

# Jamali proposes, Vajpayee disposes

Shekhar Iyer  
New Delhi, April 29

PRIME MINISTER A.B. Vajpayee assured his party MPs on Tuesday that he had not accepted Pakistan Premier Zaffarullah Khan Jamali's invitation to visit that country when the two leaders spoke to each other over the phone on Monday.

Addressing a BJP Parliamentary Party meeting, the PM said, "I was invited to visit Pakistan by that country's Prime Minister, but I did not accept the invitation." BJP leaders saw the PM's assurance as a reassertion

of their favoured line that "things cannot be hurried, and conditions need to be created before a summit-level meeting." Any summit-level meeting before a let-up in the violence in Kashmir could undermine the BJP's prospects in the four poll-bound states, they said.

Party spokesperson V.K. Malhotra quoted Vajpayee as saying that cross-border terrorism had figured in his talks with Jamali. The PM had not divulged details of the conversation, but "could make a statement if the issue figures in Parliament", Malhotra added.

Asked if Vajpayee had ruled out a visit to Pakistan, Malhotra said the PM had not accepted the invitation yet. "The BJP does not believe the government will wilt under external pressure. We are sure nothing will be done that hurts national interests. The BJP's stand is that cross-border terrorism must stop before a meeting can take place. Any Pakistani leader is welcome to come to India, but only after putting a stop to acts of terrorism in this country," he said.

Endorsing the Prime Minister's statement in Srinagar and in Parliament that India was

ready to solve bilateral problems through talks, the spokesperson stressed in the same breath that the government must not shift from the precondition that Pakistan stop its proxy war against India. "The party has noted that terrorist incidents are taking place though a number of terrorists have been killed by the security forces."

Malhotra's tough talk coincided with a fresh bout of violence in Kashmir where 11 militants and six army troops were killed in a morning encounter near the Bharat forest area in Doda district.

## INDO-PAK. TIES / SNAPPED TRANSPORT LINK MAY BE RESTORED

# Caution is the watchword

By Amit Baruah

**NEW DELHI, APRIL 29.** India is approaching the budding re-engagement process with Pakistan with abundant caution — in view of the “twin failures” of Lahore (February 1999) and Agra (July 2001). Official sources point to “two-tracks” in the aftermath of the ice-breaking telephone conversation between the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and his Pakistani counterpart, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali. One is “normalisation” or restoration of the situation that existed before the December 13, 2001, attack on the Parliament House and the second is choreographing the resumption of regular “dialogue” itself. The sources believe that there is a good chance of the former moving at a better clip than the latter. The chances of a breakthrough in restoring the snapped transport links, especially the resumption of air travel, is rated high. On the dialogue front, however, the sources are firm that they favour a “wait-and-watch” approach. And, here lies the “real” issue of India’s concern — that of terrorism.

The sources insist that Pakistan must show tangible progress on the issues of concern to India such as cross-border infiltration and in dealing with the activities of terrorist groups in Pakistan.

Sources told this correspondent that the

Government and the Prime Minister were not about to “rush” to Pakistan or begin summit-level talks. It will be the officials who will do the talking. There will be no Agra, there will be no dramatic advances. But improvement in ties could begin with a cricket match or giving permission “over-flight.” A constant refrain in official circles is that despite the “best efforts and intentions,” a resumed engagement between India and Pakistan could fail if there are any major terrorist strikes in Jammu and Kashmir or other parts of the country.

During the telephone conversation last night, Mr. Vajpayee was reported to have thanked Mr. Jamali for his invitation to visit Pakistan for talks, but he pointed out clearly that it was not as if he would be visiting Islamabad tomorrow. He is also reported to have said that his policies were being undertaken at the behest of the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf. The entire tone of the Vajpayee-Jamali conversation was extremely cordial, the sources said.

Pakistan’s response to Mr. Vajpayee’s address in Srinagar on April 18 is being seen as welcome, but no one is prepared to predict how this process will develop. However, the sources stress that it is not as if that Mr. Vajpayee’s Srinagar statement was not off-the-cuff. They point that there has been considerable discussion at repeated meet-

ings of the Cabinet Committee on Security on the issue.

The External Affairs Minister, Yashwantrao Sinha, is said to have taken the lead in stressing that India’s strategy of not having any contact with Pakistan could not be an end in itself.

There is an acknowledgement that harsh words and non-engagement are, in fact, proving to be counter-productive in putting across India’s case to the larger international community.

To many following the India-Pakistan affairs here, Mr. Vajpayee’s speech in Srinagar came as a surprise.

They acknowledged that even if the policy of renewed contact were to fail on account of terrorist attacks, India would have a case to say that Mr. Vajpayee had tried for a third time. And, this would not be in the distant past of Agra or Lahore, but as recently as Srinagar in April 2003.

Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Jamali seem to have made space for a “third initiative” after the earlier two rather dramatic moves between India and Pakistan did not produce much despite considerable promise, especially in Lahore.

After the months of rhetoric and abuse, India and Pakistan have given themselves a chance to engage in a civilised manner. Will they succeed?

All will be heard,  
says Vohra

By Shujaat Bukhari

By Our Special Correspondent

the Government, Mr. Reddy re-  
fused to brook... standing issues.

## ‘Pak. should do more’

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

30 APR 2003

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2003

## THE ROAD TO RECONCILIATION

AS INDIA AND Pakistan set out again on the arduous path of rebuilding mutual trust and reconciliation, there are early signs of the long-sought thaw in bilateral relations. The Pakistani Prime Minister's telephone call in response to Mr. Vajpayee's offer of the hand of friendship is more than the breaking of the diplomatic ice. Islamabad perhaps sent the most conciliatory message before Mir Jamali made that late evening call to his Indian counterpart when it directly addressed India's genuine and long-articulated concern over cross-border terrorism. A high-level conference on law and order in the Pakistani capital served the quit notice on the jihadi elements operating from its soil against Jammu and Kashmir. The message echoed the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's promise of January 12, 2002, when he declared that there would be a complete ban on infiltration of jihadi fighters into Kashmir. A few of the terrorist outfits operating freely in Pakistan were then banned by decree but no genuine effort was taken to root them out, leaving the impression that it was nothing more than a gesture from a front-line state in the then evolving global war on terror. The arrested leaders of some of these organisations were soon released without any threat of prosecution. On Monday, the promise was renewed when the Islamabad meeting said that no one would be allowed to use Pakistan's soil for hostile activity against any other country, acknowledging for the first time that some of the banned militant outfits had resurfaced in new garb. The Pakistan Government needs now to follow up its words with firm action on the ground to convince a sceptical international community that the promise that Gen. Musharraf made 15 months ago was being fulfilled in letter and spirit.

New Delhi's campaign against jihadi terrorism, which has received powerful support from

the U.S., France and Britain, is yielding results. But there is need to guard against overstretching this to the point where, like coercive diplomacy, it proves counterproductive. Keeping in view the constraints and capacity of the authorities in Islamabad, there is need for every effort to be made to build on the favourable trend that has been generated in the past few days. Mr. Vajpayee's friendship offer and Mr. Jamali's phone call have taken the two countries across the first major hurdle to placing bilateral relations on the road to normality. The next few weeks will see pressure intensify for tangible measures to restore normal relations. Trade liberalisation, economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and renewal of people-to-people and sporting contacts are part of the steady, but slow step-by-step process. Mr. Vajpayee's stress on economic and trade cooperation during his telephone conversation with Mr. Jamali should help to focus on this route to normalisation. The prospective early restoration of rail, road and air links will facilitate the process.

The diplomatic *pas de deux* in full evidence now has taken hardly a week to choreograph. Mr. Vajpayee refrained from imposing conditions when he made the offer of the hand of friendship in Srinagar and Pakistan has reciprocated with the warning to jihadi elements. The series of rather overwhelming gestures coming from New Delhi and Islamabad cannot hide the hard realities on the ground. Besides, after the false starts of the past four years, there is more caution than optimism. Fortunately, there is now more than ever the realisation among all shades of opinion on both sides of the border that the bilateral relations need to be retrieved from the hands of the few who have a vested interest in the continuing abnormality. For the intimations of peace to convert to real gains, however, statesmanship is demanded on both sides.

30 APR 2003

THE HINDU

INDIA WANTS PAK. TO CREATE THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE

Final - Book  
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# PM non-committal on Jamali's invitation

By Neena Vyas

**NEW DELHI, APRIL 29.** The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said he gave no commitment on travelling to Islamabad when the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, extended him the invitation for bilateral talks over telephone last night.

Addressing the Bharatiya Janata Party's weekly parliamentary party meeting this morning, Mr. Vajpayee is said to have told his party's MPs that during the telephonic conversation with Mr. Jamali he mentioned India's

concern related to the continuing terrorism in Kashmir (implying that Pakistan was sponsoring it).

The party spokesperson, Vijay Kumar Malhotra, who later briefed newsmen said that Mr. Vajpayee confirmed Pakistan's invitation to him but said, "I have not accepted it." However, one person who was at the meeting had the impression that "the Prime Minister had neither accepted the invitation nor rejected it, he made no commitment either way."

The Prime Minister told his party MPs that he was not in a

position to say more about the talk with Mr. Jamali as Parliament was in session and it would not be proper for him to say anything outside the House. However, he did indicate that he would be willing to make a statement in Parliament.

Strangely, there was no statement as no one — from the Opposition, the allies or the BJP — raised the subject either in the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha. It seems that Mr. Vajpayee was not willing to make a *suo motu* statement as he had recently made one on his "hand of friendship" offer from Srinagar.

Within the BJP, the reaction to the opening of this little window of possibility of a bilateral dialogue with Pakistan was not very enthusiastic. Most party MPs reacted with a "there must be an end to cross-border terrorism first" or, "our pre-conditions must be met" before any talks start at any formal level.

It was pointed out by some BJP functionaries that Mr. Vajpayee had been "betrayed" on two previous occasions when he had taken the peace initiative — when he undertook the bus journey to Lahore and again when he invited the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, for a summit to Agra despite the Kargil war. The BJP held firm to its stated position that talks with Pakistan and continued cross-border terrorism cannot go hand in hand.

Informally, partymen indicated that with Assembly elections round the corner and the Lok Sabha elections next year, if talks were resumed with Pakistan even as terrorist strikes continued in Kashmir the BJP would be adversely affected. At the moment, it seems, the party is not willing to take the risk of another flop show like Agra.

In response to questions, Mr. Malhotra insisted that "there was no pressure from the United States of America on India" and "India had done nothing and would do nothing under American pressure."

Informally, it seems that the party and the Government want action on the ground from Pakistan to create the right atmosphere for any possible dialogue. While an end to cross-border terrorism and infiltration across the Line of Control in Kashmir remained the top priority, a resumption of air links (after India had unilaterally lifted the embargo on overflights by Pakistani aircraft) was mentioned as another area where concrete action should come from Pakistan if it is serious about a bilateral dialogue.

**Caution is watchword:**  
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## Let's begin with sports: Jamali

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, APRIL 29.** Unfazed by the reported statement of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, that he has "not accepted" the invitation to visit Pakistan, the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, has said revival of contacts in the field of sports could be a "good beginning".

Mr. Jamali's comment came after reports about Mr. Vajpayee's "unwillingness" to travel to Pakistan were flashed on Pakistani TV channels quoting the BJP spokesman, Vijay Kumar Malhotra.

Mr. Jamali, now in Karachi, told correspondents: "I do not know what the BJP spokesperson has said. My talk with Mr. Vajpayee was Government-to-Government. I can assure you that the statement of the BJP spokesman would not affect the new initiative to get Indo-Pak relations back on the rails. So I do not attach any importance to the statement. I had a detailed, pleasant and frank exchange with Mr. Vajpayee for 20 minutes. I did not get the impression that he is not inclined to visit Pakistan," he said.

Asked about the reasons for the collapse of the Agra summit in July 2001, Mr. Jamali said he would not like to go into the past. Now there was a new Government in Pakistan and his Government was keen on talks with India for the resolution of all issues, including Kashmir. Mr. Jamali's comment on sports as an ideal field to begin the process for improvement of bilateral relations is an indication of the hard realities ahead.

The negatives that need to be removed include a lack of representation at the High Commissioner level in the respective missions, the absence of rail, road and air links and serious

irritants on the trade front. Leave alone the question of Pakistan granting the Most Favoured Nation status to India, it is not ready to implement the South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement and the South Asian Free Trade Agreement.

"It is going to be a slow process. If anyone were to expect miracles, he/she would be in for disappointment. This time around, the bottom to top would be the preferred approach. In Agra, we went for the top to bottom strategy and failed. So all the more reason for us to tread carefully," a senior Pakistani diplomat said. Mr. Jamali's reference to sports is interesting as Pakistan has been keen on reviving the cricket ties. Ironically on Monday, the BCCI president, Jagmohan Dalmiya, had said India's position of not playing against Pakistan — except in tournaments — remained unchanged. He was speaking to reporters ahead of an Asian Cricket Foundation meeting later this week in Dubai, where he will meet his Pakistani counterpart, Tauqir Zia.

His comments came a day after Mr. Tauqir had said in Karachi that he was hoping the Dubai meeting would lead to a breakthrough in cricketing relations between the nations.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri, said Pakistan was ready to do whatever it could to reduce tensions between the two countries, if Mr. Vajpayee paid a state visit. "It is incumbent on the leadership of the two countries to try and make sure that this time their talks lead to some concrete results, as they say in English, third time lucky. Maybe after Lahore and Agra it will be lucky this time," Mr. Kasuri told the Voice of America radio, while welcoming Mr. Jamali's last night phone call to Mr. Vajpayee.

30 APR 2003

THE HINDU

# India rejects Pakistan's plan to post observers along LoC

**Islamabad:** The UN Security Council's permanent members and two Islamic states should post observers along the Line of Control to check whether Islamic militants are crossing into the Indian side, Pakistan said on Monday.

Foreign minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri urged India to accept Pakistan's latest offer, which would see monitors from Saudi Arabia and Iran join representatives from the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China along the Line of Control (LoC).

"As India is not willing to accept increase in number of UN observers at the LoC, therefore, we want to get clear the picture regarding

its allegations by engaging some sovereign state or states, Mr. Kasuri claimed.

Pakistan has urged India not to attach any pre-condition for resumption of dialogue and said it would finalise within two to three days the response to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's fresh offer of friendship.

"Our response would be made public within two-three days," Pakistan prime minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali told reporters in Lahore on Sunday while welcoming Mr Vajpayee's hand of friendship, terming it as an encouraging gesture.

Mr Kasuri, who was also in Lahore on Sunday, said India should not attach any pre-condition to resume talks.

India has said it would wait for Pakistan's response and dismissed the Pakistani proposal of joint monitoring of the LoC by international monitors.

Asked about the proposal of Mr Kasuri, the external affairs spokesperson said it was not the first time that India had heard such a proposal. Pakistan's talk about international monitors was self-serving and impractical, he said, adding that it was an effort to internationalise the issue and bring in a third party.

On the infiltration issue, he said Pakistan was ready to appoint foreign observers, including UN, to monitor the LoC to verify allegations of cross-border infiltration. Agencies

# Pakistan PM calls Vajpayee to talk peace

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, April 28. — In one of the rarest overtures made to lend momentum to the peace process involving the two neighbouring countries, Pakistani Prime Minister Mr Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali called Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee tonight to speak on improving relations.

According to official sources, Mr Jamali conveyed his "appreciation" for the Indian Premier's recent statements on a possible Indo-Pak dialogue, in Srinagar as well as in Parliament, indicating that a level of seriousness exists to improve ties.

During their ten-minute telephonic conversation, the two Prime Ministers discussed ways to take the strained bilateral relations forward. This was the first time that a direct contact was made between the Indian and Pakistani leaders since Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, famously shook hands with Mr Vajpayee at the January 2002 Saarc summit in Kathmandu. Even when Mr Jamali was sworn in as the Pakistani Prime Minister, greetings were conveyed through official channels.

During the conversation, Mr Vajpayee emphasised on the importance of economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, people-to-people contact and civil aviation links, which India snapped as part of punitive measures following the terrorist attack on Parliament, the sources said. Mr Jamali suggested resumption of sporting links, they added. Pakistan has since long been keen to resume cricket ties between the two countries.

Both the leaders agreed to consider these issues as a starting point, indicating, the strong possibility of a comprehensive bilateral dialogue soon.

Although officials declined comment on any time frame, the next few weeks, around the time the US deputy Secretary of State, Mr Richard Armitage visits the region, appear crucial to the peace process.

Mr Jamali, state-owned *Pakistan Television* said, invited Mr Vajpayee to visit Pakistan at his convenience and expressed readiness to visit India to further the peace process. It said, Mr Jamali offered talks at any level on all issues

The two Premiers also agreed

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THE STATESMAN

'ISLAMABAD HAS ALWAYS FAVOURED TALKS'

# We will respond in 'a few days': Jamali

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

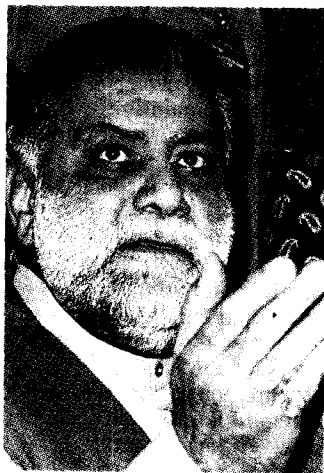
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**ISLAMABAD, APRIL 27.** Pakistan's Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, today raised hopes of forward movement on the Srinagar 'peace initiative' of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, by welcoming it.

In an informal chat with correspondents in Lahore, Mr. Jamali said Pakistan would respond to the Indian offer in a 'few days' but did not elaborate. Islamabad had always favoured resolution of differences through talks and it would continue to do so, he maintained.

Though it is nine days since Mr. Vajpayee extended the hand of friendship, the Musharraf-Jamali Government has been relatively cautious in its reaction. There are a number of reasons for the 'wait and watch' approach.

There is little doubt that the peace offer took Islamabad by surprise. Coming against the backdrop of harsh statements by the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and Defence Minister, George Fer-



nandes, Pakistan is still in the process of absorbing the message and meaning behind the offer.

Second the 'conditionalities' attached by Mr. Vajpayee for resumption of dialogue contributed to the suspicion that it could be 'old wine in new bottle'.

Islamabad sees the stipulations — end to cross-border infiltration and dismantling of terrorism infrastructure — as conditions arguing that there was no state-sponsored cross-

border infiltration.

This was evident once again today in the response of the Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, to the reported comments attributed to the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, on cross-border infiltration. Mr. Khan termed the charges 'baseless'.

Pakistan is repeating its old formulation on infiltration. It is impossible to seal the porous border and some 'freelance jehadis' could as well be going across to Kashmir.

But it was neither encouraging nor turning a blind eye to infiltration.

If India did not subscribe to view, it should agree to either strengthening the mission of the United Nations Military Observers or consider a mechanism of neutral observers from six or seven countries to monitor the border.

The latest suggestion has come from the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri.

Two days ago, the President,

Pervez Musharraf, had described Mr. Vajpayee's peace initiative as a "good offer".

## We cannot wait: Mufti

**JALANDHAR, APRIL 27.** India cannot wait for Pakistan to give peace a chance, the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, said today.

"Whenever there is a peace move in the State or an overwhelming desire shown by the people for peace, our enemies across the border start getting jittery and make attempts to sabotage it," he said at a function organised by the "Hind Samachar Group" here. "It is a war of nerves but let me make it clear that we are determined for restoration of peace and will not wait for the enemy to give us a chance," the Mufti said.

Criticising separatist groups who spurned the recent offer of talks with Centre's interlocutor N.N. Vohra, he said: "Only those who neither have support of the people nor strength in their stand or argument shy away from dialogue..." — PTI

# Hope for Indo-Pak dialogue

Nilova Roy Chaudhury in New Delhi

April 25. — There are strong indications that talks between India and Pakistan may begin shortly, possibly within the next few months. Resumption of dialogue will represent a change in India's stand. New Delhi has repeatedly said Pakistan must end cross-border terrorism before dialogue restarts. There are, however, senior officials said, "a few alternatives other than talking to Pakistan".

"Realisation" of this is why "Prime Minister Mr Vajpayee seriously offered Pakistan a hand of friendship", an official said. Significantly, the Pakistani establishment has responded favourably to recent Indian softening of rhetoric, with even its President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, publicly saying his government was willing to talk of all outstanding issues, including J&K. The public acceptance of any talks, "at any level, anywhere" from Pakistan would place India under further pressure, though that is a word officials do not acknowledge.

The issue of talks with Pakistan was likely

to have figured in Mr Vajpayee's talks with the President when he called on Dr APJ Abdul Kalam this evening. The two spoke for over an hour. Rashtrapati Bhavan sources said the one-on-one meeting was a "regular interaction", and the first this month.

Mr Vajpayee is likely to have briefed the President about his Srinagar visit and the "hand of friendship" he offered to Pakistan.

While India has never ruled out the possibility of talks since the attack on Parliament in December 2001, it has insisted that Pakistan must first end cross-border infiltration completely and end support to terrorism before any "meaningful" dialogue can begin. But, after withdrawal of troops following a 10-month standoff on the border last year, India finds itself with limited choices.

"There are limits to how long we can hold off from engagement with Pakistan, making the possibility of talks soon a reality," an official said. Even India's "friends" and interlocutors, among them Russia, France, UK and the USA, have told the government that it has few options but

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## DIALOGUE:

to talk to Pakistan, observers said. They could continue to apply pressure on Pakistan to end its support for terrorist activity in J&K only if something tangible were on offer from India.

An official said to "consistently spurn talks" has caused India to appear "intransigent", while Pakistan has emerged as more "reasonable". And with South Asia drifting away from the world's radar screens — Iraq, West Asia and Korea being the focus — global interest will remain so long as both countries remain engaged politically, observers said.

One senior official said "since infiltration across the LoC is unlikely to cease completely ever, a situation of no dialogue cannot be indefinitely sustained". And since India did not

choose to go to war even after a situation as serious as the attack on Parliament, and has run through a whole range of diplomatic options, "what will we do in the event of another major terrorist attack?", asked an official, seeking to explain India's "changed perception".

In Islamabad, lauding Mr Vajpayee for displaying "statesmanship" in offering talks, foreign minister Mr Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri today proposed that both sides meet at the foreign office level and start talks "tomorrow", PTI adds. "We welcome their statement. We believe they have demonstrated statesmanship, particularly in the context of arrogant and tough statements which have been coming," he told BBC. "Rather I would like to say very belligerent statements were being made by Indian ministers," he said referring to external affairs

minister Mr Yashwant Sinha's statement that Pakistan was a "filter case" for a preemptive strike if possessing WMD, export of terrorism, and absence of democracy were the criteria.

26 APR 2003

THE STATESMAN



# Farooq peace plan for PM

9/20 PM

**OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

**New Delhi, April 25:** The Prime Minister today got a proposal from an ally and an Opposition party to send an all-party team to Pakistan to prepare the ground for peace talks.

Seeking to lend momentum to Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Srinagar peace proposal, National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah and Nationalist Congress Party's Sharad Pawar and Praful Patel, MP, met the Prime Minister for 35 minutes to discuss their proposal.

Both Pawar and Abdullah said Vajpayee's response was "good". "Obviously, he (Prime Minister) will be talking to some of his colleagues in the government before taking a decision," Pawar said.

Abdullah, who till yesterday was unenthusiastic about Vajpayee's offer of a "new beginning", said the change could be attributed to "the youth of this country (who) want peace".

"My people are dying every day. The army was at the border for 10 months but nothing happened. Now we have to look for peace,"

the former chief minister said.

Abdullah and Patel also spelled out their views to a television network today. Both said they wanted Vajpayee to send a political mission to Islamabad to prepare the ground for talks. They were quick to add that the mission would be worthwhile only if the Prime Minister approved of the plan.

"We will give some time to them (the Centre) to think and I think we should expect an answer within a month's time," Pawar said after the meeting.

The trio is said to have suggested Congress' Karan Singh — the son of the Kashmir maharaja who signed the Instrument of Accession to India — as the team leader. But when asked, Pawar said: "We have not decided about it as yet."

The Prime Minister, however, may not let an NDA ally and the Opposition wrest from him the peace initiative he proposed in Srinagar last week.

In the run-up to next year's general polls, Vajpayee wants to exact maximum mileage for himself and his party, the BJP, if Indian Pakistan ties approach a breakthrough and,

as a result, usher peace in Kashmir. But it may be difficult for Vajpayee to completely reject the trio's plan. The Prime Minister's aides said he will, at best, lend these leaders an ear but remain non-committal.

The Kashmir Committee of former law minister Ram Jethmalani had made similar suggestions earlier, but failed to make headway after the Centre refused to play ball. He had also tried to get across to separatist groups in Kashmir.

While welcoming Vajpayee's fresh peace overtures to Pakistan, Hurriyat Conference chairman Abdul Gani Bhat had said a Hurriyat team should be sent to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir first to create the "right atmosphere" for talks.

The Hurriyat, he had said, would like to persuade "Kashmiri boys on the other side" to give up guns and declare an unconditional ceasefire. "Pakistan cannot persuade the Kashmiri youth to give up their guns, only we can do so," Bhat said in Srinagar last week.

Most people in the Valley believe the US will now turn its attention to India, Pakistan and Kashmir.

# Pervez warns India of N-attack

Mubashir Zaidi  
Islamabad, April 25

GENERAL PERVEZ Musharraf has warned India not to even dream of launching a pre-emptive strike against Pakistan.

"No power should dare think of a pre-emptive strike against Pakistan. Pakistan possesses the nuclear deterrence, a developed missile programme and a determined nation that knows how to defend itself. All these elements are together a guarantee of our safety and the talk of Pakistan's turn is an absurd proposition," he said while addressing editors of national newspapers on Thursday.

Musharraf, however, welcomed India's latest peace move. He said he wanted Prime Minister Jamali to respond to India's initiative. "Since India is hesitant to talk to me, Jamali can re-



Pervez Musharraf

*'Don't dare a pre-emptive strike'*

spond to the Indian PM's offer, which in my view is non-committal so far," he said. He said it seemed that Vajpayee wanted to hold talks with Pakistan and Jamali has also expressed the same desire, and it is a good response.

The President said Pakistan enjoys good relations with many countries of the world but when the chips are down, Pakistan will be alone. He, however, said "we are not weak, we have the power and we should have confidence in our power and should not depend on others." He declared, "We will have to defend our national interests ourselves."

The president forcefully dismissed the impression that Pakistan could be the next target after Iraq. He said, "We should have confidence in ourselves," and wondered why some people think that way.

Regarding Iraq, Musharraf said that before the war Pakistan had adopted a right diplomatic stand that Iraq should be saved from war. "Now, our policy is that sovereignty and integrity of Iraq be preserved and Iraqis should govern themselves."

He said it would be better if the reconstruction of Iraq took place under the aegis of the United Nations.

On Afghanistan, he said Pakistan wants peace and stability in that country as it would be in their interest. Pakistan, he said, would benefit immensely from stability in Afghanistan, as its trade with Central Asian countries will take place through it.

Referring to the al-Qaida, he said no non-Pakistani would be allowed to live in the country without proper documents.

Musharraf said they have their own political agenda and they should not be allowed to harm Pakistan's interests.

Highlighting the achievements of his government, he said the focus had been on good governance, economic recovery and poverty alleviation.

26 APR 2003-

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# A good offer, says Musharraf

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 24. The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, today termed the latest peace initiative made by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, a "good offer".

The subject figured briefly at an interactive session he had with a group of Pakistani editors and columnists on the deadlock between the Jamali Government and the Opposition parties on the validity of the laws he promulgated during the three years of military rule.

M. Ziauddin, Resident Editor of *Dawn*, who attended the meeting, told *The Hindu* that Gen. Musharraf was "very optimistic" over the peace offer moving forward. "I am very hopeful that something positive would emerge," he said. It appears that one journalist told Gen. Musharraf that

this time around Pakistan should be "careful" and not "repeat mistakes" it had made at the Agra Summit in July 2001.

Gen. Musharraf did not agree with the scribe's suggestion and said that "I did nothing wrong in Agra".

Interestingly, he told the group that it served no purpose to go into the past. "It is no use who has won or lost. The Indian Prime Minister has made an offer and there should be no value judgments. It is a good offer and we take it seriously."

## Gesture to Sikh pilgrims

PTI reports from Lahore:

Gen. Musharraf has offered to provide unrestricted passage to Indian Sikh pilgrims who want to visit Gurdwara Kartarpur in that country without a passport or visa.

## TASK FORCE ON CREATION OF 1 LAKH JOBS IN J&K

# End infiltration to begin talks, PM tells Pak.

By Javed M. Ansari

*Back to*  
*Hand*

**NEW DELHI APRIL 23.** The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today told the Lok Sabha that "stopping cross-border infiltration and destruction of terrorist infrastructure can open the doors for talks" with Pakistan. His remarks came in the form of a statement in the House on his two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Vajpayee said he had extended a hand of friendship, in the hope that a new beginning could take place between India and Pakistan. "This hand of friendship should be extended from both sides. Both the countries should resolve that we need to live together in peace."

The Prime Minister told the Lok Sabha that during his visit to the State, he had assured the people that the Government was keen on resolving all the issues, both internal and external, through talks. "The gun can solve no problem. Issues can be

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resolved if we are guided by the three principles of *Insaaniyat* (humanism), *Jamhooriyat* (democracy) and *Kashmiriyat* (Hindu-Muslim amity)."

In the course of his statement, the Prime Minister recalled that he had told the people that the doors "of our hearts will always be open to you". He had urged them to knock on the doors of Delhi. "We have come here to share your pain and agony; whatever complaints you have, address them collectively." He also congratulated the people of the State for participating in the polls fearlessly, and for exercising their franchise defying bullets.

Mr. Vajpayee said the greatest problem before the youth of the State was unemployment and he informed the House that his Government had decided to help facilitate the creation of one lakh job opportunities in the next two years.

He said a Special Task Force would be set up with representatives from the Central

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and State Governments, industry, commerce, banking and financial institutions. The task force would submit its report by June 30 and the implementation would start on August 15 this year.

### Airport to be modernised

Mr. Vajpayee also informed the House that during the two-day visit, he laid the foundation for the modernisation of the Srinagar airport that would double its capacity so that international air services could start from there. He also told that House that in deference to the wishes of the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister he had inaugurated the National Highway Development Project from Srinagar.

His last programme related to the commencement of work on the construction of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla railway line. "It is our resolve to ensure that train services start in the Kashmir Valley before August 15, 2007," he said.

# PM lobs peace ball back into Pakistan's court

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Elaborating on



A.B. Vajpayee

his recent Srinagar peace overture, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee told the Lok Sabha on Wednesday that a dialogue could commence with Pakistan on all issues once it stopped sponsoring cross-border infiltration and destroyed all terrorist infrastructure on its soil.

"A new beginning can take place between India and Pakistan. We have extended our hand of friendship," he said. "Let us see how Pakistan responds to this."

If there is a difference in the PM's new initiative from what the government has been saying since the disastrous Agra summit of 2001, it was the tone and tenor, rather than the substance. The line so far had been that the government would not talk to Pakistan until cross-border terrorism stopped. Now, what was stated negatively is being said positively: that talks can begin, provided cross-border terrorism stops.

This delicate shift in emphasis comes some two weeks before US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage is due to visit both India and Pakistan to press for the resumption of talks between the two sides.

In his speech to the Lok Sabha, Mr Vajpayee also repeated the offer he made at a recent public meeting in Srinagar to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. They could

knock on the doors of Delhi with any complaints they had because his government was there to share their pain and suffering, he said. "The doors of our heart are always open," he said.

At that meeting, the PM underlined the fact that he had spoken of extending a "hand of friendship" to Pakistan, provided that this hand of friendship was extended by both sides. "Both countries should resolve that we need to live together in peace," he said.

Stressing that it was his government's earnest desire to settle all issues, both domestic and external, through talks, he said, "The gun can solve no problem; brotherhood can." Issues could be resolved provided that the two countries were "guided by the three principles of *insaaniyat* (humanism), *jamhooriyat* (democracy) and *Kashmirayat* (Kashmir's age-old legacy of Hindu-Muslim amity)", he said.

Earlier, the opposition accused the government of increasingly coming under US pressure regarding its foreign policy and called for the formulation of a steady Pakistan policy.

During a discussion in the Lok Sabha, R.L. Bhatia (Congress) attacked the government for not pursuing an independent policy towards other countries, and claimed that the country's perception of Pakistan was being influenced by Washington.

"After the terrorist attack on parliament, the Prime Minister talked of 'aar paar ki ladai' (decisive battle), then what was your compulsion for sending the troops to the front and withdrawing them after nine months?" he said.

# Pak. ready to name official to discuss agenda for talks

By B. Muralidhar Reddy <sup>11.0.1</sup> <sup>28/4</sup>

**ISLAMABAD, APRIL 22.** Pakistan today formally welcomed the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's offer of dialogue while complaining that he had "contradicted himself" by invoking conditionalities. Pakistan also expressed its readiness to nominate a senior official to discuss the agenda for talks.

A Foreign Office spokesman in a statement said that Pakistan welcomed the "positive elements" in Mr. Vajpayee's speech in Srinagar. The statement came after the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, said he would back whatever "decision" his Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, took in response to Mr. Vajpayee's peace offer. He told correspondents in Lahore on Mon-

day that Mr. Jamali had already welcomed the statement made by Mr. Vajpayee. "I would support whatever the Prime Minister decides", he said.

It is also significant that the Pakistan Foreign Office statement came after the return of the Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri, from Riyadh. He had gone to Saudi Arabia for consultations with the leaders of Arab states on Iraq. Mr. Kasuri told reporters that Pakistan was ready for a 'neutral mechanism', consisting of representatives of six or seven countries, to verify charges of infiltration. The Foreign Office statement said that Pakistan believed that given goodwill and honest intentions, all issues could be resolved peacefully through a dialogue.

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# Pakistan ready to accept PM's olive branch

TIMES NEWS NETWORK  
AND AGENCIES

**Islamabad/Srinagar:** In a positive response to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's fresh offer of friendship, Pakistan said on Tuesday that it was ready to nominate a senior official to discuss the agenda for an "unconditional and meaningful" dialogue if India was "serious".

"If India is indeed serious, (the) government of Pakistan is ready to nominate a senior official to discuss the agenda for talks," a Pakistan foreign office statement said, expressing Islamabad's willingness to take the first step. Reiterating Pakistan's policy of talks at any time, any place and any level, a foreign ministry statement, however, accused Mr Vajpayee of undermining his offer with "hackneyed allegations" of cross-border terrorism.

The Pakistani offer came even as militants killed six persons and injured 12 others by blowing up a civilian vehicle with an improvised explosive device in Tral in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir at about 8 a.m. on Tuesday. Two-and-a-half hours later, militants struck in the Qazigund area on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway in Anantnag district, blowing up a BSF vehicle, injuring nine soldiers. On the other hand, the army gunned down 13 militants in a fierce gun battle in a forest in Poonch district.

The Pakistani statement claimed that Islamabad had taken a number of steps to shield its territory from being used for any activity prejudicial to other countries. "Pakistan remains fully committed and determined to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations," it said, adding that the best way to verify the allegations of cross-border terrorism would be to appoint neutral observers.

Expressing Islamabad's willingness to take the first step for the talks, the statement said Pakistan welcomed the "positive elements" of Mr Vajpayee's recent speech in Srinagar and added that Islamabad "believed

in goodwill and honest intentions". It said Pakistan placed a high priority on reducing tension and normalising relations with India.

Commenting on Mr Vajpayee's offer, Pakistan foreign minister K.M. Kasuri had said on Monday night that he saw "a change in tone and tenor which cannot be lost sight of. They were not off the cuff. He could not have made that statement in Kashmir without giving it real thought".

Mr Vajpayee's offer could result in a "paradigm" change and lead to a concrete dialogue process, he said, hoping that the forthcoming visit of US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage to the region could provide the mechanism to kickstart the process of dialogue.

Earlier on Monday, emphasising that the peace process between the two countries had to move forward, Gen Pervez Musharraf had said he supported the response given by premier M.Z.K. Jamali to Mr Vajpayee's offer. "I'll support whatever decision the Prime Minister will take. This process (of peace) has to move forward," he said.

## PM's statement on talks in LS today

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will make a statement in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday on his fresh offer of friendship to Pakistan during his Srinagar visit. He will make the statement in the upper house on Thursday, parliamentary affairs minister Sushma Swaraj said.

Meanwhile, the Centre's interlocutor on the Kashmir issue, N.N. Vohra, began his mission in Srinagar on Tuesday by holding talks with leaders of various political parties, including the National Conference and the CPI, although there was no indication as to whether he would meet separatist leaders in the state. PTI

## VV 19-1 Talks without pre-conditions: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 21. Pakistan today welcomed the offer of talks by the Prime Minister. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, but maintained that it would like them to be without any 'pre-conditions'.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, told correspondents at his regular weekly briefing that "pre-conditions" were not necessary for the commencement of the dialogue process. He was answering a spate of questions on the hand of friendship extended

by Mr. Vajpayee during his last weekend visit to Srinagar.

While Mr. Vajpayee had said on Saturday that India would await a formal response from Islamabad to his offer, Mr. Khan maintained that Pakistan would like to see further initiatives from New Delhi to kick-start the dialogue process. In other words, he was saying that the ball was in the Indian court and Mr. Vajpayee has merely said what Pakistan has been maintaining all along.

It has not gone unnoticed in diplomatic circles here that Pa-

kistan has responded only orally to the latest peace missive by India. Not only has Islamabad chosen not to react formally, in the form of a statement, but also side-stepped the conditionalities set by Mr. Vajpayee for commencement of talks.

Mr. Khan, again in response to questions, made it a point to refer to the statements made by the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, and the Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmud Kasuri, welcoming Mr. Vajpayee's peace offer. He clearly implied a suggestion

that this response should be adequate for India to agree for talks.

Asked about the conditionalities — end to cross-border infiltration and closure of alleged militant camps — Mr. Khan argued that these were 'old' allegations. "We have answered them several times in the past. There is no cross-border infiltration and if India insists otherwise, the best way to verify the charges is by strengthening the mechanism of United Nations Military Observers on both sides of the border".



# Oxy war suits Pakistan: report

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The Prime Minister of talks with Islamabad- defence ministry has kistan is continuing r in Kashmir, using card" and bleeding not thinking of at- because low-intensi- &K suits it. "It em- clear card to hold aid a defence minis- sented in February. stan war can happ- ina become hostile igh China need not ties between the rson.

NEW DELHI, April 20. — The BJP today said Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's "bold gesture" of extending a hand of friendship to Pakistan would pave the way for meaningful talks. BJP chief Mr Venkaiah Naidu said the sincerity of Pakistan's response would be judged by how soon it would stop cross-border terrorism.

Pakistan's information minister, Sherif Rashid said in Islamabad today that if New Delhi took one step towards friendship, his country would take two. Allegations that Pakistan was encouraging infiltration were borne of misconception, he added. "We are ready to increase the number of UN observers along the LoC." — SNS/PTI

And while India bleeds Paki- stan is modernising its armed forces, using force multipliers, up- grading its strategic and conven- tional strength. The Pakistan mili- tary is getting financial help from the USA and Gulf countries. It

has also benefited from foreign agencies rescheduling its debt.

Recently, Pakistan has bought 320 T-80 tanks (and is manufac- turing another 20 indigenously), 900 guns of various calibre from 122 mm to 155 mm — of which

90 have been delivered, a consid- erable amount of electronic war- fare and communication systems and unmanned aerial vehicles. The report said:

■ The proxy war will continue. There could be destabilisation attempts across the country. There are 2,500 Pakistan-trained militants in J&K. About 4,500 more terrorists are either ready to enter India or are being trained in Pakistan or PoK.

■ Pakistan's nuclear doctrine looks at a 'first use' policy, un- like India's. There is also talk of a 'one-rung escalation' — from low intensity to nuclear war. China has also transferred nu- clear and missile technology to Pakistan.

against the CPI-M's "reign of ter- ror". Mr LK Advani was present at the meeting.

The BJP chief said a memorandum to the Prime Minis- ter on the issue and was signed that he would do the needful. He said, Mrs Banerjee and the BJP chief plan to address a joint rally in Kolkata on Thursday. This was the first meeting between Mrs Banerjee and the BJP's three top leaders since she left the NDA and joined hands with the Congress before the Assembly elections. BJP leaders said the BJP Minister may induct the BJP chief into the Cabinet after the Budget session. The BJP chief has often praised her for her strong anti-Left stand, has reported people lobbying for her induction.

The party's jubilation was evident when Mr Banerjee and Miss Banerjee addressed reporters

# Breaking the ice

By K.K. Katyal

*It is better if India acts on its own to end a prolonged spell of lack of contact with Pakistan... rather than be seen to be acting under outside pressure later.*

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THE SRINAGAR speech of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, "extending a hand of friendship to Pakistan", a ringing departure — in tone, if not substance — from the cliché-ridden rigid stand of the past, holds a promise of engagement with a close yet distant neighbour. Significant both because of its timing and the venue, will it be pursued to its logical conclusion? Could it be a precursor to the type of the initiatives undertaken in the past — the bus journey to Lahore, the Ramadan ceasefire and the Agra summit (minus, of course, their negative outcome)? There are signs in it of an incipient initiative. Let it not be killed either by retractions or over-analysis by commentators.

It is better if India acts on its own to end a prolonged spell of lack of contact with Pakistan, marked by the downgrading of each other's diplomatic representation, suspension of air, rail and road traffic and restrictions on people-to-people contacts, rather than be seen to be acting under outside pressure later. The rigid stand, so far, has only served to reduce the space for Kashmir-related diplomatic manoeuvres. It did not carry conviction with the outside world, which, without an exception, favoured the resumption of dialogue with Pakistan. That was also the advice given to the foreign policy establishment by non-official experts, including retired diplomats, during informal discussion. Couldn't a beginning be made, they said, with contacts at, say, the Joint Secretary level, with India giving priority to the concerns over escalating terrorist violence in Jammu and Kashmir?

It is perfectly in order for New Delhi to draw attention to the role of Pakistan-based agencies to engineer trouble in the State as also to the vast terrorist infrastructure and to stress the relevance of remedial steps to amity with India. But the wisdom of making the end of violence a precondition for talks is open to question. If the Srinagar remarks indicate a flexibility of approach, it is to be welcomed. In Pakistan, Mr. Vajpayee's statement was hailed across the board, in the first instance, though second thoughts were less positive. To generate the momentum, Islamabad would do well to pick up

from the Indian decision to remove the curbs on overflights, and to name its High Commissioner in Pakistan. These moves, sadly, were not reciprocated. On the other hand, motives were read into New Delhi's step.

In India, the Government's tough line on Pakistan, it was widely believed, was connected with the BJP's plan to make terrorism a major item of its election platform. It is in the BJP's interest if the official stand were to be modified now. Any softening under diplomatic pressure from outside later — closer to the Assembly elections — will only upset the party's electoral calculations.

The prospects of pressure from outside are by now clear. Even during its pre-occupation with Iraq, there was no dearth of indications from the West, the United States in particular, of its intention to address India-Pakistan problems at the earliest possible. The subcontinent was very much in the minds of the leaders of the U.S. and Britain in their summit meetings during the military action on Iraq. It was pointedly mentioned at other levels — by the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, more than once, and by the Foreign Ministers of the U.K. and France at the closing stage of the operations in Iraq. On March 31, Gen. Powell told the *New York Times* in an interview that "India, Pakistan and the whole of the subcontinent problem" was part of the "broader agenda" that the U.S. planned to go back to after Iraq. The Foreign Ministers of France and the U.K., Dominique de Villepin and Jack Straw, said at a press conference after their meeting in Paris on April 9: "We discussed relations between India and Pakistan. We must, together, do our utmost to encourage a resumption of the dialogue between the two countries".

This much is clear from the line-up among the P-5 in the Security Council. On India-Pakistan matters, the U.S., the U.K. and France (as also Germany) have no differences — all

of them favour resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan, want Islamabad to step up its effort to check infiltration of militants across the Line of Control (while affirming faith in the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's professions of peace with India) and have reservations about India's human rights record. China, at best, is neutral (on the side of Pakistan). Only Russia shows complete understanding of India's stand on Kashmir — that it is a bilateral issue, to be settled by Islamabad and New Delhi under the Shimla agreement and the Lahore declaration and that India is a victim of terrorist violence).

Needless to say, Washington sets the tone for the West's stand on India-Pakistan problems, notably Kashmir. The U.S. has vast economic dealings with India — and has interest in the stability of Pakistan, which, because of its geographical location, has again become relevant to the U.S. for operations in Afghanistan and now in Iraq. In a perceptive analysis, a Pakistani commentator, Farrukh Saleem, brings out the contrast in America's interests in India and Pakistan thus: "America now needs India to grow. Top American companies have all set up their back-offices (inventory management, payroll, etc.) in India. India, in return, has accumulated \$ 70 billion in foreign exchange reserves. Pakistan produces nothing that can help America grow... Our goals do not overlap America's. America's real interest in Pakistan, as a consequence, is that we do not become a rouge state and that we do not become an agent of instability in the region. No more, no less."

As for the domestic scene in Pakistan, the military Government, in his view, "is now engaged in a dicey double-dance, appeasing the Americans in the international front and using the mullahs on the domestic front. Internal policy is all about derailing democracy and splitting up democratic forces. External policy is nothing

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ing but India-centric. The khaki the mullahs both have an iden view of national identity and the national security. Both are in fav of curbing fundamental freedom the citizens of Pakistan. Both use lam and India to distract the pop tion from real issues. Their comu enemy outside of Pakistan is Ir Their common enemies within Pa tan are the mainstream, modc political entities."

Given this reality, it may no easy for the ruling establishmer Pakistan to check the infiltratio 'jehadis', much less demolish the rorist infrastructure. The steps t by Gen. Musharraf early last year der the pressure generated by movement of Indian troops to border and under American prod turned out to be cosmetic. The 'j di' organisations banned, with g fanfare, re-appeared in new inca tions, and their detained leaders set free, on one pretext or the o According to one estimate, Pakis defence budget — at Rs.180 billio is supplemented by Rs. 80 billion lected by the 'jehadi' organisat for the "cause". Islamabad would like to lose this gain. The nexu tween them and the ISI, if anyt has been strengthened. The Al-Q and the Taliban cadres, who hav mained intact, despite the U.S military operations, have found a occupation — the "freedom stru in Jammu and Kashmir.

India's grievance that Washir has not done enough on its ov ensure compliance by Pakistan its solemn promises is understa ble. Gruesome cases such as the sacre of Pandits in Jammu Kashmir do evoke revulsion — are forgotten. Pakistan is able t away with bizarre theories tha could be the handiwork of "ot and not the 'jehadi' outfits in t eas under its control. That sor the West do not reject the bizarr is natural to incense Indians.

It is perfectly in order for New hi to impress on the America show better understanding of I concerns and to tell Gen. Must to honour the assurances given year — that steps would be tak stop infiltration permanently. has to be an essential element c kistan's reciprocity of India's tures.

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## A WELCOME OVERTURE *gund. p. n.*

THE PRIME MINISTER'S declaration in Srinagar on Friday that India is ready to extend the hand of friendship to Pakistan and Islamabad's prompt response to it have not come a day too soon and are welcome developments. The tone and tenor of Mr. Vajpayee's overture to Pakistan signal an attempt to return to pragmatism and a readiness to move forward on bilateral relations, though he did appear to have qualified his offer somewhat on Saturday. The readiness to start talks is a departure from the rhetoric of Mr. Vajpayee's Cabinet colleagues, Yashwant Sinha and George Fernandes, who have talked with reckless abandon of India's case for a pre-emptive strike in imitation of the American logic in launching its war on Iraq. By inviting equally irresponsible responses from Pakistan, their loose talk only served to exacerbate tensions, which were already high following the tit-for-tat expulsion of diplomats and charges of espionage that went flying between the two capitals. With the snows melting in the Himalayas, easing the passage for the militants to sneak across the Line of Control, bilateral relations appeared headed toward confrontation, in turn inducing expressions of concern by other nations. The Prime Minister's statement of Friday raises hopes of a reversal of this trend. Considering the many false starts in the past decade and the total absence of mutual trust between the two countries, a degree of caution may be in order. But in the changed and changing global situation, the two nuclearised neighbours must realise the dangers of continuing on the self-defeating path of hostility and the very real possibility it raises of motivated international intervention.

Mr. Vajpayee's overture comes even as New Delhi gets ready for some hectic diplomatic activity in the next few weeks. With its military involvement in Iraq winding down, the U.S. has given enough hints that its diplomatic activism will turn to other so-called hot spots. The American Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armit-

age, will soon be in the region. It is perhaps a coincidence that around the time Mr. Vajpayee was visiting Srinagar — the rally he addressed on Friday was the first by a Prime Minister after militancy erupted in the Kashmir Valley in 19 — a senior official of the Bush administration was giving public expression to a view that major parts reflected New Delhi's position. Richard Haass of the State Department declared that the U.S. was "disappointed and frustrated over Pakistan's failure to stop cross-border infiltration. Mr. Haass went on to warn Pakistan that its relations with the U.S. "will never improve beyond a certain point unless this issue (cross-border terrorism) is adequately addressed". The message was as blunt as Washington has sent to Pakistan in recent times. Clearly Pervez Musharraf and his civilian Government have not done enough to keep his promise of permanently ending the infiltration of terrorism into Kashmir from across Pakistani territory. The stepped-up violence in Jammu and Kashmir is evidence that the Government in Islamabad, unwilling to stop cross-border terrorism, the cause of the issue which New Delhi says is blocking its engagement of Pakistan.

There is little doubt that the U.S. is weighing on both sides, its concerns heightened by the rhetoric in the region in the wake of its own actions and its justification. While hoping that Washington will continue to press Islamabad to rein in the terrorists and close down the training camps, New Delhi must initiate steps to reopen the lateral path by giving up its obduracy. If Mr. Vajpayee's Srinagar speech signals a sincere attempt to regain the diplomatic initiative with its estranged neighbour, the Government must take bold followup measures. Resumption of sporting contacts with Pakistan is a ready, non-controversial option. The two countries must show the wisdom and vision to grab the opportunities presented by the geopolitical situation to break the bilateral logjam.

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*India-Relations*

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# Breaking the ice

By K.K. Katyal

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THE SRINAGAR speech of the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, "extending a hand of friendship to Pakistan", a refreshing departure — in tone, if not in substance — from the cliché-ridden rigid stand of the past, holds a faint promise of engagement with a close yet distant neighbour. Significant both because of its timing and the venue, will it be pursued to its logical conclusion? Could it be a precursor to the type of the initiatives undertaken in the past — the bus journey to Lahore, the Ramadan ceasefire and the Agra summit (minus, of course, their negative outcome)? There are signs in it of an incipient initiative. Let it not be killed either by retractions or over-analysis by commentators.

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The prospects of pressure from outside are by now clear. Even during its pre-occupation with Iraq, there was no dearth of indications from the West, the United States in particular, of its intention to address India-Pakistan problems at the earliest possible. The subcontinent was very much in the minds of the leaders of the U.S. and Britain in their summit meetings during the military action on Iraq. It was pointedly mentioned at other levels — by the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, more than once, and by the Foreign Ministers of the U.K. and France at the closing stage of the operations in Iraq. On March 31, Gen. Powell told the *New York Times* in an interview that "India, Pakistan and the whole of the subcontinent problem" was part of the "broader agenda" that the U.S. planned to go back to after Iraq. The Foreign Ministers of France and the U.K., Dominique de Villepin and Jack Straw, said at a press conference after their meeting in Paris on April 9: "We discussed relations between India and Pakistan. We must, together, do our utmost to encourage a resumption of the dialogue between the two countries".

This much is clear from the line-up among the P-5 in the Security Council. On India-Pakistan matters, the U.S., the U.K. and France (as also Germany) have no differences — all

of them favour resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan, want Islamabad to step up its effort to check infiltration of militants across the Line of Control (while affirming faith in the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's professions of peace with India) and have reservations about India's human rights record. China, at best, is neutral (on the side of Pakistan). Only Russia shows complete understanding of India's stand on Kashmir — that it is a bilateral issue, to be settled by Islamabad and New Delhi under the Shimla agreement and the Lahore declaration and that India is a victim of terrorist violence).

Needless to say, Washington sets the tone for the West's stand on India-Pakistan problems, notably Kashmir. The U.S. has vast economic dealings with India — and has interest in the stability of Pakistan, which, because of its geographical location, has again become relevant to the U.S. for operations in Afghanistan and now in Iraq. In a perceptive analysis, a Pakistani commentator, Farrukh Saleem, brings out the contrast in America's interests in India and Pakistan thus: "America now needs India to grow. Top American companies have all set up their back-offices (inventory management, payroll, etc.) in India. India, in return, has accumulated \$ 70 billion in foreign exchange reserves. Pakistan produces nothing that can help America grow... Our goals do not overlap America's. America's real interest in Pakistan, as a consequence, is that we do not become a rouge state and that we do not become an agent of instability in the region. No more, no less."

As for the domestic scene in Pakistan, the military Government, in his view, "is now engaged in a dicey double-dance, appeasing the Americans in the international front and using the mullahs on the domestic front. Internal policy is all about derailing democracy and splitting up democratic forces. External policy is noth-

ing but India-centric. The khaki the mullahs both have an ider view of national identity and th national security. Both are in fa of curbing fundamental freedo the citizens of Pakistan. Both us lam and India to distract the pop tion from real issues. Their com enemy outside of Pakistan is I Their common enemies within F tan are the mainstream, mod political entities."

Given this reality, it may ne easy for the ruling establishme Pakistan to check the infiltratio 'jehadis', much less demolish th rrorist infrastructure. The steps by Gen. Musharraf early last yea der the pressure generated b movement of Indian troops t border and under American pro turned out to be cosmetic. The 'di' organisations banned, with fanfare, re-appeared in new inc tions, and their detained leader: set free, on one pretext or the According to one estimate, Paki defence budget — at Rs. 180 bill is supplemented by Rs. 80 billion: lected by the 'jehadi' organis for the "cause". Islamabad wou like to lose this gain. The nex tween them and the ISI, if any has been strengthened. The Al- and the Taliban cadres, who ha mained intact, despite the U military operations, have found occupation — the "freedom str in Jammu and Kashmir.

India's grievance that Wash has not done enough on its c ensure compliance by Pakista its solemn promises is unders ble. Gruesome cases such as th sacre of Pandits in Jammu Kashmir do evoke revulsion are forgotten. Pakistan is able away with bizarre theories th could be the handiwork of "t and not the 'jehadi' outfits in eas under its control. That se the West do not reject the biza is natural to incense Indians.

It is perfectly in order for Ne hi to impress on the Americ show better understanding of concerns and to tell Gen. Mu to honour the assurances giv year — that steps would be t: stop infiltration permanentl has to be an essential elemen kistan's reciprocity of India tures.

2 1 APR 2003

THE HINDU

MONDAY, APRIL 21, 2003

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**A WELCOME OVERTURE** *gwd prk*

THE PRIME MINISTER'S declaration in Srinagar on Friday that India is ready to extend the hand of friendship to Pakistan and Islamabad's prompt response to it have not come a day too soon and are welcome developments. The tone and tenor of Mr. Vajpayee's overture to Pakistan signal an attempt to return to pragmatism and a readiness to move forward on bilateral relations, though he did appear to have qualified his offer somewhat on Saturday. The readiness to start talks is a departure from the rhetoric of Mr. Vajpayee's Cabinet colleagues, Yashwant Sinha and George Fernandes, who have talked with reckless abandon of India's case for a pre-emptive strike in imitation of the American logic in launching its war on Iraq. By inviting equally irresponsible responses from Pakistan, their loose talk only served to exacerbate tensions, which were already high following the tit-for-tat expulsion of diplomats and charges of espionage that went flying between the two capitals. With the snows melting in the Himalayas, easing the passage for the militants to sneak across the Line of Control, bilateral relations appeared headed toward confrontation, in turn inducing expressions of concern by other nations. The Prime Minister's statement of Friday raises hopes of a reversal of this trend. Considering the many false starts in the past decade and the total absence of mutual trust between the two countries, a degree of caution may be in order. But in the changed and changing global situation, the two nuclearised neighbours must realise the dangers of continuing on the self-defeating path of hostility and the very real possibility it raises of motivated international intervention.

Mr. Vajpayee's overture comes even as New Delhi gets ready for some hectic diplomatic activity in the next few weeks. With its military involvement in Iraq winding down, the U.S. has given enough hints that its diplomatic activism will turn to other so-called hot spots. The American Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armit-

age, will soon be in the region. It is perhaps no coincidence that around the time Mr. Vajpayee was visiting Srinagar — the rally he addressed on Friday was the first by a Prime Minister after militancy erupted in the Kashmir Valley in 1989 — a senior official of the Bush administration was giving public expression to a view that in major parts reflected New Delhi's position. Richard Haass of the State Department declared that the U.S. was "disappointed and frustrated" over Pakistan's failure to stop cross-border infiltration. Mr. Haass went on to warn Pakistan that its relations with the U.S. "will never improve beyond a certain point unless this issue (of cross-border terrorism) is adequately addressed". The message was as blunt as Washington has sent to Pakistan in recent times. Clearly, Pervez Musharraf and his civilian Government have not done enough to keep his promise of permanently ending the infiltration of terrorists into Kashmir from across Pakistani territory. The stepped-up violence in Jammu and Kashmir is evidence that the Government in Islamabad is unwilling to stop cross-border terrorism, the one issue which New Delhi says is blocking its engagement of Pakistan.

There is little doubt that the U.S. is weighing on both sides, its concerns heightened by the rhetoric in the region in the wake of its own war and its justification. While hoping that Washington will continue to press Islamabad to rein in the terrorists and close down the training camps, New Delhi must initiate steps to reopen the bilateral path by giving up its obduracy. If Mr. Vajpayee's Srinagar speech signals a sincere attempt to regain the diplomatic initiative with its estranged neighbour, the Government must take bold followup measures. Resumption of sporting contacts with Pakistan is a ready, non-controversial option. The two countries must show the wisdom and vision to grab the opportunities presented by the geopolitical situation to break the bilateral logjam.

2 1 APR 2003

THE HINDU



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AD-10  
21/4  
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2 1 APR 2003

THE HINDU

10-8  
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# Old wine in new bottle, yet we welcome it: Pak.

Judo -  
Pak

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 19. Pakistan is not enthused by the nuanced peace offer made by Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, in Srinagar even though the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmud Kasuri, has announced that Islamabad would soon propose new dates for the SAARC summit in a bid towards dialogue.

"It is old wine in new bottle. The position of Pakistan is we are ready for dialogue any time, anywhere and at any level without conditions. The Indian Prime Minister is putting the onus on Islamabad by repeating charges of infiltration and terrorist camps. We have already rejected these charges. So to that extent there is no forward movement though we welcome the change in the tone and tenor of Mr. Vajpayee," a senior official in the Pakistan Foreign Office told *The Hindu*.

The official said that soon after Mr. Vajpayee's statement in Srinagar on Friday, there was a meeting in the Foreign Office to consider a response and it was felt prudent to wait for details on the nature of the Indian offer. "Going by the elaboration given by Mr. Vajpayee at his press conference today, we see no shift in the stance of New Delhi. Of course, we welcome talks but without conditionalities."

A formal response from Pa-

kistan to the Prime Minister's statement and comments he made at the press meet are expected later. However, the likely response was evident from a statement made by the Foreign Office to the reported comments made by Richard Hass, senior U.S. State Department official. It rejected the U.S. criticism that Pakistan had not done enough to control incursions into Kashmir. Islamabad had taken all possible preventive measures and no infiltration was taking place, the Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, said.

Mr. Khan maintained that Pakistan had repeatedly offered to allow the deployment of neutral observers to verify that no incursions were taking place across the Line of Control. Pakistan had also repeatedly called for a dialogue with India on the problem. "No positive response to these offers was received. The allegations are baseless," said Mr. Khan, calling on the international community to press India for a dialogue.

Diplomatic and political observers here do note a change in the tone of India as reflected in Mr. Vajpayee's statements. The offer termed by Mr. Vajpayee as a "new initiative", diplomatic observers maintained, had to be seen against the backdrop of aggressive statements by some of his ministerial colleagues in recent

weeks.

However, Mr. Vajpayee's repeated stress on the need for the developing countries to learn from the Iraq example has intrigued observers. "It is not clear as to what the Indian Prime Minister was hinting at. Is he saying might is right? Is he saying the possession of weapons of mass destruction invites trouble? Or is Mr. Vajpayee endorsing the doctrine of pre-emption?" asked a senior Pakistani politician.

In a related development, Mr. Kasuri told BBC Radio from Riyadh that Pakistan would give a new date for the SAARC conference, which "will help lower temperature in South Asia."

Pakistan had always been making efforts to resolve all outstanding issues with India through negotiations. "It was with this very end in view that President Pervez Musharraf went to Agra on the invitation of Prime Minister Vajpayee," he claimed.

Mr. Kasuri said the visit of Gen. Musharraf was aimed at initiating some process of dialogue so that all outstanding disputes, including Kashmir, could be resolved. While objecting to a question regarding exchange of hard words between India and Pakistan, Mr. Kasuri said, "In the capacity as the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, I can say with responsibility that I did never use any wrong or filthy language."

20 APR 2003

SEE HINDU



'BUT THE ONUS IS ON ISLAMABAD'

# Waiting for Pak. response to offer of friendship: PM

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, APRIL 19. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said he was waiting for a reply from Pakistan for his offer of friendship made at a public meeting yesterday. "They have welcomed my speech but have perhaps skipped another part of it in which the responsibility has been put on Pakistan as well. Talks cannot be one-sided," he said.

Addressing a crowded press conference on the conclusion of his two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Vajpayee repeated the conditions for resuming talks with Pakistan and said that unless cross-border terrorism was stopped and training camps for militants dismantled, there could be no meaningful talks. "We want to tread the path of friendship but a lot depends on Pakistan's response. I reiterate that only talks can resolve all the issues."

Repeatedly referring to his desire for friendship with Pakistan, the Prime Minister gave the impression that he did not backtrack from his offer of talks. Terrorism, he said, could not be tolerated and only when it stopped could an atmosphere for



The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, addressing a press conference at the Srinagar airport on Saturday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

talks be created. Talks could be held on all the issues, including Kashmir, he said adding "let us make an honest effort in this direction".

Referring to the Nadimarg massacre of

Kashmiri Pandits, he said he did not mention it deliberately during his speech at the Kashmir University convocation earlier in the day as "I did not want to fan passion" and added that he had neither forgotten Kargil nor Nadimarg but "I want to have a new beginning".

## Iraq a warning for all

On the Iraq war, Mr. Vajpayee said it was a warning for the entire world, especially the developing world and those countries which were still caught in the cobwebs of poverty. "I will not elaborate on that but we have to see how long India and Pakistan will keep on fighting. The time has come for a new beginning to be made." To a question he said if Pakistan announced today that cross-border terrorism had been stopped, "I will send a senior official of (our) Foreign Ministry tomorrow to Islamabad to discuss the agenda for talks."

Mr. Vajpayee avoided a direct reply to a number of questions on talks with the Kashmiri separatists and said "(the) doors are open for all those who want to talk". The Centre's interlocutor, N. N. Vohra, would come to Kashmir with an invitation "and I can assure you that the situation has changed and a defining moment for Kashmir has come". He said the former interlocutor, K. C. Pant, had also invited the separatist All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) for talks but it did not respond positively.

The Prime Minister strongly supported the healing touch policy of the State Government led by the Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, but made it clear that it was not for militants. "It cannot be for those who are bent upon deepening the wounds," he said adding "there can be no other policy except the healing touch".

The Prime Minister announced that a committee would be set up to look into the problems of Kashmiri Pandits. Adequate security measures were being initiated for those who had stayed back in the Valley.

'Let's not repeat mistakes': Page 8

## New employment package

By Our Special Correspondent

SRINAGAR, APRIL 19. In continuation of the economic package announced by him in May 2002, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today announced another package mainly dealing with the unemployment problem in Jammu and Kashmir.

Unemployment among the youth was one of the State's most pressing problems. "Therefore, we have decided to prepare a comprehensive plan to create at least one lakh employment and self-employment opportunities in the State

in next two years," he said at a press conference adding that "for the purpose I have decided to set up a special task force comprising representatives of the Centre, the State Government, industry, commerce, banks and financial institutions. The task force will submit its report before June 30 and implementation will begin by August 15, 2003."

The sectors covered under the package are tourism, power, Information Technology, education and the Kashmir channel of Doordarshan. Implementation of these plans will be monitored by the Prime Minister's Office.

20 APR 2003

THE HINDU

10-8  
2099

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Just  
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20 APR 2003

THE HINDU

# Let Iraq be a warning for us, PM tells Pak

TIMES NEWS NETWORK AND AGENCIES

**Srinagar:** Calling for a "new beginning" in Indo-Pak ties, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said on Saturday that the resumption of a dialogue between the two countries depended entirely on Islamabad's positive response to the hand of friendship extended by him.

"If Pakistan announces today that it has stopped cross-border terrorism, ended infiltration and wound up terrorist training camps, I will send a senior official of the external affairs ministry to Pakistan tomorrow to decide the agenda. India is prepared to discuss all issues, including Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan," he told a press conference before leaving for Delhi after his two-day tour of the Valley.

Mr Vajpayee said the situation in Kashmir and in the world had changed. "Whatever has happened in Iraq is a warning for all of us. It is now impor-



J&K governor G.C. Saxena drapes a ceremonial shawl around Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a convocation ceremony in Srinagar on Saturday

tant that we resolve our differences through dialogue."

Earlier in the day, speaking at the 16th annual convocation of the University of Kashmir, he said the people of Jammu and Kashmir, through the power of democracy, had given their verdict against militancy and terrorist violence unleashed from across the border.

"My current visit to Kashmir has reinforced my belief that darkness and despair are, indeed, departing; that light and hope are, indeed, arriving. One such bright ray of hope was visible when the people of Jammu and Kashmir expressed their will in a heroic and unmistakable manner in the assembly elections held six months ago," he said.

About talks with different groups, he said the Centre had already started a process of dialogue with elected representatives and other sections of people.

"We should look to the future with a constructive approach and not remain obsessed with the acrimonies and unrealistic goals of the past," he added.

- 20 APR 2003

THE TIMES OF INDIA

ALL HELP PROMISED TO MUFTI GOVT.

# PM extends 'hand of friendship' to Pakistan

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR, APRIL 18. Saying that the gun was no solution to any problem, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today began his two-day visit to Kashmir with a call for friendship with Pakistan but said it should be extended from both sides. He also reiterated the Centre's promise to hold talks with the people of Jammu and Kashmir and assured complete support to the State Government.

At a massive public meeting attended by around 20,000 people in Sher-e-Kashmir cricket stadium here, Mr Vajpayee said his Government had made efforts to build a harmonious relationship with Pakistan. "As Prime Minister of the country I wanted to have friendly relations with our neighbours and I went to Lahore, but it was returned with Kargil. We still continued and invited General Pervez Musharraf to Agra but again failed," said Mr. Vajpayee, the first Prime Minister in 15 years to address a public meeting in Srinagar. "We are again extending a hand of friendship, but hands should be extended from both the sides. Both sides should decide to live together. We have everything which makes us to have good relations," Mr. Vajpayee said. This was the time to change the map and "we are busy in Delhi towards that and we need to work together".

Making a reference to Iraq, Mr. Vajpayee said the war should have been averted as "I believe the gun is no solution to problems". It would only kill people and would not solve any problem. The time had come to change Kashmir's fate. "Sitting in Delhi we are concerned



The Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, hands over a job appointment letter to a Kashmiri woman as the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed (left), looks on during a public rally in Srinagar on Friday. — PTI

about Kashmir," Mr. Vajpayee said amid a thunderous applause.

Without naming any separatist or militant group, he reiterated New Delhi's promise to hold a dialogue on both internal and external problems. "Not only our doors but also our hearts are always open for you. You (can) come to us with your grievances," he said adding "no guns but only brotherhood can resolve the problems".

Complimenting the Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's Government, he said the Centre would work in tandem with the State Government. "It is our duty to make

Mufti's Government a success."

## Kudos to people

Mr. Vajpayee complimented the people of Jammu and Kashmir for exercising their franchise at grave risk to their lives and even daring death. "It (election) is a sacred right which can change your destiny and if (it) falls into the wrong hands, it can lead to destruction." Taking full credit for holding free and fair elections, he referred to his Red Fort speech and said the people had ridiculed him. "They asked which world I was living in as votes cast here are not counted and, even if they are counted are not credited to

the right party." He also assured the people that special attention would be paid to the State in addressing unemployment.

The Chief Minister, Mr. Sayeed, welcoming the Prime Minister, strongly defended "healing touch" philosophy, said all disputes should be solved through a dialogue. Making a fervent appeal to the youth to shun the path of violence, said, "if you have any stand, gun is no way to achieve a goal. So leave it and come forward to seize the golden opportunity of the talks being held Mr. Vohra".

Pak. thrilled: Page

19 APR 2003

THE HINDU

## Jamali raises anti-India rhetoric

ISLAMABAD, April 15. — Stepping up the rhetoric, Pakistani Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali has said that Pakistan would go to "any extent" if attacked by India under the doctrine of pre-emption. "When it came to the sustenance and the defence of the country, we would go to any extent," he told a TV channel.

Referring to external affairs minister Mr Yashwant Sinha's remarks on pre-emptive strikes, he said: "I am not worried...we will not allow any pre-emptive strike". Pakistan would not start a war with India and it preferred to resolve issues through dialogue. He also reiterated that the Kashmir issue should be resolved through UN process.

**Pak army stays on high alert:** Despite the withdrawal of troops from the border, Pakistani army will remain on high alert, President Pervez Musharraf has said. He added that he was in touch with the USA, China and Saudi Arabia on the threat perceptions in South Asia. — PTI

16 APR 2003

THE STATESMAN

# Talks with Pak. only after terrorism ends: PM 15/4

**GANGTOK, APRIL 14.** Asserting that India wanted friendly relations with all its neighbours, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said talks with Pakistan would be held only after it stopped cross-border terrorism.

"To create a conducive atmosphere for talks, it is imperative that cross-border terrorism is stopped immediately," Mr Vajpayee told a news conference at the end of his four-day visit to Sikkim.

He said talks with the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, could not succeed because he refused to accept Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India.

On the India-China border dispute, Mr Vajpayee said talks were on to resolve the issue. "Talks are going as scheduled and will continue in future. We also want good trade relations with China."

About militant training camps in Bhutan, the Prime Minister said talks were on with the Bhutanese Government. "India wants Bhutan to be free of terrorist activities. Camps of the United Liberation Front of Asom are a problem for that country also." On the Karmapa issue, he said, "silence my answer".

## Relations with Iraq

Analysing good relations with the post-Saddam regime in Iraq, the Prime Minister maintained that it would have been better had there been no war. "India has always shared good rela-

tions with Iraq. We want the relationship to continue even after a post-war government is installed in Baghdad." Mr. Vajpayee called for a speedy reconstruction of Iraq. "As the war is now coming to an end, we are looking forward to a quick reconstruction and rehabilitation work in Iraq."

## Aid for Sikkim

Mr. Vajpayee announced a Rs. 360-crore Sikkim development package, including construction of an airport at a cost of Rs. 160 crores and upgrading of road links, and assured all assistance to the State to make it one of the most attractive tourist destinations.

Besides the construction of the airport, the package includes upgrading of the National Highway 31-A, construction of an alternative highway between West Bengal and Sikkim, modernisation of Gangtok Hospital and expansion of the Governor's House and the Secretariat.

He said the NHPC's 2200-crore Teesta hydro-power project which was to be completed in six stages and the Rs. 160-crore airport project at Gangtok were designed to give that the much-needed infrastructure boost.

He said that while announcing the 110-crore Central assistance for the construction of an airport here yesterday he had forgotten to add that Rs. 50 crores to be spent over the project by the Planning Commission. — UNI, P11

15 APR 2003

OFFICE

# Pak fit for pre-emptive strike, says Fernandes

11 APRIL

**D**EFENCE minister George Fernandes on Friday reiterated India's assertion that Pakistan was a fit case for a pre-emptive strike because of its support to terrorism. "Pakistan, more than Iraq, is a fit case for (an Iraq-like military operation)," Mr Fernandes told reporters on the sidelines of a function here to launch a new healthcare scheme for former soldiers and their families.

"I'm in total agreement with the views expressed by (external affairs minister Yashwant) Sinha," said Mr Fernandes. Asked whether the government was considering such a pre-emptive strike or had worked out plans for such a move, Mr Fernandes said: "This is not an issue I'll discuss publicly." Dismissing Pakistani information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed's contention that India, and not Pakistan, was a "fit case" for pre-emptive military strikes, Mr Fernandes said: "Pakistan is in the habit of lying."

External affairs minister Yashwant Sinha said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday Pakistan was a "fit case" for a pre-emptive strike. While there was no evidence of Iraq possessing weapons of mass destruction, India has



**Two Cheers:** Finance minister Jaswant Singh and defence minister George Fernandes wave to the crowd during the launch of the medical scheme for ex-soldiers and war widows in Bannar on Friday. — AFP

enough proof that Pakistan was indulging in cross-border terrorism. "I genuinely believe if export of terrorism were to be the basis for pre-emptive strikes, no other country deserves to be tackled the way Pakistan needs to be," Mr Sinha had said. Mr Fernandes also warned that the war in Iraq was far from over despite the successes achieved by the US-led forces over the past week. "The war is still on," he said. India was ready to do everything possible to help the Iraqi people rebuild their war-ravaged country.

"India has been maintaining it will do all it can to help Iraq in

every possible way." Earlier, Mr Fernandes and finance minister Jaswant Singh unveiled the ex-servicemen's contributory health scheme that will allow retired armed forces personnel and their families to avail of healthcare to a one-time payment ranging between Rs 1,800 and Rs 18,000.

The government plans to set up 227 clinics across the country as part of the scheme that is expected to benefit two million ex-servicemen and their dependants. Mr Fernandes and Mr Singh also opened one of these clinics set up within the Bannar cantonment. — IANS

# Cross-border infiltration down: Kasuri

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 9. The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri, has said that international monitoring on the line of control would show that cross-border infiltration had come down considerably and if it continued it was 'despite the best efforts of the Pakistan Army and police'.

In an interview to a UN news agency, Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), here Mr. Kasuri said "if some people are prepared to die despite efforts by the Pakistan Army and police forces, my question to the international community is: there are 250,000 Indian soldiers on the line of control itself. It means there is one soldier for every three metres and, if they

can't control the infiltration, how do they expect us to? We are trying to control the movement in the area, and it has been reduced considerably. Our suggestion for international monitoring is there".

The comments of Mr. Kasuri are in conformity with the statements by various functionaries in the Government from the President, Pervez Musharraf downwards, except on the existence of training camps.

Mr. Kasuri also called for improved security in Afghanistan, as well as a leading role for the UN in a post-Saddam Iraq as the best way of diplomatic bridge-building given the level of international opposition to the war.

He said Pakistan has a big stake in the security of Afghanistan. "What is important is that

Afghanistan very soon develops its own police force and Army. This is absolutely essential for long-term peace and security in the area. We have also offered to train their foreign office staff as a sign of improved relations, and they have accepted our offer.

"One reason why there are security incidents in Afghanistan is because the U.S. has diverted its attention to Iraq, and this was one of the concerns I raised in my recent trip to the U.S. before the war started. Any situation in Afghanistan is bound to have an effect on Pakistan, and we are worried, but there is no cause for alarm yet. On the postponement of the visit of the Afghanistan President, Hamid Karzai, he said that he was invited for the national day parade, which was cancelled due to the Iraq war.

1 0 APR 2003

SEE HINDU



PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE / SINHA'S COMMENTS CASTIGATED

U.S. has warned India to restrain itself, says Pak. 9/4

By B. Muralidhar Reddy
ISLAMABAD, APRIL 8. The Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, today asserted that there should be no "misunderstanding" on India's part about Pakistan's capability to defend itself in the context of the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha's comments that Pakistan was a "fit case for pre-emptive strikes".

Mr. Jamali's statement came even as his Government did the unusual by circulating a U.S. newspaper report containing the State Department's comments on Mr. Sinha's statement.

Replying to questions, Mr. Jamali maintained that the people and the armed forces of Pakistan were "fully capable of defending their country and no one should have any doubt about it".

Separately, the Press Information Department functioning under the Ministry of Information circulated a purported news report by the Washington Post containing the U.S. State Department's comments on Mr. Sinha's statement. "The U.S. has

strongly condemned India's attempts to draw parallels between Iraq and the Kashmir situation and has warned India to restrain itself from using the U.S.-led pre-emptive war against Iraq as a pretext for an attack on Pakistan," it said.

The press release quoted the newspaper as saying that the State Department spokeswoman, Joanne Prokopowicz, responded to Mr. Sinha's comments stating "any attempts to draw parallels between the Iraq and Kashmir situations are wrong and are overwhelmed by the differences between them". Citing Iraq's 12-year refusal to disarm in the face of the U.N. Security Council resolutions, Ms. Prokopowicz said the circumstances that made military actions necessary in Iraq do not apply in the sub-continent and should not be considered a precedent. "The U.S. recognises the very serious nature of the situation in Kashmir... Our joint statement last week with the United Kingdom made clear our repugnance of the killings of innocents that have been taking place in Kashmir with alarming frequency."

Separately, the state-controlled Pakistan news agency, Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) in a report from Beijing claimed that China had opposed Indian threats of pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan. It said China had emphasised that India and Pakistan should sit together and resolve their disputes through peaceful means.

Raising the Indo-Pak. rhetoric to a new height, the Pakistan Information Minister, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, today alleged that "India is the biggest terrorist state that has hidden weapons of mass destruction" with its neighbours. Addressing a public gathering in a town in Punjab province, he said that India had killed "countless Muslims" in Kashmir and Ahmedabad. He mentioned the destruction of the Babri mosque and the alleged murder of a number of Sikhs and the "destruction of Gurdwaras and burning alive of Christians and attack on churches". Mr. Rashid called on the Muslim countries to take cognisance of the "track record" of India and as a very first step stop importing workforce from India and sever trade links.

# Indo-Pak war of words at Security Council

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

UNITED NATIONS, April 5. — India and Pakistan clashed in the Security Council after New Delhi described Islamabad as an "epicentre of terrorism" and charged it with not living up to its commitments to end cross-border terrorism.

Yesterday, India's UN Ambassador Mr Vijay Nambiar demanded that the council's counter terrorism committee (CTC) identify the countries that violate its anti-terror resolutions. He did not name Pakistan, describing it in his statement as "one country". But the reference was so obvious that Pakistan Ambassador Mr Munir Akram took the floor to deny the charges. The clash came as the council was discussing threats to international peace caused by terrorism.

Mr Nambiar mentioned the massacre of 24 Kashmiri Pandits by Lashkar-e-Taiyaba militants, and said their objective was "selective cleansing" through mass murder. India's "restraint and com-

## Pervez hits back at Sinha

ISLAMABAD, April 5. — Pakistan has said it would not permit India to take advantage of the US-led war on Iraq and launch pre-emptive strike against it. It is also trying to dispel the impression that it would be the USA's next target.

This follows Mr Yasant Sinha's reported statements that India had a better case to launch pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan than the USA had against Iraq.

Gen. Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Mr Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali continued to assert that Pakistan had made itself "impregnable" and threatened to hit back with "full force" if India launched pre-emptive strikes. — PTI

posure" in "not being provoked by such incidents" has gone unnoticed. "We are confident our democracy offers systematic safeguards that would

prevent us from becoming mirror image of the 'monster' we oppose," he said.

Mr Akram said India was responsible for the situation that is a case of "the pot the calling kettle black" and demanded an "impartial inquiry" into the massacre. "Pakistan wants the massacre to be investigated by organisations such as Amnesty International," he said, challenging New Delhi to accept the suggestion if it was convinced that external forces were responsible for the incident. "People of Kashmir have waited for 50 years under Indian occupation for their right to self-determination... There is one Indian soldier for every four Kashmiri males. But my colleague from India only spoke about terrorism."

Delivering a lecture on the country's foreign policy in Berlin, Pakistan foreign secretary Mr Riaz Kokhar claimed infiltration of militants into J&K had come down as a result of measures taken by it. Islamabad banned radical groups and cut down their funds in an effort to create an atmosphere for dialogue, he said.

THE STATESMAN

6 APR 2003

# 'Ceasefire only if Pak. ends terror'

By C. Raja Mohan

29/3  
**NEW DELHI, MARCH 28.** India today insisted that it could consider an Anglo-American proposal for an "immediate ceasefire" with Pakistan only when Islamabad ends crossborder infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir on a permanent basis.

The External Affairs Ministry today "largely welcomed" the statement issued in Washington on Thursday night by the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and the British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, condemning the Sunday massacre of Kashmiri Pandits at Nadimarg in Kashmir.

As they called on Pakistan to "strictly respect the LoC", the two leaders also said that India and Pakistan "should consider immediately implementing a ceasefire and taking other active steps to reduce tension by moves within the SAARC context".

This is the first time that Washington and London have publicly underlined the importance of "ceasefire" in ending the current impasse between India and Pakistan.

The Anglo-American initiative comes amid growing concerns in the international community that the rapid slide in Indo-Pak relations could lead to a renewed military confrontation that could escalate to the nuclear level.

The U.S. and the U.K., the statement said, "stand ready to help both countries to start a process aimed at building confidence, normalising bilateral relations and resolving outstanding differences, including Kashmir".

Commenting on the ceasefire proposal, the spokesman said "if there is a permanent end to infiltration and cross-border terrorism, the question of firing across the LoC will not arise".

The Anglo-American statement also said that "the differences between India and Pakistan can only be resolved through peaceful means and engagement".

In response, India is arguing that a ceasefire and reduction of military tensions can only follow an end to infiltration from Pakistan and not precede it. India, however, might be more willing to move forward with Pakistan on economic issues in the context of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

India had often said in the past that the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, might travel to Islamabad to attend the delayed SAARC summit if Pakistan opened up to normal trade relations with India. India is certainly pleased with the clear assertion by Washington and London that Pakistan should "do its utmost to discourage acts of violence by militants in Kashmir". The spokesman said the Anglo-American statement "repudiates Pakistan's assertion that it has no responsibility for violence in Jammu and Kashmir".

Gen. Powell and Mr. Straw had demanded that "the LoC be strictly respected and Pakistan fulfil its commitments to stop infiltration across it".

The Foreign Office hopes that "Pakistan will heed the advice proffered, by stopping infiltration, and doing its utmost to cease all aid and abetment to terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism" on its soil and Pak-occupied Kashmir.

If Washington and London can deliver Islamabad on crossborder terrorism, India is signalling, it is prepared to consider a full-range of steps to defuse tensions and normalise relations with Pakistan.

**Pak. protest: Page 11**

THE HINDU

29/3/2003

# Advani blames Pakistan for <sup>Quadr</sup> <sup>POK</sup> J&K <sup>26/3</sup> <sup>SM</sup> massacre

TIMES NEWS NETWORK AND PTI

Narimarg (Pulwama): India on Tuesday blamed Pakistan for the massacre of 24 Kashmiri Pandits at Narimarg village in south Kashmir, saying violence was continuing in the state because of that country.

Terming the massacre as "cold-blooded murder", deputy Prime Minister L K Advani, without naming Pakistan, told reporters that "this is an act of our neighbour and violence in the state is continuing only because of them".

Advani, who arrived here on Tuesday for an on-the-spot assessment of the security situation, met emotionally surcharged survivors of the attack. Raising slogans for migration from the Kashmir Valley and against the Mufti government, the residents complained they were not provided with adequate security cover. "No police officer was available till the next day of the massacre," they lamented. They even accused the state government as well as the Centre for continued apathy towards the community.

In an effort to pacify the angry residents, Advani said the state government would provide all facilities to Kashmiri Pandits for leaving the Valley. However, he cautioned that such a move would amount to playing in the hands of the enemies of the country.

He further said they should continue staying in the Valley as this would encourage Kashmiri Pandits in other parts of the country to return.

All those who prefer to stay back would be provided ade-

**"This cold-blooded murder is an act of our neighbour and violence in the state is continuing only because of them"**

quate security, he added.

Advani said, if required, the residents of Narimarg would be shifted to safer places within the Valley.

Advani was accompanied by chief minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, People's Democratic Party vice-president Mehbooba Mufti and National Conference chief Omar Abdullah, besides senior police officers.

Earlier on board the special IAF flight, he declined to reply whether the "healing touch" policy of the Mufti government hampered tackling militancy in the state. "I will collect the report and brief the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) once I go back (to Delhi) in the evening," he said.

Advani said the Narimarg incident had inflicted "serious wounds on the entire Kashmiri community that has migrated to safer places in Jammu and Delhi". Omar Abdullah squarely blamed Pakistan-based militant outfits like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed for the Narimarg massacre.

**Comment:** Now that Gen Musharraf has admitted that Osama might be in Pakistan, why doesn't George Bush's 'willing coalition' will itself to send a recon team there to check on Islamabad's anti-terrorist bona fides?

# 32 Indian fishermen held

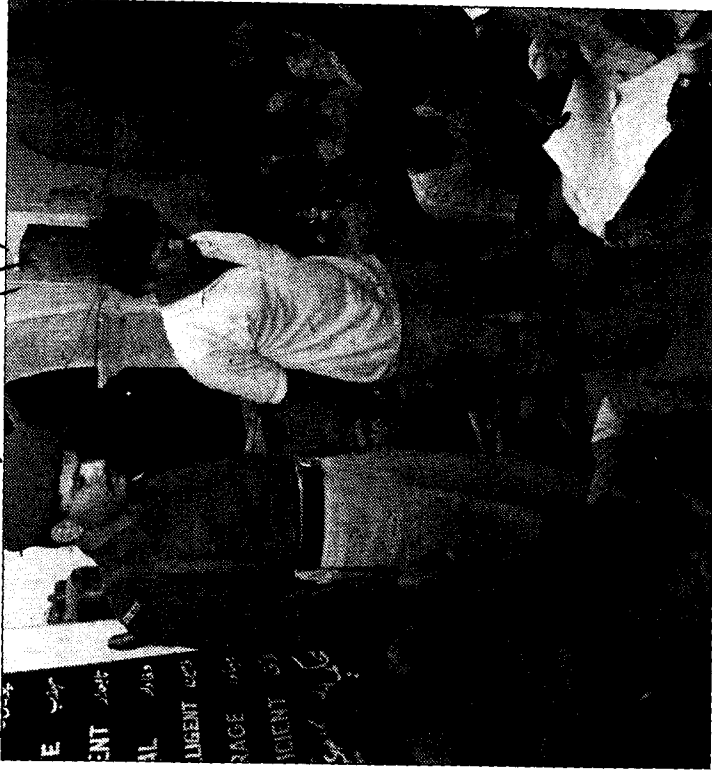
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PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, March 8. — Thirty-two Indian fishermen have been taken into custody by the Pakistan navy for allegedly straying into the Pakistan waters for fishing off the Karachi coast.

The fishermen were detained along with their seven boats by a patrol of the Maritime Time Security agency some 125 km off Karachi yesterday, and were produced before a local court today, reports from Karachi said. With the latest arrests, the number of Indian fishermen in Pakistani custody has exceeded 150.

Recently, Pakistan had released 281 fishermen out of the nearly 400 in its custody. Indian fishermen, mostly from Gujarat, get caught at frequent intervals at Pakistani waters.



A Pakistani official gets information from arrested Indian fishermen at a police station in Karachi on Friday. — AFP

# Musharraf kin in custody over visa

WASHINGTON, March 8. — US immigration authorities detained General Pervez Musharraf's nephew for more than two weeks for a visa violation. Mr Amir Javed Musharraf was detained on 19 February and released yesterday. He could be deported to Pakistan or could be permitted by an immigration judge to stay.

He was arrested in Memphis, Tennessee, when he went to register at a local immigration office under a programme requiring thousands of visiting men and boys from 25 mostly Muslim countries to be photographed and fingerprinted. He was found to have an expired tourist visa from 1994.

In another development, two lawyers have been sentenced to serve prison terms ranging from eight to 10 years for fleecing hundreds of immigrants, including Indians. — **PTI**

# Fresh breeze from Moscow

By Pran Chopra

*Russia has been sensitive and discreet in handling India and Pakistan and the problems between them, avoiding the American mistakes of promising too much and doing too little.*

HD 1 27 2

**T**HE ANGRY exchanges between Pervez Musharraf and Atal Behari Vajpayee at the NAM summit in Kuala Lumpur make it difficult to expect that the two leaders can hold a peaceful bilateral summit anytime soon. But other things are also happening which permit one to hope.

Gen. Musharraf recently paid an extended state visit to Moscow, the first by a Pakistani leader since Zulfikar Ali Bhutto went there more than 30 years ago. There was a time not so long ago when such an event would have disturbed many in India and elated many more in Pakistan with the belief that Pakistan had made a breach in an Indian diplomatic stronghold. Gen. Musharraf's visit to Moscow has done neither. There has been realistic comment in the Pakistan press, and India has shown quiet self-confidence. Both countries have noted that Russia has been sensitive and discreet in handling them and the problems between them, avoiding the American mistakes of promising too much and doing too little.

It is quite likely that in response to an invitation extended already by Gen. Musharraf, Vladimir Putin will go to Pakistan, thus becoming the first Russian leader ever to do so. There is no reason why he should not and every reason why he should. If the same constructive mood prevails in India, Pakistan and Russia on that occasion as well, it will be a sign that a timely maturity has been reached in this latest diplomatic triangle in this part of the world. But it is not too soon even now to welcome a fresh breeze that has blown in from Moscow via the Pakistan press.

For instance, it was not only the Indian media but also a Pakistan newspaper, the *Pakistan Daily Times*, of February 8, which said that Mr. Putin was briefing Mr. Vajpayee on his talks with Gen. Musharraf even while the talks were going on, and that Mr. Vajpayee was "very satisfied that President Putin conveyed to Pakistan that cross-border terrorism should stop" and that terrorists hiding in Pakistan should be prosecuted. Noting that some people in Pakistan might have been disappointed that Gen. Musharraf got nothing on Kashmir out of

this visit, the paper candidly underlined three basic truths. First, "Russia has strongly stood by India in its dispute with Islamabad over Kashmir". Second, "like America, Russia too is India's strategic partner". And third, "it is a measure of Pakistan's gradual isolation in the region to note that Iran too has become a kind of strategic partner of India".

Another Pakistani newspaper, the *Dawn*, editorially advised Pakistan on February 8, "given Russia's longstanding friendship with India, it would be unrealistic for Pakistan to expect Moscow to shift its position on Kashmir and other India-Pakistan disputes", and "Islamabad's close relationship with the Taliban in the 1990s had created problems for Russia in Central Asia... Islamabad needs to continue to (combat) terrorists in Pakistan". Only the previous day, in welcoming a call by Mr. Putin to India and Pakistan "to resume a dialogue", the *Dawn* had editorially pointed out that Mr. Putin had coupled this with "asking Pakistan to stop militants from crossing the Line of Control".

This rider by Mr. Putin did not evoke any adverse reaction in the Pakistan press, which makes an interesting contrast with what happened when the same demand was made by the American Ambassador in Pakistan, Nancy Powell. She said Pakistan must live up to its pledges to stop terrorists from crossing into Jammu and Kashmir, and she was greeted by a huge protest in the press. The reason for the difference appears to be that Mr. Putin was discreet in adding the rider, while taking care to inform India that he had done so.

There is also an interesting contrast on another issue. In urging India and Pakistan to resume talking, America did indeed emphasise that the issues at stake were a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan and that America would intervene

only if the two countries invited it to do so. But Mr. Putin went an important step further. He said talks must take place on the basis of the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore documents. These had been rudely dismissed by Gen. Musharraf when he seized power. But they, particularly the Declaration made in Lahore and the MoU the two countries signed there, are the best agreements ever reached by them.

First, they are the only India-Pakistan documents which have publicly opened the door for talks between the two countries on nuclear safety in South Asia. Second, they comprehensively cover all disputes between them as India wanted, while also giving the central place to the Kashmir dispute as Pakistan wanted. Third, what happens to them has become the touchstone for the prospects for future talks, because India insists, rightly, that talks can be useful only if the parties are committed to respecting such agreements as may result.

The importance India attaches to the sanctity of the agreements will become greater if Russia sticks to the position Mr. Putin is said to have taken when Pakistan offered to buy some \$ 5 billion worth of Russian military weaponry. He said this could be considered after Pakistan's relations with India became normal, and the road to normality lay through Shimla and Lahore. Hence the advice a commentator in a Pakistani newspaper, *The Nation*, gave to Gen. Musharraf on February 7: "If foreign policy is taken away from the ISI and given back to the foreign office, where it rightly belongs, it could save us much embarrassment and loss of face in the future."

It needs to be noted, however, that the Pakistan Foreign Office, more so while it was stewarded by Abdul Sattar as Foreign Minister, was not always on the side of peace between the two countries, and the ISI was not

always an evil genius, as both showed during a Pugwash conference on South Asian security in Geneva last November. A former and powerful head of the ISI, Durrani, presented a paper there which differed widely from the position taken by Gen. Musharraf about the India-Pakistan agreements since 1997, which culminated in the Lahore documents. They had been jointly steered by the Pakistan Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, and his opposite numbers in India. Gen. Musharraf threw them out of the window as rubbish precisely because Mr. Sharif, whom he was to oust in a military coup, had played a part in shaping them. But at the Geneva conference Lt. Gen. Durrani described them as an "opportunity" which was not only "lost" but "squandered".

In fact, the whole tenor of his paper and presentation was so constructive that I suggested the conference should invite him to sit with a few Indian participants of his choice to see what could be done to retrieve the opportunity. But before any of that could happen the mandarins of the Pakistan Foreign Office succeeded in muddying the waters by raising issues which were not germane to the conference.

Can the breeze from Moscow revive the "opportunity"? Perhaps not. But the chances are better now than at any time since Mr. Vajpayee took the bus to Lahore, where the Declaration and the MoU were signed. This is partly because of the change of mood in Pakistan, as reflected in the press comments quoted above; partly because of the style and chemistry of Mr. Putin's diplomacy, which Gen. Musharraf too has now had the chance to taste; partly because of the new compulsions created for both by the long saga of terrorism and by the dangerous crisis over Iraq. Perhaps the new circumstances can be energised by India giving a clear signal to Moscow that it is willing to pick up the thread from where it was left in Lahore provided Pakistan too shows unambiguous commitment to it, even if it be that those documents are restored to the table for the preliminary task of discussing where they need to be modified and updated.

26 FEB 2003

THE HINDU

# The general's albatross

Musharraf's magnificent Kashmir obsession is one reason why Indo-Pak ties are going nowhere

MUCH like the Ancient Mariner in S.T. Coleridge's masterly poem, General Pervez Musharraf has but one magnificent obsession which he carries with him like an albatross round his neck. And that is Kashmir, Kashmir, Kashmir. Therefore, regardless of occasion or circumstance, he dwells upon it, totally unmindful of the general consternation he causes as a result. So it was last September, before the UN General Assembly, when he could not help but observe that the Kashmiris had waged a struggle "for decades against India". And thus it was on Monday, at the Non-Aligned Movement summit at Kuala Lumpur, when he spoke of the "flagrant violations" of international law in Kashmir, Rwanda and Palestine.

As for the international community, it cannot choose but hear as the bright-eyed general holds forth, but it is an entirely different matter whether it is in consonance with his sentiments. At Kuala Lumpur, host Malaysia politely but pointedly observed that the "issue between Pakistan and India is between Pakistan and India". Clearly, it did not appreciate this attempt to introduce a contentious bilateral issue at a multilateral forum that was seeking issues that unite member-states. Of course, why Pervez Musharraf flogs Kashmir is well known. He had himself famously revealed during that breakfast meeting with the media at Agra that if he were not to es-

pouse the Kashmir cause he might as well pack up his belongings and return to his ancestral haveli in Delhi's Chandni Chowk. Later, in a television speech to his people, he romanticised that sentiment further by observing that Kashmir ran in the blood of all Pakistanis. It is also well documented that the general has done his bit to keep the Kashmir cauldron boiling in the name of waging a just freedom struggle.

It is unfortunate that the general does not seem to understand that the law of diminishing returns can also apply to abstract causes. The fact is that a great deal has changed in the world and the region since the days when Kashmir was a useful stick for Pakistan to wield against India. At least two of these can be considered here. One, the public mood in Kashmir has undergone considerable transformation, as the successful conduct of elections there and the not inconsiderable progress the Mufti government has achieved in terms of delivering governance, testify to. Two, the world itself has demonstrated little sympathy for terrorists passing themselves off as freedom fighters. Therefore, in keeping with the new ground realities, could we request Musharraf to move on from his stuck-record act on Kashmir? Ironically, it is only when the rhetoric on Kashmir gets less strident that the possibility of both countries sitting across the table and discussing the issue brightens.

# Discuss Kashmir & die, Atal tells Nam

PRANAY SHARMA

Kuala Lumpur, Feb. 25: A day after Perv-ez Musharraf sprang the Kashmir issue on the Non-Aligned Movement Summit here, Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee warned that the grouping "will die" if it got entangled in bilateral disputes.

"If this happens, Nam will die even before its (re)birth," Vajpayee told journalists at the end of the Nam summit, the theme of which was to "revitalise" the movement of the developing world.

The note of caution was a dramatic parting shot from the Prime Minister, who had begun his summit engagements by outlining a blueprint for Nam's survival in the post-Cold War unipolar world. Vajpayee had suggested that Nam reinvent itself around economic issues if it were to be meaningful. It could act

as a collective bargaining body with the developed world in the interest of all member nations.

Further snubbing Pakistan, Vajpayee said Nam was not interested in putting Kashmir on its agenda. "I had the opportunity of speaking to a number of leaders during the summit. None of them showed any interest in Kashmir. They all felt it's a bilateral issue which should be resolved between India and Pakistan," he said. To drive home the point, he referred to host Malaysia's comment that disputes between member countries should not be brought into Nam.

The Prime Minister felt Nam should follow the example of the Organisation of Islamic Countries and Asean, which have kept out bilateral disputes.

He indicated that Pakistan's desperate measures would not bring India to

the negotiating table. "I hope these (Malaysia's) remarks will open the eyes of our friend (Pakistan)," he said.

Asked to comment on Musharraf's remark that both hands were required to clap and if India was reluctant to resume dialogue, he was also not keen, the Prime Minister took a dig at the Pakistani leader, saying: "*Tait nahit bajiti to chut ki baja lein. Kuch na kuch bajna chahiye* (if he can't clap, then let him snap his fingers. There should be some sound)."

Vajpayee made light of Pakistan's attempt to equate the situation in Kashmir with the struggle in Palestine. "They have been trying to do this for many years now. They did not succeed in the past. There is no hope for them even in the future." Distinguishing between the two situations, he said: "People of Kashmir want to stay with India."

Interacting with the media for nearly 40 minutes on the summit's concluding day, a relaxed Vajpayee spoke at length on Iraq, Nam's relevance and Pakistan, but steered clear of domestic issues. The moment Ayodhya was mentioned, he quipped: "I am now going to meet the Lankans." He had got a brief respite from these sticky domestic issues, he said, on which he will have to focus only a few hours later when he flies back to Delhi.

Earlier, as an aide began reading out his opening statement before the media, Vajpayee interrupted at the mention of the "Indian Prime Minister". "I often wonder why I am referred to as the Indian Prime Minister, and not only as the Prime Minister. I don't see any other Prime Minister in this room," he said, adding: "Unless, of course, you already have a replacement in mind."

5-6

2/26



**NAM / 'INDIA WILL NOT STOOP TO PAK. LEVEL'**

# Musharraf has misused Forum, says Sinha

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

HP-12  
25/2

**KUALA LUMPUR, FEB. 24.** The External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, today said that the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, was trying to introduce "new concepts" such as conflict resolution into the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Speaking to presspersons, Mr. Sinha said NAM had functioned all these years on the basis that conflict resolution was not an issue. The Minister said there had been no discussion within NAM for the "role" suggested by Gen. Musharraf.

Without the achievement of consensus, Mr. Sinha said the Pakistan President had even offered to host the NAM "mechanism" for conflict resolution. There is little doubt that when Gen. Musharraf speaks of conflict resolution he has Jammu and Kashmir in mind.

Mr. Sinha said the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, was constrained to respond to the points made by Gen. Musharraf in his speech. "In no international conference would we like to go down to the level of Pakistan," he said, adding that Gen. Musharraf had misused the NAM forum. India, he said, wanted a dialogue with Pakistan, but Islamabad kept raising contentious issues at multilateral forums. Mr. Sinha said that people living in the Northern Territories occupied by Pakistan were controlled by an Under Secretary sitting in Islamabad and had no democratic rights. Separately, the Foreign Secretary, Kanwal Sibal, said that Gen. Musharraf's address today was predictable. Once again, Mr. Sibal said the Pakistani leader had demonstrated his compulsive hostility towards India.

Pakistan, he said, had brutalised people living in Pakistan-

occupied Kashmir and had violated all its agreements with India — whether it was the Shimla Agreement or the Lahore resolutions. The General was the one who had planned and plotted the Kargil operation and then staged a coup d'etat in his country.

The ill-treatment of women and Muslim minorities in Pakistan was a demonstration of its "schizophrenic attitude," he said.

According to Mr. Sibal, Pakistan was a haven for the Al-Qaeda and was a problem nation for the international community. Every major terrorist incident had the hand of Pakistan, the Foreign Secretary alleged.

He said Pakistan, which had a history of being part of one military bloc or the other, never had any serious commitment to NAM. Islamabad wanted to "devalue" it. Islamabad, he added, had always been short on vision and long on venom.

THE HINDU

25 FEB 2003

# Pak. move on conflict resolution fails: Sinha

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

**KUALA LUMPUR, FEB. 22.** The External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, today said that Pakistan's efforts to incorporate conflict resolution into the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) had received little support. Pakistan had raised the issue of intra-NAM conflict resolution at one of the four sessions involving the Foreign Ministers, but it remained in a minority of one.

"We'll end up doing nothing but this," Mr. Sinha said when asked about a proposal floated by the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri, on the subject.

Mr. Sinha also revealed that there would be a separate NAM Ministerial meeting on the Palestinian issue. This was a clear indication that NAM countries had not forgotten the Palestine issue.

"We should forget about the 'fixation' with Pakistan" when asked whether there would be talks between the Indian and Pakistani leaderships.

Asked what India's response would be to a Pakistani proposal on fresh dates for a possible SAARC summit, Mr. Sinha said that it was clear that a fresh proposal had to come given the fact that the summit meeting had been postponed.

"When they (Pakistan) send us a proposal, we will consider it," he said. India had made progress on the SAARC economic agenda in relation to the SAARC summit.

On Iraq, senior Indian officials said a consen-

sus draft statement that had been agreed upon was a considerable success given the fact that both Kuwait and Iraq were parties to the draft.

The draft statement said: "We, the Heads of Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, meeting in Kuala Lumpur from February 24-25, 2003, considered with grave concern the precarious and rapidly deteriorating situation arising from the looming threat of war against Iraq."

"We are fully cognisant of the concerns expressed by millions in our countries, as well as in other parts of the world, who reject war and believe, like we do, that war against Iraq will be a destabilizing factor for the whole region, and that it would have far-reaching political, economic and humanitarian consequences for all countries of the world, particularly the States in the region."

"We reiterate our commitment to the fundamental principles of the non-use of force and respect for their sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and security of all member States of the United Nations."

"We reaffirm our commitment to exert our efforts to achieve a peaceful solution to the current situation. We welcome and support all other efforts to avert a war against Iraq and call for the persistent continuation of such efforts based on multilateral as opposed to unilateral actions, and reaffirm the central role of the United Nations and Security Council in maintaining international peace and security," it said, adding that Iraq must actively comply with Resolution 1441.

23 FEB 2003

# India must participate in SAF Games: MPs

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 21. Sixty Members of Parliament have appealed to the Government to allow the Indian contingent's participation in the SAF Games in Islamabad from March 29.

The Centre had recently decided that India should not participate in the Games, keeping in mind the present bilateral relations and security considerations.

The MPs, including Natwar Singh, K.P. Singh Deo, Suresh Kurup, Renuka Chaudhary, Nilotpal Basu and Kirti Azad, said that sports and politics should not be mixed.

"Not participating in the Games could have an adverse

effect on the Afro-Asian Games to be held in India later this year," they said.

It may be mentioned here that when the Afro-Asian Games were originally scheduled in November, 2001, Pakistan was in no position to come for the hockey competition since it was getting to ready to host the Champions Trophy. India was then prepared to go ahead without Pakistan, as well as Korea, for the Games and Japan and Bangladesh were named as "replacements".

It was a different matter that in the post-September 11 developments, the Games got postponed while the Champions Trophy had to be shifted to the Netherlands.

1101  
112

# Pak. Air Force chief killed in plane crash

Pak 1

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 20. Pakistan's Air Chief, Mushaf Ali Mir, along with 16 others, including his wife and two Air Vice-Marshals, died this morning as the Fokker plane in which they were travelling crashed in the low hills, near Kohat, in the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP).

A spokesperson of the Pakistan Air Force who gave details of the tragic incident at a special news conference at the Chaklala military airbase, on the outskirts of the national capital, maintained that PAF would neither rule in nor rule out any cause for the accident.

To questions on what could have led to the tragedy, he repeatedly appealed to the media not to speculate and wait for the outcome of the report of a high-level inquiry ordered by the PAF. "Be assured the inquiry would not leave out any angle in the investigation," he said.

As per the official details, the PAF chief was heading towards the city of Kohat in the north western frontier province along with senior officers in a Fokker-27 aircraft for annual inspection of the military air base



Mushaf Ali Mir

there. The aircraft took off from the Chaklala military airbase at 8 a.m. and lost contact with the Kohat control tower air base around 8.27 a.m., minutes before it was to land.

The last contact between the Kohat control tower and the crew of the aircraft was when the later sought clearance to descend. Rescue operations were initiated instantaneously but no one aboard survived.

The PAF spokesperson was emphatic that the aircraft, which was part of the PAF VVIP

Squadron, was certified as "flightworthy" and was technically cleared before it took off in the morning.

The spokesperson emphasised that there was nothing unusual for so many senior officers to accompany the Air Chief as he was going for an inspection.

There is little doubt that the death of Air-Marshal, Ali Mir, and two Air Vice-Marshals, along with seven other senior officers and technicians, is a major loss for Pakistan. While there have been a number of accidents involving PAF aircraft, it is for the first time in Pakistan's history that its Air Chief is a victim. In a statement, the PAF said the wreckage had been found 27 km west of Kohat. It is said the plane crashed in the Tolanj Mountains due to bad weather. However, the PAF statement said the cause was yet not confirmed.

The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf and the Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, expressed shock over the incident. Gen. Musharraf appointed Air Marshal Syed Qaiser Hussain as the Acting Air Chief.

# Indo-Pak tensions surface again

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 19. — Diplomatic tensions between India and Pakistan resurfaced today with the Indian high commission here lodging two protests in a day objecting to the "aggressive tailing and harassment" of its defence attache Brig. RK Karwal by Pakistan Intelligence agencies.

Mr Vikram Misri, acting Charge d'Affaires, said that the high commission has sent two "note verbales" today to the Pakistan foreign office protesting the harassment of Brig. Karwal at the hands of local Intelligence agencies.

Today's protest notes were in addition to the one sent on 13 February complaining of Brig. Karwal being subjected to aggressive surveillance, similar to the one experienced by former Charge d'Affaires, Mr Sudhir Vyas two weeks ago before his expulsion along with four other staffers of the mission.

The protests came just a day after the two countries cleared the visas of diplomats to enable them take up assignments as deputy high commissioners in their respective missions at New Delhi and Islamabad.

According to Mr Misri, Brig. Karwal was being followed very closely in an "intimidating fashion" during the past few weeks. Today his vehicle was blocked several times by vehicles of Intelligence agencies that followed him while he was returning from a money changer's shop in the busy Blue area.

The Brigadier was also followed in an intimidating fashion even when he went out for walks with his family, he said.

20 FEB 2003

THE STATESMAN

# Pak. dismisses Kalam's statement on cross-border terrorism

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 17. Pakistan today dubbed the statement of the President, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, on Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism as 'baseless' and insisted that there was no truth in it.

In his address to the joint session of Parliament, the President asserted that there was a "method in the madness" of Pakistan-supported terrorist violence and accused Islamabad of flouting diplomatic norms by using its mission here to arrange financing of terrorist groups.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, described them as 'oft repeated' and said "we are used to these baseless allegations."

Mr. Khan argued that India routinely made these allegations, but whenever challenged by Pakistan, "they shied away,

they run away". Referring to Pakistan's proposal to deploy U.N. observers on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) to verify allegations, the spokesman claimed that India did not agree to it, because then the "basis for making baseless allegations will go away".

Pakistan was in favour of a peaceful resolution of all the disputes, as had also been demanded by the international community. "We are not shying away from it."

Mr. Khan said there was no proposal from Pakistan's side to snap all links with India. He was surprised at reports in a section of the press to this effect.

A Pakistan English daily carried a report, attributed to unidentified wire agencies and quoting the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, that India intended to cut all its relations with Pakistan. Strangely, the report went on to quote Mr.

Sinha as saying that a resolution would be moved in Parliament for terminating diplomatic relations with Pakistan.

In response to another question on the recent statement made by Mr. Sinha that Pakistan should be guided by the 'Chinese model' in its relations with India, the spokesman said that dialogue and diplomatic processes were the only civilised way to conduct inter-state business. "We certainly want that process to go on".

On Iraq, he recalled the recent statement by the President, Pervez Musharraf, during a telephonic talk with the U.S. President, George Bush, that "war was not a good option". He said, it had been Pakistan's consistent position that the "matter should be resolved peacefully".

The spokesman said that as long as the U.N. inspections were going on in Iraq, "we hope that peace will be given a

chance".

Incidentally, the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, has begun consultations with party leaders on the Iraq crisis. With 'anti-American' sentiments running high, the Musharraf-Jamali Government did not want take any chances on the sensitive subject.

Islamabad is fully conscious of the difficulties ahead if the Bush-Blair brigade goes ahead with its plans to attack Iraq. The strong position taken by Germany, France and Belgium has, in fact, come as a blessing in disguise for Pakistan. The crunch for Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Jamali will come if the U.S. and the U.K. were to move a second resolution in the United Nations seeking use of force. As a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, Pakistan will be called upon to take a side.

18 Feb 2003

THE HINDU

# Visas for India, Pak. envoys

18/2 ✓  
By Amit Baruah F+D r

**NEW DELHI, FEB. 17.** India and Pakistan have agreed to simultaneously issue visas tomorrow to fill the posts of Deputy High Commissioners which have been "vacant" since the tit-for-tat expulsions on February 8.

From the Indian side, T.C.A. Raghavan will be the new Deputy High Commissioner and Charge d'Affaires (in the absence of the High Commissioner) in Islamabad, and Munawar

Saeed Bhatti will be his counterpart in New Delhi.

Following diplomatic contacts, the two sides, going by the principle of "reciprocity", have agreed to issue the visas for Mr. Raghavan and Mr. Bhatti tomorrow.

Jalil Abbas Jilani was expelled from New Delhi on February 8 after being accused of passing money to Kashmiri separatists and Pakistan followed suit by asking Sudhir Vyas to leave Islamabad the same day.

Announcing Mr. Jilani's expulsion, India had stated that it did not want to further downgrade the level of diplomatic representation and was ready to give a visa to a new Deputy High Commissioner.

India recalled its High Commissioner from Islamabad in December 2001 after the attack on the Parliament House complex and sent back the Pakistani High Commissioner after the Kaluchak killings in May 2002.

18 FEB 2003

THE HINDU

## 'Talks only if Pak meets our conditions'

*13/2/03* *Jude Park*  
**KULLU, FEB. 12.** Accusing Islamabad of double talk on terrorism, the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, today rejected Pakistan's repeated offer of dialogue with India saying New Delhi would have no talks with its neighbour until it fulfilled three conditions — ending cross-border terrorism, dismantling terrorist camps in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir and returning 20 Indian fugitives, including Dawood Ibrahim.

Regretting Pakistan's failure to meet these demands so far and pointing out the difference between its words and deeds, Mr. Advani said Islamabad had only changed its language but not its "behaviour and conduct".

The three conditions were put forward by India after the attack on Parliament in December, 2001.

"But they are harping on a dialogue with us. We have tried dialogue twice — by undertaking the Lahore bus journey and in Agra. But both times they cheated us," Mr. Advani said while formally launching the BJP's campaign for the Himachal Pradesh Assembly election at the Dussehra grounds here.

Denouncing Pakistan for terming Kashmiri terrorism as "freedom struggle", he said: "Are the terrorist strike on Indian Parliament, the attack on temples and the killing of women acts of freedom struggle?" Stating that the world was convinced of India's viewpoint on having no dialogue with Pakistan till it ended the proxy war, Mr. Advani said that even those countries that were publicly insisting on a policy of continued dialogue privately justified New Delhi's stance.

Taking a dig at the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, Mr. Advani said that after the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's Lahore bus journey, the General thought the then Pakistan Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, was taken in by Mr. Vajpayee and therefore he effected a coup.

### 'West must stop aid'

He urged the Western countries to stop any aid to Islamabad. "Pakistan will be paralysed and cannot survive if Western countries stop their military and financial aid."

Later addressing an election rally at the Dhalpur grounds here, Mr. Advani made no reference to Ayodhya or the Ram Temple and sought a positive vote based on the BJP Government's performance during the five years. He described the allegations of corruption levelled against the Himachal Chief Minister, P.K. Dhumal, as a "bunch of lies without any basis".

In an apparent reference to the Punjab Government's raids on Mr. Dhumal's relatives there which yielded nothing, Mr. Advani said "they themselves have realised their mistakes". Even Mr. Dhumal's critics concede that he was "honest". He said the party, if voted back to power, would convert the State into India's Switzerland in terms of tourism, employment and prosperity.

Mr. Advani denied reports of differences within the BJP on extending support to the Mayawati Government in Uttar Pradesh. —

UNI, PTI

13 FEB 2003



# India, Pak lock horns over visas to envoys

Nilova Roy Chaudhury in New Delhi

Feb. 10. — As the expelled diplomats and officials from the Indian and Pakistani High Commissions in Islamabad and New Delhi returned home today, consular matters seemed set to become the next issue of contention between the neighbours.

India had, last July, sought a visa for Mr TCA Raghavan (IFS) to serve as the deputy chief of mission in Islamabad, replacing Mr Sudhir Vyas, whose term was due to expire. As it turned out, Mr Vyas was expelled from Pakistan on Saturday in retaliation to India's expulsion of the Pakistani charge d'affaires, Mr Jalil Abbas Jilani, on charges of funding separatists in India.

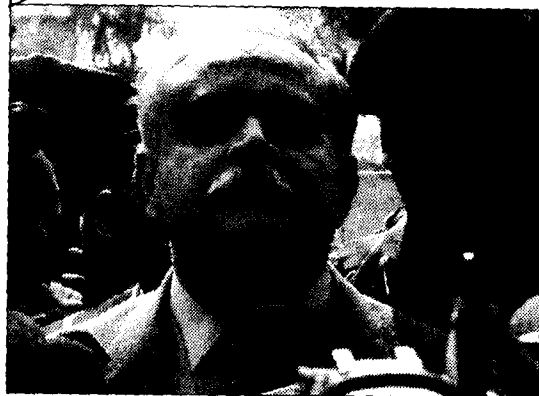
Pakistan sought permission last November to send Mr Munawwar Bhatti to replace Mr Jilani, whose term as officiating head of the mission was also nearing an end.

Officials said there was likely to be an impasse till Islamabad cleared Mr Raghavan's papers. Only then will Mr Bhatti's visa be granted.

Amid this fracas, Mr Harsh Bhasin, appointed as India's High Commissioner to Pakistan, wonders when he might come back into the picture. With bilateral ties touching a new low, and staff strength in both missions reduced to 47, there are no signs of a restoration of diplomatic normalcy.

The expelled officials (except Mr Jilani) travelled over land and crossed over into their countries at Wagah post this afternoon. Flights over each other's countries are not permitted.

According to agency reports from Wagah, Mr Vyas and the other four expelled officials called



Sudhir Vyas at the Wagah border on Monday. — AFP

for a change in Pakistan's attitude. Mr Vyas, who spoke to journalists after crossing the Radcliffe Line, said cross-border terrorism would not end till Pakistan remained under a military regime.

Besides Mr Vyas, others who arrived were first secretary Mr Rahul Rasgotra and Mr RK Balu, Mr Ranbir Singh and Mr Surendra Raj Singh. The expelled Pakistani staffers who crossed over through Wagah described the BJP as a communal party.

**Pak reaction:** Pakistan's ambassador to Nepal today refuted Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's statement that Islamabad was using Nepal and Bangladesh for its anti-India agenda, SNS adds from Kathmandu. The statement defies political and geographical realities, Mr Zamir Akram said.

Bangladesh, meanwhile, said it was trying to ascertain the "exact nature" of the statement, SNS adds from Dhaka.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2003

## INADEQUATE DELIBERATION

149-10

WHILE THE MISDEMEANOUR alleged to have been committed by Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires in New Delhi, Jalil Abbas Jilani, should indeed be considered as grave, the more important question is whether or not India should have handled the matter with more deliberation and greater discretion given the fragility of the South Asian situation. Mr. Jilani, who was alleged to be involved in the handing over of Rs. 3 lakhs to a Kashmiri activist for onward transmission to militant groups, has been given 48 hours to leave the country. In calling for the withdrawal of four other officials of the High Commission of Pakistan as well, the Ministry of External Affairs indicated that they might be connected with this particular case. But the Ministry also made clear that the expulsion of the four was being done both because they were believed to have indulged in activities incompatible with their official status in the past, and also because New Delhi wanted to demonstrate the seriousness with which it viewed Mr. Jilani's alleged misconduct. Although New Delhi has conveyed to Islamabad that it does not intend any down-gradation in the level of representation of the Charge d'Affaires — that the official Islamabad could appoint to replace the ousted diplomat could be of the same rank — it is not certain whether Pakistan will act on this offer. As a first step, Pakistan has expelled the Indian Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad and slightly upped the ante by also adding a diplomat to the list of four other High Commission personnel that it has decided to oust. Such a whittling down of the diplomatic representation that each country has in the other does not bode well when there is hardly any other channel of direct communication between them and when this dearth of contact co-exists with the potential for either to do serious harm to the other.

The question that arises is if New Delhi has done enough to substantiate the charge that

the money recovered from the Kashmiri activist had actually been given to her by Pakistan's senior-most diplomat in this country. The case made by the Delhi police is that the persons leaving the Pakistan High Commission have been so indiscreet, as to carry funds provided by a mission source and a diary identifying the ultimate recipients, even knowing full well that they and their possessions might be thoroughly searched once they exited the mission compound. Under these unusual circumstances it is to be hoped that the authorities concerned do have a fool-proof case. To level a serious charge against a diplomat of another country without being able to substantiate it (through the judicial process and other convincing means) would not only adversely affect the state of the relationship between India and Pakistan but would also invite uncomfortable questions about India's adherence to the code of conduct between nations. The observance of proper conduct is all the more necessary at a time when the global community is weary of the mean-spirited spats that India and Pakistan indulge in and is only too eager to pin the blame for any escalation of tensions between them.

Whether strong enough evidence exists or not, New Delhi should have proceeded slowly instead of expelling the diplomat within less than two days of the first arrest being made. Time would have enabled more deliberation on all aspects of the matter and it would have, perhaps more importantly, created the impression that the affair was being treated with the seriousness required and not in a hurried or summary manner. Even if Mr. Jilani was indeed guilty as charged it might have been better if Islamabad had been discreetly informed that his presence was not welcome. No great advantage accrues to India from holding aloft a Pakistani diplomat like a trophy that has been bagged.

10 FEB 2003

India-Pakistan ties plumb new depths

# Jilani told to leave... so is Vyas

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 8. — Relations between the subcontinental neighbours plumbed new depths today after India expelled the Pakistani Charge d'Affaires, Mr Jalil Abbas Jilani, and four other Pakistani High Commission officials on charges of paying off separatists in Jammu and Kashmir.

Islamabad retaliated promptly, throwing out India's deputy chief of mission Mr Sudhir Vyas and four others, including a diplomat, without charging them with any misdemeanours.

But the missions are not being further downgraded. The replacements are likely to be in place at the deputy chief of mission level shortly, as soon as formalities are completed for Mr Munawwar Bhatti (who'll take over from Mr Jilani) and Mr TCA Raghavan (due to replace Mr Vyas).

Hours after Delhi asked Mr Jilani and his four colleagues, Mr Habibur Rahman, Mr Aftab Ahmed, Mr Abdul Razak and Mr Mohammad Nazir to leave the country within 48 hours, Islamabad expelled Mr Vyas, first secretary Mr Rahul Rasgotra, and staffers Mr R Balu, Mr Ranbir Singh and Mr SR Anand.

Mr Jilani's expulsion was anticipated after he was named by Delhi police for making payments to Hurriyat members. "We have evidence (provided by the home ministry) of what Jilani was doing, which was incompatible with the diplomatic norms," the foreign ministry spokesman said. But the expulsion of the Indian officials was an act of "brinkmanship" and "unmerited retaliation" and "an indication of the compulsive hostility" Pakistan harbours towards this country. "It clearly shows there is no change in their mindset," an official said. Tit-for-tat action isn't necessary in diplomacy, even though it is the norm. Islamabad could have acknowledged its diplomat's complicity and withdrawn him, because, Mr Jilani's activities were not designed "to improve bilateral ties", the spokesman said. Pakistan's denial of Mr Jilani's actions showed how far they have carried "mendacity as a fine art".

The missions of both countries will now be down to 47 officials.

The Prime Minister today charged

## Delhi high on confidence

NILOVA ROY CHAUDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 8. — India's decision to expel Pakistani diplomats caught making payoffs to separatists reflects its new-found confidence, bolstered by international support of its stand on Pakistan-backed terrorism.

Mr Vladimir Putin's phone call to Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee yesterday to inform him that he had told General Pervez Musharraf that Pakistan should end cross-border terrorism was a major confidence-booster.

Similar statements from the USA, Britain and France have buoyed the country's image. The successful J&K polls have provided the government its most potent accolades. Also, the evidence it has built up on Pakistan's complicity in terror acts, has given its claims a solid foundation.

Having been accused for years of being "reactive" in its dealing with Pakistan, the "pro-active" attitude, reflected in placing its troops on high alert on the International Border and recalling its High Commissioner to Islamabad after the attack on Parliament, and now, in dismissing diplomats found encouraging separatists, shows how much Indian diplomacy has gained in confidence.

Pakistan with taking "no significant action" to dismantle its terror infrastructure, and, on the contrary, using terrorists in Nepal and Bangladesh to pursue its anti-India agenda. Speaking at a conference of chief ministers, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee said: "...terrorism is sponsored by Pakistan as a matter of state policy... This questions its claim to join the international war on terrorism."

■ Editorial: Mission possible,  
page 8

## MISSION POSSIBLE

9/2/03-8

### India must be consistently tough

INDO-Pakistani relations have turned worse than usual. Be that as it may, India needs to consistently get across the message that mischief will not be tolerated. The expulsion of the Pakistani Deputy High Commissioner, Jalil Abbas Jilani, came after Delhi Police investigations uncovered a money for militancy racket operating out of diplomatic premises. The response is proportionate to the provocation. That Pakistan has countered by expelling the senior Indian diplomat, Mr Sudhir Vyas, does not weaken India's case. The senior most Pakistani diplomat cannot be arrogant if, as Delhi Police has accused him, he uses his privileges to personally hand over money to terrorist groups and their front organisations. As the Indian foreign office has made clear, New Delhi is not telling Islamabad that the diplomatic mission is being downgraded. Only that Mr Jilani's activities are so far out of line with acceptable behaviour that he cannot remain acting head of mission. A replacement will be welcome. Any other course of action, such as those favoured by Track II enthusiasts, would show up India as weak but illogical. Pakistan's diplomatic responses should already have been factored into India's strategy. New Delhi's foreign policy mandarins say that there's a possibility that Pakistan will up the ante to the level that both countries move to sever diplomatic ties. If that happens, India has little to lose on the ground. Most commercial ties, save smuggling of Indian films and liquor to Pakistan, are effectively dead anyway. Civil aviation ties have not been restored after the December 2001 ban. India, even with fully functioning missions in both capitals, has served notice that it will not talk to Pakistan until and unless the latter pulls the plug on terrorism. That leaves world reaction.

Russia, a good friend, so much so that Putin felt the need to brief Vajpayee before and after Musharraf's visit, will understand. Of the major European countries, France is more supportive of India's position than Britain. But Britain does little more than follow the USA these days. The US reaction to a diplomatic shutdown won't be happy but, for a number of reasons, it is unlikely to look at India as an agent provocateur. The general climate of Indo-US relations has improved as US exasperation with Pakistan has increased. The signing of the dual use technology agreement, even if it is more impressive on paper than likely to be in practice, signals a small but perhaps significant shift in emphasis. On the other hand, making Pakistanis in the US queue up for the foreigner registration scheme and ignoring strong protests from Islamabad inspires hope that White House has, finally, understood that Musharraf's dumping of Taliban is not the same as Pakistan dumping terrorism. But Pakistan, thanks to India's long standing soft approach, still does not fully understand that this country has reached the end of its tether. We have to maintain consistency in our toughness. That is not an established Indian trait. It will have to be.

THE STATESMAN

9 FEB 2003



BSF considers forcible pushback if another round of meeting fails

# Unfed Shah Rukh in deathly silence



A woman with her children in no man's land. (AFP)

MAIN UDDIN CHISTI AND AVIJIT NANDI/MAJUMDAR

Satgachhi/New Delhi, Feb. 4: Delhi and Dhaka are in a deadlock over her identity, but Shah Rukh Khan's mother Namuna Bibi tries to make no secret of where her home is.

The 213-strong group — snake-charmer families — stranded in the no man's land here in north Bengal's Cooch Behar district since Friday could be on its way home if the Border Security Force (BSF) makes good its threat.

After a meeting with senior officers, Ajai Raj Sharma, DG, BSF, said from Delhi that if the dispute over the group's identity was not resolved at a meeting with the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), possibly on Thursday, India would opt for forcible pushback.

"If there is resistance from the BDR during

the operation, we will reply in kind," he said.

However that strategy might pan out, for now, grasping a month-old Shah Rukh close to her, Namuna is clutching at straws. She tells the BSF jawan, the journalist, whoever is prepared to listen: "Babu, my husband (she won't name him) — Shah Rukh's father — lives in Porabari village under Savab police station of Dhaka. Please tell him his son is dying because I have nothing to feed him. He will certainly do something."

Struck in this sliver of land, hemmed in by the BSF on one side and the BDR on the other — with neither country ready to accept her or her compatriots — the tension, the anxiety and the state of near-starvation have sucked her breast dry.

Shah Rukh has nothing to drink. He is not even making any sound today.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## Bangla row

FROM PAGE 1

Even the border has fallen silent with not even the customary exchange of words — flag meetings — between the BSF and the BDR taking place since yesterday.

"I have directed my officers to strengthen vigil. They will move more men and equipment to forward areas if necessary," Sharma said.

BSF sources said there was information of the BDR organising a human shield on their side to stonewall pushback attempts.

The standoff could quickly lead to a humanitarian disaster. The injuries of those who were attacked yesterday by a group of Bangladeshi villagers from Nazir Gumani on the other side of the border have not healed much. Din Islam, the group's leader, with his head still bandaged, said: "BSF doctors have given us first aid."

Regina Bibi's two-month-old child is feared to be afflicted with pneumonia. As one approaches her — holding her son close to keep him warm as he lies on a six-foot piece of plastic sheet given by the Red Cross — Regina, past 40 years of age, breaks down: "Baba, do something to send us home."

For Kalani Bibi, nine months pregnant with the child of snake charmer Asikul Mian, home is where her father is. "Please tell my father Ajan Mian at Dhaka's Savab. He will do something."

Desperate cries for help have touched the people of Satgachhi on the Indian side. Today, Bairagir Haat panchayat sent rice, dal and wood for cooking.

Eating that rice and dal, which had only been boiled, Jarip Mian said: "Where will we go? Bangladesh is not taking us. Better shoot us all."

Noor Begum, around 40, acknowledged the help they had received from Indian villagers. "Thanks to them, we've got something to eat."

But the snakes, she said, had died of starvation.

LISTINGS 2 FOREIGN 3-4 OPINION 12-13 BUSINESS 14 '5

# Aggressive 'tailing' of diplomats: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 31. Islamabad today complained to the Indian mission here of "aggressive tailing" of two of its top diplomats in New Delhi. The complaint came less than a week of lull in tension between the two countries.

Relations between Pakistan and India have been particularly strained this month. What began as alleged harassment of the Pakistan Acting High Commissioner, Jalil Abbas Jilani, took a nasty turn with personnel of Pakistan intelligence agencies "boxing in" the flag car of the Indian Acting High Commissioner, Sudhir Vyas, twice obstructing his diplomatic duties.

The episode culminated in the expulsion of four staffers of

the Pakistan High Commission and Pakistan retaliated the next day. The Pakistan Foreign Office on Thursday called Mr. Vyas and complained of alleged "aggressive chasing" of Mr. Jilani and the Defence Adviser of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi. A written protest was lodged with the Foreign Of-

rice in New Delhi.

In a press statement here, the Foreign Office said Pakistan had taken a serious note of the "harassment" of Mr. Jilani and the Defence Adviser in New Delhi and "aggressive chasing" of their official vehicles by the Indian intelligence agencies.

Pakistan's concern has been

conveyed to the Acting Indian High Commissioner here. Indian High Commission officials here said that Mr. Vyas had been orally told about the Pakistani complaint.

Interestingly, for the second time in recent days the Indian Charge d' Affaires has been told that Pakistan is ready to release over 280 Indian fishermen detained in Karachi.

The Foreign Office also repeated the readiness to hand over a plot of land — located opposite the Indian High Commission — bought by India a long time ago to construct residential quarters for its staff. Indian High Commission officials said that "tailing" — intelligence officials following the vehicles of diplomats either on motorbikes or cars — was a regular feature in Pakistan.

## Surprising, says India

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 31. India today claimed that the Pakistani statement regarding aggressive chasing of its top diplomats in New Delhi was "surprising". Reacting to reports from Islamabad, official sources said that the Indian Charge d'Affaires, Sudhir Vyas, actually had a good meeting with the Pakistani side and was told that the recent events involving diplomats were "behind us". The sources were surprised at the account given by Pakistani officials to the media in Islamabad.

THE HINDU

7 1 1953

## DEMARCHE TO DHAKA ON IMMIGRATION

# Pak. urged to release Indian fishermen

419-1  
1/2

By Amit Baruah

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 31.** India today called on Pakistan to release 400 Indian fishermen and a number of civilian prisoners in its custody even as Bangladesh was handed over an *aide memoire* to stop illegal immigration.

According to sources, Pakistan has spoken six times of its intention to release the fishermen but so far nothing had come out of these statements.

This was conveyed by the Director (Pakistan) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Ruchi Ghanashyam, to a Pakistani Counselor, Aman Rashid, today.

India was particularly interested in the release of 22 Sikh youths who were now in Pakistani custody (in Quetta) after being pushed out of Turkey.

Consular access had been extended to six of these Sikhs, but similar access to others

was awaited.

In a demarche to Dhaka, the Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh, Shahadat Hussain, was called in to the Foreign Office and told of India's concerns about the issue of illegal immigration. He was presented with an *aide memoire*.

Mr. Hussain was told that Bangladesh should recognise the gravity of the problem and cooperate with India in dealing with the issue. India had raised these concerns with Dhaka during a recent meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) between the two countries.

"The Bangladesh Government needs to recognise the gravity of the situation and address it in a pragmatic manner with sincerity and in a spirit of cooperation," the Foreign Office spokesman said.

Denying charges levelled by Dhaka, he said there was no question of India pushing

any of its citizens into Bangladesh. "Any such allegation or the implication of such allegations is baseless. It is absurd."

### Tension on Bangla boder

PTI reports from Siliguri:

Tension prevailed along the Indo-Bangladesh border in the Mathabhanga subdivision of Coochbehar district when Bangladesh Rifles personnel tried to push 213 of their citizens across the border today and the BSF personnel resisted the bid.

The BSF prevented the people, whom the BDR termed as Indian infiltrators, along the zero line at Satgachi outpost. Both the BSF and the BDR had taken position on either side with the people, including 80 children and 68 women, stranded along the zero line inside India.

THE HINDU



# India wants Pakistan to set its civilians free

9 and 11  
5-11  
Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Jan. 31. — India today sought the immediate release of 53 of its civilians, including 22 Sikh youths, detained in Pakistan.

The government at least seeks consular access (which implies allowing its officials in Pakistan to meet these people to affirm their nationality and see the conditions under which they have been detained) to them and a group of 406 fishermen.

Pakistan has permitted consular access to six of the 22 detained Sikh youths, who — duped by travel and employment agencies — landed in Pakistan when they were sent back from Turkey. India also wants access to the other 16, whose human rights had allegedly been violated.

According to an NGO working outside Pakistan, these Sikh youths were told that if they converted to Islam,

they will receive better treatment. The NGO, International Bhai Mardana Yadgari Kirtan Society, wrote to the Indian government, alleging that these youths had their basic rights violated after being detained.

In an aide memoire (formal diplomatic communication) handed over to Mr Aman Rashid, first secretary of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, the government formally took up the case of these youths and the other civilians, including the crew members and fishermen of 66 boats captured in Pakistani waters.

The director in the ministry of external affairs dealing with Pakistan, Ms Ruchi Ghanshyam, called in Mr Rashid and handed over details of these youths and the fishermen, and sought their immediate repatriation. The nationality of six of the youths and 281 fishermen, to whom Pakistan has allowed consular access, was established as Indian.

“It was requested to grant the consular access so that diplomats of the Indian mission in Islamabad can meet the detained Indian nationals”, the MEA spokesperson said.

In a separate incident, the MEA spokesperson denied allegations that there had been repeated harassment of Pakistan High Commission staff in India. When the Indian Deputy Chief of Mission in Islamabad, Mr Sudhir Vyas, was called in to the Pakistani foreign office yesterday, he was told that Islamabad was satisfied that its staff had not been tailed or harassed.

But subsequent allegations appeared today in the media, stating that Pakistan mission staff in New Delhi were being followed and hampered in their work. Strongly refuting the allegations, the MEA spokesperson said, “we hope that these fictitious claims are not cover for some undesirable activities, as has been the case in the past.”

# George warns Pak on N-threat

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, Jan. 27. — Mr George Fernandes has said Pakistan would be “erased from the world map,” if it uses nuclear weapons against India.

Participating in a programme on BBC yesterday, the defence minister said: “We have been saying that the person who heads Pakistan today, who is also the whole and sole in-charge of that country, has been talking about using dangerous weapons including the nukes... If Pakistan has decided that it wants to get itself destroyed and erased from the world map, it may take this step of madness, but if wants to survive, then it would not do so.”

Mr Fernandes said: “There has been talk of Pakistani nuclear weapons



Mr George Fernandes

falling in the hands of dangerous elements. We believe whatever be the policy of Pakistani leadership towards India, howsoever irresponsible they may be, it is difficult to accept that they would put such weapons in the hands of individuals or organisations, who might eventually use them.”

In Islamabad, the Pakistani spokesman said: “These are absolutely absurd statements which should not be made. This is unfortunate. There have been, of late, actions and statements from India which do not help to ease tension.” He spoke of US Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell’s call for India and Pakistan to work together.

Asked about infiltration, Mr Fernandes said: “Armed units of Taliban that fled from Kabul, entered Pakistan... Now they were provided not only shelter by Pakistan, but all possible help including training, which is in full knowledge of the world, America included. How far America would be ready to impress upon Pakistan to give up such dangerous policies, is difficult to say.”

The defence minister said the deployment in December 2001 made sure that Pakistan would not repeat a Kargil-style misadventure.

28 JAN 2003

THE STATESMAN

THEIR FAMILIES HAVE MORE TIME TO LEAVE

# Pak. expels four Indian personnel in retaliation

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 23. In a retaliatory move, Pakistan today expelled three diplomats and a staffer of the Indian High Commission on the ground that their "activities were not compatible with their official status." They were asked to leave the country within 48 hours.

There is little doubt that the development is a direct response to New Delhi's decision on Wednesday asking four personnel of the Pakistan High Commission to leave within two days.

The developments during the last four days mark a new low in the already strained ties between India and Pakistan. There seems to be no end to the blame

game, which began with the alleged harassment of the Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan, Jaleel Abbas Jilani, and took a nasty turn with the blockade of the official flag car of the Charge d'Affaires of the Indian mission, Sudhir Vyas.

The diplomats who have been declared personae non-grata (PNG) by Pakistan are Vipin Handa, Counsellor, R. P. Singh, Second Secretary and Vakil Ramdas, Attaché. The expelled staffer is P. H. Sundaram. All the four are from the visa section and it is after a gap of several years that three diplomats have been expelled.

Islamabad's decision to target the visa section will leave it without an officer. It may not, however, make much of a dif-

ference in effect as issuing of visas has been drastically declining in recent weeks.

The Pakistan Foreign Office summoned Mr. Vyas and read out a brief statement declaring the four officials PNG. The reason cited was their "involvement in activities incompatible with their status as members of the diplomatic mission." While all the four are required to leave Pakistan within 48 hours, their families have been permitted seven days as provided for in the Bilateral Code of Conduct signed in August 1992.

## 'Charges baseless'

Mr. Vyas said there was no truth in the allegations. "It is a simple case of tit for tat response. The allegations levelled

against our colleagues are totally baseless," he told Indian journalists on his return from the office.

Mr. Vyas was also told by the Pakistan Foreign Office that "reciprocating the Indian decision to cut down the strength of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi to 51 personnel, the Government of Pakistan has also decided to apply the same staff ceiling on the Indian High Commission in Islamabad."

In the wake of the December 13 Parliament attack, New Delhi had recalled the Indian High Commissioner, cut the staff strength in the mission here by half, terminated the Samjautha Express and the Lahore Express and suspended the air links. Pakistan followed suit.

As a result of the decision to halve the mission size, the strength of the Indian and Pakistan missions in Islamabad and New Delhi were down to 55. It now stands further reduced to 51.

The personnel declared PNG on both sides can travel by road. It is a concession of mutual convenience considering that since January 1, 2002, the air, rail and road links between the two countries stand suspended. In June, India agreed to lift the ban on over-flight facilities to Pakistani aircraft on a reciprocal basis. However, Islamabad did not respond to the gesture, saying New Delhi's move was "self-serving."

The only positive development today was that the alleged "aggressive surveillance" on Mr. Vyas, which has been on since Saturday, was "less objectionable." However, though the "situation has eased a little, it is more than the normal surveillance," Mr. Vyas said.

## Unwarranted, says India

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23. India today termed the expected Pakistani decision to expel four Indian officials from its diplomatic mission in Islamabad as entirely unwarranted.

As Pakistan drags India into a primitive game of harassing diplomats and tit-for-tat expulsions, there is a growing concern here that India's focus is being taken away from the more urgent challenges facing the nation.

A spokesman of the Foreign Office here said the allegations of spying against the expelled Indian officials in Islamabad were "baseless and false charges".

"It is a clear act of retaliation against a very considered" move by India to expel four officials from the Pakistani High Commission here yesterday, the spokesman said.

The Indian move itself was a consequence of the sustained public harassment of the senior-most Indian diplomat in Islamabad, Sudhir Vyas, over the last few days.

If there were any expectations in New Delhi that the problem of Pakistan would disappear by

refusing to engage it, those are turning out to be wrong.

Pakistan has once again demonstrated that it has many ways of drawing attention to itself and the tensions with India.

At a moment, when India should have been focusing like a laser beam on the impending war in the Persian Gulf and the extraordinary political cleavage that is opening up between the United States and Europe, New Delhi is being drawn into a street diplomacy with Pakistan.

The deepening crisis in the Gulf and the widening trans-Atlantic rift have the potential to redraw the contours of India's regional security environment and induce fundamental changes in the global order.

India might have had no option but to respond with some vigour to the unacceptable treatment being meted out to its Charge d' Affaires in Islamabad.

But New Delhi will have to find a way to prevent this bout of diplomatic confrontation with Pakistan from spiralling out of control and distracting it from the more consequential agenda that is unfolding in the region and the world.

## BILATERAL TIES HIT A NEW LOW

# India expels four Pak. embassy personnel

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, JAN. 22. In a signal that Indo-Pakistani relations will get a lot worse before they can get better, the Government today expelled two diplomats and two staffers from the Pakistan High Commission. The move was aimed at conveying India's extreme displeasure at the harassment of its diplomats in Islamabad that has continued despite strong protests.

Arun Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, told the Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan, Jaleel Abbas Jilani, who was summoned to the Foreign Office, that the four officials should be withdrawn from India within 48 hours.

While New Delhi sees this as a calibrated response to the turn of events in Islamabad, the inevitable Pakistani reaction is bound to push the diplomatic ties between the two countries further down the spiral.

The Indian decision follows the reports that Pakistan has not put an end to the harassment of the Indian Charge d' Affaires, Sudhir Vyas, in Islamabad that had started over the weekend. Mr. Singh told Mr. Jilani that the treatment being meted out to the seniormost Indian diplomat was "completely unacceptable," a spokesman of the

Foreign Office told reporters here. India reiterated that "it is the responsibility of Pakistan to ensure the security and safety" of the personnel of the Indian High Commission and their families in Islamabad.

According to the spokesman, Mr. Jilani was informed that the four persons were "engaged in activities incompatible with their official status." The officials, declared

'persona non-grata,' are the political counsellor, Mansoor Saeed Sheikh, the first secretary in the visa section, Mian Mohammad Asif, and two staffers, Mohammad Tasneem Khan and Sher Mohammad.

Sources in the Pakistani High Commission here said that the 48-hour notice was "unusually short and very punitive." They pointed to the great difficulties in organising the withdrawal of the officials and their families within two days.

The reaction to the expulsions from across the border would be equally harsh, if not worse. Tit for tat expulsions on charges of spying between adversarial nations are common but will have to be halted at one point or another, observers of Indo-Pak. relations say. The bout of mutual expulsions, however, that is expected to unfold in the coming days is certain to deepen the current trail of bitterness between the two nations.

With the High Commissioners in both the capitals having been pulled out more than a year ago, there is very little political communication between the two Governments. In the vitiated atmosphere, observers say, there may be more political depths to be plumbed by Islamabad and New Delhi.

## Pak. may retaliate

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 22. Pakistan today denounced the expulsion of two of its diplomats and two officials by India. The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, said, "this will further vitiate the atmosphere in the region." Pakistan would "deliberate" upon a response. Implied in this was the hint that in a tit-for-tat action Islamabad would retaliate. He rejected as "absolutely rubbish" accusations that the diplomats ordered to leave India had been spying.

India protests again: Page 12

40-1 THE BOOT IS ON THE OTHER LEG: PAK. 2/1

# Envoy's car blocked again

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 20. For the second day running, personnel of the Pakistan intelligence agencies allegedly obstructed the official flag car carrying the Charge d' Affaires, Sudhir Vyas.

However, Pakistan strongly denied India's charges that its intelligence personnel had blocked the flag car. It maintained that New Delhi had "fabricated" the case to cover up its own deeds of "harassment and maltreatment" of Pakistani staffers in India and alleged that it could be part of a design to further vitiate the already tense atmosphere in the region.

The Pakistani rebuttal of the allegations came even as the Indian High Commission today sent a second *note verbale* (protest note) to the Foreign Office complaining about the continued harassment of Mr. Vyas. "At least three vehicles of intelligence agencies are not only trailing my official car but are causing deliberate obstruction even after the complaint on Saturday. Several times from no-

where a vehicle would turn up in the front and brake at high speed," he said.

Mr. Vyas was called to the Pakistan Foreign Office in the afternoon to discuss "certain administrative issues" relating to visas. The issue of the protest note sent by the Indian mission on Saturday was not raised, and when Mr. Vyas mentioned about the harassment, he was informed that Pakistani staffers in India from the Acting High Commissioner downwards were being hounded. The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, told a news conference that there was no truth in the Indian allegation and, in fact, it was the Pakistani staff that were at the receiving end in Delhi. He said Pakistan had lodged a formal protest on Jan. 7 with India over the "harassment" of its diplomatic staff in New Delhi.

Mr. Khan termed the treatment to the Pakistani diplomats as "wilful harassment" and said that despite the formal written protest with the Indian authorities by Pakistan's Acting High

Commissioner, the harassment persisted. "Since we did not want to draw political mileage out of the incident we did not talk about it openly," he said.

He said Pakistan always wanted a "tension-free atmosphere" and did not inform the press about the treatment being meted out to its diplomats in New Delhi.

Asked to comment on a statement by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, criticising Pakistani agencies for harassing the Indian diplomat, Mr. Khan said that taking up of the issue by the Prime Minister showed that India was up to "some new kind of game". He alleged that for India it pays dividends to create tension as was evident from its past record. "In the past elections, they resorted to Pakistan-bashing and their treatment of the minorities reflected it all".

A statement released earlier by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deplored what it termed as "motivated and baseless allegations levelled by India accusing Pakistani agencies of harassing

the Charge d' Affaires in Islamabad." It said: "Pakistan's feelings on this preposterous propaganda gimmick have been conveyed to the Charge d' Affaires."

"In fact it was the operatives of the Indian intelligence agencies who were aggressively chasing and harassing Pakistan's Acting High Commissioner in New Delhi, Jalil Abbas Jilani, for the past two weeks. The Pakistan High Commissioner lodged a formal protest with the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on this count on January 7, 2003."

The statement said: "It is regrettable that even the Indian Prime Minister has thought it appropriate to comment on a non-existent incident. Obviously the Indian Prime Minister was fed concocted stories to cover up for the treatment being meted out to officials of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi. It could well be part of a deliberate design of the Indian establishment to further vitiate an already tense atmosphere in the region."

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2003

902/par

## MINDLESS HARASSMENT

H0-10 211

THE HARASSMENT OF the Charge d'Affaires at the High Commission of India in Islamabad, allegedly by personnel belonging to Pakistan's intelligence agencies, reprehensible even in normal circumstances is all the more condemnable when it has occurred in a situation in which the atmosphere between the two countries is already so poisonous. Pakistan's intelligence agencies have harassed personnel working in the Indian diplomatic missions in that country in the past and Indian agencies have behaved in an obnoxious manner with Pakistani diplomats posted here. When such incidents have occurred in the past, the rank of the diplomats concerned had not always granted them immunity from such transgressions. Yet, the victimisation of the senior-most Indian diplomat in Pakistan must be condemned in the strongest terms since the action taken against him comes across as a display of contempt towards the country he represents and is therefore a violation of the niceties that help maintain the contact between countries. With the current context being one in which the two countries continue to regard each other with great hostility, but yet see the wisdom in not resorting to the drastic action of totally rupturing diplomatic relations, it is all the more important to ensure that civilities are observed. Islamabad and New Delhi need to recognise — without pressure from, or persuasion by, powerful international forces — that the dangerous consequences of further instability in the region necessitate that they prevent the relationship from deteriorating any further. Both countries demean their standing by indulging in such barbaric behaviour and they strengthen misgivings felt elsewhere in the world that they are incapable of abiding by the norms of international discourse.

Whenever Indian or Pakistani security agencies have harassed the accredited representative of the other side in the past, they have usually tried to justify their action by alleging that the official concerned was indulging in activity not compatible with his diplomatic status (a euphé-

mism for spying), but no such allegations appear to have been levelled in this instance. It hardly stands to reason that the High Commission of India would have concocted the story and therefore it is difficult to understand what those who authorised the harassment of the diplomat hoped to gain by blocking his vehicle or by delaying his arrival at a function held in the embassy of a third country. Islamabad is apparently annoyed because its senior-most representative in New Delhi has been recently subjected to the unwelcome attention of Indian intelligence agencies and, if so, the time has certainly come for the two Governments to break this pattern of treating each other's diplomats in such a despicable manner. Even in those cases where the personnel in the respective missions are believed to be involved in espionage, the appropriate action would be expulsion rather than their intimidation or the use of violence against them and their families. It needs to be remembered that even at the height of the Cold War, personnel at the U. S. Embassy in Moscow and their Soviet counterparts in Washington did not have to fear more than the embarrassment of an expulsion whereas there have been occasions when Indians or Pakistanis similarly situated have even had reason to fear bodily harm.

There exist a number of conventions and protocols that cover the minutiae of the treatment that a host Government has to provide to the accredited representatives of another. As if these had been found insufficient, Islamabad and New Delhi have bilaterally set down the rules that will govern their treatment of the other's diplomats. The shortfall is not in the lack of norms but in the determination to adhere to them. India and Pakistan have so locked themselves into a cycle of retribution that there is a near Pavlovian tendency to react in kind when such incidents occur. It is high time that this cycle was broken and for that to occur one or the other Government has to decide that it will not resort to uncivilised conduct, no matter the provocation.

THE HINDU

JAN 2003

'VIOLATION OF DIPLOMATIC NORMS'

# Top Indian diplomat in Pak. harassed

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, JAN. 19.** The official vehicle of India's Charge d'Affaires, Sudhir Vyas, was blocked twice, allegedly by sleuths of Pakistani intelligence agencies on Saturday.

In a protest note to the Pakistan Foreign Office, the Indian High Commission detailed the blockade and pointed out that it was in gross violation of the basic norms of diplomatic beha-

viour. Though relations between India and Pakistan have been strained particularly since the December 13, 2001 Parliament attack, the whole of 2002 was relatively free of any incident involving the diplomatic community of both countries.

The Indian mission here is at a loss to understand the provocation for the action of the intelligence men in plainclothes, for, according to it, there is no such incident in New Delhi in-

volving any staffer of the Pakistan mission, leave alone the Charge d'Affaires.

According to the protest note, the vehicle of the Charge d'Affaires was blocked before his residence and forcibly prevented from leaving on two occasions when he and his wife were going to attend official diplomatic engagements at the Malaysian and Nepalese embassies.

When the mission car, flying the national flag, was able to leave the residence, it was forcibly stopped and boxed in by four vehicles and two motorcycles repeatedly on the main roads of the town, both on the outward and return journeys. The flag car was kept boxed in with the Charge d'Affaires and his wife inside for up to 45 minutes at a time, even at 11 p.m.

Mr. Vyas and his wife were thus prevented from performing their diplomatic functions, arriving more than an hour late for each engagement. On the return journeys too, intelligence personnel attempted to block the entrance gate of his residence by parking a vehicle in front of it, preventing the entry of the flag car.

"Such a harassment is unprecedented in nature and amounts to a clear attempt on the part of Pakistani intelligence agencies to thwart the Charge d'Affaires in the conduct of his diplomatic duties, besides displaying a lack of normal courtesy to the national flag of this accredited mission. This represents a grave violation of the basic norms of diplomatic behaviour codified in international and bilateral conventions.

"This mission condemns such an action and requests the Ministry to direct the Pakistani intelligence agencies responsible to stop this harassment forthwith," the note said.

## What does Islamabad want, asks PM

**PORT BLAIR, JAN. 19.** The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today denounced Pakistan for its "misbehaviour" with the Charge d'Affaires at Islamabad, Sudhir Vyas, and wondered if the neighbouring nation was averse to even maintaining the decorum of normal diplomatic behaviour.

"What does Pakistan want? Our envoy has been ill-treated in Islamabad today. His car was stopped and other obstacles were created in his way," Mr. Vajpayee said at a public meeting here. Reiterating that India wanted to normalise relations with Pakistan, he regretted that Islamabad was, however, not abandoning terrorism. "*Tali ek haath se nahin bajti... Yadi Pakistan ka vyavhar theek nahin hota, hum apni suraksha ke liye poori tarah taiyar hain* (You cannot clap with one hand. If there is no change in Pakistan's behaviour, we are fully prepared to safeguard our security)."

Lambasting Pakistan for its continued support to terrorists in Kashmir, he said explosives were hurled at a bus in Kashmir today in which 25 people were injured.

"What kind of independent war is Pakistan fighting in Kashmir where innocent people are being killed and women and children massacred?"

Urging Pakistan to exercise restraint, he said Indian forces were ready to meet any eventuality and defend the country. "We had positioned our forces on the border to ensure that Pakistan did not repeat the mistake of Kargil." — PTI

Our New Delhi Special Correspondent writes:

Reacting sharply to the harassment of Mr. Vyas, the Foreign Office spokesperson said, "We have received reports of the tailing and harassment of Mr. Vyas. This falls into a consistent pattern of harassment of Indian diplomats by Pakistani agencies and gross violation of the bilateral code of conduct as well as international norms and the Vienna Convention."

49-12  
14/11

# 'Trade route' to Indo-Pak. thaw

By Amit Baruah

**NEW DELHI, JAN.13.** A senior U.S. State Department official, Richard Haass, the Japanese Foreign Minister, Yoriko Kawaguchi, and the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, have all spoken of the need to promote trade and commerce in South Asia in the New Year.

The "trade route" to greater understanding between India and Pakistan is the underlying principle in the remarks made first by Mr. Haass and Ms. Kawaguchi and more recently by Mr. Sinha. Few can quarrel with such assertions, but the fact that the External Affairs Minister has chosen to go public with his own radically new formulations must be heartening for those who want greater understanding in South Asia.

In an address to the CII summit in Hyderabad, Mr. Haass made another point which had been missing from the formulations advanced so far by the Bush administration. During his visit last year, this correspondent had pointedly asked Mr. Haass about the lack of references to the "sanctity" of the Line of Control — a formulation which was repeated many times during the Clinton Presidency.

On this occasion, Mr. Haass was direct: "First, the status of the Line of Control will not be changed unilaterally. Second, the LoC will not be changed by violence.

To the contrary, in the absence of a jointly agreed Indo-Pakistani alternative, everyone should act to ensure the continued sanctity of the Line of Control." Even as he

clarified the Bush administration's stance, the senior American official defined "normalcy" in South Asia, among other things, as "market-driven commerce".

"Today, legal trade and investment between the two countries is virtually non-existent. Developing natural commercial links could bring greater prosperity to both countries, and in the process, build constituencies for normalisation and increase the stake that each country has in the peaceful resolution of disputes," Mr. Haass said, adding that a free trade area in South Asia was desirable.

For her part, the Japanese Foreign Minister said: "Improvement in India-Pakistan relations is vital for Japanese companies here to conduct stable economic activities. Such improvement will make the Indian market more attractive for investors."

In comments made on Friday, Mr. Sinha spoke of a shared history, of the need to live together. He called for the creation of a South Asian Union, possibly on the lines of the European Union.

He said twice that India was ready to agree to a free trade arrangement tomorrow. Every South Asia watcher is aware of the depths to which India-Pakistan relations have taken the region. On every available occasion, India has spoken of nothing other than cross-border terrorism.

If India can't send back its High Commissioner on account of cross-border terrorism, then how can the two countries have normal trading relations, far less a free trade arrangement, a South Asian Union? If

one were to situate Mr. Sinha's remarks in the current context, there are bound to be problems of interpretation. But, the External Affairs Minister's remarks appear to be a genuine expression of what he would like South Asia to look like.

The External Affairs Minister is right about everything that he said; he didn't even fault Pakistan for not extending MFN status to India as far as trading relations go.

Any visitor to Pakistan will be aware of the fact that "trading with India" is seen as a "crime" by the high priests of the Pakistani establishment when the Kashmir issue remains unresolved and India continues its "atrocities".

If India is to nudge South Asia forward, then trade and commerce is the only available vehicle. And the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline can set the pace for greater cooperation in South Asia.

If the World Bank-negotiated Indus Waters Treaty has worked since 1960, then an international consortium can certainly satisfy India's security concerns with Iran acting as the guarantor. Water flows into Pakistan from India; oil and gas can certainly flow in the reverse direction.

But for trade to develop, businesspersons need to travel. And they can't travel by the Mumbai-Dubai-Karachi route. It must be direct.

The first step to increased commerce must be the re-opening of trade and travel routes. Mr. Sinha cannot stop at his seminar speech. He must translate these principles into policy.



# Agni tests show desperation: Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 12. Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali has claimed that Pakistan was not 'impressed' with the latest Indian ballistic missile tests and considered them as New Delhi's desperate effort to change the balance of military power in its favour.

He was talking informally with correspondents on the sidelines of the convention of Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) alias King's party. The convention saw the election of Chaudhary Shujat Hussain as the president of the party following the forced exit of Mian Azar.

"The latest tests of Agni did not impress Pakistan at all and they were perceived to be India's effort at shifting the balance of power in its favour," Mr. Jamali said. He said India should come forward to resolve all disputes, including Jammu and Kashmir amicably with Pakistan "instead of demonstrating military power."

"Pakistan has no fears from Agni missiles as far as our national and territorial security is concerned and India has not succeeded in establishing that the balance of power in South Asia has been shifted in its favour through such missile

tests," he said.

He said Pakistan's armed forces were fully capable of defending every inch of the motherland and the defence of Pakistan was in very safe hands.

Asked if his Government faced any international pressure over its nuclear arms programme, he said, "neither any pressure exists nor will we accept any such pressure." He referred to recent reports on the nuclear programme (controversy about Pakistan's nuclear cooperation with North Korea) and dubbed them as 'baseless and groundless'.

On the Immigration Naturalisation Service (INS) of the United States and the difficulties faced by the Pakistanis, Mr. Jamali said his Government has been working actively to end such 'restrictions'. "The Foreign Minister is visiting the U.S., exclusively for relief of expatriate Pakistanis who are facing much difficulties due to various new laws in the United States," he said.

In response to a question whether the Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee contacted him after he assumed office, Mr. Jamali said, "he congratulated me in a letter and I had already responded to it". He said that he had not met Mr. Vajpayee so far "but would like

to suggest to him to resume talks with Pakistan to settle all the differences while sitting across the table."

Talking to reporters at the same venue the Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri alleged that India was responsible for tension and nuclearization of the region. Responding to a question about statements of Indian leadership (directed at Pakistan), he said "Pakistan is a responsible country and we do not want to respond to such statements."

Welcoming the statements of American leaders regarding the resumption of talks between Pakistan and India, Mr. Kasuri said, "India should resume dialogue with Pakistan to resolve all issues including the core issue of Kashmir."

Condemning India for "setting off an arms race" in the region, he said "it is sad for the whole region, India tried to threaten Pakistan by deploying its troops on the borders for months." He claimed that "India failed in its designs and its threatening posture will fail yet again as Pakistan is fully alive to its defence and security needs."

Responding to a question about his coming visit to the U.S. he said "I am going to the U.S. in the last week of this month (January 26 or 27) and

will hold meetings with the Secretary of State, Senators and Councillors.

"I will apprise them about the prevailing situation in the region in the wake of India's testing of ballistic missiles", he said. During the meetings with American leaders, Mr. Kasuri said bilateral and international issues would come under discussion.

Replying to a question about the INS registration for Pakistanis, he said this would be discussed in the meeting with Secretary of State. Pakistan has already taken up this issue with American leadership. He said the American leadership would be apprised about the conventional disparity in the region, which caused nuclearisation.

The Minister said "Pakistan does not want to be in the weapons race but it was forced to maintain strategic balance and deterrence." He said development in the sub-continent depends on peace and stability in the region.

"The Government of Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali sent signals to the Indian leadership for resuming dialogue but India did not respond positively. Even the SAARC summit was postponed due to the policies of Indian leadership," he said.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 2003

## DANGEROUS TALK

40-10  
37/1  
9/20  
Pak

WHILE AN OFFICIAL spokesperson has clarified that the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, was not referring to the possible use of nuclear weapons, when he was said to have warned the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, that a resort to non-conventional methods of war should not be ruled out if Indian troops crossed the border, there remains sufficient ambiguity to suggest that Islamabad has not abandoned its practice of raising the nuclear bogey from time to time. In an address to veterans of the Pakistan Air Force, Gen. Musharraf had said that the message he had sent to Mr. Vajpayee on several occasions was that India should not expect a "conventional" war if its troops crossed the international border or the Line of Control. As a senior military leader, Gen. Musharraf knows that the terms "conventional" and "non-conventional" have a specific meaning when used in connection with warfare. Given Pakistan's proven nuclear weapon capability, its refusal to adopt a "no first use" doctrine and the statements made by senior officials in the past that Islamabad would not abjure the use of these weapons, there ought to have been little doubt in Gen. Musharraf's mind as to how his statement would be interpreted. It was therefore disingenuous of the official spokesperson to issue a clarification that the Pakistan President had not been talking of the use of non-conventional weapons but about using unconventional troops, such as the guerrillas in Kashmir.

Gen. Musharraf, through his careful choice of words, was able to appeal to the patriotism and militarism of his immediate audience and yet retain the scope to deny that he had spoken of a resort to nuclear weapons. In the period when Indian and Pakistani troops were confronting each other on the borders it served Pakistan's interests to magnify the risk of nuclear war so as to goad the international community into intensifying efforts directed at a defusing of the

situation. While that particular crisis has been relegated to the past, Islamabad apparently still entertains the false belief that a third party would feel compelled to mediate the various issues in contention between India and Pakistan (especially Kashmir) if fears of a nuclear conflict are raised from time to time. Irresponsible statements in regard to nuclear weapons and their use have also been made from the Indian side in the past. Therefore, it must be assumed that the leadership on both sides of the Subcontinent's main strategic fault-line have yet to develop an understanding that a stockpile of non-conventional weapons can, at best, be justified as a deterrent and that talk of their possible use has to be avoided scrupulously. Loose talk only conveys to the world outside the Subcontinent that neither India nor Pakistan can be trusted with the possession of such dangerous weapons and nuclearisation might well become the only subcontinental issue that the rest of the global community will concern itself with.

The poverty of thought that led to the nuclearisation of the Subcontinent gets all the more exposed when threats of nuclear weapon use are so freely brandished. What is worse is that resort to such dangerous brinkmanship is being made in a context devoid of any real effort to re-start substantive negotiations to resolve the serious issues between India and Pakistan. In its response to Gen. Musharraf's statement, New Delhi has focussed exclusively on its phraseology and the context in which it was made. While New Delhi might be justified to an extent in treating with disdain Gen. Musharraf's nuclear muscle-flexing, it cannot forever ignore the fact that the decades-long subcontinental impasse has acquired a dangerous dimension. India cannot compromise its best interests under threat of nuclear blackmail but the political and military leadership of the country does need to examine the ways by which the risks of non-conventional warfare can be minimised.

THE HINDU

3 JAN 2003

## ✓✓ COLD WELCOME ✓✓

**T**he lack of a coherent and consistent Indian policy towards Islamabad is once again in evidence with the government's latest decision to adopt a tough posture while dealing with visitors from Pakistan. New Delhi plans to restrict the movement of visitors from Pakistan to just three cities and clamp down on Pakistani citizens who have overstayed in the country. It is not clear how this hardline policy towards the people of Pakistan will further India's interest or make Pakistan less belligerent towards New Delhi. As may be recalled, at present citizens from Pakistan can visit twelve Indian cities. The decision to bring the number down to three will mean that many Pakistani citizens will not be able to visit their friends or relatives in different parts of this country. In addition, the government now proposes to introduce 100 per cent pre-verification of individuals from Pakistan who want to visit India before a visa is issued. In other words, the Indian embassy in Islamabad will have to refer each visa application to New Delhi where the application will probably be scrutinized by officials in the home ministry and the Intelligence Bureau. This will mean long delays, with the applications being caught in endless red tape of the Indian bureaucracy.

All this is most unfortunate. Even those who are not particularly taken up with the idea that India-Pakistan relations can be dramatically improved through greater people-to-people contact will find it difficult to support New Delhi's latest policy. Most Pakistanis who visit India are harmless individuals seeking to temporarily reunite with their friends and families. They are certainly not terrorists or spies. While they may not become great votaries for India within Pakistan, the experience of Indian democracy and pluralism is certain to have a positive impact on them. And this may, in the long term, help the cause of better India-Pakistan relations. By targeting them, India will lose even the little goodwill that exists for it within Pakistan. There is, of course, the legitimate Indian concern about Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country. But terrorists rarely, if ever, have entered India on legitimate visas. In Jammu and Kashmir, they have infiltrated through the line of control and the international border, and in other parts of India, terrorists have entered through the porous border with Nepal and Bangladesh. The inability of India to prevent this infiltration of terrorists must not translate into a knee-jerk reaction against innocent Pakistani visitors, most of whom, after spending a few days in India, return to their country. India needs a clear and comprehensive Pakistan policy, but the government's latest initiative is certainly not the way to go about it.

'A COMMITMENT AGAINST ATTACK ON FACILITIES'

# India, Pak. exchange list of n-installations

By Amit Baruah

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 1.** India and Pakistan today exchanged lists of their nuclear installations and facilities as stipulated under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack Against Nuclear Installations and Facilities between India and Pakistan, 1988.

Today's exchange, which took place simultaneously through diplomatic channels in Islamabad and New Delhi, is the 12th occasion where the two countries have undertaken such an exercise. While the non-attack

Agreement was signed in 1988, it came into force in 1991.

"Under the agreement, the two countries are to inform each other on January 1 of every calendar year of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered by the Agreement. The first such exchange of lists took place on January 1, 1992," a Foreign Office statement said.

**B. Muralidhar Reddy** reports from Islamabad:

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman and Additional Secretary, Aziz Ahmed Khan, handed over at the Foreign

Office here the Pakistani list to the First Secretary in the Indian High Commission, Vikram Misri. Similarly, the Indian list was handed over to the Pakistani High Commission representative at the Foreign Office in New Delhi.

Even at the height of tensions at the end of last year, both the countries exchanged information on the nuclear installations and demonstrated their commitment against attack on each other's nuclear installations much to the relief of the rest of the world.

## No lowering of guard: Vij

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 1.** The new Army chief, N.C. Vij, today criticised the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, for hinting at plans to use nuclear weapons had Indian forces crossed into Pakistan during the tense military standoff after the December 13, 2001 attack on Parliament.

Observing that "no responsible military man can make that statement", Gen. Vij declined to get into the semantics of the observation.

However, he pointed out that a few months ago, Gen. Musharraf had stated that only a mad man could think of using nuclear weapons.

Interacting with newsmen after inspecting a guard of honour by his parent regiment, Gen. Vij said the Army was being relocated in positions from where it could react to a threat on the western borders in the quickest possible time. Its repositioning would be based on the experience

gained during 'Operation Parakram' — the name given to the deployment of troops in a battle-ready position ordered in December 2001.

There would be no lowering of guard in Jammu and Kashmir — the Army would maintain the tempo of hunting down terrorists, persevering with its vigil along the rugged Line of Control as well as cooperating with the newly-elected State Government by supporting its initiatives for the restoration of peace and normality.

The other three priorities are increasing the intake of officers, modernisation and stepping up welfare activities for the serving and retired personnel.

Gen. Vij did not agree that the Army would become marginalised with respect to the other two services owing to the current emphasis for them. Warfare in the modern world would have to take place in total synergy in which the role of all the three services would be equally important.

# Saying the unsayable

Qayyum Khan breaks the mould

Delhi's decision to restart the political process in Jammu and Kashmir by holding elections and allowing Mufti Mohammed Sayeed to take office is winning praise from an unexpected quarter — Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, head of Pakistan's National Kashmir Committee who participated in the Pathan invasion of Kashmir in 1947-48, and has been President as well as Prime Minister of PoK several times. One consequence of General Musharraf's coup was Khan's ouster from the PoK presidency in 2000, but he was reinstated this year following the "moderate" course envisioned by Musharraf's January 12 speech. Khan has articulated what is fairly obvious now but unmentionable inside Pakistan, that armed struggle cannot lead to a solution in Kashmir, that the election of Sayeed's government calls for a fresh look by Islamabad at its Kashmir policy, that the only viable solution is conversion of the LoC into an international boundary. Coming from the chairman of the official body appointed by Islamabad to keep Kashmir in its sights, Khan's views, in a letter to Musharraf, carry weight. It remains to be seen what response they elicit from the Pakistani establishment.

Khan has been in the thick of both Kashmiri militancy and PoK politics and he knows from experience that, with the induction of a freely elected government the political process in Jammu and Kashmir is now demonstrably fairer than on his side of the LoC, where politics in a supposedly "autonomous" province has been consistently manipulated by the army and by central authorities to suit themselves and keep militancy and terrorism going inside India. Nomination papers for candidates to the PoK assembly are rejected if they refuse to sign an affidavit supporting Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, and veteran human rights activist Asma Jehangir confirms that assembly elections are routinely rigged in the name of security. If Islamabad goes so far to disable self-determination in the part of Kashmir that it controls, how can it pursue that goal for the rest of Kashmir? Add to that the fact, as exiled PoK leader Sardar Shaukat Ali Kashmiri has pointed out, most of PoK's budgets go into maintaining an expensive infrastructure of terrorism and little is left for development. Thus Indian Kashmiris are better off than their Pakistani brethren in both economic and political terms, and it would be madness for them to want to change to Pakistani citizenship, confirmed by a recent poll by London-based Mori International, which showed 61 per cent of Kashmiris in favour of Indian citizenship and only 6 per cent for Pakistan.

Qayyum Khan has begun to say the unsayable, giving shape to what could be a likely solution to a problem which has caused decades of conflict and held back the economic progress of the whole subcontinent. The tenure of his committee terminates on January 14, after which he holds no brief, which may have prompted him to deviate so far from orthodoxy and speak his mind. Now that international pressure has been brought to bear on Pakistan to abandon the export of terrorism, there is, however, the tantalising possibility that moderate elements in the Islamabad establishment are speaking through him. One can only hope that Qayyum Khan's proposals, and not Musharraf's renewed sabre-rattling, are the true augury for Indo-Pak relations in the new year. Any peace process is bound to be lengthy and tortuous. If at any time in the future Islamabad becomes amenable to a variant of the solution Qayyum Khan is now proposing, the pill could be sweetened for it by accommodation over the Siachen glacier and Sir Creek, and for Kashmiris by opening up transit points along the LoC/boundary.

1 JAN 2003

# 'Unconventional' Pak forces Delhi rethink

SUJANDUTIA

**New Delhi, Dec. 31:** The Indian security establishment's interpretation of Pervez Musharraf's claim yesterday that Pakistan's threat of an "unconventional" response had staved off a war can mark a change from the position New Delhi has held on the fear of a nuclear conflict in the subcontinent.

Strictly speaking, Musharraf did not categorically say he had threatened a "nuclear strike". His words — to a gathering of Pakistan Air Force officers — were: "I personally conveyed messages to (Indian) Prime Minister (A.B.) Vajpayee through every international leader who came to Pakistan, that if Indian troops moved a single step across the international border or the Line of Control, they should not expect a conventional war from Pakistan."

In Delhi, the feeling in the security establishment is that belligerence of this sort is not wholly unexpected when Musharraf, supreme commander of Pakistan's armed forces, is addressing a domestic audience of military men.

However, Delhi has also decided to use the statement to paint Islamabad as an irresponsible state incapable of handling its nuclear status.

Late last night, the Pakistani spokesman responded by saying Musharraf's use of the word, "unconventional", should not be interpreted as a synonym for "nuclear".

Strategists say there is little doubt about what Musharraf actually meant. "This (Pakistan's retraction) is a deliberate technique of making a statement and them backtracking," says Lt General (ret'd) V.R. Raghavan of the thinktank, the Delhi Policy Group.

In military jargon, "unconventional" wars are conflicts such as guerrilla tactics and/or war by proxy. A nuclear exchange in a war would also make it unconventional.

But there has never been a nuclear exchange — such history is the handmaiden of the idea of nuclear deterrence — and military theorists believe that limited wars are possible even under the nuclear shadow.

Defence minister George Fernandes expounded in a seminar at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis in New Delhi early last year that despite India and Pakistan's nuclear status, a "limited, conventional war" was actually possible. He meant a war limited by confines of space (such as in Kargil in 1999) and also

in terms of use of weapons.

The doctrine has come to be adopted by the security establishment in India. But just as the Kargil operations were a "limited, conventional war" for India, it was an "unconventional" war by Pakistan. Pakistan had used mujahideen and army irregulars to hold strategic heights in Kashmir. But Operation Parakram — the 10-month-long military standoff — and Pakistan's frequent brandishing of nuclear-capable missiles and repeated threats from its establishment to use the nuclear option can gradually redefine the Indian military doctrine of a "limited, conventional war".

Now that Delhi is saying Islamabad can be carefree with nuclear weapons — raising fears that weapons of mass destruction can also be acquired by non-state actors (e.g. militants) — the Indian security establishment's response to Pakistan can go through a shift. It will be a shift from the belief that both New Delhi and Pakistan are conscientious with nuclear arms.

So far, Delhi has held that fears of a nuclear exchange in South Asia are totally unfounded. The defence ministry and Fernandes have been vocal on this. In June, the defence ministry said in a statement: "(The) government makes it clear that India does

not believe in the use of nuclear weapons. Neither does it visualise that it will be used by any other country."

Fernandes further elucidated in an interview to *The International Herald Tribune*: "I don't agree that India and Pakistan are so imprudent and excitable that they will forget what nuclear weapons can do... I think it should be accepted that in South Asia, there are responsible leaders. They may be belligerent and not fulfil their promises."

"But on nuclear matters, the subcontinent is alive to the implications... If the western powers and China know how to keep their nuclear capabilities under control, the same holds good for India-Pakistan."

Musharraf's utterances on Monday is the latest in a series of statements from Pakistan that Islamabad was ready to flex its nuclear muscle. Earlier, Pakistan's ambassador to the UN, Munir Akram, too, talked of using the nuclear option in the event of an Indian strike.

Sources in the security establishment say that during the military standoff, Pakistan had deployed its nuclear-capable missiles. But whether its nuclear warheads were "coupled" with the missiles was a matter of conjecture.

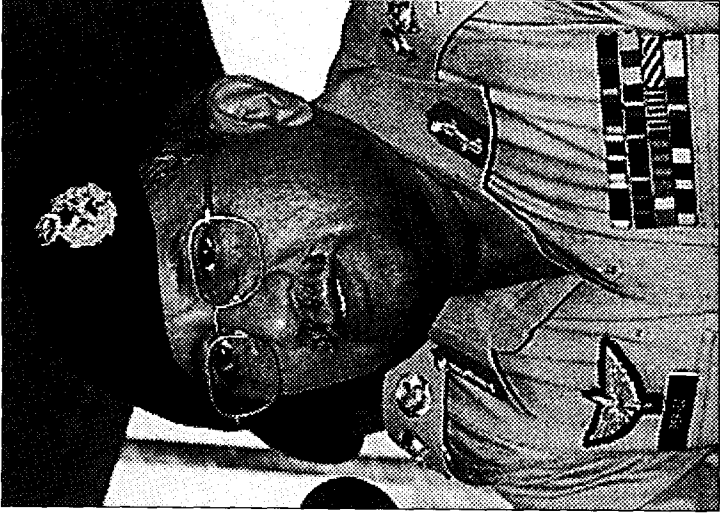
In different wargame scenarios, Pakistan — which rejects the policy of "no first strike" — can be projected to use a tactical (small) nuclear weapon on attacking troops if it is afraid of losing crucial ground, or on narrow tracts to sever large chunks of territory from the mainland.

Indian military officials and security leaders refuse to speculate aloud on nuclear scenarios and say the very airing of such views in public is the sign of irresponsibility.

In January 2002, even after army chief General S. Padmanabhan made clear the Indian policy to only retaliate, Fernandes thought it fit to issue a clarification only to drive home the point more forcefully.

"Non conventional war — the words Musharraf used — can mean a range of things like use of special forces. But there is no question that what Musharraf meant was a nuclear strike," says Bharat Karnad, author of *Nuclear Weapons and Indian Security* (Macmillan 2002).

"He has to talk in this manner. For a small country like Pakistan it is crucial that credibility is injected into its deterrence. I call such exchanges rhetorical nuclear wars. It is no big deal. I believe that in South Asia, we are at the initial stages of arriving at a nuclear *modus vivendi*."



Musharraf

Ind. Pak

# POK off Plan panel's map

by the Survey of India. When those magazines were sold in India, the maps were stamped to say that they were not "official".

A few years ago there was a furore over international TV channels displaying incorrect maps that were not in accordance with the Indian government's specifications. Hence they often refer to the state as being "disputed" territory — lest they upset Pakistan. In 2000, three cases of publication of incorrect maps came to the notice of the government, in 2001 there were seven and four last year, Parliament was informed recently.

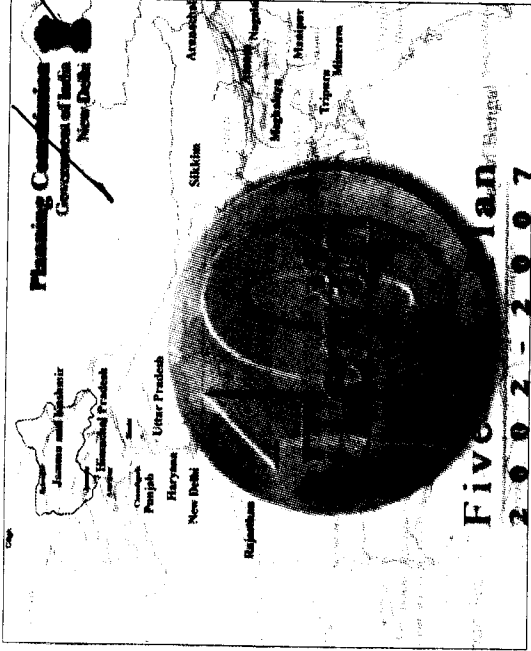
J&K reports on page 4

## H Bula Devi in New Delhi *SM 2M*

April 28. — The Planning Commission appears to have affixed its seal on converting the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir into the international border. The map (see left) depicted on the cover of the 10th Five Year Plan's *Volumes I, II and III* gives the impression that Pakistan Occupied Kashmir — Gilgit and the Northern Areas — are beyond Indian boundaries.

Copies of the Tenth Five Year Plan documents with the dubious map were circulated to all members of Parliament on 10 April.

Maps of J&K printed in foreign publications often do not tally with those produced



THE STATEMENT

# Pakistan PM calls Vajpayee to talk peace

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, April 28. — In one of the rarest overtures made to lend momentum to the peace process involving the two neighbouring countries, Pakistani Prime Minister Mr Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali called Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee tonight to speak on improving relations.

According to official sources, Mr Jamali conveyed his "appreciation" for the Indian Premier's recent statements on a possible Indo-Pak dialogue, in Srinagar as well as in Parliament, indicating that a level of seriousness exists to improve ties.

During their ten-minute telephonic conversation, the two Prime Ministers discussed ways to take the strained bilateral relations forward. This was the first time that a direct contact was made between the Indian and Pakistani leaders since Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, famously shook hands with Mr Vajpayee at the January 2002 Saarc summit in Kathmandu. Even when Mr Jamali was sworn in as the Pakistani Prime Minister, greetings were conveyed through official channels.

During the conversation, Mr Vajpayee emphasised on the importance of economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, people-to-people contact and civil aviation links, which India snapped as part of punitive measures following the terrorist attack on Parliament, the sources said. Mr Jamali suggested resumption of sporting links, they added. Pakistan has since long been keen to resume cricket ties between the two countries.

Both the leaders agreed to consider these issues as a starting point, indicating, the strong possibility of a comprehensive bilateral dialogue soon.

Although officials declined comment on any time frame, the next few weeks, around the time the US deputy Secretary of State, Mr Richard Armitage visits the region, appear crucial to the peace process.

Mr Jamali, state-owned *Pakistan Television* said, invited Mr Vajpayee to visit Pakistan at his convenience and expressed readiness to visit India to further the peace process. It said, Mr Jamali offered talks at any level on all issues including Kashmir. The two Premiers also agreed to be in touch with each other, *PTV* said.

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THE STATESMAN



# Proxy war suits Pakistan: report

Srinjoy Chowdhury  
in New Delhi

April 20. — The Prime Minister has spoken of talks with Islamabad, but the defence ministry has noted that Pakistan is continuing the proxy war in Kashmir, using the “nuclear card” and bleeding “India through a thousand cuts”.

Pakistan is not thinking of attacking India because low-intensity conflict in J&K suits it. “It employs the nuclear card to hold India back,” said a defence ministry report presented in February. An India-Pakistan war can happen “should China become hostile to India,” though China need not interfere if ties between the neighbours worsen.

## Party backs PM's gesture

NEW DELHI, April 20. — The BJP today said Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's “bold gesture” of extending a hand of friendship to Pakistan would pave the way for meaningful talks. BJP chief Mr Venkaiah Naidu said the sincerity of Pakistan's response would be judged by how soon it would stop cross-border terrorism.

Pakistan's information minister Sheikh Rashid said in Islamabad today that if New Delhi took one step towards friendship, his country would take two. Allegations that Pakistan was encouraging infiltration were borne of misconception, he added. “We are ready to increase the number of UN observers along the LoC.” — SNS/PTI

And while India bleeds Pakistan is modernising its armed forces, using force multipliers, upgrading its strategic and conventional strength. The Pakistan military is getting financial help from the USA and Gulf countries. It

has also benefited from foreign agencies rescheduling its debt.

Recently, Pakistan has bought 320 T-80 tanks (and is manufacturing another 20 indigenously), 900 guns of various calibre from 122 mm to 155 mm — of which

90 have been delivered, a considerable amount of electronic warfare and communication systems and unmanned aerial vehicles.

The report said:

■ The proxy war will continue. There could be destabilisation attempts across the country. There are 2,500 Pakistan-trained militants in J&K. About 4,500 more terrorists are either ready to enter India or are being trained in Pakistan or PoK.

■ Pakistan's nuclear doctrine looks at a ‘first use’ policy, unlike India's. There is also talk of a ‘one-rung escalation’ — from low intensity to nuclear war. China has also transferred nuclear and missile technology to Pakistan.

~~SECRET~~

21 APR 2003

## Jamali raises anti-India rhetoric

ISLAMABAD, April 15. — Stepping up the rhetoric, Pakistani Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali has said that Pakistan would go to "any extent" if attacked by India under the doctrine of pre-emption. "When it came to the sustenance and the defence of the country, we would go to any extent," he told a TV channel.

Referring to external affairs minister Mr Yashwant Sinha's remarks on pre-emptive strikes, he said: "I am not worried...we will not allow any pre-emptive strike". Pakistan would not start a war with India and it preferred to resolve issues through dialogue. He also reiterated that the Kashmir issue should be resolved through UN process.

**Pak army stays on high alert:** Despite the withdrawal of troops from the border, Pakistani army will remain on high alert, President Pervez Musharraf has said. He added that he was in touch with the USA, China and Saudi Arabia on the threat perceptions in South Asia. — PTI

STATE DEPT ALLEGES VIOLATION OF GLOBAL NUKE TREATY

# US pulls up Pak for backing ultras in J&K

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 1 APRIL

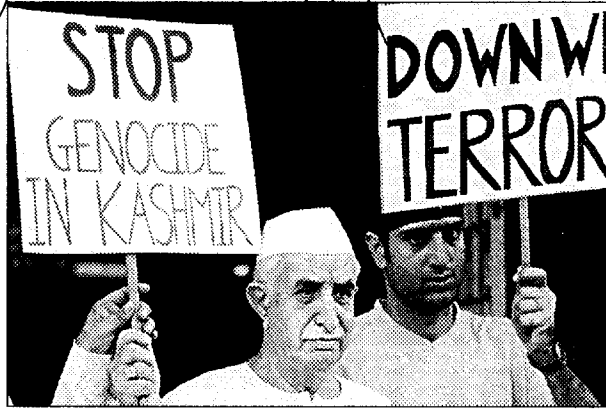
THE United States, one of the foremost supporters of the Musharraf regime, has handed out a severe snub to Pakistan. In the past 24 hours the US state department endorsed the Indian government's claim that despite the international pressure on it, Islamabad had continued to back armed intrusions in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), while at the same time accusing the rulers there of breaching the non-proliferation regime by selling nuclear know-how.

To New Delhi, the twin censures, though terribly belated, read like a strong endorsement of its case against Pakistan. It has all along accused Pakistan of being an "irresponsible" nuclear power, which never kept its promise to the international community to cease the export of armed jihadis to J&K and other parts of India.

The report, however, also showed that the US state department hasn't yet overcome its penchant for even-handedness towards the two South Asian neighbours. It stopped short of hailing last year's successful electoral exercise in J&K, limiting its endorsement to "somewhat fair." The niggardliness that flies in the face of the almost universal validation of the election as "fair," should disappoint the NDA government which only recently protested against the Bush administration's continued sermons for resumption of dialogue.

It can, however, take satisfaction from the references in the report to J&K. The document, on the whole, lend weight to the Indian position that Pakistani-backed armed intruders continued to cross into J&K throughout the year, masterminding numerous killings and committing human rights abuses.

The report specifically quoted



CRY KASHMIR: Kashmiris hold a rally in Mumbai on Tuesday to protest against the recent killings of pandits in the Valley. — AFP

last year's assault on the Raghunath Temple in Jammu, and the Kaluchak massacre to buttress its contention that there had been no let-up in Pakistan-backed terrorism. "The concerted campaign for execution style killings of civilians by Kashmiri and foreign-based militant groups continued and included several

killings of political leaders and party workers," the report said, adding that over 260 civilians, 250 security personnel and 370 militants were killed in politically-motivated violence during the year.

The report also blamed the militants for perpetrating human rights abuses.

## Yash fumes at Powell

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 1 APRIL

CONTROVERSIAL statements attributed to US secretary of state Colin Powell about the Indo-Pak issue being next on the US agenda has evoked a sharp response here, with external affairs minister Yashwant Sinha on Tuesday making it clear that the role of outsiders was "limited" to the central issue of cross border terrorism. Replying to questions on the purported remarks by General Powell, Mr Sinha firmly said India was capable of fighting its own war. The foreign minister indicated that any initiative will be welcome only in the context of the international war against terrorism.

"We are not waiting for somebody to come and solve this matter," Mr Sinha said. "And they (US) should be clear that their involvement, if any, can only be in the context of international campaign against terror and to the extent that they can pressure Pak to give up its support to terrorists. We will welcome any initiative from their side but are clear that this is our war," he said.

# Pak infiltrators in J-K worst human rights violators: US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, APRIL 1

PAKISTANI-backed armed intruders continued their incursions into Jammu and Kashmir throughout 2002 carrying out killings and numerous human rights abuses, the US State Department said in its annual



report for the year.

"The concerted campaign of execution-style killings of civilians by Kashmiri and foreign-based militant groups continued and included several killings of political leaders and party workers," the report re-

leased on Monday said. Militants were responsible for numerous serious abuses including killings of armed forces personnel, policemen, government officials and civilians, torture, rape and "other forms of brutality", it said. The ultras carried out kidnappings and extortions in Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeastern states, the report said. Quoting official government figures, it said militant activity increased notably during 2002 in Jammu and Kashmir.

In two separate attacks in May and November, terrorists entered the Raghunath temple in Jammu and killed 25 persons. While terming the October Assembly elections in the state as "somewhat fair", it noted that more than 260 civilians, 250 security personnel and 370 militants were killed during the year.

INDIAN EXPRESS

1/2/03