Kashmir president of the Shiv Sena, Kalki Maharaj (right), at a hotel in Jammu on Monday. — AFP

Ghulam Hassan, had been kept in custody by his (Maharaj's) policemen, perhaps to facilitate the attack," Mr. Lone said.

The Shiv Sena leader, accompanied by his supporters,

abused Mr. Lone and shouted slogans such as "Bal Thackeray zindabad".

He told Mr. Lone that he had no right to call a press conference in Jammu where the militants had attacked the Raghunath Temple on Saturday.

Mr. Lone was rescued by some mediapersons. The policemen who accompanied Mr. Maharaj pushed Mr. Lone's PSO aside and did not allow him to protect the Hurriyat leader, who had recently undergone heart surgery.

Repeated attempts to contact Mr. Maharaj in Jammu failed. "He is not present in the house" was the response from his residence.

The DIG, Jammu, Dilbag Singh, said Mr. Lone had not lodged any complaint so far. "It is between two individuals and not cognizable," he added.

When contacted, Mr. Lone

condemned the attack and said "these are the people who are involved in the Gujarat riots and have created havoc in India. This reflects their Fascist mindset."

Mr. Lone said he had called the press conference to highlight the "maltreatment" being meted out to Mr. Malik in police custody.

"The SP of SOG, Mapohar Singh, had beaten him (Mr. Malik) mercilessly, damaging his ear which was recently operated upon in the U.S.," Mr. Lone said and added that his condition was deteriorating.

"I am going to fight for his release in the Supreme Court and will consult legal luminaries like Ram Jethmalani. One fails to understand that on the one hand, the Government wants to talk to separatists while on the other, they are being implicated in false cases," Mr. Lone said.

J&K police denies security lapse

Kavita Suri in Jammu

March 31. — Having failed to prevent the *fidayeen* attack on the Raghunath temple in Jammu, the state police has claimed the strike did not target the shrine complex. Denying any security lapse, IGP (Jammu Range) Mr Pitamber Lal Gupta said late last night that the terrorists had targeted the security personnel outside the temple.

In another incident, an officer of the Army's bomb disposal squad, a BSF jawan and two others were injured after six bombs exploded at Kharak Panja at Kalakote area in Rajouri yesterday. Sources said the terrorists blew up four electric poles with IEDs, causing disruption of power supply in the area.

About 40 priests from different temples in the city and over 500 devotees today performed a *shuddhikaran* (purification) ceremony at the Raghunath Temple complex following its "desecration" in yesterday's *fidayeen* attack.

Yesterday's attack on the temple — located a few yards from the chief minister's residence and just a kilometre away from the district police headquarters — has shocked both the administration and residents, as it was the first of its kind on any religious place in the past 13 years of militancy in the state. Though the IGP may claim the attack was not aimed at the temple, Intelligence officials told The Statesman that they had information on many possible attacks on religious places in the state.

A senior security official, on condition of anonymity, said the issue of militants increasingly taking shelter in shrines and mosques in Kashmir and the desecration or damaging of temples in Poonch and Rajouri areas had been discussed in various security meetings. The state police, however, did nothing to beef up security or took steps against possible attacks. The official said the Raghunath Temple complex was always "a soft target" for *fidayeen* attacks.

Meanwhile, Governor Mr GC Saxena and chief minister Dr Farooq Abdullah visited the temple today. The Governor said the militants, at the behest of their foreign mentors, were carrying out such acts to provoke a communal backlash. Condemning the killings, the chief minister called for convening special session of the UN Security Council to persuade Pakistan to end "cross-border terrorism".

Turn to page 6

Kashmir:

(Continued from page 1)

Prominent Kashmiri separatist leaders, including chief of the Hizbul Mujahideen Syed Salahuddin, have also condemned the killing of civilians in Jammu.

In another incident, business establishments were closed and demonstrations were held in Jammu in response to a *bandh* called by the Shiv Sena and the J&K Panthers Party to protest against the government's alleged failure to provide security to common people.

Sonia angry: Mrs Sonia Gandhi today condemned the killing of "innocent civilians" in the Raghunath temple, adds SNS from Delhi. The Congress president said: "We strongly condemn the dastardly act of terrorism."

Too many lives have been lost to bigotry and hatred. No faith condones the killings of innocent lives. ...perpetrators of such crimes should be condemned universally."

THE STATESMAN

H0-1
38/3

Abdul Gani Lone to get back his passport

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, MARCH 30. The Centre is believed to be coming round to the view that the senior Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone, be allowed to have his passport back. For now, the proposal is to allow Mr. Lone to have a passport, valid for one year. Once his passport is restored, he should be able to go abroad, including Pakistan.

However, there seems to be no willingness to oblige similarly another Hurriyat leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who has been requesting the External Affairs Ministry that his passport be restored and that he be allowed to travel to Saudi Arabia for Haj. Mr. Geelani recently wrote to the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, demanding that his request for a passport be considered.

The decision to give Mr. Lone, a known moderate, the passport is seen as an attempt by the Centre to get back the control over the "Kashmir policy", leading up to the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections later this year. The Centre's efforts — open and in the back-rooms — are geared to secure the All-Party Hurriyat Conference's participation in the elections. To this end, the Prime Minister has promised, more than once, of his Government's commitment to ensure "free and fair" elections in Jammu and Kashmir. The Centre's efforts, consequently, have been based on the presumption that the "moderates" such as Mr.

Lone or Yasin Malik (JKLF leader) or Mirwaiz Umar Farooq could ultimately be persuaded to test the extent of their support in the Kashmir valley.

But this policy was deemed to have been derailed by the Farooq Abdullah Government when it arrested Mr. Malik for "illegally possessing" foreign currency. Mr. Malik was arrested under POTO. The Union Home Ministry was kept in the dark about the arrest. This has suddenly soured the mood among all those voices and individuals who were reported to be getting disillusioned with Pakistan's ability to deliver "azadi" (freedom) through "jihad" (holy war) and were believed to be prepared for seeking accommodation for their aspirations within the framework of a democratic India.

Mr. Lone has been leading an internal debate within the Hurriyat Conference and has emerged as the voice of moderation. Syed Geelani leads the other faction, and is generally seen to be an ardent advocate of Kashmir's merger with Pakistan. By deciding to give Mr. Lone the passport, the Centre has tried to reach out, once again, to the separatist constituency and has sought to signal to the Abdullah Government that it would not be allowed to queer the pitch. The Centre also wants to tell the international community that it would be watchful of the possibility of the State Government's "mischievous desire" to dilute the fairness of the Assembly elections.

THREE SECURITY PERSONNEL AMONG SEVEN KILLED

'Fidayeen' strike at temple in Jammu

①
J&K
HPD-1

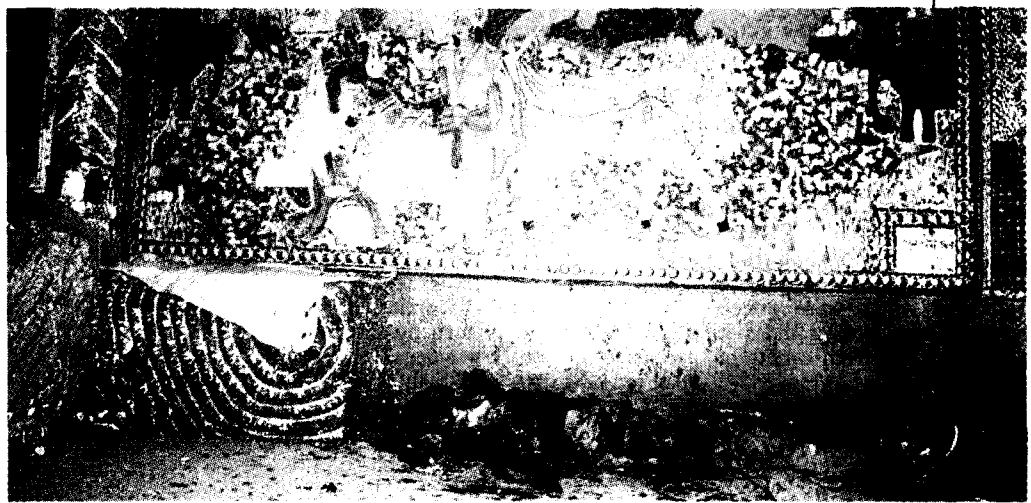
31/3

By Luv Puri

JAMMU, MARCH 30. In the first-ever attack by a suicide squad ('fidayeen') in the heart of the Jammu city, two terrorists struck the usually heavily-crowded Raghunath temple at 10.20 a.m. today. Both were killed and are yet to be identified.

The terrorists opened fire indiscriminately, killing seven persons, including three security personnel and a woman. Eighteen persons were injured and four were said to be in a critical condition.

Eyewitnesses told *The Hindu* that the two 'fidayeen' came to the crowded Hari market adjacent to Raghunath Mandir, built 150 years ago by Raja Pratap Singh, and blew up a car by throwing a grenade on it. The blast created a panic among the people who started running for safety. The terrorists then started spraying bullets at civilians, killing two, identified as Santosh Kumar and Ashok Kumar. Security personnel opened fire at the terrorists, killing one. Taking advantage of the panic, the other terrorist ran towards the Raghunath Mandir and gunned down two special services bureau personnel guarding the main temple gate. The killed personnel were identified as Havaldar Sureshwar and constable Togan Taki hailing from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The terrorist entered the temple and fired at a Jammu and Kashmir Constable Dheeraj Kumar and Laxman Das, a shoemaker. Both died on the spot. The terrorist entered the right side of the temple and opened fire at a woman, Ratna Devi, hailing from Gwalior. The



The body of a militant lying inside the Raghunath temple complex in Jammu on Saturday. — PTI

woman, who was sitting beside her seven-year-old son, Guarav, was killed but the boy escaped unhurt. She had returned from a pilgrimage to the Vashino-Devi Shrine.

The terrorist then tried to fire at the priest, Jivan Anand, but he had run out of ammunition. Feeling that he was cornered, the terrorist, who was wearing belt-like contraption, blew himself up. Later, it was found to be a bag-and-catheter device. There was no damage to the temple. A bag containing hand-grenades and other explosive material was recovered from the terrorists.

Tension at hospital

Later there was tension at the Government Medical College Hospital as a mine was found on the body of one of the terrorists which was brought for post-mortem examination. Hospital sources told *The Hindu* that a

bomb squad soon arrived and the mine was defused. Police and CRPF blockades were set up at all exit points of the city and security was strengthened at all key buildings and installations. Shops were closed to protest the terrorist attack.

The State BJP unit blamed the State Government for not taking adequate steps to prevent these type of attacks and demanded the Chief Minister's resignation.

A painful act: Shabir

PTI reports:

The Jammu and Kashmir Freedom Party president, Shabir Ahmad Shah, condemned the attack terming it a "painful act". "Islam teaches respect of places of worship of all religions. The people-friendly and justice-loving people who are fighting for a bigger goal can never act like this," he said in a telephonic statement from New Delhi.

He said Kashmiris were passing through a crucial and critical phase and they had to maintain discipline and work for communal brotherhood at all costs.

It is desperation: Omar

In New Delhi, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Omar Abdullah, said the assault was aimed at whipping up communal frenzy in Jammu and Kashmir and asked the people not to fall into the trap.

In a statement from Teheran, where he is on a two-day official trip, Mr. Abdullah said the attack "proved the desperation of militants in their efforts to gain lost ground and they were not sparing even the devout in trying to achieve this aim".

The Minister urged the people of the State, especially Jammu, to maintain calm and not fall into the trap of these anti-national elements.

THE HINDU

31 MAR 2002

J&K separatist groups protest terror law

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, March 27

"POTO IS the photo of Indian democracy," read a banner held up by the acting chairman of JKLF, Javid Ahmad Mir, as he led a group of youths at Maisurama in Srinagar in a protest against the passage of the Bill.

The police, however, charged the protesters and chased them away.

Javid Mir fears that Pota would be used as a tool to "suppress the pro-freedom voice in Kashmir". He said the arrest of JKLF chairman Yasin Malik was the beginning of a major crackdown on the "pro-freedom leadership".

Mir is not the only separatist leader who harbours such apprehensions. There is a general feeling in the secessionist circles that the law would be used at random against them. But they insist they will not be deterred from their path.

"Poto or no Poto," said Muslim Conference general secretary Shabir Ahmad Dar, "Our struggle will continue". He said the Valley was already reeling under severe laws such as the

Valley shutdown

A GENERAL shutdown called in protest against the arrest of JKLF chief Yasin Malik tripped life in the Valley on Wednesday.

The JKLF, describing the police charge as "fabricated and false", called the strike, which was also supported by the Hurriyat. All shops, commercial centres, educational institutions and banks were closed and transport was off the roads. The Kashmir High Court Bar Association too supported the strike.

HTC, Srinagar

Armed Forces Special Powers Act and Public Safety Act.

"Any more such law will only further our resolve. Dialogue, not laws, will help resolve the Kashmir problem in Kashmir," a Hurriyat leader said.

J&K Human Rights Front chairman Mohammad Ahsan Untoo said at least eight of the 91 people booked under Pota in the last four months are boys in the age group of 11-13.



JKLF leaders at a rally in protest against Pota in Srinagar on Wednesday. AFP PHOTO

52 injured in Kashmir blast

HT Correspondent
Srinagar, March 22

A GRENADE explosion today rocked the southern township of Shopian in Pulawama district injuring 52 civilians.

Police sources said that some unidentified men lobbed a hand grenade at a busy marketplace in the town around at 10.30 am. People hit by grenade splinters were rushed to hospitals in Srinagar. The condition of eight was stated to be critical.

The local residents believe this to be the handiwork of the counter-insurgent Ikhwanis, who are camping at Gagrin. They reasoned that there were no security personnel around who could have been targets of militants.

"There was a policeman among the injured but was not in uniform," a source said. The Hizbul Mujahideen has also condemned the incident calling it the handiwork of Ikhwanis.

Meanwhile, security forces shot dead four top militants of the Hizbul Mujahideen and Tehreek-e-Jihadi-Islami (TJI) at Kangan in Srinagar district and Kaimoh in Anantnag. Sources said security forces raided a militant hideout at Thiyun village in Kangan, 50 km north of Srinagar on Thursday night. The militants fired, which led to a fierce encounter.

Two bodies were recovered from the site this morning. They were identified as Manzoor Ahmad alias Cobra and Abu Bakre. Cobra was a senior commander of the Hizbul, who had been active in the area for the past 12 years. Abu Bakre, a Pakistani national, was also considered a top commander of the TJI. Sources said that three militants escaped the security dragnet.

The Hizbul Mujahideen suffered yet another jolt, when security forces, in a separate encounter that lasted for 20 hours, killed two of its cadres at Kaimoh village in Anantnag. The encounter began on Thursday afternoon, when security forces, on a tip-off cordoned the village.

Four houses, two cowsheds and two other structures were razed in the incident. One of the slain Hizb militant was identified as Manzoor Ahmad, while another was charred beyond recognition.

Meanwhile, Hizbul militants carried an overnight attack on a security formation at Kokernag in south Kashmir.

Sources said that the militants fired rifle grenades and rockets on the camp. There are no official reports of any casualties.

However, the Hizbul claimed that 10 security men were killed in the attack.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
25 MAR 2002

Yasin arrested on hawala charge

HT Correspondents
Srinagar / London, March 25

JKLF CHIEF and senior Hurriyat leader Mohammad Yasin Malik was arrested today under the Foreign Exchange Movement Act (Fema) and Poto for his alleged involvement in a hawala racket.

Malik's arrest followed the arrest of Mushtaq Ahmad Dar and Shazia by the Jammu police near Batatote on the Jammu-Srinagar highway. The two were carrying \$100,000 which had been brought into the valley illegally and was to be handed over to Malik in Srinagar.

The police said Dar and Shazia had received the money from Pakistan-based JKLF leader Altaf Gadhri in Nepal. A case in this regard has been filed (14/2002) against Malik at the Kud police station in Jammu.

The police raided the Hurriyat at headquarters at Raj Bagh here at 2.30 pm and arrested Malik in the middle of a Press conference. Malik urged the policemen to "wait for a few minutes" so that he could conclude the Press conference. But a police officer shot back: "The Press can wait, we can't." Malik resisted the policemen and refused to go with them without ending the Press conference. A police officer hauled him to a police vehicle.

Hurriyat supporters raised slogans against the police and pelted stones at the officers. The police retaliated with cane charge and teargas shells. JKLF supporters also clashed

'Malik is lying'

MUSHTAQ AHMAD Dar, the man who was caught with a consignment of dollars on Sunday, insists that Yasin Malik assigned him the task of carrying the money into India from Kathmandu. "Yasin is lying about the whole thing," he said.

Shazia, the woman who was with him and whom Malik has denied knowing, has refused to talk.

Dar says Malik had collected the money from Kashmiris to strengthen the JKLF in the State. "The money was diverted to Pakistan, from where it reached Kathmandu, where it was given to me and Shazia," he said.

HTC, Jammu

with the police at Matsumma, where the outfit's headquarters as well as Malik's home is located.

The JKLF has called a general strike on Wednesday in protest against the Government's "atrocious measures to subjugate the voice of freedom in Kashmir".

A front spokesman described Malik's arrest as the "worst case of state terrorism". He said Malik had been wrongly implicated in the case to harass the "pro-freedom" leadership. The APHC too condemned the arrest.

At the Press conference, Malik said the allegation of his involvement in a hawala racket

was "fabricated". Malik said he was being punished for his opposition to the Assembly elections. "Since I was ill and was inactive for the past 18 months, the Government could find no excuse to arrest me... now they have fabricated hawala case against me."

Malik said he had never seen or met Shazia. "If it is proved that she has met me, I will resign from the ongoing struggle."

But Malik admitted that Dar was a district commander of the JKLF during the armed struggle. He said Dar was in jail from 1966 to 200 and has not been associated with the JKLF since his release. He said the police claim that Dar was a JKLF spokesman as "false". "Everybody knows who's who of our political set-up. Dar does not figure anywhere in our organisation."

Malik dared the Government and the police to prove that Gadhri had ever visited Nepal in the past seven years. "Let the police come with me and prove it there (Nepal). I will publicly accept the charge and will be ready to only face all the punishment it deserves but will also quit the slogan of *azadi*," he said.

Executive member of the JKLF's Central Diplomatic Bureau in London, Barrister A. Majid Tramboo, too said Gadhri "has not travelled to Kathmandu for over seven years".

He said the JKLF did not know who Shazia was and that Dar had not been linked with the outfit "following his release in 2000".



Yasin Malik after his arrest in Srinagar on Monday.

AP Photo

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
25 MAR 2002

25 MAR 2002

Al-Jehad warns people against taking part in J&K polls

SRINAGAR, MACH 24. Pro-Pakistani outfit Al-Jehad has resurfaced in Kashmir Valley warning people not to take part in the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir amid reports of merger of various terrorist groups.

The Al-Jehad, founded by Sheikh Abdul Aziz, is the second militant outfit which has warned Hurriyat leaders not to participate in the Assembly polls.

Earlier, the Jammu and Kashmir Islamic Front (JKIF) warned Hurriyat leadership of serious consequences if they participated in elections, while another militant outfit, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, asked the State Government employees to stay away from the poll process.

"If any Hurriyat leader including Syed Ali Shah Geelani and the Democratic Freedom party leader, Shabir Ah-

mad Shah, are found involved in any (election) activity, it would attract serious consequences," the JKIF had said.

The Al-Jehad was one of the front-ranking militant outfits in the Valley in the early 1990s and disappeared after the arrest and killing of its leadership and hundreds of cadres. Sheikh Abdul Aziz, who later joined the Hurriyat and became its executive member, is presently undergoing detention under the Public Safety Act after arrest last year.

The Al-Jehad's statement came at a time when reports of local outfits staging a comeback have started pouring in from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), where almost all militant outfits including those completely wiped out by the security forces are based.

Efforts to reintroduce totally local-

ised militancy are in the final stages on the other side of the Line of Control (LoC), a leading English daily said quoting a local news agency. While the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) have been advised to work in tandem with the local outfits, the numbers of apparently Kashmiri outfits are being reduced to a bare minimum, the agency quoting reliable information said.

According to the details made available by the agency, quite a few outfits would remain active in the coming days as all the smaller outfits have been directed to merge into them.

It will be the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, the Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen, the Tehreek-e-Jehad-e-Islami, the Harkat-e-Je-

had-e-Islami, Al-Umar Mujahideen, the Tehreek-e-Jehad, the Islamic Front and the Kashmir Resistance Force trying to dominate the militancy in the State in the near future, the reports said.

The Al-Khalid, a stray group of the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, has merged into the Hizb after three years of independent existence; another group Al-Badr Mujahideen has joined the Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen and the Hizb-e-Islami has been directed to join the Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen outfit, the report said.

Negotiations for merger of the Tehreek-e-Jehad-e-Islami and Al-Baraq are stated to be in the final stages and they are merging under a new name, the reports said. Similarly, the stray group

of the Tehreek-e-Jehad that was operating under a PoK militant commander, Ishfaq Balwal, under code name "third brigade" has returned to the mother outfit. While Karvan-e-Jehad has been directed to merge with the Al-Umar Mujahideen, the Lashker-e-Islami has been asked to merge into Islamic Front, the news agency said in the report.

The reports said all the militant outfits floated by various factions of Peoples' League have managed to forge a single outfit called Kashmir Resistance Force (KRF).

The KRF will draw its cadres from the erstwhile outfits of the Al-Jehad, the Hizbullah, the Muslim Janbaaz Force and Al-Fateh. — PTI

1,735 Pandit families still live in Kashmir valley

By Shujaat Bukhari

JAMMU, MARCH 10. Despite the trying times the Pandits faced in the early 90s, 1,735 families continue to live in different parts of the Kashmir Valley. The Government says the migrants can return only after the situation improves.

The Revenue and Rehabilitation Minister, Abdul Qayoom, informed the State Assembly recently that 33,984 migrant families had been registered with the Relief Organisation, Jammu, till January. About Rs. 442.26 crores had spent on their relief and other expenses.

Of the 1,735 families that decided not to migrate after insurgency broke out in late 1989,

557 live in Srinagar district, 419 in Anantnag, 313 each in Baramulla and Pulwama, 112 in Badgam and 16 in Kupwara. "The expenditure has been incurred on tenements, cash relief, free ration and administrative cost," Mr. Qayoom said. All efforts were being made to make their lives safe.

He said the Centre had approved a plan for their return to the Valley, but it had not been implemented due to continued trouble on the security front. "They can return only when situation improves," he said, adding that initially 26,000 migrant families were registered with the Government and the number went up after killings of

Pandits in Wandhama and Sangramapora.

The Minister said that a committee, headed by the former Financial Commissioner, Moti Lal Koul, had said that the plan for getting the migrants back involved an expenditure of Rs 2,300 crores.

A total of 6,604 Sikh families were living in the Valley and despite the killings in Chattisinghpura and Mehjoor Nagar, they have rejected calls for migration. Of them, 1,757 were in Baramulla district, 1,639 in Pulwama, 1,393 in Badgam, 990 in Anantnag, 570 in Srinagar and 205 in Kupwara. Police pickets have been posted in areas where Sikhs are in majority.

THE HINDU
11 MAR 2002

J&K 'is' and 'shall be' an integral part of India

Despite the UN Security Council's resolution of 17 January, 1948 calling upon India and Pakistan to take measures to improve the situation, the matter entered a stalemate.

At home, the state's internal administration was being governed by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution Act, 1939.

On 5 March, 1948 Maharaja Hari Singh issued a proclamation *inter alia* stating: "My Council of Ministers shall take appropriate steps, as soon as restoration of normal conditions have been completed, to convene a national assembly based upon adult suffrage having due regard to the principle that the number of representatives from each voting area should as far as practicable be proportionate to the population of that area."

This proclamation was followed on 20 June, 1949 issued by the Maharaja, by which he conferred all powers hitherto exercised by him on Yuvraj Karan Singh. On 1 May, 1951 Yuvraj Singh issued a proclamation which *inter alia* contained the following directions:

■ That a constituent assembly consisting of representatives of the people, elected on the basis of adult franchise, shall be constituted forthwith for the purposes of framing a constitution for the state of Jammu and Kashmir;

1 That the vote at election shall be direct and (by) secret ballot;

1 That the constituent assembly shall have power to act notwithstanding any vacancy in the membership thereof; and

1 That the constituent assembly shall frame its own agenda and make rules for the governing of its procedure and the conduct of its business. The convening of the constituent assembly in 1951 was a natural outcome of the desire of the people of the state to have a democratic government responsible to the legislature, elected by the people.

It was invested with the authority to frame the constitution for the

The accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India is legally sound, constitutionally binding and irrevocable. Holding of a plebiscite would be repugnant to the constitutions of both India and Kashmir, concludes ADARSH SEIN ANAND

state and to decide its future. "Today is our day of destiny. A day which comes only once in the life of a nation..." declared Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah in his inaugural address to the constituent assembly, adding that the Assembly shall give "its reasoned conclusions regarding accession".

The constituent assembly, convened on the basis of adult suffrage in unequivocal terms, ratified Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India through a well-considered resolution on 15 February, 1954

which deal with the state territory, permanent residents and relationship of the state with the Union of India - came into force at once.

The remaining sections came into force on 26 January, 1957. This day is referred to as the commencement of the constitution.

The preamble to the constitution of Kashmir opens with the declaration: "We, the people of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, having solemnly resolved, in pursuance of the accession of this State of India which took place on

According to the assurance given to the UN Security Council, the question of accession was finally set at rest by the people of the state through their elected representatives in 1954 and 1957.

If the accession of Kashmir has to be reopened, the same reopening would imply going back 54 years and reopening the whole question of the independence of India and Pakistan.

The resolution of the Security Council (91 of 1951) dated 30 March, 1951 cannot effect the constitutional provisions

contained in the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir because even international treaties which are in conflict with the domestic law of a country must give way to the domestic law under settled legal practice. The accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India on 26 October, 1947 is legally sound, constitutionally binding and irrevocable.

Article 253 has been made applicable to the state in a modified form with a proviso that no decision affecting the disposition of the state shall be made by the government of India except with the consent of the state government.

The preamble to the constitution of Kashmir opens with the declaration: 'We, the people of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, having solemnly resolved, in pursuance of the accession of this State of India which took place on the twenty-sixth day of October, 1947, to further define the existing relationship of the State with the Union of India as an integral part thereof.'

the twenty-sixth day of October, 1947, to further define the existing relationship of the State with the Union of India as an integral part thereof."

The people of Jammu and Kashmir thus, finally settled any controversy regarding accession through the constituent assembly comprising their elected representatives.

No one, even the worst critic, has ever doubted the representative nature of the constituent assembly.

Self-determination is a one-time slot - the people of the state took a final decision and, therefore, the question of any further "self-determination" or "plebiscite" does not arise either legally or morally.

The "wishes" of the people of Jammu and Kashmir have been duly ascertained through the duly elected constituent assembly.

The state of the people of Jammu and Kashmir has been duly ascertained through the duly elected constituent assembly. The state's accession to India, therefore, cannot any longer be questioned or doubted.

The 1954 resolution of the constituent assembly was followed by the incorporation of Section 3 in the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir which reads: "The State of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India."

The use of the expression "is and shall be" is significant. It talks both of the past and the future relationship of the state with the Union of India. This section is in affirmation and reiteration of the desire of the people of Jammu and Kashmir to be an integral part of India.

It has been put beyond the powers of the state legislature to amend by virtue of the mandate of Section 147 of the constitution. This provision was apparently incorporated to "avoid any fissiparous tendencies raising their ugly heads in the future".

Legally speaking, even if a government in Jammu and Kashmir wanted to give its consent to secession of the state, a position otherwise not permissible under the Constitution of India, the state government would be banned under Section 3 of its own constitution to give such consent. Section 147 of the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir prohibits any amendment of Section 3, which is a basic feature of the state constitution. Thus, holding of a plebiscite would be repugnant to the constitutions of India and Kashmir.

The accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India is quite analogous to the annexation of Texas by the USA. When Mexico separated from the Spanish empire and set up as an independent republic, Texas was an integral part of the new state.

Later, Texas revolted against the Mexican authorities and established itself as an independent entity. The independent status of Texas was recognised by the USA and the principal powers of Europe.

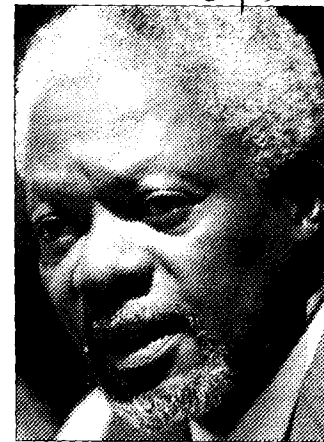
In 1844, the government of Texas, threatened by the menace of predatory incursions from Mexico, requested the US government to annex the state. This proposal was sanctioned by the American Congress in a joint resolution in March 1845.

After this sanction, America sent an army to defend the western frontiers of Texas. The government of Mexico strongly protested and alleged violation of the rights of Mexico and even diplomatic intercourse between the two governments was suspended.

The Mexican protest evoked the following reply from the US government: "The government of the United States did not consider this joint resolution as a violation of any of the rights of Mexico, or that it offered any just cause or offence to its Government; that the Republic of Texas as an indepen-



Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

dent power, owing no allegiance to Mexico, and constituting no part of her territory or rightful sovereignty and jurisdiction."

In the Texas case, it has never been contended that the annexation was not valid nor was the US action to send an army to defend

the western frontiers of Texas ever questioned.

The case of Kashmir's accession stands on a much stronger footing than that of Texas and the criticism regarding the validity of the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India is wholly meaningless and

unsustainable.

The question of holding a "plebiscite" in Jammu and Kashmir is legally not permissible. The theory is flawed on legal as well as moral grounds. Even the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has accepted this position.

He has clearly said that UN resolutions are no longer implementable obviously because it was the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir, including, the areas of Pakistan occupied Kashmir and areas given by Pakistan to China, which has acceded to India and unless all those areas were restored to India, the pre-condition for holding a plebiscite under UN resolutions, is even otherwise impracticable and un-implementable.

The clock cannot be put back - one must look forward only.

Concluded

(The author is former Chief Justice of India)



Yuvraj Karan Singh

after a great deal of debate, discussion and consideration.

The task of constitution-making entered a decisive phase when, in the 12th session of the constituent assembly held from 29 September, 1956 to 19 November, 1956 the drafting committee on 10 October, 1956 presented the draft constitution.

The constitution was approved and adopted on 17 November, 1956. Sections 1 to 8 and 158 -

2 MAR 2002

2 MAR 2002

Geographically, the state of Jammu and Kashmir, pre-October 1947, fell into four natural regions. In the south lies Jammu, the winter capital; in the centre is the valley of Kashmir which contains the summer capital, Srinagar; to the north is Gilgit and between Kashmir Valley and Tibet is the province of Ladakh. The state covered an area of 84,471 square miles and included Gilgit, areas in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Kashmir Valley, Ladakh and Jammu. At present, almost 50 per cent of the area is not under the control of the Jammu and Kashmir government — it is under occupation of Pakistan or China.

The Indian native states, of which Jammu and Kashmir was one such state, had a hereditary ruler who, subject to the paramountcy of the British Crown, exercised, with some exceptions, unlimited power over the states ruled by them. The rulers of the native states were sovereigns subject to the paramountcy of the British Crown. The aftermath of World War II and the assumption of power by a Labour ministry in England brought about a change in the British policy towards India.

The Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethick Lawrence, on 19 February 1946 announced the decision of the British government to send a delegation of three Cabinet ministers to India to find a solution for the problem of India. The delegation popularly, known as the "Cabinet Mission", arrived in India on 23 March 1946. On 25 May 1946, it circulated a memorandum dated 12 May 1946 in regard to the native states. In its memorandum, the Mission affirmed that on the withdrawal of the British government from India, it would no longer be possible for the rights of the states which flowed from their relationship with the Crown to exist and the rights surrendered by the states to the paramount power would revert to the rulers of those states when the two new dominions of India and Pakistan were created.

The Cabinet Mission, however, advised the rulers of the native states to enter into negotiations with the successor government or governments and evolve a scheme of the precise form of their relationship. On 20 February 1947, the British government announced that independence would be granted to British India. This was followed by another statement on 3 June 1947 setting out its plan for the transfer of power. The plan *inter alia* provided that the Muslim majority areas in British India should constitute the dominion of Pakistan and the Hindu majority areas in British India the dominion of India. In this plan, the position of the princely states was dealt with in the following manner.

"His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that the decisions announced above (about partition) relate only to British India and that their policy towards Indian States contained in the Cabinet Mission Memorandum of 12-5-1946, (Cmd. 6835) remains unchanged."

Thus it would be seen that on the withdrawal of paramountcy, the princely states were to become independent and the communal basis of division of British India was not to apply *ipso facto* to the states. Neither the Cabinet Mission nor the British government made any positive

Himalayan transition

In this first of a three-part series, ADARSH SEIN ANAND provides a historical and legal perspective to Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India

suggestions regarding the future of the princely states.

Lord Mountbatten, as the Crown representative, addressed the Chamber of Princes on 25 July 1947. He advised the princes and their representatives that although legally they had become independent, they should accede to one or the other dominion, keeping in mind the geographical contiguity of their states. (*Keeping's Contemporary*



to India. Power to take the decision vested exclusively in the ruler according to the British government's declared policy.

In Kashmir, the National Conference had launched a "Quit Kashmir Movement" with renewed vigour from 28 June 1938 demanding that Maharaja Hari Singh should quit the state bag and baggage and leave the people of the state to decide their own future by having a responsible government. It gained more momentum in 1944. The Maharaja's government made efforts to crush the "Quit

While Lord Mountbatten (left) caused to be circulated for discussion a Draft Instrument of Accession which explicitly provided for surrender to the appropriate dominion the power over defence, external affairs and communications and stated that the dominion would have no authority over the internal autonomy of the state, Maharaja Hari Singh's (below) indecision gave rise to genuine concern for his personal safety



Archives, 9/16/8/1947, p. 8765.)

Lord Mountbatten told the Chamber of Princes that accession of the state to either of the dominions was to be under the Cabinet Mission Memorandum of 16 May 1947, which contemplated surrender to the dominion of three subjects, namely defence, external affairs and communications.

He also caused to be circulated for discussion a Draft Instrument of Accession which explicitly provided for surrender to the appropriate dominion the power over the three specified subjects and stated that the dominion would have no authority over the internal autonomy of the state. A state could accede to either dominion by executing an instrument of accession signed by the ruler and accepted by the Governor-General of the dominion concerned. The decision on whether to accede or not and to which dominion were in the exclusive right and discretion of the ruler. In the Indian dominion, the accession was to be made under Section 6 of the Government of India Act, 1935, as adopted by Section 9 of the Indian Independence Act, 1947.

On 15 August 1947, India became independent. In accordance with the Cabinet Mission plan of May 1946 following the creation of the dominions of India and Pakistan, Kashmir, bordering on both India and Pakistan, had, like any other native state, three alternatives: to assert complete independence, to accede to Pakistan, or to accede

to India. Power to take the decision vested exclusively in the ruler according to the British government's declared policy.

In Kashmir, the National Conference had launched a "Quit Kashmir Movement" and the arrests of political leaders followed. On 15 August 1947, most of the leaders of the National Conference and the Muslim Conference were in prison. The movement, however, did not die. In the absence of British help, which the Maharaja was hitherto getting, Hari Singh found himself in a tight corner. "He disliked the idea of becoming a part of India, which was being democratised, or of Pakistan, which was a Muslim

Sheikh Abdullah's advice paved the way... Hari Singh also found no other alternative and he addressed a letter to Lord Mountbatten, the Governor-General of India, stating: 'I have to inform your Excellency that a grave emergency has arisen in my State and request the immediate assistance of your Government... I wanted to take time to decide to which dominion I should accede'

State. He thought of independence." (Brown, W.N., *The United States and India and Pakistan*, Cambridge 1953, p. 162.) He therefore offered to sign a standstill agreement with both India and Pakistan aimed at continuing the existing relationship pending his final decision regarding the future of the state.

No standstill agreement came to be concluded between Kashmir and India though the foreign secretary to the government of Pakistan on 15 August 1947 indicated to the Maharaja that the government of Pakistan was agreeable to have a standstill agreement with the government of Jammu and Kashmir. This was followed by the visit of Mr Jinnah's private secretary to Srinagar and "His Highness was told that he was an independent sovereign, that he alone had the power to give accession, that he need consult nobody, that he should not care for the National Conference or Sheikh Abdullah... that he need not delegate any of his powers to the people of the State and that Pakistan would not touch a hair of his head or take away an iota of his power" if he acceded to Pakistan. (Mahajan, M.C., *Accession of Kashmir to India (The Inside Story)*, Sholapur, p. 2.)

There started an economic blockade from Pakistan. The government of Pakistan did not unequivocally deny the charge of economic blockade but pleaded "special circumstances" and difficulties in sending supplies to the state due to lorry drivers' reluctance to carry these supplies between Rawalpindi and Kohala.

While the Pakistan government was pleading "special circumstances", *Dawn*, the Muslim League's official organ, wrote on 24 August 1947, "The time has come to tell the Maharaja of Kashmir that he must make his choice and choose Pakistan." Should Kashmir fail to join Pakistan, "the gravest possible trouble would inevitably ensue".

This threat alarmed the Maharaja of Kashmir. Looking to the upsurge in the state, Sheikh Abdullah, who was in jail, was released on 29 September 1947. On 20 October 1947, a column of several thousand tribesmen armed with "bren guns, machine guns, mortars and flame throwers" attacked the frontiers of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. "Srinagar trembled before the danger of the tribesmen's invasion."

The tribal invasion caused grave devastation in the state. Maharaja Hari Singh's indecision gave place to deep-seated alarm and to a genuine concern for his personal safety. On 25 October 1947, the Maharaja appointed Sheikh Abdullah as the emergency administrator. The raiders were fast approaching Srinagar, destroying and looting whatever came their way, and the state was in imminent peril. Sheikh Abdullah advised the Maharaja that if the state was to be saved, he must accede to India and ask for immediate military help.

This advice paved the way for the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. Hari Singh also found no other alternative and he addressed a letter to Lord Mountbatten, the

Governor-General of India, stating: "I have to inform your Excellency that a grave emergency has arisen in my State and request the immediate assistance of your Government. As your Excellency is aware, the State of Jammu and Kashmir has not acceded to either the dominion of India or Pakistan. Geographically my State is contiguous with both of them. Besides, my State has common boundary with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and with China. In their external relations the dominions of India and Pakistan cannot ignore this fact. I wanted to take time to decide to which dominion I should accede or whether it is not in the best interest of both the dominions and my State to stand independent, of course with friendly relations with both."

After giving an account of the tribal invasion, the letter continued: "With the conditions obtaining at present in my State and the great emergency of the situation as it exists, I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian dominion. Naturally, they cannot send the help asked for by me without my State acceding to the dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government."

To be concluded

(The author is a former Chief Justice of India.)

9.8
Ddk

Hurriyat forms 'election commission'

HO-1
18/2

By Our Correspondent

JAMMU, FEB. 12. The All-Party Hurriyat Conference today announced the names of six members to its proposed "election commission," constituted to discuss the modalities for holding elections in Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The two co-chairpersons of the "commission" would be Tapan Kumar Bose, who runs the Kathmandu-based South Asian Human Rights Centre and the former Chief Justice of Pakistan, Sajjad Ali Shah.

Ved Bhasin, Editor of the *Kashmir Times* — a local English daily from Jammu — Zafar Mehdi, an academician in the Kashmir University, Sadiq Wahid Raja, a Ph.D. scholar from Harvard University, and a retired judge from PoK, Khushid, would be the other four members of the "commission."

Announcing this at Srinagar, the Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Ghani Bhat, said the persons concerned had agreed to "help



The chairman of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, Abdul Ghani Bhat, at a press conference in Srinagar on Tuesday.

— Photo: Nissar Ahmad

in the Hurriyat endeavour" of conducting elections in the State and PoK. The purpose of the whole exercise was to elect the "true representatives of the people of Jammu and Kashmir" who could discuss its future in tripartite talks, involving both India and Pakistan.

Mr. Bhat said the six persons,

selected by the Hurriyat executive committee, were men of integrity. And hoped the Centre would not obstruct the Hurriyat's proposal.

On whether the Pakistani authorities had been consulted on the move, the Hurriyat spokesman told *The Hindu* that "so far," they had not been consulted. "We are waiting for the response of the Governments of India and Pakistan and hope they will respond positively to the proposal so that the people of Jammu and Kashmir can live in peace." Asked when the first meeting of the "election commission" would take place, he said "it will be decided soon."

Mr. Bhasin, when contacted by presspersons, said the scope of the Hurriyat proposal was not yet known. Considered a strong proponent of independent Jammu and Kashmir, he said "I am yet to receive any official proposal in this regard but whether the proposal succeeds or not will depend on how Islamabad and New Delhi react to it."

THE HINDU

1992

Al-Qaida men spotted in J&K

Srinjoy Chowdhury in New Delhi

Feb. 10. — A large group of suspected Al-Qaida militants have been spotted in Pakistan along the India-Pakistan border, while a few are already in Jammu and Kashmir, according to senior Army officers.

A group of Pakistanis who were once with the Al-Qaida have already moved into Baramulla. Over a hundred militants have been spotted in Pakistan, opposite Poonch and Rajouri in the Jammu region. The passes are still open in the area despite the winter.

"We still don't know whether they are Afghans or Kashmiris or Pakistanis. They have been there for a while," a senior officer said. The group that moved into Baramulla was identified about a month ago.

501 11/2
"They may have moved in from Afghanistan but they are not proper Taliban," the officer said. Al-Qaida militants came from all parts of the world, some of them even being Chechens.

That apart, the decrease in terrorist activity in the Valley is well-known. Army sources said there is a considerable decrease in the amount of directions made on radio to the militants from across the border. The militants also lack funds. Army officers said fewer radio or signals contacts between the militants and their "masters" have been made in recent times. As a result, the militants have begun extorting money to make up for the inflow.

"This is very good in the long run. It will annoy locals and help to alienate them in the long run," the officer said. While there has

been a noticeable drop in militancy since the Pakistani President, General Pervez Musharraf's speech, it could also be because of the heavy snow that has closed all passes in northern J&K.

"It is too short a period to tell whether there has been a real decrease or it is just a temporary thing. We have intercepted messages telling the militants to lie low," the officer said.

This is evident in the number of "kills" the Army is achieving in its encounters. Though the number is not as high as 200 as was the case several months ago, it has remained in the range of 160 to 170, "a sufficiently substantial number," he said. Pakistani shelling, which helps militants to infiltrate is still continuing along the Line of Control, particularly north of Poonch.

THE STATESMAN

11 FEB 11 2002

Kashmir: need for a policy shift

HD-8

By Saifuddin Soz

11/2

THE PARADOX of some politicians in the ruling elite wanting to tackle Kashmir militarily, while several top generals categorically asserted on a number of occasions that Kashmir could be resolved best through political instrument is greatly puzzling.

It is none's case that terrorism should not be fought with vigour. Who does not know that Kashmir has suffered all these years because of terrorism, mainly promoted through cross-border insurgency? But, then, how can the military approach of tackling the situation be justified in the absence of any worthwhile political initiatives?

It is unfortunate that the Government of India did not do anything in Kashmir for the past two years which could be rated as politically significant.

The public perception that the intended negotiations through K.C. Pant have not fructified, in any manner, is now being realised at decision-making levels. Even the natural process of socio-political initiatives got blunted as the expertise gained by some of the most perceptive minds in the country, through their track II efforts, before Mr. Pant's arrival on the scene, was wasted as there was no mechanism to weave the inputs into the new scheme of things.

This is not to suggest that Mr. Pant alone is to blame for the failure of the so-called Pant mission. He performed little because he was essentially doing an 'extra job' in Kashmir!

But there is a silver lining which Delhi would be well-advised to take notice of and act. In spite of the failure of his 'ceasefire' initiatives the flak he faced because of Pakistan's sabotage of the Lahore declaration, the circumstances that led to the withdrawal of his 'Samjhauta Express', the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's constituency based on his personal image in Kashmir remains safe. The ordinary Kashmiri perceives him as a man genuinely committed to peace and wanting to move beyond

the beaten track' to resolve the imbroglio.

Meanwhile, the political scenario has undergone a tremendous change internationally, primarily because of civil society's most vigorous response to extremism. Terrorism has received a beating all around. The global psychology, so to say, has undergone a metamorphosis and the ranks of those who reject violence as an in-

strument of settling political issues has swelled beyond imagination. The unfortunate episode of September 11 was condemned by civil society universally as a heinous crime against humanity. The emergence of a new political dispensation in Afghanistan amid hopes for harmony, reconstruction and development affords a rare opportunity to its neighbours to participate in the great task of reconstruction and development. Fortunately, India's response to the emerging situation in Afghanistan has been positive.

An unfettered dialogue on Kashmir must be accepted as an imperative which cannot be delayed any more.

There is no doubt that the Afghan-istan factor will have an impact on Kashmir and it will be manifest in many ways. So will the unfortunate attack on Parliament on December 13 and the people's response to it. Pervez Musharraf's bold speech of January 12, which will go down in history as a powerful counter-point to the clergy, in cultural and religious terms, will also impact on Kashmir. But the assessment of diverse factors shall have to be made in an objective manner.

To my mind, the Government of India and the elements who enjoy considerable clout among the power elite did not take adequate notice of the fact that the Hurriyat Conference and the leadership to keep their eyes open. I would also like to say that the leaders should not live in castles which do not exist anywhere."

In the process of polarisation, important milestones were provided earlier by the senior APHC leader, Abdul Gani Lone, whose visit to Pakistan last year, apart from generating lot of heat and controversy, had brought fresh thinking to the APHC. It was on Pakistan soil that Mr. Lone had equated Pakistan and India in their bad behaviour with Kashmiris and he had categorically stated in PoK that people there were not even free to voice their grievances and that they enjoyed no real freedom. He made many more statements there that upset the Pakistan establishment. Then, he characterised Kashmir as a political rather than a religious issue. Many had thought that Mr. Lone would face turmoil on his return and the APHC would break. But nothing of the kind happened.

The majority of the APHC's executive and the general council has unanimously stated that Kashmir is a political proposition and it will be resolved through political means. The polarisation on this issue is complete and this is a welcome development. It is in spite of my disagreement with the APHC executive's recent res-

olution on Kashmir, particularly its impractical demand for a separate election commission, that I consider it to be a significant 'political resource' that can be sidelined or ignored only at a high cost to the healing process in Kashmir. This is, however, not to suggest that all that needs to be done has to be done by Delhi. The APHC would be well-advised to respond to the national and international situation, in full measure, and realise that dialogue is the only instrument available for resolution of the conflict.

I think the moment for a definite and result-oriented dialogue on Kashmir has arrived. Alongside the APHC, one should also look forward to the possibility of the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen transforming itself into a political outfit. On the APHC falls the crucial role of coordinating all the separatist elements, including leaders such as Shabir Shah and others. I, for one, would not like to take sides. The question as to how working relations between the APHC and the Hizb will shape and how the former will relate itself to the divergent statements of Mr. Geelani must be left to the so-called separatist conglomerate itself. The Government of India should be interested only in talking to the people of Jammu and Kashmir rather than worrying about intra-personal /party affiliations.

There is quite a lot of noise going around on the question of organising credible elections in Kashmir. My perception is that first things should be allowed to be done first. An unfettered dialogue on Kashmir must be accepted as an imperative that cannot be delayed any more.

The issues such as credible elections are, no doubt, significant, but these can be woven into the texture of a dialogue itself.

The ball seems to be straightaway in the Centre's court and Mr. Vajpayee should know better how to move forward!

(The writer is a former Union Minister.)

THE HINDU

Kashmir is not negotiable, reiterates PM

517
82

Times News Network
DEHRA DUN/CHANDIGARH: Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Union home minister L.K. Advani on Thursday struck a strident posture with respect to current Indo-Pak tensions. Mr Vajpayee, who addressed a large election meeting in Dehra Dun, asserted that the status of Kashmir was not negotiable as the Kashmiri people had chosen to be with India. "We have fought three wars on the issue and every time Pakistan has had to lose land."

Mr Advani, at a public meeting in Morinda in Punjab, said that there was a need to set Pakistan right. He minced no words, asserting, "Padosi ko thikane lagana hai."

The home minister, while canvassing for the Akali Dal-BJP alliance, asserted that India had taken a decisive step to wipe out terrorism once and for all from the country and necessary measures would be adopted to achieve this goal.

Mr Vajpayee ridiculed Gen Pervez Musharraf's recent address to the Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) assembly. He said it was of no consequence as the PoK assembly was not an elected body. The PM said that a crisis of trust and confidence marked Indo-Pak rela-

tions at the moment. This was due to Pakistan's betrayal of trust in the past.

The PM recalled how Gen Musharraf had failed to reciprocate India's gesture of goodwill when he had been to Pakistan and also when Gen Musharraf had been invited to India. He pointed out that the Kargil conflict took place soon after his visit to Lahore. He also said that after the 1971 war with Pakistan, he had suggested to the then PM, Indira Gandhi, that

CIA chief worried about Indo-Pak war

WASHINGTON: Central Intelligence Agency director George Tenet has said the U.S. remains concerned about the possibility of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan.

"Both are publicly downplaying the risks of nuclear conflict in the current crisis," he warned, adding, "We are deeply concerned that a conventional war once begun could escalate to a nuclear confrontation." (ANS)

the Kashmir issue be settled once and for all in exchange for prisoners of war.

Mr Vajpayee said that India wanted to have good trade relations with Pakistan on terms favourable to it, but "Musharraf is busy harping on Kashmir".

He also lambasted the Congress for making an issue of the coffins purchase. "That party wants to make political capital of a sensitive issue," he said, adding, "This will only demoralise our jawans on the war front."

He said previous Congress governments did not care enough for dead soldiers and their families. He also refuted the Congress charge that India was isolated in the world community. "India's standing has risen to a new height in the world community," he said.

THE VARNISHING ACT



Flashing her brightly painted nails, an Afghan woman waits for an examination at Kabul University on Wednesday.

APHC leaders seek dialogue with PMO

H Bula Devi in New Delhi

Feb. 6. — With Pakistan keeping a safe distance from the All Party Hurriyat Conference, its leaders are now seeking a direct dialogue with the Prime Minister's Office.

APHC leaders are also working overtime to clear doubts raised by various quarters about the Hurriyat's sole representative character in the state.

While the Hurriyat leaders who are in the Capital have already opened up channels of communication with diplomatic circles of many countries, Islamabad appears to have left the leaders of the 23-party conglomerate in the lurch. The reasons being Pakistan itself is facing a tough time and also they want the amalgam to first set its house in

order instead of speaking in different voices.

Since the blessings from the Pakistan High Commission do not appear to be forthcoming, the leaders have decided to go to the people to seek a mandate under the observation of an autonomous election commission, having representatives of international repute from India, Pakistan and Kashmir. But this election would have nothing to do with the State assembly elections.

Speaking to The Statesman, Hurriyat executive council leader Mr Abdul Ghani Lone categorically stated that the APHC has not reversed its firm stand of 1996 to stay away from the "fraudulent" polls. "Those who will ultimately win the elections under the autonomous election commission will represent the people in any ensuing dialogue with the Centre. We want to set at rest the

doubts raised by the government of India but, on our own terms", he asserted adding that it is "part of the freedom struggle".

The Hurriyat wants a direct dialogue with the PMO since the dispute is over resolution of the state's accession.

According to them, when the Government of India could hold a dialogue with Harchand Singh Longowal on the Punjab issue, with Laldenga in the case of Mizoram and with various factions of NSCN to resolve the Naga issue, "direct talks should be held with us also". By this APHC would also clear doubts on its representative character.

However, the government's aim is to "frustrate the people so that ultimately we agree to their terms on bended knees". The APHC accused the Centre of causing "mischief" so that APHC can "never play an active role in any dialogue".

THE STATESMAN

7 FEB 2002

'No change in Hurriyat stand'

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, FEB. 5. Senior officials who otherwise should be in the know of things as well as the Hurriyat leaders remain clueless about the existence of the so-called "Wajahat Habibullah Mission." Although there has been no official announcement, most media reports suggest as if the Centre has appointed a new interlocutor for talks with political parties and groups. According to these media reports, Mr. Habibullah's task is to persuade the Hurriyat leaders to take part in the Jammu and Kashmir elections later this year. But the officials also concede that the crux of the problem is that there is no political decision on what to do or not to do in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to Abdul Gani Lone, senior Hurriyat executive member, there "has been no formal or informal dialogue or discussion with Mr. Habibullah." All that is known is that six weeks ago Mr. Habibullah sought a meeting with the Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat and wanted to make the point that it would be worthwhile for the Hurriyat to participate in the elections and in case it chose not to do so the least the conglomerate could do was not to give a call for the boycott of the polls. Mr. Habibullah was heard out.

As far as Mr. Lone is concerned, there has been no change in the Hurriyat's 1996 stand that it would keep away from the election process.

"There has been no review" of that stand. (A similar sentiment was expressed by another Hurriyat leader, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq in an interview to a news agency.)

If Mr. Lone is clueless about the "Habibullah Mission," senior officials in the Union Home ministry and the Prime Minister's Office too remain in the dark. As far as it can be made out, the designated interlocutor, K.C. Pant, had been occasionally relying on Mr. Habibullah to reach out to this or that Kashmiri leader.

The Hurriyat leaders are quite clear that the so-called Habibullah Mission is a non-starter. "At least Mr. Pant is the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and enjoys a Cabinet rank status; how can any one expect us to talk to a junior officer," asked Mr. Lone. According to him, the "K.C.Pant Mission" could not take off because the Centre went back on the informal understanding that had been worked out.

Why suddenly this excitement about Mr. Habibullah? Mr. Lone believes that the Centre has come under international pressure to start some kind of dialogue within Kashmir, and that is why so much is being made of the "new interlocutor". There is another suspicion. The "Habibullah Mission" is seen as a step in what the separatist camp calls the pattern to discredit the "credible" leaders by protecting them as "New Delhi's boys."

It's all gamesmanship

518 Hurriyat participation in J&K elections

The Hurriyat says it is willing to contest the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections due in September. The decision has been taken by the executive committee and can be said to have the approval of the individual parties that constitute it. This ought to be good news, normally, for it would imply recognition on the part of those who contest the legitimacy of Kashmir's accession to India, that the bottom has fallen out of their claims that Kashmir is held by force of arms. The Hurriyat, however, puts two spokes in the wheel. One, the election has to be held under an "independent, impartial and honest" authority, which by deduction is not the Election Commission. It had earlier spoken of getting the UN involved in the exercise. The Hurriyat's point is that since it questions India's sovereignty in the state, it cannot accept supervision by an Indian constitutional organ. The government of India will see the point and repudiate it ferociously. The Hurriyat knows this and is indulging in gamesmanship. Secondly, it says that elections must be held in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir too, which it knows to be impossible. Besides the idea is flawed and unfair, because pro-Indian elements, such as the National Conference and the mainstream parties on our side, will get very little space on the other side of the line of control where the Hurriyat will find a ready constituency, nurtured for it by Pakistan, while representing, at the same time, on this side of the LoC, a point of view favourable to Pakistan's basic position that the state is disputed.

The Hurriyat proposal does not answer the question put to it by the government — on what basis does it claim to be the principal Kashmiri interlocutor in any dispute over the state. What it does is to set up a near-plebiscite on the state's accession to India, without bringing the UN resolutions and its set of conditions into the picture. In other words, without questioning Pakistan's occupation of a portion of the state. The government of India is not fool enough not to see through the ploy.

THE STATESMAN

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2002

110-8
672

THE CHALLENGES IN KASHMIR

THE REPORTED 'DECISION' of the outlawed terrorist outfit, the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), to confine itself to Jammu and Kashmir and 'cease' its operations elsewhere in the country has been sought to be projected as a 'concession' to India which is going all out to impress on the international community the seriousness of the challenge it continues to face from cross-border terrorism. The 'gesture' however would appear to have much to do with the unrelenting global anti-terror campaign spearheaded by the U.S. and, in the more immediate context, the several initiatives Pervez Musharraf has taken — even if haltingly and under American pressure — by way of clamping a ban on the likes of the JeM and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), freezing their assets and cracking down on such terrorist elements operating in Pakistan. It is more a case of the JeM trying to make a virtue out of necessity, so to say. At another level, the JeM's publicised 'decision' to restrict its 'theatre of war' to Jammu and Kashmir and to substantially cut down the element of 'foreign participation' — from 75 per cent to 25 per cent — could well be a tactical shift aimed at image correction by highlighting its 'Kashmir focus' and 'predominantly indigenous character', the calculation being that India will have less room to complain of 'trans-border terrorism'. The LeT too had, just a few weeks ago, taken recourse to a similar cosmetic exercise. But there can be no question of anyone being taken in by such puerile attempts.

If the terrorist attacks mounted particularly by the JeM and others in its league are indeed seen to be restricted to the geographical boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir — the situation on the ground needs to be watched carefully for a reasonable time before one could get convinced about it — the anti-terror combat stands every chance of acquiring a sharper focus, both spatially and strategically. In a way, with the high-profile terrorist groups consciously seek-

ing to 'indigenise' their cadres, the imperative of making substantive moves to end the alienation of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, which is at the root of the terrorist menace in the State, has become all the greater. As a spin-off from the global anti-terror campaign mounted by the United States, a profound attitudinal change seems to be sweeping across the Kashmir Valley where the Pakistan-backed jihadi groups have been thrown into disarray, and at least a section of the secessionist camp is showing a pronounced tilt in favour of a 'Kashmiri solution', the contours of which are of course still nowhere near being delineated even vaguely, for obvious reasons. It is for New Delhi to seize the present moment and make imaginative and politically correct moves to consolidate the gains on the insurgency front.

Of considerable significance in this context is the indication given by the Centre's designated interlocutor, K.C. Pant, that the separatist All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has shown an "inclination" towards participating in the Assembly polls, due to be held later this year. The APHC has, just about a week ago, declared its intention to set up its own "autonomous, impartial and honest" Election Commission to hold a three-phase poll in the State, including PoK — a patently bizarre plan, ostensibly to "establish its representative character". Obviously the umbrella outfit is divided on the question of participating in the electoral process and Mr. Pant's assessment is apparently based on the official emissary, Wajahat Habibullah's interaction with its leadership. The first and yet critical step to ending alienation is to work on the positive signals from the 'secessionist' elements and respond constructively to their genuine demands vis-a-vis the poll process. It should be the earnest endeavour of the Centre and the State Government to ensure that the coming democratic exercise is truly free, fair and credible.

THE HINDU

RDG

POLITICKING WITH THE LAW

15/6/2

THE STAY ISSUED by the Supreme Court on the controversial Jammu and Kashmir Resettlement Act of 1982 is indeed a bold rebuff to the political machinations of the National Conference (NC) Government's frantic bid to bolster its electoral prospects by playing the communal card and embarking upon a course that would set a dangerous precedent for the entire nation. The invitation to all those who had migrated to Pakistan before 1954 to return to their native soil with a promise of restoring lost property as contemplated in the Act can potentially arouse deep passions in a population that has far from recovered from the trauma of Partition and, moreover, continues to bear the brunt of secessionist violence. The 1982 Act had sparked a controversy even at the time of its introduction by the NC Government headed by Sheikh Abdullah; with the Opposition dubbing it a ploy to alter the demographic composition of the Hindu-majority Jammu region with an eye on the Assembly elections of 1983. The Act was returned to the Assembly for reconsideration by the then Governor, the late B. K. Nehru, and subsequently, a Presidential reference was sought from the apex court. But even during the pendency of the reference, the Assembly once again passed the Bill which eventually received the Governor's assent. After 19 long years, the Supreme Court returned the original reference without comment in November 2001 and the NC has since come out strongly in favour of enforcing the law. Clearly, little has changed as far as the political orientations of the NC are concerned despite the grim ground realities in the State.

A fundamental consideration which must decisively weigh against any attempt to enforce the Act is that no State within the Indian Union should pass such legislation as would have im-

plications for the country's foreign relations. At a juncture when ties with Pakistan are at the lowest ebb, an endorsement of the 1982 law would be setting an unhealthy precedent against the interest of national identity and integrity. It would therefore be of the utmost importance and urgency to establish legal safeguards providing that laws aimed at renegotiating the status of former subjects are beyond the jurisdiction of any State. But if the NC nevertheless embraces this overtly communal stance, unmindful of these other dimensions, the reasons are not far to seek. The mainstream national political parties have had little compunctions in letting loose the politics of communalism on this sensitive border State with an eye on narrow and short-term gains.

The apprehensions raised by the Panthers' Party — which has petitioned the Supreme Court against the Act — of a terrorist influx into the region may be only as real or imaginary as the likelihood of a possible large-scale migration as a consequence of the disputed law. But, if history is anything to go by, the political fallout of the law for the elections to the State Assembly in a few months should by no means be underestimated. The 1983 Assembly elections were polarised in no small measure with the most hypocritical alliance between the Congress (I) and the NC designed to corner the Hindu and Muslim vote in the Jammu and Kashmir regions. It is almost certain that the pattern will be repeated with the BJP taking the place of the Congress (I) this time around. Strife-torn Jammu and Kashmir could well do without this ill-timed and utterly irresponsible meddling in its social balance by the 1982 Act simply because a political leadership, lacking in vision and foresight, finds that it has run out of ideas when it seeks the people's mandate.

THE HINDU

15/6/2002

SC demands report on border migrants

FROM OUR LEGAL
CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Feb. 4: The Supreme Court today ordered the Union government to send an official team to Jammu and Kashmir to assess the condition of migrant families and the relief being given to them by the state government.

A division bench of Justice B.N. Kirpal and Justice Arijit Passayat expressed displeasure over the reports submitted by the Jammu zone divisional commissioner, who co-ordinates relief schemes for the migrants from the border districts of Rajouri, Poonch, Doda and Udhampur.

"We are not satisfied with the reports received from the divisional commissioner with regard to the relief packages suggested to be given to the migrants from Udhampur, Rajouri, Poonch and Doda," the bench observed, virtually chiding the Farooq Abdullah government.

"The Centre should depute a team of responsible officers to personally visit migrant camps as well as the districts," the judges added and asked for a report within two weeks.

The order marks another turn to the controversial Jammu

and Kashmir Resettlement Act, which the apex court had earlier stayed.

The judges also said the central team's report should give details of measures taken by the state government and whether the relief packages outlined in an earlier affidavit to the court had been implemented.

Attorney-general Soli J. Sorabjee, who appeared for the Union government, told the court that the Centre had sanctioned Rs 10 crore to the state government for purchase of tents for the refugees and that various relief measures were already in operation.

The apex court's order came on a petition filed by Bhim Singh, the president of the Jammu and Kashmir Panthers' Party. Singh contended that in the name of "resettling", Pakistan-trained mercenaries and "even Taliban militants" could come back to the militancy-ravaged state and claim land and property.

It was on this contention that the court had stayed the operation and implementation of the resettlement law, which enables those who had migrated to Pakistan after March 1947 to come back and settle down permanently.

In his petition, Singh had

said if the Act was implemented, it would result in "chaos and pose a threat to the country's defence and security".

Earlier, the apex court had given two weeks' time to the Jammu and Kashmir government to file a reply after the Centre supported the stand of the petitioner.

The Centre had told the court that the law was *ultra vires* the Constitution and if allowed, it would facilitate the entry of terrorists into the state where more than 50,000 civilians have fallen victim to terrorist violence.

The 1982 legislation was about to be implemented following an announcement by the chief minister. As a Constitution bench of the apex court had earlier returned unanswered a reference by the President on the enactment, Abdullah said he was free to implement the Act.

However, the petitioners argued that about two lakh Pakistanis could enter the country in the name of resettlement. "Even the Taliban, now being driven out due to US military action, could come to settle down in Jammu and Kashmir with false certificates", the petitioners said. The apex court would take up the report of the Central team after two weeks.

THE TELEGRAPH

Jaish to stop activities outside Jammu & Kashmir

By Shujaat Bukhari

JAMMU, FEB. 4. In a major policy shift, the militant organisation, Jaish-e-Mohammad — responsible for the October 1 and December 13 attacks in India — has asked its cadre to stop forthwith their activities outside Jammu and Kashmir. It also decided to effect changes in its cadre.

In a statement issued to a local news agency CNS in Srinagar, the JeM spokesman, Shamsuddin Haider, said that an extraordinary meeting of the top-level commanders was held under the chairmanship of Abu Hijrat, in which the situation across Jammu and Kashmir was discussed and some important decisions taken.

"It was decided to direct the mujahideen of our organisation in other states of India to stop their activities and

report back to headquarters" said the spokesman adding that now the activities of Jaish would be confined to

tions in the State" he said. The meeting was told that earlier the ratio of foreign and local militants was 75 and 25 per cent and it was now decided to reverse the ratio — locals would form 75 per cent of mujahideen and the rest would be foreigners.

Mosque siege ends

By Shujaat Bukhari

JAMMU, FEB. 4. The 30-hour-long siege of the mosque in Tarzoo near Sopore in north Kashmir came to an end this evening with both the holed up militants surrendering before the Baramulla Deputy Commissioner, Naveen Chowdary, at 5.30 p.m. with two AK rifles, one grenade and 100 rounds.

Details on Page 9

Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. He did not give any reasons for stopping the activities.

"Our members will continue to target Army installa-

The militants had been accordingly directed to intensify their activities in each part of the State. The Jaish was founded by Moulana Masood Azhar, one of the three militant leaders freed in exchange for hijacked IA plane passengers in Kandahar in December 1999.

It eventually emerged as one of the strongest organisations operating in Kashmir and other parts of the country. It is also held responsible for attacks on the Srinagar Assembly on October 1 and Parliament on December 13.

Hurriyat has taken a step forward: Pant

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 4. The All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has indicated that it was ready to contest the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls scheduled later this year and by doing so it can establish its representative character, the Centre's interlocutor, K.C. Pant, today said.

"The Hurriyat leaders are indicating that they may be inclined towards participation in the Assembly polls as and when they are held. I will not say anything that will block their way. "By some way or the other, the Hurriyat may participate in the State elections. Earlier, they were not even talking about it but at least now they are not averse to it. I will not say anything more than that which will affect their moves," he said.



The Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, K.C. Pant (right), with Wajahat Habibullah, former Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, at a meeting in the Yojana Bhavan in New Delhi, on Monday.

— Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

Mr. Pant was talking to presspersons after meeting the senior IAS officer of the Jammu and Kashmir cadre, Wajahat Habibullah, who has been in touch with the Hurriyat leaders and others in Kashmir.

Asked why Mr. Habibullah was meeting him, Mr. Pant said: "I have known him and his family for a long time. There is nothing very surprising or startling about his meeting me. He has all along been very helpful and as a former Divisional Commissioner in Kashmir, he has known many people in the State."

Maintaining that Mr. Habibullah's role as the Government's emissary was "not a new initiative", Mr. Pant said that dialogue was a continuing process and added that many people were helping in it formally and informally. "Talking to people is one of the basic purposes of continuing the dialogue," he added.

Mr. Pant's optimism on prospects of the Hurriyat's participation in the Assembly polls stems from what he described were two crucial factors in the present scenario in Jammu and Kashmir.

First, the post-September 11 situation in which Pakistan had to crack down on terrorist groups and 'jehadi' organisations and Taliban cadres which has triggered a change in the situation in Kashmir. Secondly, elements in the Hurriyat would also be watching closely the change in the attitude of Pakistan, which has shown that it can dump any group, if the situation so demanded, in guarding its own interest.

Asked if he had any interaction with the Hurriyat leaders on the subject, Mr. Pant said that some elements in the conglomerate might be in favour of participation in elections while some might not be. "One can say that the Hurriyat has not put forth all its ideas. It has taken a step forward," he added.

Jaish takes a new name to beat the ban

Times News Network and PTI

BARAMULLA (North Kashmir): Unfazed by the ban imposed on it by the U.S. and Pakistan governments, Maulana Masood Azhar's Jaish-e-Mohammad, rechristened as Jamiat-ul-Furkan, threatens to shatter the lull in militant activities in the Valley.

Besides the Jamiat-ul-Furkan, another militant outfit, the Ansar-ul-Islam, has also surfaced in the Valley.

Confirming the activities of the two militant outfits in north Kashmir, senior superintendent of police Showkat Malik said there were no indications that militants operating in north Kashmir had been demoralised by the January 12 speech of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf.

Mr Malik said the militants here were yet to translate Gen Musharraf's words into action and stop violence.

Intelligence reports suggest that militant-recruiting agencies in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) have floated the Ansar-ul-Islam with former Hizbul Mujahideen chief Master Ahsan Dar at its helm, said Mr Malik.

Ahsan Dar's arrest, in 1997, from a government house at Jawaharnagar in Srinagar had raised many eyebrows. Dar was released after a year and is presently in PoK, according to reports.

When asked what had led to his release, a senior BSF officer said this question could be best answered by the civil authorities.

Meanwhile, the Centre's informal approach to the 23-party Hurriyat Conference to participate in a political process in Jammu and Kashmir appears to have made some headway.

Former divisional commissioner of Kashmir, Wajahat Habibullah, who has been holding back-door negotiations with Hurriyat leaders, will meet external affairs minister Jaswant Singh and the Centre's interlocutor, K.C. Pant, on Monday.

The meeting assumes significance as Mr Habibullah, who used the influence of Hurriyat leaders during the Hazratbal mosque siege in 1993, has held several rounds of informal negotiations in Srinagar and Delhi with a section of the Hurriyat's leadership.

When contacted, a Hurriyat spokesman neither confirmed nor denied the meetings with Mr Habibullah.

Efforts to contact Hurriyat chairman Abdul Gani Bhat in Srinagar or senior executive leader Abdul Gani Lone proved futile.

Meanwhile, police and security forces have launched a joint combing operation in the twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri to wipe out militant groups, believed to be hiding in the hills of the Pir Panjal range.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

4 FEB 2002

Another Central emissary meeting Hurriyat leaders

By Neena Vyas

28k
96-9-9/12 ✓
NEW DELHI, FEB. 3. The Centre has activated another line of communication with the Hurriyat Conference and militant groups. Besides K.C. Pant, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, who has been the Centre's interlocutor with Kashmiri groups, another person has been informally asked to see what he can do.

Wajahat Habibullah, who has earlier served as a Divisional Commissioner in Kashmir, has over the last one month established contact with the Hurriyat leadership and he is coming here to discuss "something specific" with the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, tomorrow morning, following which he will also meet Mr. Pant in the afternoon in his Planning Commission office. Mr. Habibullah has met Mr. Pant on earlier occasions over the last one month. It appears that at least for now the main effort is towards persuading the Hurriyat to make up its mind to contest the next round of Assembly elections.

It has been indicated by Government sources in the case of other States too where there have been separatist movements, the Government has always been willing to open a channel of communication — the effort is very much on to talk to the NSCN (IM) of Nagaland, and earlier the Government had successfully negotiated peace in Mizoram. Even in Punjab the Akali Dal which had adopted the Anandpur Sahib resolution is today running the Government.

Shujaat Bukhari reports from Jammu:

With the return of senior IAS officer of the J & K cadre, Mr. Habibullah to the Kashmir scene, the "informal" dialogue between New Delhi and the separatists is entering a new phase.

The latest exercise began last month when Mr. Habibullah, at present director of the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie, visited Srinagar and had meetings with Hurriyat leaders. He met the APHC chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat, and discussed New Delhi's intention to start fresh parleys with the separatist conglomerate besides others. What transpired between the two is not known but Prof. Bhat confirmed that he had a meeting with Mr. Habibullah. Mr. Habibullah also had discussions with the Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) chief, Shabir Shah, as also another Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone.

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 4 FEB 2002

Delhi puts 'credible' face on J-K talks

Former Kashmir Divisional Commissioner, IAS officer Wajahat Habibullah begins talks with the Hurriyat

AASHA KHOSA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2



In a key step towards ensuring credibility of its moves to test the political waters in Jammu and Kashmir, the Government has got Wajahat Habibullah, a widely respected 1968 IAS officer of the Jammu and Kashmir cadre, to talk with separatists, including the Hurriyat conference.

Sources said that Habibullah, who established contact with Hurriyat leaders last month, received a "positive" response. And although it's too early to identify any "concrete movements," sources said, "ideas had started flowing in

from the rebels' side." Habibullah will carry on the dialogue continuing in his present assignment as Director of the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie.

With this, the contours of the Government's strategy on Kashmir are slowly taking shape. Habibullah will interact with Kashmiri rebel groups and the official interlocutor, K C Pant, will be in touch with foreign diplomats.

As of now, sources said, Habibullah and Pant will work independently on their respective briefs without "getting into each other's way."

Several factors have gone behind

No de-escalation: Mishra

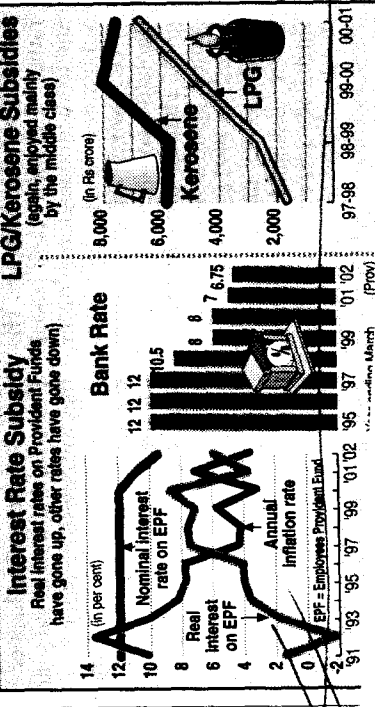


INDIA said on Saturday that its troops would not stand down until there was clear evidence that "terrorism from across its borders" had slowed. "We sincerely hope we will achieve our purpose without use of unnecessary force," Na-

tional Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra told an international defence conference in Munich. "But it is important — not only for our national interest but also for the global campaign against terrorism — that we should remain firm in our resolve," he said. There was no word on Saturday on whether the two would indeed meet, but Pak Foreign Minister Sattar said international intervention was helping "de-escalate".

Who is cornering Govt's goodies? You, that's who

The Middle Kingdom (or the subsidies enjoyed mainly by the middle classes)



Source: Ministry of Finance, Govt of India. (Provisional figures for March)

Kissinger's Mission Kashmir

Kavita Suri in Jammu

Feb. 1. — Former US secretary of state Mr Henry Kissinger, who recently visited India, was entrusted with the task of sounding out the Indian leadership on "possible solutions to the Kashmir problem."

Mr Kissinger, who as secretary of state to Richard Nixon had drafted "solutions" to such problems as the Vietnam conflict, came as an unofficial interlocutor.

The All Party Hurriyat Conference chief, Mr Abdul Ghani Bhat, said Mr Kissinger was in India on "Mission Kashmir".

"Yes, he (Mr Kissinger) was on Mission Kashmir and it was a US initiative," Mr Bhat said.

During his visit to India, Mr Kissinger met the home minister,

Mr LK Advani, and Mr KC Pant, the Centre's chief interlocutor on Kashmir. The external affairs ministry said the meetings were "purely courtesy calls".

Sources said the former US secretary of state "discussed Kashmir in detail during these meetings". He also reportedly met Hurriyat leaders in Delhi. The APHC refused to comment on this issue.

Sources said during Mr Kissinger's talks with Indian leaders "all options" came up. These included conversion of the Line of Control into International Border, more autonomy for Jammu and Kashmir, plebiscite and "independence".

Apparently, Mr Kissinger asked Indian leaders to consider multiple options as "that was the only way to find a solution". In-

dian leaders, sources said, were willing to consider the option of giving more autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir only.

But Mr Advani reportedly said going back to the pre-1953 status was not possible even if the government decided to grant more autonomy to the state.

Interestingly, the Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Mr Farooq Abdullah said: "Americans are already here as far as the Kashmir issue is concerned".

He said: "The USA was in the know of things very well and was trying to play a friendly role in both countries...Now I believe they (the US government) are trying to find a way forward which is necessary for peace in the two countries."

Pak shelling kills three: page 3

THE STATESMAN

1978

28K
AD-9
25/1
KASHMIR / ANNAN FLOODED WITH APPEALS

Pak. groups want U.N. resolution implemented

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 24. The United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, who is here on a two-day visit, was flooded with memorandums and appeals by various organisations seeking implementation of the U.N. resolution on Kashmir.

Over a hundred activists of various outfits and 'Kashmiri refugees' camped outside the Pakistan Foreign Office in a bid to catch the eyes and ears of Mr. Annan and plead their case for urgent resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

The presence of so many activists, mostly women, right outside the Foreign Office indicated that they had the blessings of the establishment. The recently appointed chairman of the National Committee on Kashmir and former Prime Minister and President, Sardar Qayyum, had sought a meeting with Mr. Annan but it did not take place.

For several months now, particularly since the March visit of Mr. Annan when he had declared that the U.N. resolutions on Kashmir were not enforceable, Islamabad has been looking for an opportunity to present its case to the Secretary-General.

The statement of Mr. Annan about the nature of the U.N. resolutions on Kashmir and his counsel to resolve the issue in the spirit

of Lahore Declaration did not go down well with the Government and the civil society in Pakistan.

In one of the Pakistan Television programmes hours after Mr. Annan landed in Islamabad on Wednesday, a senior politician, representing one of the factions of the Pakistan Muslim League, angrily questioned the logic of the Secretary-General talking anything other than the U.N. resolutions. "The media should grill him on this point. We have to state our position bluntly," he said.

Mr. Annan did face repeated questions on the subject at the joint press conference he held along with the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Abdul Sattar. He stuck to his position that while the U.N. resolutions on Kashmir were very much there, they could not be implemented without agreement of both the parties (India and Pakistan).

When the questioning persisted, the Pakistan Foreign Minister quipped: "well this is the first visit of the Secretary-General to Pakistan during his second term. We want him to come back. Please leave him to attend to other important engagements".

In a memorandum to Mr. Annan, the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) maintained that neither wars nor bilateral talks between India and Pakistan

could solve the Kashmir issue. The front headed by Amanullah Khan urged him to take immediate and concrete steps to resolve the issue peacefully, equitably, democratically and permanently.

The JKLF told the Secretary-General that the best practicable solution of the issue is to re-unite the divided State under international auspices in several peaceful phases and make it a completely independent State with a democratic, federal and secular system of government having friendly relations with both India and Pakistan. Fifteen years later let there be a U.N.-supervised referendum in which Kashmiris would determine whether Kashmir should retain its independence or become part of India or Pakistan and that popular verdict be accepted by all concerned.

In a related development, the local media said the newly formed Kashmir Committee and the PoK chapter of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) have decided to work together. Sardar Qayyum, the Chairman of the Kashmir Committee has begun meeting with Kashmiri leaders. On Wednesday, he held talks with APHC leaders, Siddiq Ganai, Altaf Qadri, Syed Yusuf Nasim, Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Prof. Ashraf Sarraf, Mir Tahir Masood and Faiz Naqshbandi, in Muzaffarabad.

THE HINDU

25 JAN 2002

24/11 **The Centre cannot hold** 4/18

ALTHOUGH THERE is nothing new in L.K. Advani's comment about the granting of more powers to Kashmir, it is bound to arouse more than the usual interest in the present context when attention is again focused on the state. The curiosity will be all the greater since the home minister has also said that Kashmir's 'history' called for a greater devolution of powers. Coming as they do from a perceived hardliner of a party which favours the abrogation of Article 370, these observations are of significance. In the aftermath of the prime minister's call for a 'fair' election in Kashmir and the interest which sections of the Hurriyat have shown in participating in it, the importance of Mr Advani's request to the authorities in Srinagar to identify the areas where they wanted to exercise greater powers cannot be denied. J&K

True, he has categorically ruled out any return to the pre-1953 status with its provisions for designating the chief minister as prime minister, permitting the state to have a separate emblem and so on. Even if a demand on these lines was made by the J&K assembly in 1999, it was seen as something of a bargaining ploy by the ruling National Conference, intended to secure the political high ground vis-a-vis the Hurriyat. In fact, the resolution was adopted by the assembly

soon after the Centre had released several Hurriyat leaders from jail with the objective of reopening a dialogue with them. Anyway, it is clear enough that no one even then could have seriously contemplated turning the clock back by nearly half a century. However, what can be considered, as Mr Advani has pointed out, is an expansion of the federal arrangement in line with the concept of increasing decentralisation.

It is an idea which has the support of several of the BJP's allies such as the Akali Dal and the DMK. Indeed, both have occasionally underlined their preference for a system where the Centre will be in charge of only defence, external affairs and communications. The rest will be under the jurisdiction of the states. Such a system may not be on the anvil at present, but there is little doubt that if and when a genuine devolution of powers takes place in Kashmir, the other states will not be far behind in demanding similar privileges for themselves. At the moment, of course, there is nothing concrete so far as such suggestions are concerned. There are also a number of ifs and buts before an arrangement of this nature can be introduced. However, in the event of a gradual return to normality in Kashmir and the holding of elections, the move for decentralisation is bound to gather pace.

Pre-1953 status must for unity: NC

Srinagar, January 23

THE NATIONAL Conference, an NDA ally, today tore into Home Minister L K Advani for his statement ruling out return of Jammu and Kashmir to the pre-1953 position. "Restoration of pre-1953 position of the State is the only guarantee for national integration and independence of India," the party said.

Reacting to Advani's statement at a function in Delhi yesterday, NC's Kashmir provincial president and MLC G N Shaheen said, "Return to the pre-1953 status which has been snatched through force and through puppet regimes in the State is the only guarantee for national integration and independence of India."

Terming Advani's statement as "far from truth," Shaheen said the Home Minister should keep in mind the disintegration of the

Hurriyat may have a rival in J&K

VARIOUS KASHMIRI separatist groups will unite to form a new party that could become a political force parallel to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference. The alliance has the support of the Prime Minister of PoK, Sardar Sikander Hyat Khan.

Democratic Freedom Party chief Shabir Ahmad Shah, who is behind the move, said the new outfit would be a party and not a platform of various groups. "All the parties and groups joining the new alliance will cease to be individual identities and will operate under one banner, one flag and one leader." Shah has written to all separatist political leaders and groups in Jammu and Kashmir and PoK, including the Hurriyat, to join the new party.

HTC, Srinagar

erstwhile USSR.

"Unfortunately Advani should know that Jammu and Kashmir is a Muslim majority State and Kashmiris have rendered numerous sacrifices and will not hesitate to do so in future to protect the identity and individuality of the State, especially the Kashmiriyat," Shaheen said.

"Return of pre-1953 position to Kashmiris is good for India itself as it is the only guarantee for its integration and independence," Shaheen said.

"Unfortunately, even after 53 years have passed, India and its leaders have miserably failed to win the confidence of Kashmiris and had always indulged in

breaking the promises made to them," he said.

"Keeping faith in god, we had joined India on three principles, but the relations between Kashmir and rest of the country was broken by Indian leaders themselves on August 9, 1953, the day when the then Prime Minister of Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah was deposed and put behind the bars," Shaheen said without identifying the three principles.

Farooq hints at Sept polls: Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah today blamed the opposition parties and Hurriyat Conference for the miseries of the people in the State.

"The Government is in office till October 11 and I think we will go to polls in September as the tourism season and farming work would be almost over by that time," he said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Kashmiri expats urge Hurriyat to seize the moment

By Rashmee Z. Ahmed
Times News Network

LONDON: Prominent expatriate Kashmiris are pushing for an ambitious political do-or-die measure from leaders of the Hurriyat Conference in a new and enlarged 'Jammu and Kashmir Freedom Conference' movement. The expatriate community, numbering about 600,000, is setting up 'Kashmir Missions' in key capitals around the world, bringing the militants to heel under a unified cross-border political command centred in the Valley and adopting Yasser Arafat's PLO as the model for a self-sustaining "struggle for self-determination".

The proposal has now taken on urgency after General Pervez Musharraf's public disavowal of Pakistan-based *jehadi* support to the Kashmir cause.

The bare bones of the proposal—which argues that the Hurriyat is not representative enough and, more crucially, has been unable to take the political initiative in more than a decade—were agreed by the Hurriyat leadership as far back as

October 1998 when it met in New York under the chairmanship of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq.

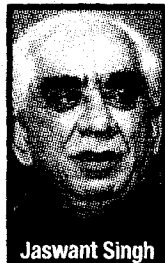
On the telephone from Srinagar, Mr Farooq confirmed that he and some others had personally endorsed the suggestions from prominent expatriate Kashmiris in London and Washington to set up Kashmir missions. "We could not do so because of a lack of resources. We were also able to become more representative of Jammu but not of Ladakh," Mr Farooq admitted.

Prominent British Kashmiris said that Pakistan had originally opposed the proposal, perhaps for fear that it could well lose its grip on the movement and its self-styled right to speak on behalf of Kashmir's political aspira-

India ready to act on Pak list

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: External affairs minister Jaswant Singh said on Monday that India would extradite any Pakistani criminal if it received a list from Islamabad.



Jaswant Singh

In the first official reaction to the remarks by Pakistan's foreign minister Abdus Sattar that Islamabad would hand in to New Delhi its own list of fugitives sheltered in India, Mr Singh said, "If any such list were to come, I can assure you that the ministries of home affairs and external affairs will work double time to send them promptly back to Pakistan."

tions.

British diplomats said the proposed Kashmir missions, each one of which would be based in the P-5 countries, the permanent members of the UN Security Council, would be an interesting development, although they were purely hypothetical at this stage because of the factions within the Kashmiri movement.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 JAN 1999

Kashmir: lessons of history

By Navnita Chadha Behera

The great Indian success story lies in its total faith in democracy... and devising rules of the game in a way that allows power sharing among different communities. The challenge lies in extending that logic to Jammu and Kashmir.

HP-8 22/1
THE LARGE-SCALE military build-up on the India-Pakistan border has once again upped the military ante on Kashmir. Pakistan has till now pursued its proxy war there with impunity. December 13 changed that. This was partly because the attack on Parliament crossed the Indian leadership's threshold of patience and partly because the post-September 11 international context provided a rare opportunity for India to persuasively make a case that this would no longer be tolerated. This needs to be complemented with a political strategy at home.

After all, the logic of New Delhi's demand that Pakistan jettison jihad as an instrument of state policy and Pervez Musharraf's televised speech conceding that "no organisation will be allowed to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir" is that the battle for resolving Kashmir must shift to the political arena. Here the ultimate key would lie in meeting the popular aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. This is not a cliché but a lesson writ large in the political history of Kashmir. The records of both Pakistan and India prove this point.

In the first round of battle in 1947-48, Pakistan's entire strategy revolved around urging Maharaja Hari Singh to declare independence, the calculation being that in a Muslim-majority state, he would be forced to share power. Sheikh Abdullah in his autobiography quotes Jinnah's reply to a Kashmiri activist's question whether the people of Kashmir would decide its future as "let the people go to hell". Jinnah would pay a heavy price because when the raiders attacked the Valley, it was the local Peace Brigade and National Militia mobilised by Abdullah's National Conference (and not Maharaja Hari Singh as many Pakistanis like to believe) that resisted the raiders till the Indian Army landed in Srinagar.

Pakistan's debacle in the 1965 war also lay in not correctly assessing the pulse of the people in the State. Ayub Khan made a grave miscalculation that given support the Kashmiris would revolt against India. Instead, they turned in the infiltrators to the Indian Army. Gen. Musharraf's speech is another tacit acknowledgment that Pakistan's strategy in Kashmir has, once again, gone awry.

The Kashmiri secessionist movement, when it started in 1989-1990, was indigenous in character but Pakistan has only to blame itself for decimating that. Its first grave mistake was to marginalise the JKLF as early as the mid-1990s when it realised that "independence and re-unification of divided J&K State" and not accession to Pakistan was the latter's political goal which, it feared would backfire. Since 1994-95, Pakistan pushed in Afghan veterans and foreign mercenaries, radically changing the character of the militancy and completely negating the Kashmiris' political ethos and their political struggle. This alienated the Kashmiris not only from the militants but also from Pakistan. Gradually, even the Kashmiri militant groups realised that Pakistan did not have the military wherewithal, or the intention, (as they had been led to believe) to risk a full-scale war with India to liberate Kashmir. And, that Pakistan was merely using Kashmir as a pawn for "bleeding India". The honeymoon with Pakistan was over.

Pakistan's record for supporting the Kashmiris' right to self-determination in its own backyard — the Azad Kashmir and Northern Areas — is also very poor. Until October 1994, 47 years after they came under Pakistan's control, the people of the Northern Areas had no right to adult franchise. They had no elected Assembly and no elected representatives in the Federal Assembly. Azad Kashmir too, is free only in nomenclature. Its status was never defined in normal international legal terms by the Azad Kashmir Government, Pakistan or the United Nations. The right to adult franchise was first granted in 1970, two decades after 'Independence'. Under Section 56 of the 1974 Constitution, the Pakistan Government could dismiss any elected Government in Azad Kashmir irrespective of the support it enjoyed in the Assembly. Constitutional regulations barred any person "propagating any opinion or acting in any manner

prejudicial or detrimental to the ideology of the State's accession to Pakistan" from holding any elective office.

If Pakistan's record in the people's court is blemished, India, too, is on a weak footing. It has to learn its lessons from the history as to why Kashmir, accorded the pride of place in newly-independent India, has turned into a liability. Going back to the pre-Partition days, the affinity between the Indian National Congress and the National Conference was due to their shared ideals of secularism and democracy and because the INC led by Jawaharlal Nehru had mobilised nationwide support for the Quit Kashmir Movement of the Kashmiris against the Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh. Nehru's confidence in Kashmir's accession to India emanated not from the Maharaja's legal accession as much from the political choices of the Sheikh Abdullah-led National Conference which had a mass support base in the Valley.

Even after the State joined India, Nehru backed the Sheikh to the hilt vis-a-vis other political forces in the State: Maharaja Hari Singh in the Valley and the Praja Parishad movement in Jammu. But Nehru's first serious mistake was to put all his eggs in one basket — Sheikh Abdullah. He sought the people's support but his only instrument of strategy was Abdullah and once the latter started seeking complete internal sovereignty, or else an independent state, Nehru dumped the Sheikh as well as the people's constituency. Since then, democracy was never allowed to take root in the State, subordinated as it was to India's "national interests".

Herein lies the rub. The people of the State, especially Kashmiris, joined India because of the compatibility in their vision of "Naya Kashmir" and the nature of the Indian state. They believed that their political autonomy would be better protected in a secular and democratic India than a theocratic and feudal Pakistan.

The root cause of fissures in the relationship between the Kashmiris and the Indian state lies in successive Central Governments' imposition of their political choices through a steady erosion of the State's special status and by manipulating the electoral processes over the years. By doing so, New Delhi has inadvertently allowed anti-Government protests to acquire anti-India overtones because in the popular mindset, New Delhi has been held responsible for the ills of the political system created say by Ghulam Mohammad Bakshi or Farooq Abdullah. The great Indian success story, that of having weathered a million mutinies, lies in its total faith in democracy as the key political instrument for governing a much diverse and plural India and devising the rules of the game in a way that allows power sharing among different communities. The challenge lies in extending that logic to Jammu and Kashmir: provide the political space for the people to make their own democratic choices.

Also, there is an erroneous belief shared by many in Delhi's ruling elite that the Kashmiri identity is a threat to the Indian identity and that it needs to be demolished because as long as it exists, it would be exploited by Pakistan. The failure to distinguish between Kashmir's secular identity and Muslim identity is a grave mistake because history has proved that Pakistan had never been able to take advantage of the Kashmiri identity. On the contrary, Kashmir's secular beliefs always militated against Pakistan's Islamic identity. When the Indian leadership had accepted the reality of Partition, only Kashmiris had defied the logic of Partition and the two-nation theory.

Pakistan has always sought to cultivate the religious identity of the Kashmiris and failed. The lesson, therefore, lies in reversing the communalisation of political processes in the State.

India and Pakistan have evidently traversed very different paths to reach this historical juncture. But the lesson for them is the same: both must conceptualise a new, a fresh political strategy for meeting the popular aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

(The writer is Visiting Fellow, The Brookings Institution.)

THE HINDU

Hurriyat calls for dialogue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Jan. 19. — In a significant statement, the alliance of 23 separatist parties, Hurriyat Conference, said today that the militants had "done their duty" and now it was the time for political negotiations, to find a way out of the present situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr Abdul Gani Bhat told a TV channel: "the boys with guns have done their duty. Now it is for the politicians to capitalise on it."

In a veiled dig at the Jamaat-e-Islami leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani's statement that Kashmir was a religious issue, Mr Bhat said "he who talks in terms of religious issue perhaps forgets that if and when right of self determination is granted to the people of the state, it will be exercised by each one of us irrespective of caste, creed, colour and religion."

Meanwhile, speaking today at a parade of the 4th batch of CRTC at the police training school, Manigam, the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Dr Farooq Abdullah, said General Musharraf's speech was not enough to defuse the present situation unless he translated his words into action.

In a separate incident, in pursuance of its consistent demand for creation of a separate homeland for Kashmiri Pandits within the valley, a Panun Kashmir delegation today called on President K R Narayanan to emphasise the case, arguing that the community was facing "serious threat of extinction owing to its forced uprootment".

2 LASHKAR MEN KILLED IN POONCH

JAMMU, Jan. 19. — Two Lashkar-e-Taiyaba ultras were shot dead by security forces at Tilla Mailan of Poonch district this afternoon. Senior SP, Poonch, Dr Kamal Saini said acting on a tip-off that some militants were hiding in the Tilla Mailan area, police and the Army launched a pre-dawn joint operation to flush them out. The militants opened fire and in the ensuing gun battle two ultras were killed. In a separate incident, security forces killed a militant while a surrendered rebel was shot dead in the Kashmir valley overnight. — UNI

THE STATESMAN

20 JAN 2002

Kissinger's Kashmir tips for Pant

FROM SEEMA GUHA

New Delhi, Jan. 16: US ambassador in India Robert Blackwill and former secretary of state Henry Kissinger will meet K.C. Pant tomorrow.

Pant, the deputy chairman of the Planning Commission, is the chief pointman of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government on Kashmir.

Kissinger and Blackwill will provide him valuable inputs on the Bush administration's thinking on Kashmir.

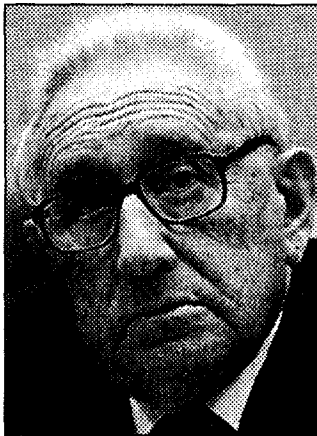
The interaction comes at a time the US is stepping up pressure on India to resume talks with Pakistan.

Last year, Pant had begun preliminary talks with different sections of people in Kashmir. The exercise failed to make much headway because the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders refused to talk.

The US ambassador has been in touch with Pant and met him at least three times since the September 11 attacks. The British high commissioner is also scheduled to meet Pant before the week ends.

With Kashmir taking centre stage again, India needs to rethink its strategy, which has so far been confined to fighting terrorism. The Farooq Abdullah government's demand for an autonomy package for Kashmiris has remained in cold storage and is unlikely to be revived in the near future.

"An economic package for Jammu and Kashmir has already been approved, but an autonomy package is out for



Henry Kissinger

now," a top government official said.

Policy-planners at the Centre are now confining themselves to a simple agenda: free, fair and credible elections in Kashmir scheduled later this year. The people of Kashmir have long complained of rigged elections. New Delhi feels a fair poll will reassure them that the Centre is not interested in imposing its favourites on the state.

The planners are trying to wean away some of the Hurriyat leaders to join the democratic process to lend credibility to the elections.

India believes Pakistan had played a major role in ensuring that the people of Kashmir boycott the elections. India is bent on breaking the pattern and getting a decent turnout this time around. A fair election with maximum participation would give India's image a boost internationally.

Hurriyat drops out of talks in protest

By Shujaat Bukhari

JAMMU, JAN. 15. Three senior leaders of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference have cut short their stay in Delhi in protest against the arrests of its middle-rung leadership. The team comprising the former chairman, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Abdul Gani Lone and Mohammad Yaseen Malik, was scheduled to interact with the diplomats of the G-8 countries as also hold an informal dialogue with the Government.

While Mr. Malik was already in Delhi to attend court in connection with cases against him, Mr. Lone and Mr. Geelani joined him a few days ago. The three leaders were deputed by the executive to apparently apprise the diplomats of G-8 countries in Delhi about the prevailing situation in the troubled State and push forward their stand on Kashmir problem.

But authoritative sources told *The Hindu* that they were in Delhi to hold an informal round of talks with the Union Government, ahead of the Assembly election due in the State before September. Even as the channels between the Hurriyat leaders and the Government had been open for quite some time, the December 13 attack on Parliament pushed everything into the background. But a "secret mission" of a senior IAS officer of the J & K cadre, Wajahat Habibullah, recently to Srinagar revived the "re-

lations". It was on his invitation that the Hurriyat leaders had agreed to hold fresh informal talks with the Centre. However, it is not known at what level they were planning to hold talks. Much before the attack on Parliament the Hurriyat chairman had a meeting with Brajesh Mishra, Prime Minister's Principal Secretary, and A.S. Dulat, OSD in the Prime Minister's Office. Mr. Habibullah, now director of the IAS Academy, Mussoorie, had held talks with the Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat and other leaders. The visit of the Hurriyat leaders to Delhi assumed significance as the team had Mr. Geelani as one of its members. He is considered a staunch pro-Pakistan leader.

Fire in Secretariat in Islamabad

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 15. A fire engulfed the 14-storey Shaheed-e-Millat Secretariat building in the capital's Blue Area this evening and several fire engines were engaged in putting out the blaze. There were no immediate report on the cause for the fire.

The building houses the sub-offices of the Federal Ministries of Interior and Education and was situated a few meters away from the American Centre.

THE HINDU

Two Dutch militants shot dead

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, Jan. 13. — For the first time in the 12-year long militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, two foreign militants attacked a BSF patrol party with sharp-edged long daggers early this morning in Srinagar's Dal Gate area.

Mr Rajinder Singh Bhullar, DIG, BSF, Kashmir who looks after the BSF's entire Intelligence wing in Kashmir told The Statesman over phone from Srinagar that two foreign militants, apparently from the Netherlands, attacked a BSF patrol party near Dal Lake at 7.20 a.m. with daggers. Two BSF constables Mr Shivsagar Yadav and Mr YK Tiwari were seriously injured in the attack and admitted to 92 Base Hospital.

The BSF jawans, having failed to overpower the militants, opened fire on the terrorists killing them on the spot.

The militants were later identified as El Baiwali Ahmed and El Harsnavi Khalid from their passports. Mr Bhullar informed that both the terrorists had flown into Srinagar on 26 December from Amsterdam and were staying in a house boat on Dal Lake.

The security forces were trying to establish

more links about these foreign militants with militant groups operating in the Valley.

Crackdown on APHC

Just hours after the Pakistani President declared his full commitment to demolish religion-induced terrorist outfits from Pakistani soil, security forces in the Valley started raiding the establishments of supporters of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference separatist leaders, a report adds from New Delhi.

The raids began around 2 a.m. and continued till sunrise, sources said. The security forces raided about 60 places spread over Sopore, Badgaum, Kupwara and Baramullah till the wee hours today and more raids took place during the day. Most of the supporters of the separatist leaders have apparently gone underground in panic.

It is believed the target of the forces is mostly the supporters of Jamaat-i-Islami leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, since he is considered a hardcore fundamentalist. Sources said the security forces are on the lookout for Mr Geelani's son-in-law, Mr Altaf Ahmed Shah, who used to work as Mr Geelani's secretary unofficially.

As the panic message spread like wildfire, Mr Shah apparently went underground. The forces then arrested his brother and "refused" to release him till Mr Shah was found. The security forces are also searching for Mr Geelani's son who is untraceable.

By the time the news reached the APHC leaders, those leaders who had initially been enthusiastic in reacting to the General's address, refused to say anything today.

As part of the strategy, the APHC leaders have now decided to hold a meeting tomorrow here and give a proper reaction.

Three of the Hurriyat leaders are presently stationed in the capital including Mr Geelani, Mr Abdul Gani Lone (Jammu and Kashmir Peoples' Conference) and Mr Yasin Malik (Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front). While Mr Lone and Mr Malik had already arrived a couple of days back, Mr Geelani reached today.

Three militants were among four people killed while security forces busted two hideouts of the ultras and arrested three of them in J&K since last night, a police spokesman said today, PTI adds from Srinagar.

Three AK rifles and some ammunition were recovered from them.

THE STATESMAN

14 JAN 2002

110-1

Militants strike near J&K Assembly complex, one killed

By Shujaat Bukhari 31

SRINAGAR, JAN. 2. One policeman was killed and 20 persons, mostly security personnel, were injured here today, when militants set off a series of powerful grenade explosions near the State Legislative Assembly complex, they had targeted only three months ago.

Two grenades were lobbed in Jehangir Chowk, a stone's throw away from the main gate of the Assembly, while another grenade targeted a Border Security Force picket at nearby Magermalbagh.

Eyewitnesses said unidentified militants hurled grenades at a Central Reserve Police Force patrol vehicle passing through the busy Jehangir Chowk near the Assembly.

They, however, missed the target and exploded on the road injuring over 10 persons, including several policemen.

The heads of the police stations of Maisuma, Shergarghi and Shaheed Gunj who were in the vicinity, were also injured, as also three civilians. One of the policemen later succumbed to his injuries in hospital.

No militant outfit has owned responsibility for the attacks. But police said the grenades were not aimed at the Assembly, which shifted to Jammu in November.

On October 1, militants had rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into the State Assembly which was followed by an encounter. On



Security personnel inspecting the scene of a grenade attack by militants near the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in Srinagar on Wednesday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

that day, 38 persons, including four 'fidayeen' (suicide) militants were killed.

Meanwhile, militants gunned down a woman in Bandipore area. Police said Rafiq, wife of Mohammad Sultan, was gunned

down on suspicion of being an informer.

Yesterday also a woman was killed for the same reason. Three militants were killed in separate encounters in Anantnag and Handwara, police said.

THE HINDU

- 5 JAN 2002