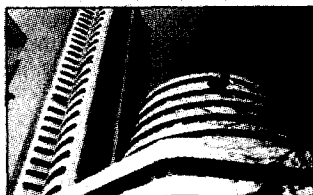


India, France sign Scorpene deal

New Delhi: In a major deal, India and France on Thursday signed an agreement for the construction of six Scorpene-class submarines in the country at a cost of 3.5 billion US dollars.

The agreement was signed here by additional secretary in defence ministry, S Banerjee, and French ambassador Dominique Girard. Under the agreement, India would build the submarines, armed with advanced stealth capabilities, at the state-owned Mazagon Docks in Mumbai under full transfer of technology.

The first submarine would be ready for induction within seven years of the signing of the contract and the remaining five would be delivered at intervals of one year each after that. The submarines would be laced with high levels of automation and armed with anti-ship Exocet missiles and wire-guided torpedos. Agencies



Sensex plunges by 196

points: Stocks appeared to be religiously following the bearish trend in global markets, as the country's key share market index plunged for the second consecutive day on Thursday. The BSE's benchmark 30-share sensex lost 196 points to close at 8,528.70, the second biggest drop in two weeks, as market players took yet another opportunity to book profits. The gravity of sales was so intense that it enveloped the bulk of index heavyweights. Metal and banking stocks took the maximum beating, losing 3.94 and 3.27 per cent respectively, as against the 2.24 per cent fall suffered by the sensitive index. Domestic investors, including mutual funds, were believed to be heavy sellers in a number of counters during the day.

CM, REVELLERS TARGET: LETTER

Bomb threats send B'lore cops into tizzy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

31/12
D. S. K. Kumbh

Bangalore: Two days after the terror attack at the IISc campus, chaos prevailed in Bangalore on Friday after some newspapers, including The Times of India, received a letter saying bombs would go off at the chief minister's residence and Grand Ashok Hotel on Saturday night. And, compounding the confusion was a series of bomb hoaxes at IBM office on Airport Road, Forum Mall, Garuda Mall, Oxford College in JP Nagar, Krupanidhi College in Koramangala and Embassy Park in Banaswadi, sending the police into a tizzy.

The bomb hoaxes were taken extremely seriously, with the police asking all employees to vacate the building at IBM and conducting checks at all the other places as well.

With the situation in the city turning tense over the last two days, the police, not willing to take chances, have thrown a security blanket around the chief minister's residence, his office and Hotel Grand Ashok. Every person entering the CM's residence is being screened thoroughly and sniffer dogs have been pressed into service. Even food items going in are being checked. Security has also been beefed up for other ministers.

The letter faxed to the publications warned that six men belonging to the Al Jihad outfit were in the city and would trigger powerful blasts at 10.30 pm, during the new year's eve revelry, at the hotel and two human bombs—Sarla and Hanif—would trigger another blast at the CM's residence during the chaos at the hotel. "It will be one of the most systematic executions ever to take place in the country," it said.

Suspects grilled in Hyderabad

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore: Although the city police are still to establish which group was responsible for the shootout at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, some suspects have been rounded up in Hyderabad and are being questioned.

Confirming that some suspects had been rounded up on Friday, Karnataka DG-IGP B S Sial said the investigators were looking for connections these suspects might have with the perpetrators of Wednesday evening's attack in Bangalore.

Meanwhile, the Bangalore police have got sketchy details of the suspect collected after speaking to the injured victims and other eye witnesses. The portrait of the suspect has been made and it will be sent to various security agencies in the country. The police are also in touch with the IB and their counterparts in Delhi, AP, TN and Mumbai to obtain more clues in connection with the case.



Bangalore police chief A K Singh displays a computer-generated sketch of a suspect involved in the IISc firing

Terror On Tech Turf P 10

THE TIMES OF INDIA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2005

Enhancing institutional security

Winter is the season when countless scientific conferences and meetings are held in cities across India, and many of these attract delegates from abroad. These are occasions to hear about the latest work being done, discuss important issues, and network with one's peers. It was one such meeting organised by the Operations Research Society of India at the Indian Institute of Science's J.N.Tata Auditorium — a favoured venue in Bangalore for scientific meetings — that was targeted by terrorists, probably from the Lashkar-e-Taiba group. The murderous attack has stunned the scientific community, and led overnight to many of India's leading academic and research institutions reassessing their campus security. But 'hardening' a sprawling campus where a large number of people live and work, and which many visit daily is no easy matter. IISc, for instance, is spread over some 400 acres of land; employs about 440 teaching and academic staff plus 900 administrative and support staff; has 2,000 students; and is a place visited by hundreds of people every day. Increasing security entails two kinds of costs. One is monetary, which can be considerable. The other is inconvenience: if security procedures become onerous, the institution's links with the larger community of scientists and society will be severely damaged. As the director of a leading national research laboratory remarked, an academic institute cannot — and should not — be secured like a military base. IISc will be increasing its security but will strive to do this in a non-intrusive way through a mix of technology and management, according to its director, P. Balaram.

Moreover, when the aim is to spread fear through mayhem and create a sense of vulnerability, there is no dearth of 'soft' targets in Bangalore — or, for that matter, in any southern city — for determined terrorists. As these cities are in the cross hairs because they exemplify India's growing prowess in science and industry, systematic steps to counter the threat are vital. One step the police and intelligence agencies can take is to identify in each such city the important companies and institutions that terrorists are most likely to target. These institutions can then take measures to enhance their security. But as with IISc, there is only so much any one institution will be able to do. So putting in place city-wide measures against terrorism is an imperative. In London, for instance, a wide network of surveillance cameras proved invaluable in swiftly identifying the perpetrators of the July 2005 bombings. Likewise, it is important to make sure that the local police have the tools they need to cope with terrorist organisations and terror attacks, including the latest in technology and the training needed to wield it effectively. But even if all of this is done, the painful truth is that absolute security is going to be impossible.

THE HINDU

Portrait of suspect released

Attackers were not locals, says DGP; Army teams to be deployed on New Year's Eve

K.V. Subramanya

BANGALORE: While the Bangalore police are yet to achieve a breakthrough in Wednesday's terrorist attack at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), experts say the grenades found on the premises were made in China and were of "Warsaw Pact origin."

Sources in the State police told *The Hindu* that the three grenades, an AK-56 assault rifle and live bullets recovered from the scene of attack, were all made in China. Classified as "anti-personnel grenades", they are used against tank crew during the wars, the sources said.

Such grenades are used during hijacking of aircraft and cause serious impact when exploded in a compact area. Had the grenades exploded on the IISc campus, several people would have been killed, the sources said.

The police have recovered live bullets of a 7.62 Takare pistol from the scene. "The attacker, who opened fire with the AK-56 rifle, has left it behind and carried the pistol with him," the sources said.

An Urdu newspaper on which "Ganganagar" was scribbled was found at the scene of the attack, the sources said.

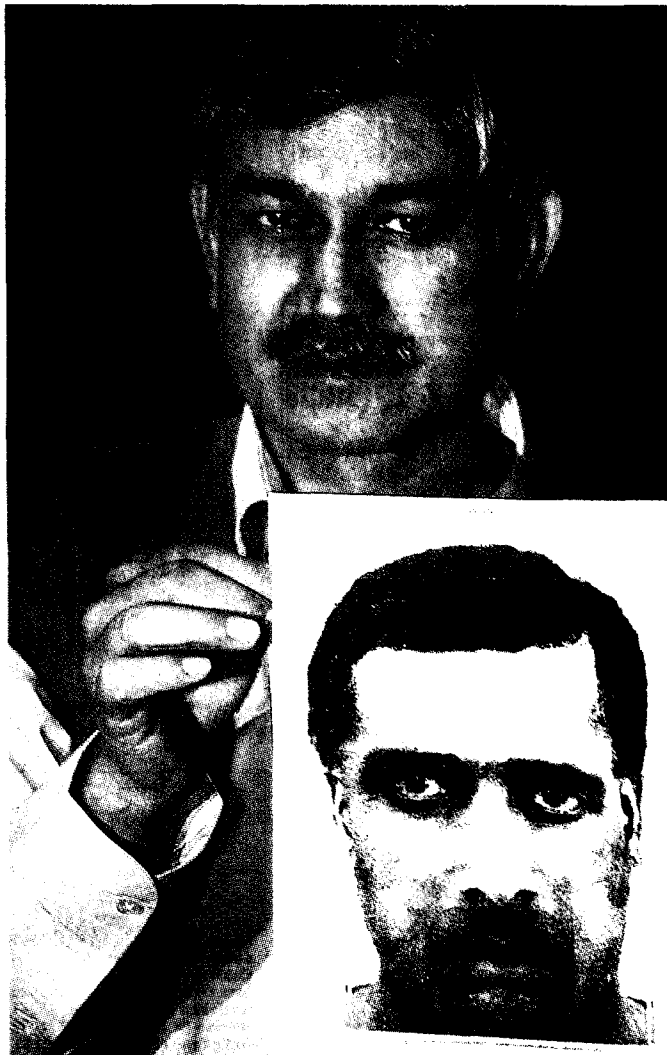
Despatched

Commissioner of Police Ajai Kumar Singh told presspersons that the police have not achieved a major breakthrough so far. "On credible information, we have sent a team outside the State for investigation," he said.

Sources in the city police said the team, led by a Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), had been sent to Hyderabad, where three suspected terrorists had been arrested. "We are yet to ascertain whether the three have any link with Wednesday's attack," the sources said.

Mr. Singh released to the media a computer-generated portrait of the suspected attacker, prepared on the inputs given by the eyewitnesses. The suspect is said to be in his late twenties and about 5.9-ft. tall. He said the indications were that the attacker was alone. He was not sure if the attacker had reached the spot in a vehicle.

Mr. Singh said the Bangalore police were in touch with their counterparts in Rajasthan, Jam-



FACE OF TERROR: Police Commissioner Ajai Kumar Singh displaying to the media, in Bangalore on Friday, a computer-generated image of the suspect in Wednesday's terrorist attack at the Indian Institute of Science. At right, the IBM campus being evacuated after a bomb scare. — PHOTOS: BHAGYA PRAKASH.K AND MURALI KUMAR

mu and Kashmir, New Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad and the Intelligence Bureau. "The security agencies in all these places have told us that they had no definite prior information on the attack on the IISc."

Special team

He said a special team, led by a Deputy Inspector-General of Police and comprising a DCP, three Assistant Commissioners of Police and five inspectors, was investigating the case. He said the police would coordinate with IISc authorities in devising a security system for the institute.

Mr. Singh said that in the wake of the fax message received by some newspapers in the city on Thursday night that "Al-Jihadees" will trigger explosions at

Hotel Grand Ashoka and the Chief Minister's residence on the night of December 31, anti-sabotage checks were conducted at both the places. The police did not find any explosives, he said.

Security has been heightened for the New Year Eve celebrations in the wake of the threat and quick reaction teams from the Army will be deployed, he said.

Mr. Singh said some calls stating that bombs have been planted at a few places were received on Friday and all of them turned out to be hoax.

To a question, he said the police would take up with the higher-ups the issue of establishing a special counter-intelligence unit in the city in the wake of the terrorist attack. The State Gov-



ernment had decided to raise the level of mobile patrolling, he said.

"Defective grenade"

Chief Minister N. Dharam Singh, who participated in the Civil-Military Liaison Conference, said security had been provided to Hotel Grand Ashoka. Major General B. Shivashankar, General Officer Commanding, Southern Area, said the fact that one of the recovered grenades had its pin removed but had not exploded indicated that it was defective. Director-General and Inspector-General of Police B.S. Sial told presspersons on the occasion that the presence of dried dates found in a bag recovered on the IISc campus showed that the "attackers were not local

people."

Regarding the claim made by some official sources that Prof. Vijay Chandru had come forward to provide details of the attackers (as reported in these columns on Friday), family sources clarified that Prof. Chandru had not made any such statement. "He was hit by bullets and fell down, and was in no position to gather any details at that point of time," said one family source. "Since the incident, Prof. Chandru has not been in a position to speak at all," the source added.

Prof. Chandru is progressing well after a surgical procedure.

More reports on Page 12

"Terrorism an impediment to peace process"

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Though investigations into Wednesday's armed attack at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore were still continuing, the government has no information at this point linking Pakistan-based terrorist organisations to the incident, official sources said here Friday.

At the same time, the sources expressed concern at the effect the Bangalore incident -- and other recent terrorist attacks -- might have on the Indian public's attitude towards the peace process with Pakistan. "If we were looking at the discernible trend of violence across the border and of terrorist incidents,

then it is clear that a downward pattern has not emerged", the sources said, adding that the commitment made by Pakistan "at the highest level" that no part of territory under its control would be used to launch violence against India "remains to be fulfilled".

Composite dialogue

The sources expressed the hope that the third round of composite dialogue -- which would begin when the Pakistani foreign secretary met his Indian counterpart in New Delhi in the third week of January -- would lead to a further improvement in bilateral relations. "But our point to Pakistan is that the phe-

nomenon of cross-border terrorism hangs like a big question mark over this whole process... If the trend of reduction in cross-border terrorism does not emerge, then the public opinion, which today favours dialogue will start evaporating. We have to be sensitive to this".

Asked about recent Pakistani proposals for a "self-governance"-based solution to the Kashmir problem, the sources said Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had responded to Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz when the latter had raised the issue during their meeting in Dhaka last month. According to the sources, Dr Singh had said there was already self-govern-

ment in Jammu and Kashmir and "pointed to the lack of representative institutions in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and particularly Gilgit-Baltistan". At the same time, the sources reiterated the recent statement made by National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan that if Pakistan had any fresh ideas on self-governance they should raise these through the "back-channel" process with India.

Balochistan situation

The official sources denied there was anything untoward or provocative in the External Affairs Ministry's recent statement on the situation in Balochistan. "There is a certain

serious situation that has been developing in Balochistan and when [the government was] asked for its views, [it] gave a restrained answer".

The sources rejected the suggestion that the statement amounted to waving a red rag at Pakistan. "Red rags are waved at us on a daily basis", the sources said.

Asked why India was concerned only about Balochistan and had not expressed its concern about the American use of "helicopter gunships and jet fighters" in its attempts to quell the violence in Iraq, the sources insisted there was no symmetry between Balochistan and Iraq.

প্রতিরক্ষা গবেষণায় ধাক্কা দিতেই পুরী-হত্যা, সন্দেহ

দিগন্ত বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় • নয়াদিল্লি

২৯ ডিসেম্বর: এক টিলে তিন পাখি।

কাল রাতে বাঙ্গালোরের আইআইএসে এক বিজ্ঞানীকে হত্যা করে জঙ্গিরা এক সঙ্গে তিনটি বার্তা পৌঁছে দিতে চেয়েছে বলে মনে করছেন কেন্দ্রীয় গোয়েন্দারা।

দিল্লি আইআইটি'র প্রাক্তন অধ্যাপক মুনীশ চন্দ্র পুরী বর্তমানে প্রতিরক্ষা মন্ত্রকের একটি গোপন গবেষণা প্রকল্পের সঙ্গে যুক্ত ছিলেন। এমন একটি বিশেষ বিমান তৈরির ব্যাপারে গবেষণা হচ্ছিল, যে বিমানের বায়ুর পরিমাপের তারতম্য ঘটিয়ে যেখানে খুশি সেটি নামানো সম্ভব হবে। পুরীর কর্মদক্ষতা এতটাই ছিল যে, আইআইটি'র গণিত বিভাগ থেকে অবসর নেওয়ার পরেও তাঁকে 'এমিরেটাস ফেলো' সম্মানে ভূষিত করা হয়। রাষ্ট্রপতি এ পি জে আব্দুল কালামের ঘনিষ্ঠও ছিলেন তিনি। গোয়েন্দারা মনে করছেন, এই কারণে গতকালের হামলায় এম সি পুরীই শুধু লক্ষ্য হতে পারেন। কারণ, এ কে-৫৬ বা ৪৭ থেকে গুলি চালালে মাত্র এক জনের মৃত্যু হওয়াটা একটু 'অস্বাভাবিক'। যদিও এই গবেষণায় আরও অনেকে যুক্ত রয়েছেন, তবু প্রাক্তন এই অধ্যাপককে হত্যা করে জঙ্গিরা প্রতিরক্ষা গবেষণার বিরুদ্ধে কোনও বার্তা দিয়ে চেয়েছে বলে গোয়েন্দাদের ধারণা।

দ্বিতীয় যে কারণটি গোয়েন্দাদের মাথায় ঘুরছে সেটা হল, যদি এ ভাবে 'সফট টার্গেট' করে কোনও এক বিজ্ঞানীকে মারাই উদ্দেশ্য ছিল, তা হলে বাঙ্গালোর কেন? দেশের অন্য যে কোনও জায়গায় এই ঘটনা ঘটানো যেত অনায়াসে। এ যাবৎ বড়সড় জঙ্গি হানার ঘটনা মূলত ঘটেছে উত্তর ভারতেই। দিল্লি, শ্রীনগর কিংবা অযোধ্যায়। কিন্তু গত অক্টোবরে হায়দরাবাদে স্পেশাল টাস্ক ফোর্সের দফতরে হঠাৎই জঙ্গি হানার পরে নড়েচড়ে বসে পুলিশ ও গোয়েন্দা বাহিনী। সম্প্রতি হায়দরাবাদ ও পশ্চিমবঙ্গ থেকে তিন জঙ্গি ধরা পড়ার পরে পুলিশ জানতে পারে, দক্ষিণ ভারতের বিভিন্ন জায়গাতেও হানাদারির ছক কষছে জঙ্গিরা। এ রকম কিছু নির্দিষ্ট খবর দক্ষিণের রাজ্যগুলিকে জানিয়েছিল কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রক। গোয়েন্দারা মনে করছে, তথ্যপ্রযুক্তির কেন্দ্র হিসাবে বাঙ্গালোরের বিশ্ব মানচিত্রে ঠাঁই করে নিয়েছে। ফলে এখানে হামলা হলে আন্তর্জাতিক মহলে আলোড়ন উঠতে বাধ্য।

কিন্তু স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রকের কাছে সব থেকে উদ্বেগের হল, আক্রমণের লক্ষ্য হিসাবে এক জন বিজ্ঞানীকে বেছে নেওয়া।

দেশের প্রথম সারির হাতে গোনা কয়েক জন ছাড়া অধিকাংশ বিজ্ঞানী, শিক্ষাবিদই কোনও নিরাপত্তা নেন না। ফলে তাঁদের আক্রমণ করা খুবই সহজ। কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্রসচিব ডি কে দুগ্ললও এ নিয়ে উদ্বেগ প্রকাশ করে বলেছেন, "এই হামলার উদ্দেশ্য যা-ই হোক, বিজ্ঞানীকে হত্যা করা ঘোর নিশ্চয়। বিজ্ঞানীদের কাজ কোনও একটি দেশের সীমায় বেঁধে রাখা যায় না। গবেষণার সফল সকলেই ভোগ করেন।" আজই দেশের প্রথম সারির সব প্রতিরক্ষা ও পরমাণু বিজ্ঞানী ও প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিরাপত্তা বাড়িয়ে দেওয়ার নির্দেশ দেওয়া হয়েছে। নিয়োগ করা হয়েছে 'কুইক রিঅ্যাকশন টিম'।

পরিস্থিতি খতিয়ে দেখতে আজ সকালে রাজ্য পুলিশের পদস্থ কর্তাদের সঙ্গে বৈঠক করেন কর্নটকের মুখ্যমন্ত্রী ধর্ম সিংহ। পরে সাংবাদিকদের জানান, ঘটনাস্থল থেকে কিছু সূত্র মিলেছে, যার সাহায্যে শীঘ্রই জঙ্গিদের ধরে ফেলা যাবে বলে তিনি আশাবাদী। আক্রমণের পদ্ধতি দেখে গতকালের ঘটনার পিছনে লঙ্কর-ই-তইবার হাত আছে বলে সন্দেহ করছে বাঙ্গালোর পুলিশ। গত বছর পাকিস্তানে লঙ্করের বার্ষিক সভায় ভারতের তথ্যপ্রযুক্তি শিল্পের উপর আঘাত হানার কথা ঘোষণা হয়। স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রক কর্নটিক, অন্ধপ্রদেশকে তা জানিয়েছিল। কিন্তু বাঙ্গালোরের ইন্ডিয়ান ইন্সটিটিউট অফ সায়েন্সে যে হামলা হবে, তা নিয়ে আগাম খবর গোয়েন্দাদের কাছে ছিল না। তথ্যপ্রযুক্তি প্রতিষ্ঠানের উপরে হামলা হতে পারে বলে আজ সতর্ক করেছে স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রক। 'ন্যাসকম'-এর চেয়ারম্যান কিরণ কারনিক রাজ্য সরকারের বসে এই শিল্পের নিরাপত্তার বিষয়টি পর্যালোচনা করে দেখবেন।

ধর্ম সিংহ আজ প্রধানমন্ত্রী মনমোহন সিংহ, সনিয়া গান্ধী, স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী শিবরাজ পাটিলের সঙ্গেও কথা বলেন। কেন্দ্রীয় মন্ত্রিসভার বৈঠকের পরে অর্থমন্ত্রী পি চিদম্বরম বলেন, তদন্তে যদি দেখা যায়, এটি সংগঠিত জঙ্গি হানা, তা হলে বাঙ্গালোরের মতো শহরে এ ঘটনা মোকাবিলার জন্য নির্দিষ্ট পরিকল্পনা দরকার। বিচ্ছিন্ন ঘটনা হলে রাজ্যকে ব্যবস্থা নিতে হবে।

আর এ ঘটনার সুযোগে কেন্দ্রের বিরুদ্ধে মুখর হয়েছে বিজেপি। লালকৃষ্ণ আডবাণী আজ মনমোহন সরকারকে এক হাত নিয়ে বলেছেন, দেশের অভ্যন্তরে নিরাপত্তার ব্যবস্থা করতে কেন্দ্র ব্যর্থ। পাক-মদতে একের পর এক জঙ্গি হানার ঘটনা ঘটা সত্ত্বেও কেন্দ্র ইসলামাবাদের সঙ্গে শান্তি আলোচনা চালিয়ে যাওয়ার সমালোচনা করেছেন বিজেপি সভাপতি।

● সঙ্কটে 'ব্র্যান্ড বাঙ্গালোর'ই... পৃঃ ৬

Science wakes up to a stifling new world

'Soft targets' resigned to risk

GS. MUDUR

New Delhi, Dec. 29: Despite enhanced vigilance, it will not be easy to protect India's science establishments from terrorist strikes because of their culture of unfettered interaction and openness, scientists and policy-makers said today.

The attack in Bangalore, the first apparent terrorist strike at an Indian scientific institution, has prompted scientists to rethink security strategies. But science establishments will remain "soft targets", they chorused.

"I'm deeply worried," said Raghunath Mashelkar, the director-general of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). With 40 laboratories involved in areas of economic and strategic importance, the CSIR is the country's largest research agency.

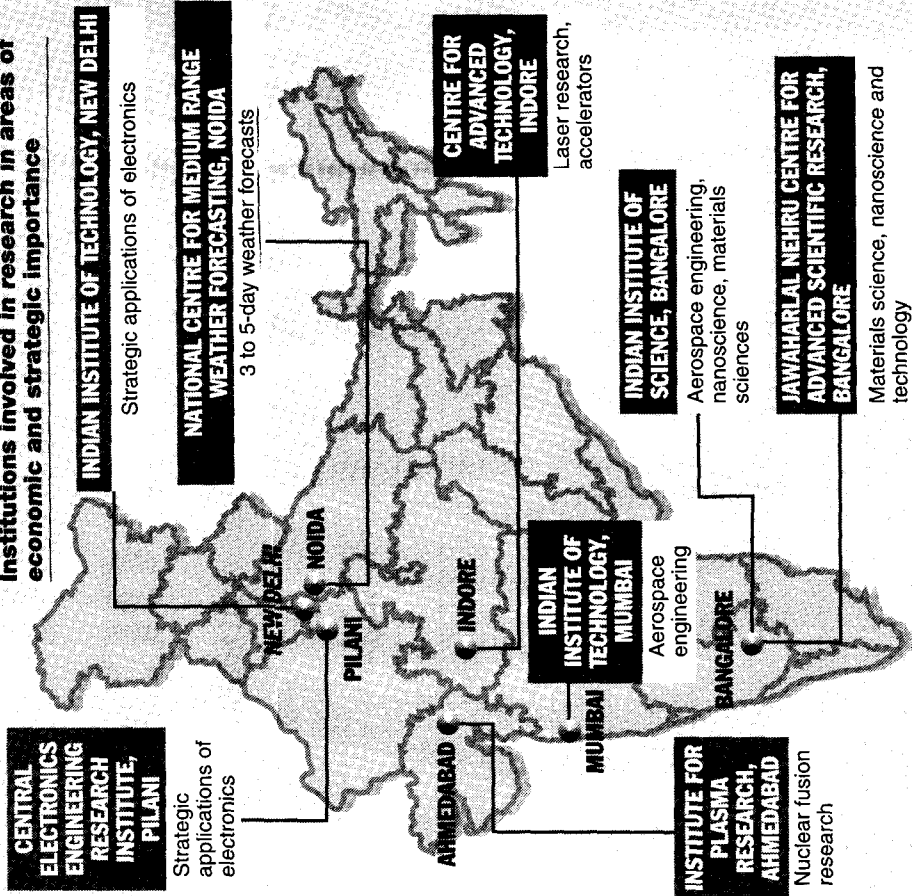
"Scientists cannot build fortresses around themselves. Our science labs will remain vulnerable. The level of intelligence needs to be stepped up," Mashelkar said.

India's space, defence and atomic energy centres have relatively rigorous security systems in place. But academic institutions like the Indian Institute of Science, the IITs and autonomous science institutes have, as one scientist put it, "porous borders".

Many science institutions allow and encourage unhindered interaction with people. "In some places, we don't even have minimum security today. It makes us soft targets. We'll have to do something,

INDIA'S THINK-TANK TERRAIN

Institutions involved in research in areas of economic and strategic importance



but can't overdo it," said C.N.R. Rao, who heads the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Prime Minister (SAC-PM).

For terrorists eyeing India's economic or strategic assets, scientists would be possible targets in both their workplaces and homes, analysts said. A leading scientist who is a senior adviser to the central government, for instance, goes out for morning walk at 4.45 when it is still dark and roads are deserted.

"And when the SAC-PM meets, you have 28 of the nation's top scientists at one place, with virtually no security," said a senior scientist. "We're trying to be extra

vigilant, but we have a large 50-acre complex," said Dr P.K. Kaw, the director of the Institute for Plasma Research in Ahmedabad, an institution under the department of atomic energy, pursuing nuclear fusion research.

An official said it would be impossible to provide a security umbrella to everyone all the time. "Open conferences are routine in science," said science and technology secretary Valangimam Ramamurthy.

Scientists said the choice of last night's target was not surprising. "Bangalore is India's science city," Rao said. "It was a science city long before it became a software city."

With the IISc, the National Centre for Biological Sciences, the Raman Research Institute, the National Aerospace Laboratories and several space and defence laboratories, Bangalore has the nation's highest population of scientists.

At the Centre for Advanced Research in Indore, an institution under the department of atomic energy involved in advanced laser technologies, officials met today to check entry into its campus. "It will cause some inconvenience to friends who might be visiting our township," said its director Vinod Sahni. "But we live in times when they'll have to get used to it."

Anger tinged with tension

CHARU SUDAN KASTURI

New Delhi, Dec. 29: Shaking off the numbness that had gripped them last night, faculty and students at IIT Delhi today assembled to remember a "gentle and helpful" friend and speak out against his "cowardly" killers.

But anger was tinged with apprehension on the campus a day after Dr M.C. Puri, professor emeritus of mathematics, was gunned down in Bangalore in what appears to have been a terrorist strike on a scientific seminar.

"We may be shocked, even stunned, but more than anything else we are full of questions for those who carried out this dastardly act. What did they gain by shooting at Sir?" said Rajat, who had been studying under Puri for the past two years. "They can't scare us."

But several teachers betrayed the chilling realisation, brought home to them suddenly, that they, too, could become targets of terrorist attacks. "Dr Puri was a role model for younger professors like me. I will now feel scared to attend such conferences," said maths professor Dr Suresh Chandra.

The entire faculty, along with almost a hundred students and officials, gathered at noon to remember Puri at the institute's convocation hall today.

Dr D.P. Kothari, deputy director (administration), said he had known Puri for nearly two decades and had



Relatives escort M.C. Puri's son Saurav out of a hospital in Bangalore on Thursday. (PTI)

shared a close friendship with him.

The students were "very angry and upset". "We just know that Sir was targeted because he was easy to kill. Those who did this are absolute cowards," said Sanyog, a final-year student, as he gazed at his former teacher's photograph.

"This would have come as a shock not only to IITians but to the entire teaching community and scientific Colleagues spoke warmly

of the dead professor. "He was a very gentle man and very helpful. I joined the IIT maths department only a couple of years ago. It was my first teaching experience. He helped me a lot," said Dr S. Dharamraja.

An acquaintance said: "Puri saab could not have had any personal enemies. All this is beyond belief."

Terrorist attack was predicted

Architect of Lashkar's Akshardham temple attack had visited Bangalore

Praveen Swami

NEW DELHI: The Karnataka Government received a warning of an imminent terrorist strike in Bangalore less than a fortnight before Wednesday's attack on the Indian Institute of Science.

Sources said the warning was based on an Intelligence Bureau signals intelligence operation that monitored communications between two Lashkar-e-Taiba operatives in New Delhi. Although intelligence sources admitted the warning did not contain information that could have enabled the Bangalore police to prevent the strike, they said officials and institutions had been slow to address their vulnerabilities.

Lashkar operatives had been attempting to execute a major strike in Bangalore since 2001, in the months preceding the Jaish-e-Mohammad attack on Parliament House. Mohammad Arif 'Ashfaq', the Lashkar operative who recently received a death sentence for his role in the attack on the Red Fort in New Delhi, told his interrogators that a separate terror cell had been ordered to blow up information technology baron Azim Premji's farmhouse. Investigators believe the 2001 attack failed because of the Lashkar's inability to recruit locals. At the end of the year, the Lashkar's structure was dislocated by the elimination of its top commander for all-India operations, code-named Abu Adnan, in an encounter in New Delhi. Lashkar activities were then scaled back by Pakistan's covert services during the 2001-02 India-Pakistan crisis to prevent a war-provoking incident.

By mid-2002, with the crisis out of the way, the Lashkar's efforts to target Bangalore were renewed.

That summer, the BSF's General Branch — its cryptically-

named intelligence wing — succeeded in eliminating the Lashkar's top leader in Jammu and Kashmir, Manzoor Zahid Chaudhuri, responsible for the 2002 attack on the Akshardham Temple in Gandhinagar and an attempt to storm the makeshift temple at the site of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya.

From a laptop discovered in Chaudhuri's hideout, Indian intelligence gained insights into the existence of a growing Lashkar network operating out of Bangalore. Chaudhuri, it turned out, had held discussions on potential targets with an undercover Lashkar operative code-named 'Imran' planted in Bangalore several years earlier. Using the alias Mohammad Wasim Bhat, Chaudhuri stayed at the Vardhaman Hotel for several days in May 2002, before returning to Jammu through Chennai.

Building the network

The Lashkar continued to build its capability in Bangalore. Shahid Ahmad, a Pakistani national who took charge of all-India Lashkar operations in 2003, focussed on recruiting ethnic-Kashmiri students studying outside the State. Manzoor Chilloo, a Pune-based medical student, was tasked with facilitating an attack on the Mumbai Stock Exchange. Students in Bangalore were also approached, with some success.

Evidence emerged in recent months that the Lashkar felt it now had the resources it needed to strike. In March, the Delhi Police eliminated three Lashkar terrorists who had visited Bangalore in December 2004. Pakistani nationals Bilawal Ahmad and Mohammad Shahnawaz, along with a Patna resident Pervez Ahmed, are thought to have met local Lashkar contacts during their visit to their city. However, efforts to identify them again failed.



THE ECONOMIC TIMES

FRIDAY 30 DECEMBER 2005

Combating terror A Joint Battle For State And Civil Society

WE'RE in it all together. That is the clear message from the horror enacted in Bangalore by terrorists Wednesday night. No one is exempt, no one can take their own security for granted. It is easy to blame the government for security lapses — indeed, security was lax at the IISc, after the government got the specific information that Bangalore is being targeted by terrorists. Yes, an institution like IISc can and should be guarded better. But there are so many other soft targets — cinema halls, shopping malls, restaurants, railway stations, schools — that it is futile to place the entire burden of security on the state machinery. Even if the government releases all those policemen currently guarding our cash-for-questions specimens for policing the populace at large, they will be spread out too thin to be effective in terms of conventional policing. Which is why we need to have systems and procedures in place that minimise risk and cope, when something nasty happens. Society at large has to realise that it is collectively at risk and that every individual has a role to play in guarding against and foiling terror attacks. It is up to the government and the political leadership to institute effective frameworks for coordinated action by the citizenry and ensure voluntary involvement.

J. D. M. K. K. K.
This is a complex, multifaceted challenge. It means politics that eschews both communal hatred, which sows the seeds of terror, and appeasement of communalism, which allows the malaise to spread. It means inclusive politics and justice that do not close all avenues other than violence. It means throwing out the legacy of the caste culture that fragments society, to enlarge the framework of cooperation beyond one's own group to the entire nation. It calls for replacing custom and tradition as guidelines for personal conduct with disciplined adherence to new systems of organised action. Ad-hocism and quick fixes must give way to strong systems. Alongside vastly improved intelligence and policing systems, we need civil society vigilance to combat terror, which holds life and all its splendours in contempt.

30 DEC 2005

The Economic Times

A terrorist strike: Dharam Singh

S: DB of Seminars 110-1 30/12

Sophisticated arms were used

K.V. Subramanya

BANGALORE: Karnataka Chief Minister N. Dharam Singh has confirmed that Wednesday's attack in the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) here was the handiwork of terrorists.

After reviewing security measures with officials on Thursday, he told presspersons that the police were yet to ascertain the identity of the terrorist organisation, which carried out the "planned attack." M.C. Puri, a retired professor of the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi, was killed and four others were injured.

Mr. Dharam Singh said on Thursday that though no outfit claimed responsibility, the use of sophisticated weapons clearly suggested that the intruders were terrorists. The police found some clues and were working on them.

The Chief Minister said Pan-kaj Gupta, a scientist from New Delhi who was injured, had some information about the attackers. As he was in shock and admitted to hospital, it would take some time to obtain details.

The police are planning to generate a portrait of the attacker on the basis of Dr. Gupta's information.

Official sources said another injured scientist, Vijay Chandru of the IISc, too had come forward to provide details of the attackers.

Arms, ammunition found

Meanwhile, the police on Thursday found an AK-56 assault rifle, a Browning pistol, a hand grenade and an empty magazine of an automatic rifle near the J.N. Tata auditorium on the IISc campus. They also found a bag containing a pair of jeans and tissue paper.

On Wednesday, the police found five magazines, of which three were fully loaded, two grenades and 11 spent bullets.

Sources in the security and intelligence agencies told *The Hindu* that the casing of the bullets indicated that they were fired from more than one weapon, probably from the AK-56 rifle and an AK-47 rifle.

The fact that at least two weapons were used and grenades lobbed clearly indicated that more than two persons carried out the attack, the sources said. But they were not sure whether the attackers had come in a white Ambassador car as reported in a section of the media.

They said they suspected the terrorists undertook a "reconnaissance" of the IISc premises at least 12 hours prior to the attack. The terrorist organisation, suspected to be Lashkar-e-Taiba, could have carried out the attack through "local recruits."

The Chief Minister said he had spoken to Union Home Minister Shivaraj Patil, and State officials were in touch with the Central intelligence and security agencies.

Mr. Dharam Singh appealed to all citizens as well as information technology and biotechnology industries, which are facing threats from terrorist outfits, to remain calm. Security was heightened.

The Government decided to provide tight security to all national and international seminars to be held in the city. The former Indian Space Research Organisation Chairman and Rajya Sabha member, K. Kasturirangan, was not the target of the attack, Mr. Dharam Singh said.

Director-General and Inspector-General of Police B. Sial reiterated that there was no specific alert by the Central intelligence agencies on the terrorist attack. "The alerts we had received were general in nature," he said.

Editorial on Page 10,
more reports on Page 12



TAKING STOCK: Karnataka Chief Minister N. Dharam Singh visits the IISc campus in Bangalore on Thursday where a scientist was shot dead and five others injured on Wednesday allegedly by terrorists. - PHOTO: K. GOPINATHAN

30 DEC 2005

THE HINDU

Scientist killed as intruders open fire

49-1
29/12

Outrage on IISc campus in Bangalore

Staff Reporter

BANGALORE: Terror struck Bangalore, as two armed men sprayed bullets on six scientists, killing one of them, at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc.) here on Wednesday evening.

Five of the six scientists were taken to M.S. Ramaiah Hospital, where N.C. Puri from Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, died. Three others were identified as Vijay Patel, Laboratory Assistant; Sangeeta, and Pankaj Gupta. Vijay Chandra, Professor at IISc., was operated upon at Mallige Hospital.

The intruders fled the scene in a car. The drama unfolded between 7 p.m. and 7.15 p.m., when the two assailants, armed

with an automatic rifle, reached the J.N. Tata Auditorium complex. Within a few seconds, they started firing at the scientists, who were walking from the auditorium to an adjoining building after an international seminar on "Operations Research Applications in Infrastructure Development".

The armed men started firing at a laboratory. A car at the auditorium was damaged. The police found a magazine of the automatic rifle and a grenade at the spot. Commissioner of Police Ajai Kumar Singh said only ballistic experts could confirm whether the bullets were fired from an "AK-47" rifle.

On the identity of the assailants, Mr. Singh said: "We cannot now say whether they were terrorists."

29 DEC 2005

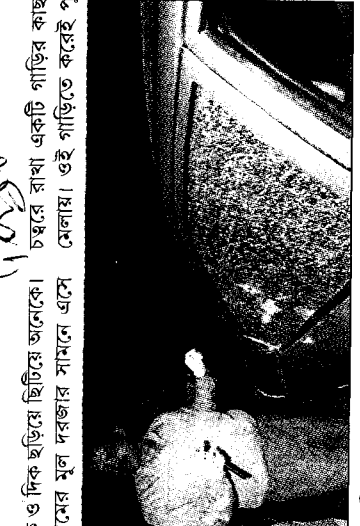
THE HINDU

বাস্তালোর আইআইএসে হানায় হত বিজ্ঞানী, সন্দেহ লঙ্করকে

বাস্তালোর, ২৮ ডিসেম্বর: আব সালেমকে নিয়েই আজ দিনতর মাথাব্যথা ছিল পুলিশের। লাই ডিটেক্টর টেস্টের জন্য শহরে নিয়ে আসা হয়েছে উনাকে। তার নিরাপত্তা নিয়ে ব্যস্ততার ফাঁকেই আচমকা জঙ্গি হামলায় কার্যত দিশাহারা বাস্তালোরের পুলিশ কর্তারা।

বৃধবার রাত সাড়ে সাতটা নাগাদ ইন্ডিয়ান ইনস্টিটিউট অফ সায়েন্সে চড়াও হওয়া জঙ্গিদের গুলিতে প্রাণ হারিয়েছেন এক বিজ্ঞানী। দিল্লি আইআইটি'র ওই প্রাক্তন অধ্যাপক এম সি পুরী একটি গোপন প্রতিরক্ষা জঙ্গিরা এসেছিল কি না, তা অবশ্য এখনই বলতে পারেনি পুলিশ-প্রশাসন। কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রকের ধারণা, লঙ্কর-ই-তইবার সমর্থনপুষ্ট কয়েকটি ছোট জঙ্গি গোষ্ঠী এই হামলার সঙ্গে জড়িত। তেমন ইস্তিত দিয়েছেন স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী শিবরাজ পাটিলও। তবে কেনও জঙ্গি গোষ্ঠী রাত পর্যন্ত হামলার দায় স্বীকার করেনি।

চার নম্বর জাতীয় সড়কের দু'দিক জুড়ে আইআইএসের চহর। এক দিকে মূল ভবন। অন্য দিকে জে এন টাটা অডিটোরিয়াম। সেখানেই চলছিল একটি আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন। সাতটা কুড়ি। সম্মেলন সবে শেষ



গুলিতে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত গাড়ি। আইআইএস চহরে। — এ এফ পি

হয়েছে। জিয়ার যাওয়ার আগে এ দিক ও দিক ছড়িয়ে ছিটিয়ে অনেকে। জাতীয় সড়ক লাগোয়া অডিটোরিয়ামের মূল দরজার সামনে এসে থামল একটি সাদা অ্যাম্বাসাডার।

তার থেকে নেমেই গুলি চালাতে শুরু করে মুখ ঢাকা জঙ্গিরা। জঙ্গিদের সংখ্যা কত তা নিয়ে সংশয় আছে। এক প্রত্যক্ষদর্শী জানিয়েছেন, দু'জন লোক গুলি চালিয়েছেন। তবে তাদের সঙ্গী আরও কয়েক জনের থাকা অসম্ভব নয় বলেই মনে করছে পুলিশ।

জয়েন্ট কমিশনার (ক্রাইম) নারায়ণ গৌড়া বলেছেন, চার-পাঁচ জন জঙ্গি ওই অ্যাম্বাসাডারে চড়ে এসেছিল। জঙ্গিদের মূল লক্ষ্য অধ্যাপক পুরীই ছিলেন বলে আধমিক ভাবে মনে করা হচ্ছে। এই সন্দেহ আরও জোরদার হয়েছে পরে অডিটোরিয়াম হামলার অস্ত্র নিয়ে পুলিশ এখনও ধন্দে। কেনও মহল থেকে বলা

হচ্ছে, একে-৪৭ থেকে গুলি চালায় জঙ্গিরা। কেউ আবার বলছেন, একে-৫৬ থেকে গুলি চালানো হয়। অডিটোরিয়ামের পাচিলের কাছে একটি একে-৪৭ এবং গুলি ভর্তি দু'টি ম্যাগাজিন মিলেছে। পুলিশ কুকুর এনে তল্লাশি চালানোর সময় অডিটোরিয়াম চহরের একটি বোম্ব থেকে পাওয়া যায় তাজা হ্যান্ড গ্রেনেড। তবে কেনও জঙ্গিরই খোঁজ মেলেনি।

অস্ত্রকারের সুযোগ নিয়ে তারা গা ঢাকা দেয় বলে পুলিশের ধারণা। বাস্তালোর শহরে জারি করা হয়েছে চূড়ান্ত সতর্কতা। বন্ধ করে দেওয়া হয়েছে বাস্তালোরের সঙ্গে প্রতিবেশী রাজ্যগুলির সংযোগকারী সড়ক। পরিস্থিতি খতিয়ে দেখতে কাল, বৃহস্পতিবার সকালে জরুরি বৈঠক ডেকেছেন কনট্রোলার মুখ্যমন্ত্রী ধর্ম সিংহ। সতর্কতা জারি করা হয়েছে মুম্বই, হায়দরাবাদেও। এই তিন শহরে হামলা চালানোর ছক কষছে লঙ্করের সমর্থনপুষ্ট জঙ্গিরা, এমন খবর আগে থেকেই ছিল কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রকের কাছে। সেই আশঙ্কাই সত্যি হল বলে মনে করা হচ্ছে। কিন্তু প্রশ্ন হল, সতর্কতা সত্বেও হামলা ঠেকানো গেল না কেন? কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্র প্রতিমন্ত্রী শ্রীশ্রীকান্ত জয়সওয়ালের সাফাই, কোনও এক

এর পর পাঠের পাতায়

হত এক বিজ্ঞানী

প্রথম পাতার পর

জন বা দু'জন জঙ্গি আচমকা কোনও জায়গায় ঢুকে গুলি চালিয়ে পালিয়ে গেলে কারই বা কী করার আছে। কাল সকালের মধ্যেই জঙ্গিরা ধরা পড়ে যাবে বলেও তাঁর আশা। পাশাপাশি, হামলার দায় পরোক্ষ রাজ্য সরকারের ঘাড়ে চাপাতেও কসুর করেননি জয়সওয়াল। তাঁর মতে, আইআইএসের সূতো গুরুত্বপূর্ণ প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিরাপত্তার দায়িত্ব রাজ্য সরকারেরই।

কয়েক ঘণ্টার মধ্যেই এই হামলা থেকে রাজনৈতিক ফায়দা কতটা তোলা যায়, তা নিয়ে ভাবনাচিন্তা শুরু করে দিয়েছে বিজেপি। একের পর এক কেলেঙ্কারি নিয়ে নাজেহাল লালকৃষ্ণ আডবানী'র দল সরকারের দিকে গাফিলতির অভিযোগ তোলার জন্য আইআইএসের হামলাকেই বেছে নিচ্ছে। ঘটনার পরেই কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী শিবরাজ পাটিলকে ফোন করেন আডবানী। পাটিল তাঁকে বলেন, এটা লঙ্করের কাজ হতে পারে। পরিস্থিতি খতিয়ে দেখতে মুম্বইয়ের জাতীয় অধিবেশন থেকে ছুটি দিয়ে অনন্ত কুমারকে বাস্তালোর যেতে বলেছেন বিজেপি সভাপতি। কাল মুম্বইয়ের সমাবেশ আর তার পরে ছয় রাজ্যের বিধানসভা ভোটের প্রচারে জাতীয় নিরাপত্তা নিয়ে কেন্দ্রের টিলেচালা মনোভাব নিয়ে বিজেপি তোপ দাগতে চলেছে বলে খবর।

Delhi busts terror hub in Bengal

*Militants had Andhra
politicians on hitlist*

HT Correspondents

New Delhi/Kolkata, December 26

IF YOU are looking for a terrorist, search for him in Bengal. The Delhi police have caught three, two of them in Murshidabad and the third in North 24-Parganas.

A special cell was looking for suspects in the October 29 Delhi blasts. The cops stumbled on the three men, who did not seem connected with the blasts but had high-profile links.

The two arrested in Murshidabad, both Bangladeshis with one trained in Pakistan, were plotting to kill some Andhra Pradesh politicians besides attacking Bangalore's software park and Hyderabad's Hi-Tech City. One of them had engineered the escape of terrorists involved in the attack on the STF base in Hyderabad. They are members of the Harkat-ul-Jehad.

The man arrested in North 24-Parganas, Aamir Ali, had helped the militants involved in the Ayodhya attack in July. Aamir, a local recruit of the Jaish-e-Mohammad, had helped mastermind Mehmood and accomplice Younis slip into Bangladesh.

The Habra catch, on the other hand, had arranged a hideout for Pakistani militant Mehmood, mastermind of the Ayodhya attack.

The Murshidabad police, meanwhile, arrested Nafiq-ul Biswas and his crony Hilaluddin under the Arms Act and handed them to the special cell. Vishwas had helped three terrorists escape to Bangladesh after the STF attack. A fourth attacker, Ibrahim, arrested in Hyderabad this week "confessed that he trained in Baluchistan," said joint commissioner, Karnal Singh. So was Biswas, who said his trainers were Pakistan army personnel.

The arrests confirmed the use of Bangladesh as a base for terrorist operations in India. Rajsahi and Dhaka are the main centres.

REBEL HAUNT

Nov: Abdul Baqi Mondal arrested in Barasat over Ayodhya attack

Nov: Johur Alam arrested in north Kolkata's Rajmohan Street for links to Bangladesh terrorists

Dec: Two JeM men held in Murshidabad, a Hizb man held in Habra

Suspect's image in e-mail case developed

Combing operation on in southern districts

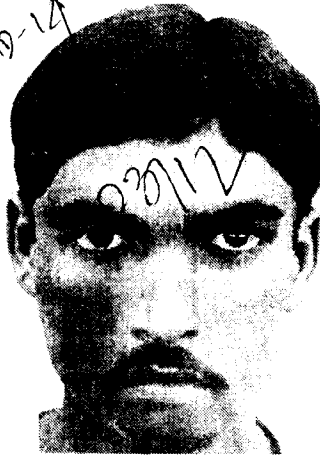
S. Vijay Kumar

MADURAI: The Tamil Nadu police have developed an image of the prime suspect in the e-mail threat case to Parliament and U.S. Consulates. Preliminary reports indicate that the suspect is an "educated, middle-aged and well-built youth." A combing operation has been launched in the southern districts to track down the accused.

A special team of the Madurai police adopted the computer-aided portrait building technique to develop the image based on the inputs provided by the owner of an Internet browsing centre at Murugankurichi in Palayamkottai.

The image, a copy of which was made available to *The Hindu*, was passed on to the Delhi police who have registered a case and are investigating the e-mail threat. However, sources in the intelligence wing said the image did not match any of the photographs available with the crime records bureau. The face (of the suspect) was also not familiar among people in the locality (Murugankurichi).

According to police sources, sleuths of the Special Intelligence Unit made enquiries with some suspected Muslim fundamentalists who were brought to Palayamkottai from the Coim-



The image of the prime suspect in the e-mail threat to Parliament case, developed by the Tamil Nadu police.

batore central prison for court proceedings during November. Police along the State borders in Tirunelveli, Theni and Kanyakumari districts have been alerted to keep track of the movement of suspicious elements. Vigil has been intensified along the Western Ghats, the sources added.

"Special teams are on the lookout for the accused. We are following some clues," the Deputy Inspector-General of Police (Tirunelveli Range), Vijay Kumar, said.

Work on national war memorial will begin soon, says Pranab

17/12/75
A10-

Nation celebrates 'Vijay Diwas' to mark India's victory over Pakistan in 1971 war

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The nation celebrated 'Vijay Diwas' on Friday, the day India achieved victory in the 1971 war with Pakistan, at all the war memorials. It was on this day that the largest military surrender after World War II took place, when the Army's Eastern Command chief Jagjit Singh Aurora accepted the instrument of surrender from A.A.K. Niazi of the Pakistan Army at Dhaka.

Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee gave an assurance that the Government would soon start work on the national war memorial being demanded by the armed forces for a long time. No headway has been made for a number of years because the armed forces want the memorial to be located at a prominent place. A concept paper and design of the national war memorial has been sent to the Union Ministry of Urban Development for consideration.

Tributes paid

Mr. Mukherjee, who along with the three service chiefs, paid floral tributes at the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate here, said no "politics" should be read into the Government's decision

to celebrate Vijay Diwas after four years and to commemorate the 1971 war instead of the Kargil conflict observed by the previous government for a couple of years. He said the Government decided to celebrate Vijay Diwas as the nation wanted to remember the supreme sacrifices made by the armed forces.

"The nation cannot forget its brave soldiers. We want to remember the supreme sacrifices made by our armed forces, not only in 1971 but also in 1962, 1965 and later in the Kargil war," he told newsmen. "Kargil is equally glorious and significant and there is no difference," he said.

Exhibition

An exhibition of equipment and aircraft such as the MiG-21 and the Sabre Killer Gnat which saw their first operations in the 1971 war have been displayed on the India Gate lawns.

A photo exhibition highlighting the Tangail airdrop, Battle of Longewala and attack on the Governor's house in Dhaka during the 1971 operations has also been put up. Both the exhibitions are open to the public till Sunday.



REMEMBERING THE GLORY: Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee with Chief of the Army Staff Gen. J.J. Singh (left) and Air Chief Marshal S.P. Tyagi at an exhibition in New Delhi on Friday. - PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

Terror email empties Parliament

J-D 8 N K... 98-1 12712



With the Mahatma as cover, a security guard on vigil outside Parliament House as NSG and police teams search the complex. Anil Sharma

THREAT ■ Both Houses adjourned, building emptied after US consulate received e-mail warning of bomb in Parliament from an 'Osama supporter'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 16

FOR the first time in recent memory, both Houses of Parliament in session were adjourned today and the entire building emptied after a terse e-mail, purportedly by a supporter of Osama bin Laden, warned of bomb explosions in the highly fortified complex. Sirens blared as the evacuation was carried out, bringing back grim memories of the terror attack on Parliament four years ago.

Acting on information received by the US consulate in Chennai that a bomb has been planted in the building, Rajya Sabha Chairman Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatter-

jee adjourned the Houses abruptly just before noon. Members were then told to vacate the premises immediately.

As the siren was sounded, bomb detection and disposal squads, assisted by sniffer dogs, were brought in and security forces went on high alert both inside and outside the complex. Almost two hours of combing later, the all-clear signal was given.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who had just wrapped up a meeting with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalithaa, was escorted out of the building to his office in South Block.

All ministers, MPs, staff and mediapersons were asked to move out of the premises. All roads leading

to Parliament House and South and North Blocks, where the offices of the Prime Minister and key ministries are located, were sealed.

When both Houses reassembled at 3 pm, Home Minister Shivraj Patil informed the members that the American consulate in Chennai had received an e-mail, saying that there would be bomb explosions in Parliament House and American consulates in the country at 11.46 am. The American Embassy in New Delhi also gave this information.

The information, Patil said, was conveyed to Tamil Nadu police which informed Delhi. It was quickly passed on to Parliament.

The e-mail said there would be explosions at 11.46 am in American

counsulates and Parliament House. "If you can stop, try and stop", it said adding "Long live Osama bin Laden". The e-mail had come through the Sify domain and was traced to Tirunelveli in south Tamil Nadu.

When the Lok Sabha reassembled, Speaker Chatterjee said "nothing can cow us down" and said "... (we) reiterate our resolve to be alert and be in preparedness to combat all such threat."

Teams of elite National Security Guards and sniffer dogs conducted a second round of searches before both houses met again. Home Minister Patil justified the decision to evacuate Parliament: "What has been done is correct and it was necessary."

5 hours of panic: Inbox to Close

9.50 AM: Threat e-mail reaches US Embassy, New Delhi on general contact at ndcentral@state.gov. Delhi police informed

10.50 AM: Embassy officials reach Parliament Street police station

11.10 AM: Messages relayed to security agencies; information also comes from Chennai where US consulate has been put on alert

11.45 AM: Lok Sabha Speaker informed; SPG moves for PM's safety

11.52 AM: Parliament adjourned. Evacuation ordered



12.10 PM: Sirens in Parliament

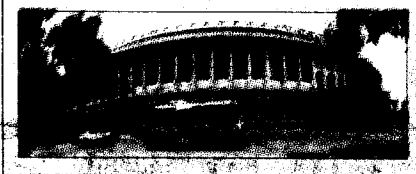


12.50: Police clears premises

1 PM: Bomb disposal units called

1.15 PM: Home Minister says all-clear

3 PM: House convenes



17 DEC 2005

INDIAN EXPRESS

BrahMos missiles being inducted into Navy

Special Correspondent

BANGALORE: India's supersonic cruise missile BrahMos is being inducted into the Navy after a fresh evaluation, A. Sivathanu Pillai, Chief Controller of Research and Development, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), said here on Thursday.

During the third international conference on Intelligent Sensing and Information Processing, Dr. Pillai told presspersons that trials of another version of the missile, with a 290-km range and made with "smart material," was undergoing trials with the Army. Yet another version is likely to be integrated with the Sukhoi aircraft of the Indian Air Force by 2007.

"There is no similar supersonic missile in the world today. However, there are no plans to sell it to other countries. We are not in the world arms market," he said.

BrahMos is the result of collaborative research with Russia, the only country with which India is cooperating in defence-related research. The land-to-land and ship-to-ship missiles are believed to be world leaders, with greater accuracy than those with other armies.

Speaking at the conference later on "Defence applications of sensors," Dr. Pillai recalled that

it was Tipu Sultan who first used a rocket in warfare — during the Mysore Wars against the East India Company's forces. Those had a remarkable 900-m range and caused panic in the English cavalry. Ballistic missiles were developed during the Cold War and cruise missiles from the first Gulf War.

Stealth weapons

Weapons with sensors have become necessary in today's diffused battlefields where fast deployment and accuracy are needed, he said.

Sensors can be used in "stealth weapons" and in the command, control, computing, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance roles of the modern armed forces. Better mobility and positioning and deployment of future weapons will be possible with sensors.

The DRDO has developed and tried out supercomputers to take advantage of weaponry with sensors, Dr. Pillai said.

Missiles such as Nag can hit identified targets even four km away, and the trajectory can be accurately corrected in real time with built-in sensors.

Sensors will also be used in weapons of the future based on microwave, laser and charged particle beam technologies, and these weapons will be "intelligent and autonomous," he said.

19 DEC 2005

THE HINDU

Akash missile achieves a milestone

The surface-to-air missile integrated command, control and communication systems

T.S. Subramanian

CHENNAI: December 7 is seen as a milestone in India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme. Akash, a surface-to-air missile, made its 50th flight, integrating, for the first time, command, control and communication systems, said Prahlada, Director, Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad.

He called the launch "an important development" and "good news." The Army and the Air Force, which will use Akash, wanted the missile to integrate these functions. "So a lot of effort went into this automated command, control and communication mode," he said. The DRDL is responsible for designing Akash.

The flight took place from the Interim Test Range at Chandipur-on-sea in Orissa from a mo-

bile launcher. It destroyed a Pilotless Target Aircraft. The mission met all its objectives.

The previous flight of Akash on December 3 did not take place in a mode that integrated the three systems. It was an "interim step" which led to the "pinnacle" on December 7, said Mr. Prahlada.

Akash is a medium-range surface-to-air missile. It has a launch weight of 720 kg, a diameter of 35 cm and a length of 5.8 metres. It has a range of 25 km. Akash flies at supersonic speed, reaching a maximum of 2.5 Mach (2.5 times the speed of sound). It can reach an altitude of 18 km. Its warhead weighs 55 kg. While the missile meant for the Army can be launched from tracked vehicles such as battle tanks, the Air Force version can take off from wheeled vehicles. Three ready-to-fire Akash missiles can be carried in a battle

tank. The missiles can take off in different directions and destroy multiple targets. Akash can be deployed by rail, road or air.

Mr. Prahlada said Akash had three unique features. First, it can engage multiple targets. A single battery can simultaneously engage four targets. Second, by using ram-jet propulsion, it thrusts all the way till it meets the target. "The speed will never drop. So you are able to maintain superiority over the target. Even the Patriot missile does not have ram-jet propulsion. The Patriot missile, after its boost phase, keeps decelerating but Akash does not decelerate," he said. There will be more flights of Akash to fine-tune the requirements of the Army and the Air Force.

Trishul's performance

Trishul, another surface-to-air missile launched on Decem-

ber 8, did not perform well. DRDO sources said there was "a deviation in the trajectory" of the missile, but were reluctant to call it a failure. The development of Trishul, meant for the armed forces, has been plagued with problems. Sources said developing a missile for all three services was an ambitious programme and entailed development of several complex technologies.

DRDO's missile engineers were puzzled by the behaviour of the Trishul flight on December 8 because they had a series of successful flights in 2003 and 2004. There were problems with Trishul's propulsion and guidance systems in many of its flights. Trishul has been launched more than 70 times.

Agni, Akash, Trishul, Prithvi and Nag are the missiles that constitute India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.

11 DEC 2005

7:11 AM

Joint task force to tackle Maoist militancy

Bengal, Jharkhand police, paramilitary
forces to coordinate operations

Marcus Dam

KOLKATA: A task force comprising personnel of the West Bengal and Jharkhand police and Central paramilitary forces has been set up to coordinate operations against Maoists in areas near the border of the two States. This follows a directive from the Union Home Ministry.

The West Bengal Government has been concerned over reports of Maoists crossing the border from Jharkhand and indulging in subversive activities and returning back. Three districts — West Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia — share the border with Jharkhand.

Chief Ministers of both States have held discussions on the menace and agreed that there was a need for greater co-ordination to tackle the problem.

Several hideouts

According to local intelli-

gence reports, Maoists have several hideouts deep in the forests of Jharkhand where they plan operations in West Bengal.

Springboard

West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, in a recent interview to *The Hindu*, had reiterated that Maoists were trying to extend their sphere of influence in parts of West Bengal's three southwestern districts using Jharkhand both as a springboard as well as a safe haven.

West Bengal's Officer-on-Special Duty (Coordination), Chayan Mukherjee, who returned here from New Delhi on Friday after updating Central officials on matters relating to the task force, said that though Bihar is also affected by the Maoist problem the need for setting up such a force with that State had not been felt as there are no reports of frequent movement of Maoists between West Bengal and Bihar.

10 DEC 2005

THE HINDU

Salem custody extended to Dec 17

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Gangster Abu Salem was on Friday produced before a packed TADA court and remanded by judge P V Bavkar to police custody till December 17. The ruling came hours after the Bombay high court struck down Bavkar's orders restricting the number of police officers interrogating Salem.

The hearing was marked by high drama, with heated exchanges between the prosecution and defence. The climax came when Salem broke his silence and spoke to the judge for nearly five minutes.

Public prosecutor Ujjwal

DON AND OUT

Nikam, who peppered his argument with Sanskrit phrases, said the anti-terrorist squad had come across certain "new names" while interrogating Salem. "The leads are sensitive and need verification. Some officers may have to fly abroad," he told the judge.

Nikam said Salem had used two phone numbers to make extortion calls and threaten family members of Pradip Jain, who was shot dead on his orders. "Two persons, whose statements we have recorded, told us how they went to Dubai to pay extortion money to Salem. Besides, we have also identified a co-accused, Naeem Khan (now deceased), in the murder," Nikam added.

Nikam said the police wanted to recover several documents and other materials of importance by questioning Salem. The police also wanted to find the people involved in hawala operations with the gangster and trace the origins of the smuggling network used by him to transport weapons to India.

"The ATS is also probing the fresh threats issued to Pradeep Jain's brother Sunil," he stated. Seeking further remand Nikam said: "In the last week, we got only four days to interrogate Salem."

Meanwhile, defence lawyer Ashok Sarogi objected to his client being referred to as 'gangster'. He also alleged that Salem was being tortured. "There is a need for the presence of a lawyer or any other officer appointed by the court during interrogation. Also, Sunil Jain has no right to interrogate my client in custody and issue threats," he said.

His charges were recorded by the judge, who then focussed his attention on Salem.



Salem was bought to the KEM hospital for a medical check-up before being taken to the TADA court on Friday

I can't tell you again, I don't have the courage

Judge: Kuch complaint hai?

Salem: Whatever I had told you last time, it is the same thing. I cannot tell you again, don't have the courage.

Judge: Do you get proper food?

Salem: Ji (yes).

Judge: Hospital le jate hain?

Salem: Dawa ka problem hain (I am not getting medicines).

Judge: Is there any problem during interrogation?

Salem: They are not asking me about Pradeep Jain. They are asking me all sorts of things. There are many things I don't know about, but the ATS wants to find out details from me.

Salem: Jain aaya tha. Usne battamizi ki (Sunil Jain had misbehaved with me in custody).

Harjot Singh: (Salem's lawyer in Portugal) This is violation of extradition terms.

Nikam: (rises) I object to his interference. I don't know this gentleman (pointing to Singh).

(Singh is not allowed to speak)

Nikam: The defence is trying to induce Salem to say things.

(Judge pacifies the two parties. Begins dictating order)

Salem: Aap jaisa koi nahin (There is no one like you).

Nikam: Chalo, phir picture banate hain (Let's make a movie then).

Judge: Excuse me, what's going on? It seems you two are on good terms.

Nikam: We are always on good terms.

Any number of officers can quiz Abu, orders high court

By Somit Sen/TNN

Mumbai: "What do you mean by Salem is restless in custody?" The question was put forward by high court judge D G Deshpande to Salem's lawyer O A Siddique on Friday. "That is no excuse to put restriction on the number of officers interrogating him," he added.

A bench comprising Deshpande and Justice V M Kanade struck down a TADA court order which had restricted the number of investigators to two officers to question Salem.

"Such an order is uncalled for," Deshpande said.

"When the accused was being interrogated, he did not complain of ill treatment," the judge observed as he set aside the order and said any number of officers could interrogate Salem in custody.

A senior Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) officer, who was present during the hearing, said, "This is victory for the Mumbai police. Salem and his lawyers have been trying to scuttle our probe, making baseless allegations. We were demoralised when the TADA court issued directives that only two officers could quiz Salem."

The officer said there were supreme court judgments which said the court cannot interfere in such matters.

The public prosecutor had cited the judgments and stated that "the manner and method of conducting investigation is left entirely on officers in charge of police stations. The court has no power to interfere with the same."

Clarifying his stand, TADA judge P V Bavkar, in whose court Salem was produced, told the prosecution: "I had permitted two officers to interrogate Salem. But I had not put any restrictions to the number of officers who could be present during interrogation. The ATS could have had as many officers present at the time of interrogation. They could have been consulted by the two officers interrogating Salem."

Said another ATS officer, "The TADA judge can question us if Salem is tortured in custody. He cannot put fetters on the investigators. The commissioner had appointed a five member team to question Salem and this will continue. We are happy with the high court order."

Meanwhile, Siddique said the order will be challenged in the supreme court.

"We have two senior lawyers for Salem, Harjot Singh (from London) and Imtiaz (a supreme court advocate) and they will go to Delhi to challenge the high court order," he said.

'Soft attitude' to terrorists assailed

2/12
J-D S.A. Security HD-12
POTA repeal caused violence: Opposition

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Opposition on Friday attacked the Government for its "soft attitude" towards terrorists and the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA). This had triggered recent incidents of violence including the pre-Diwali blasts in Delhi, terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir and naxalite attacks in Jehanabad and Giridih.

Participating in inconclusive debates on internal security in both Houses of Parliament, the Opposition's thrust was that the Government's "kid gloves" approach had led to the worsening of the security situation in the country.

In the Lok Sabha, Vijay Kumar Malhotra (BJP) also charged the Prime Minister with betraying the nation for vote bank politics. Responding to Mr. Malhotra, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Kapil Sibal underscored the point that POTA had been in place when the Akshardham temple was attacked during the regime of the previous government. As to the charge that the Government was going soft on Pakistan in not naming it in the terror strikes, he said, "Responsible Governments do not name people before the investigation is over."

Of the view that terrorism should not become a ground for partisan politics, the Minister intervening in the debate as representative of Chandni Chowk in the Capital where one of the Diwali-eve serial blasts took place - said the Congress in Opposition had always been supportive of the National Democratic Alliance Government's efforts to counter terrorism.

As for the Government's determination to fight terrorism, Mr. Sibal said the Prime Minister had time and again articulated India's zero tolerance towards terrorism. "The Prime Minister made this amply clear to Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf also," he said while

• **Manmohan betrayed the nation for vote bank politics, says BJP**

• **PM has articulated India's zero tolerance towards terrorism: Sibal**

stating that it was not the United Progressive Alliance but the NDA, which had compromised with terrorism by buckling to the Taliban.

Initiating the discussion in the Rajya Sabha, Arun Shourie (BJP) said giving funds for developmental purposes in extremism-hit areas of the North East and Central India would prove counter-productive. He advocated strengthening of civil and police systems and revamping of the criminal judicial system.

Taking a jibe at Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil for reposing "so much faith in the mechanism (for tackling naxalism)", he pointed out that the number of districts affected by naxalite violence had gone up to 165 from 143 a year ago.

Mr. Shourie asked the Home Minister not to reel out statistics in his reply about a decline in the number of fatalities because there has been a qualitative change in the methods adopted by the naxalites - they have become bolder as was shown by the large number of activists participating in the attacks, looting a huge cache of arms and carrying out simultaneous attacks on a number of symbols of state authority. "Each time they come out (from talks with the Government) they are stronger," he said while asking the Government to abandon the same approach being adopted with the United Liberation Front of Assam on the eve of assembly elections.

Ram Jethmalani (Independent) did not agree with Mr Shourie's observations and drawing on his experience of talking out some youth in Jammu and Kashmir from terrorism, wanted dialogue to continue.

02 DEC 2005

Only two cops can grill Salem: Judge TADA Court Asks For Less 'Pressure' During Questioning Of Don

By Somit Sen/TNN

Mumbai: In an order that has left the city police fuming, TADA judge P V Bavkar on Tuesday has told the anti-terrorist squad (ATS) that it should deploy not more than two officers at a time to grill extradited don Abu Salem.

While medical reports have confirmed that Salem is not being tortured in custody, legal circles said it was rare for a judge to intervene in investigation in the absence of any direct violation of an accused's rights. Tuesday's hearing began with Bavkar inquiring with Salem about his well-being. To a question if he had been tortured by the police, Salem hesitated to reply. It was then that the judge announced that he would speak to Salem privately in his chamber.

On emerging from the room after 20 minutes, he directed the investigating officer, ACP Dhavale, to stop using 'so many' officers to grill Salem. When Dhavale protested saying that they were working in shifts, the judge remarked that this had 'affected' Salem's health and that he was complaining of restlessness. The judge said the police team needed to stop using so much 'pressure' if they wanted Salem to cooperate. "I am sure he will cooperate with the police," he said before setting December 2 as the next date for the trial.

The Hearing

Judge: Look at me and answer my questions. When were you first brought to this court?

Salem: 24th

Judge: Today is the 29th. So, you were in custody for five days. Where did the police officers keep you?

Salem: Crime branch lock-up (An officer from ATS interrupts and informs the court that Salem is in Bhoiwada lockup)

Judge: Are you being served food in custody?

Salem: Ji (Yes)

Judge: Are you given chai and *nashia* on time?

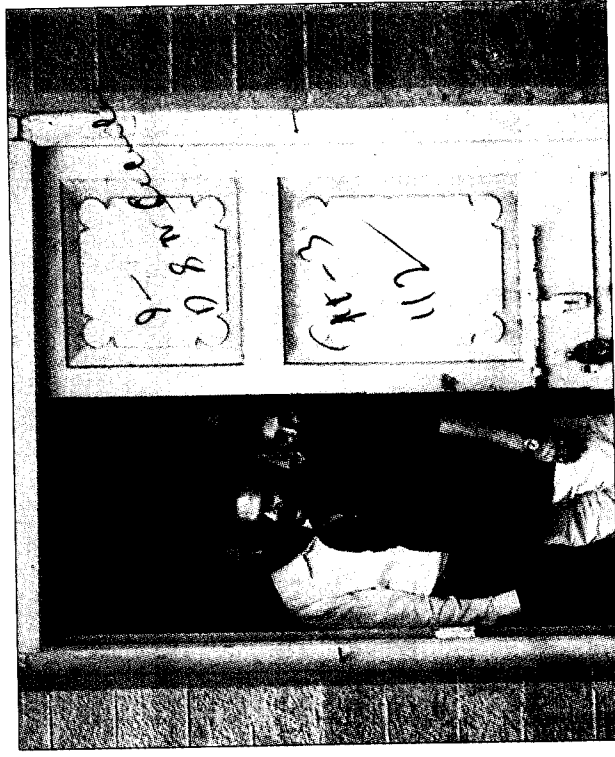
Salem: Ji

Judge: Are lawyers allowed to meet you daily?

Salem: Ji sir

Judge: *Rehne ki jagah achchi hai?*

Salem: *Haan*
Judge: Torture *karke hain kya?* (Salem looks down and turns his eyes on additional commissioner Jai Jeet Singh who is standing next to him in khaki)
Judge: Don't look here and there. Don't look at the police. Look at me and answer my question. (Salem's lawyer Ashok Sarogi stands up and informs the court that Salem is afraid to speak in the presence of policemen)
Judge: *To hum chamber mein baat*



Salem being taken out of the special TADA court on Tuesday

kar sakte hain. (Looking at Salem)
Tumhare man mein jo kuch bhi baatein hain, mujhe batana. Ghabrana mat. Kisi ke kehne mein mat aana. Mere bhi kehne mein mat aana. (Whatever is in your mind, tell me. Don't be afraid or influenced by anyone including myself)... I will speak to Salem in my chamber. I cannot allow lawyers or police officers. Only my steno will be present, so that he can be a wit-

ness to what is said. Before leaving for his chamber, the judge tells Salem: *Dekho jo hai bol dena.* I cannot come to the Bhoiwada lock-up to question you. (Judge walks into his chamber followed by the stenographer. Salem is escorted to the door by gun-toting securitymen, who wait outside as he walks in. Twenty minutes later, the judge walks out and takes his position in the dock).

Judge: (now facing ACP Dhavale) Why are so many officers interrogating him? It has affected his health and he is complaining of restlessness.

Dhavale: But, my lord, we have to interrogate in shifts.

Judge: Why do you need so many officers? One officer asks him 20 questions and then he has to face a barrage of questions from another three officers in succession. I am taking cognisance of this. Only one officer will be permitted.

Dhavale: My Lord, please allow myself and another officer, Deshmukh

Judge: Ok. I shall give permission for only two officers. Look at him. He is almost paralysed on one side. And I believe he is cooperating. He should not feel insecure in your custody.

Public prosecutor Rohini Salian rises from her chair.

Salian: My Lord, Salem is not cooperating with us.

Judge: If you don't put pressure by using so many officers, he certainly will. In the chamber, I inquired about his wife and children, and he told me some things. I am sure he will co-operate with the police.

(Salem is standing in the dock dressed in a black T-shirt and jeans. The court is packed with lawyers and mediapersons)

Plan to fit BrahMos missile on Sukhoi

New missile to be lighter than naval and ground versions

Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI: BrahMos Aerospace, the missile joint venture between India and Russia, is all set to make the air version of the world's only supersonic missile shortly after having successfully developed the land and sea variants, company CEO and MD A. Sivathanu Pillai told *The Hindu*.

"We are waiting for Russia to make payments for the additional commitment. We are also trying to locate a safe and large aircraft for testing it by 2007 so that the platform is closer to the actual configuration [Sukhoi]," Dr. Pillai said. Lighter than naval and ground BrahMos missiles, the plan is to fit them on the Indian Air Force's Sukhoi-30 series of fighter aircraft. "The combination of BrahMos and Sukhoi in the deep strike aircraft role will be deadly," he said.

The initial plan is to fit one missile under the Sukhoi's belly.

• **Testing to begin in 2007**

• **Booster size, nose thrusters to be smaller in air variant**

• **Army, Navy's acceptance increases chances of export**

If the wings can be strengthened, two more can be fitted on the flanks. The air variant is likely to be lighter as the designers plan to reduce the size of the booster and replace the nose thrusters with a small configuration at the tip of the nose.

The land version has been tested in the desert with the Army accepting the system. "But Army capabilities vary under different conditions. So we have to do some more flights to evaluate the capability to attack different targets to make it useful for the Army. However, the

process for production has started because this is more time consuming even as we are doing some more work to make the Army version more versatile said Dr. Pillai.

A battery of 16 BrahMos missiles has been fitted on an Indian naval ship, probably the one that was used to test the missiles 11 times and the submarine variant has been readied for use aboard the Russian Amur submarines.

The chances of exporting BrahMos have brightened with the success achieved by the naval version, the Army's acceptance of the ground variant and Russia's move to change its laws prohibiting the induction of foreign weapons in its armed forces to accommodate the BrahMos. However, Indian diplomatic support in some countries has been lukewarm and the Defence Ministry would be appealing to other wings of the Government for active support.

27 NOV 2006

Sealed envelope with Tada court

'Confession' of Salem on test

OUR BUREAU

Mumbai/New Delhi, Nov. 21: The CBI today submitted a sealed envelope, apparently containing Abu Salem's confession, to the court hearing the Bombay blasts case.

"We have sent a sealed envelope carrying statements by Salem to the court," said the don's lawyer Ashok Sarogi. The packet reached the Tada (the anti-terror law) court through the chief metropolitan magistrate's court.

Sarogi said the packet was signed by him as well as a CBI counsel, but said he did not know its contents. The lawyer said he assumed that the envelope would contain Salem's statements about the 1993 serial blasts.

The envelope will be given to Tada court judge P.D. Kode for acceptance tomorrow at 11 am.

Sarogi said: "All formalities have been followed. Legally, it is a confession, but we believe it has been forced out of him by the CBI."

According to Section 15 of Tada, whenever an accused makes a confession before a CBI or a police officer of a particular rank, he has to appear again before the chief metropolitan magistrate to confirm the statement.

A senior officer of Mumbai police's crime branch said: "If it is indeed a confessional statement, it can be of use only if Salem admits so



Salem: Confession or coercion?

before the judge.

"In most cases, including Tada, the accused can just retract the statement before the judge, even though it may have been recorded in the presence of a senior officer. It can't be said whether it is a confession unless Salem agrees it is one."

In the past, several Bombay blasts accused, like actor Sanjay Dutt, have retracted their confessions before the court. In his confession to Mumbai police, Sanjay had named Salem as the person who had supplied arms to him, but went back on it subsequently.

Despite the scepticism, Tada regulations give a lot of importance to confessions made before an officer of the rank of SP or above.

On Sunday, Meeran Boriwanker, the joint commissioner of police, Mumbai, had paid a visit to the CBI's special task force headquarters where Salem is being interrogated.

She is also believed to have had a meeting with senior CBI officials interrogating Salem.

The sealed envelope is expected to be opened by the judge either tomorrow or the day after when Salem is produced in court to decide whether the CBI will continue to hold him or he will be moved to judicial custody.

If Salem admits to his "confession" before the Tada judge, it will mean a big victory for the CBI.

CBI officials, however, admitted that they were waiting with bated breath to see what Salem says about his confession in court. Sources said the CBI team had tried to make Salem's confession foolproof so that he did not backtrack when questioned by the Tada court.

The sources added that a metropolitan magistrate was present during the confession.

Under Tada, if the confessional statement of an accused is admitted, it becomes evidence in the court of law.

"If Salem's statement is admitted, the Bombay blasts case will pick up speed. The court will fix time for the CBI to frame charges and submit a fresh chargesheet. The CBI in all likelihood will ask for further custody of Salem to get more details. Trials will begin once the CBI files the chargesheet," said a source.

If Salem stands by his confession, the question that will be asked is what deal the CBI has struck with the don.

22 NOV 2005

Salem's advocate to withdraw from case

CBI issuing threat, says Siddiqui

PRESS Trust Of India
Mumbai, November 19

Brother can meet don

ONE OF the lawyers of Abu Salem on Saturday sparked off a controversy by moving a special Tada court urging for withdrawal from the case on the ground that CBI had "threatened" to have him removed through Salem.

The designated judge P.D. Kode asked CBI to file a reply on November 22 on the application moved by Salem's lawyer O.A. Siddiqui.

The court also refused to allow the lawyer to withdraw from the case and asked him to wait till November 23 when Salem would be produced for remand.

Siddiqui alleged that CBI had informed Salem's another lawyer Ashok Saorgi that Salem would dance to the tune of the agency and he would say whatever they wanted him to say. He further alleged that CBI wanted them to withdraw and had even threatened to have the lawyers removed through Salem.

As of now, Salem is defended by lawyers Siddiqui and Sarogi.

On last occasion, the judge had asked Salem whether he wanted to be defended by a lawyer to which the alleged gangster said he needed three to four days to decide. However, Siddiqui, who was present in the court, rose to say that he had been instructed by Salem's lawyer who had appeared for him in a Portugal court, to defend Salem in Mumbai's Tada court.

He then sought court's permission to seek instructions from Salem and the



A SPECIAL court on Saturday allowed Abu Les, brother of Abu Salem, to meet the accused in CBI custody for 15 minutes after proper verification by the investigating agency. The permission was granted by justice Kode who heard Abu Les' plea. Les' advocate O.A. Siddiqui prayed that Abu Les was Salem's brother and had come down from Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh to meet his kin.

Agencies

court allowed his plea following which the accused said he would retain Siddiqui as his lawyer for the time being.

'Miss' Monica

Abu Salem's girlfriend Monica Bedi, who returned to jail on Saturday after two days in CBI custody, told special CBI judge C.V. Subramanyam that she is single and prefers to be addressed as "Miss Monica." "My name is Monica Bedi," she said when the judge asked what was her name. Next the judge asked her what is her husband's name. Bedi then answered, "I am single and Miss."

Salem ready to turn approver, CBI cold

HTC and Agencies
Mumbai, November 18

ABU SALEM is willing to turn an approver if the CBI responds positively, but the CBI has ruled out any trade-off.

Salem's lawyer Ashok Sarawgi said in an India TV interview, "I talked to him (Salem) in detail on this issue. He says he is innocent (in the 1993 Bombay blasts). But even if he is not involved, he knows who are all involved and what all happened. I asked him (Salem) if you could turn an approver and he said if it works out like that I am willing to think about it."

He added, "It is possible that Salem can provide information about certain persons whose names never cropped up before and come up with information which either CBI or the police never knew. But CBI should come up with some response to our plea. Only if CBI does that can we file an application in the court pleading that Salem is willing to turn an approver."

The CBI's response so far will not encourage the lawyer. Top CBI sources said they had already succeeded in turning two accused into approvers, and they could do without Salem.

"Why would we want Salem as approver? We don't need to. The need for approvers arises when a conspiracy has to be unravelled. We already have two good approvers," said the



source. He also sought to play down the role played by Salem in the blasts. Salem was a relatively small fry in the Dawood gang and his role was largely confined to transporting arms.

The source implied that Salem may not have been an important link then in the D Gang's decision-making chain, and so the CBI isn't exactly dying for him to spill the beans. "What can he say that we don't know already?" said the source.

Reacting to reports that Salem had offered to turn approver in return for a "good enough deal," the source said that the agency has not received "any indication" from Salem or his lawyer Ashok Sarogi on this matter. He termed as "absurd" any talk of Salem becoming an approver since "so far Salem's lawyer has denied any link with the blasts." "A court could grant pardon under Section 306 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which in layman's terms

means the granting of approver status, only if Salem accepts his guilt and gives an undertaking that he would tell all about his involvement and those of others," pointed out the source. Moreover, said the source, "the CBI has never, and would never, accept any conditions from such an accused. If we do, it would amount to inducing somebody to get his confessions. The court wouldn't approve."

If Salem "wants to turn approver, he should volunteer himself unconditionally. He can request it in writing and we can intimate the court. His lawyer can directly approach court also." It's up to the court to grant pardon or deny it; it can also overrule the CBI.

Sarogi, on the other hand, told HT, "The offer should come from the CBI. If it's good enough, we may look into it." Meanwhile, Sarogi told.

CBI chief to head probe

CBI director Uma Shankar Misra on Friday flew to Mumbai to oversee the probe. Misra took an evening flight from Delhi and reached Mumbai late on Friday. Sources said he might also personally interrogate the don. CBI's probe enters a crucial phase in the next few days as the agency begins to record the don's statement. Salem's 12-day CBI custody ends on November 23. The agency is expected to seek an extension of the remand.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2005

A shocking failure of security

*NO-12
16/11
9-
National
Security*

Sunday's brazen naxalite attack on Jehanabad's high security prison is shocking even by Bihar's notoriously lax law and order standard. For all of that night a thousand-strong army of extremists had a free run of the town. They stormed the prison using firearms and bombs, killed Ranvir Sena leader Bade Sharma, took other Sena men hostage, and freed hundreds of their jailed cadre, including the Area Commander of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), Ajay Kanu. The guerilla operation left behind a trail of chaos and confusion, with liberated prisoners and ordinary citizens mingling freely to the horror of the hopelessly outnumbered security guards. That the Maoists struck within hours of the conclusion of the penultimate phase of the ongoing Assembly election added a bizarre touch to the drama. Indeed, earlier in the day, the Bihar bureaucracy and the Election Commission had claimed credit for providing a "violence-free" environment for the election. Jehanabad itself had a reasonably peaceful election in the first phase, thanks to the EC's hawk-like watch on the constituency. As it turned out, the EC's insistence on saturation security cover went to the advantage of the ultras who timed their attack to coincide with polling elsewhere in the State. Not that this absolves the Centre or the State Government of blame. The State Chief Secretary has admitted to prior information on the movement of naxal groups from Jharkhand to Bihar, which was all the more reason for exercising vigil in violence-prone Jehanabad.

The Jehanabad siege holds valuable lessons for those dealing with Bihar. Few will quarrel with the Election Commission's determination to enforce "free and fair" polls in a State till recently infamous for its rigged elections. Yet, maximum security and staggered elections pose their own problems. A month-long election exercise cannot but stretch the forces and leave crucial gaps in security. Jehanabad was left vulnerable by the concentration of forces in other parts of Bihar. The jailbreak has only reinforced Bihar's anarchic image. This said, there is an urgent need to go beyond law and order concerns and place the State's endemic caste and class violence in a larger socio-economic context. The uprising in the naxal belt of Bihar is a product of the social unrest engendered by decades of upper caste dominance. Stories of bonded labour suffering hardship at the hands of the land-owning upper castes are legion. The advent of the naxalites led to the birth of the warlike Ranvir Sena, a caste army raised by the Bhumihars to decimate the Maoists' support base. Needless to say, the Sena's primary targets were the poor and landless Dalits, who, in turn, looked to the naxals for protection and support. That the Maoists were able to mobilise thousands of their cadre for the jailbreak operation speaks to the extent of their support. It is vital that security is restored in Jehanabad at the earliest. It is equally important that administrators begin to address the long-neglected problems of the people.

Centre admits lapses, sends copters, jawans

Fears Of Ranvir Sena Retaliation In Bihar

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Admitting to security lapses that caused the country's biggest-ever jail-break in Jehanabad, the Union government on Monday vowed that those responsible would be booked and said that "hot pursuit" was on to recapture escaped prisoners. It also sent an additional 1,000-strong paramilitary force to the region and added two more helicopters to the existing fleet of two to carry out air surveillance of the Maoist-infested regions and where needed, air dropping of men and equipment.

All these measures were announced after Union home minister Shivraj Patil had a tough time at the meeting of Parliament's consultative committee attached to his ministry where even his Congress colleagues, including policeman-turned Bihar politician Nikhil Kumar, called the incident "shameful".

Though the agenda of the meeting was police modernisation, the jail-break incident that resulted in 12 deaths dominated proceedings.

Whether security lapse was caused by an intelligence failure, as alleged by Nikhil Kumar, has been a point troubling the Centre. "Nearly 500 people assembled in Jehanabad and the authorities can't say they were not aware of it," Union home secretary V K Duggal said. He added: "The failure will have to be justified and somebody will be held accountable for it."

A major task for the Bihar administration, said sources, would be to ensure that Ranvir Sena, an extremist outfit of upper caste Hindus, does not retaliate against the killing of its jailed man Bade Sharma and abduction of 20 others from the prison.

Another cause for trouble is the convergence of relatives of the missing prisoners, who, by virtue of being in the jail, were state responsibility, officials pointed out.

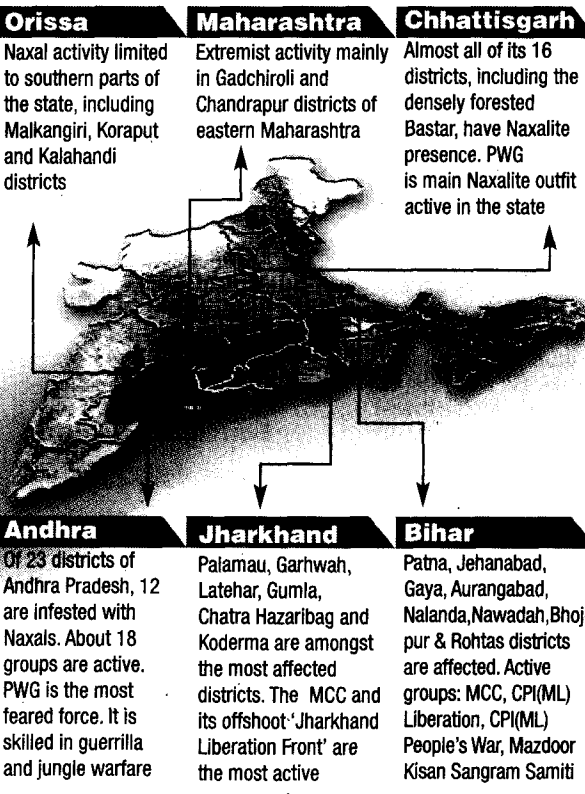
Earlier, Patil reviewed the Jehanabad situation at a high-level meeting where the requirement of paramilitary forces, now thinned because of deployment on a variety of missions, was scrutinised. The Bihar

administration has 24 companies engaged in such operations. Duggal said initial reports suggest about 400-500 Naxalites attacked the police lines, a college where electronic voting machines had been kept and the jail. Media reports have placed the figure at 1,000-plus. One Naxalite, who had been injured in the attack, has been taken into custody and will be questioned.

"While the attack was repulsed from po-

The Naxal Web

What began as a Naxalbari peasant uprising in 1967 has evolved into a complex network covering 170 districts of 15 Indian states & Maoist areas of Nepal. TOI takes stock



lice lines and college, the Naxalites were successful in climbing the walls of the Jehanabad prison from where they released their men besides abducting 12-40 people of Ranvir Sena," he said.

"Our aim is to get them released besides carrying out pursuit against the culprits," Duggal said. He said one Naxalite, who had been injured in the attack, has been taken into custody and will be questioned.

Denying any connection between the Giridih and Jehanabad incidents, Duggal said an operation was already under way to smash the Naxalite hideout responsible for the attack.

Don't talk to media in Salem case, CBI told

MUMBAI: A TADA court on Monday restrained the Central Bureau of Investigation from disclosing any information to the media on the investigations involving the extradited underworld don Abu Salem.

Designated TADA Judge P.D. Kode, hearing Salem's application to allow his lawyer to be present during interrogation, said that "having regard to the delicacy of the matter as well as the manner in which the accused was brought to India, it required to avoid unwanted sensation and speculation being created in society that would affect the progressing trial."

The court directed the CBI not to disclose or forward any information to the media.

It held that it did not want to comment on the past but hoped that the investigating agency knew its responsibility and limitations, considering the gravity of the case.

Supreme Court ruling

Salem's counsel O.S. Siddique said that the Supreme Court, in a ruling, had said defence counsel could be present in an investigator's office during interrogation of an accused.

The apex court had said the defence lawyer should be allowed to remain present during any investigation, not at the visual level but at least on an audible level so that they could hear the accused.

No confession

The CBI clarified on Monday that Salem had not made any confessional statement and whatever material they had gathered during interrogation was oral.

The court had adjourned the hearing of Salem's plea till November 16 with a direction to the CBI to file its reply. — UNI

Bihar seeks more reinforcements

Naxalite attack in Jehanabad a security failure, says Centre; paramilitary forces rushed to the State

K. Balchand

PATNA: Caught unawares by Saturday night's massive naxal attack in Jehanabad, the Bihar Government, is gearing its forces to cope with the situation. Chief Secretary G.S. Kang said on Monday the State had sought bullet-proof helicopters and extra Central forces to carry out combing operations.

At least six persons — two policemen, two naxalites and two Ranvir Sena (army of landlords) members — were killed when hundreds of naxalites struck at the jail, the police lines and many other places in Jehanabad. There are reports that some of the over 20 Sena men kidnapped from their cells in the jail have been "executed."

The attack not only exposed chinks in the police armour but threatens a fresh gun-battle between the naxalites and the Ranvir Sena.

Director-General of Police Ashish Ranjan Sinha admitted that there had been some lapses on the part of the police and that they did not move as quickly as they should have. He, however, said they had protected the armoury.

The State Government claimed that it was constrained by the deployment of forces on election duty elsewhere in the State.

Retaliation feared

The police fear that "executions" and "jan adalats" by the naxalites would have repercussions. They fear retaliation by the Ranvir Sena; Dalit localities might come under attack. That is precisely why the State Government had sent a report on the situation to the Centre and sought at least 25 additional companies of paramilitary forces.

Police officials claimed that at least 15 of the naxalites who had taken part in the operation had



PALPABLE TENSION: Onlookers throng on Monday the Jehanabad jail which was stormed by armed Maoist rebels on Sunday night. — PHOTO: REUTERS

been identified. They belonged to Jehanabad, Aurangabad and Gaya districts.

Fearing similar action by the naxalites, the Government has decided to shift at least 25 top functionaries of the CPI (Maoist) lodged in the jails in Motihari, Bettiah and Bagha to the Patna Central Jail.

The naxalites killed a top Sena functionary, Bade Sharma, and the Maoists have made it clear that they would hold "jan adalats" and try those whom it had

down. Sena supporters took out torchlight procession in Aurangabad.

Probe panel

PTI reports: The State Government on Monday constituted a two-member administrative committee to probe the naxalite attack.

Home Secretary H.C. Sirohi told PTI that V. Jaishanker, Commissioner-cum-Secretary of the Water Resources depart-

ment, and A.C. Verma, IG (Railways), would hold the inquiry and submit a report in a week.

Situation under control

Special Correspondent reports from New Delhi:

Union Minister of State for Home Sri Prakash Jaiswal said on Monday that additional Central paramilitary forces had been rushed to Jehanabad, where naxalites struck on Sunday.

Mr. Jaiswal said the situation was now under control. "The

district authorities have asked for 20 more battalions which we hope to provide soon," he said adding that there were only eight to 10 men at the prison when the CPI (Maoist) stormed it. "The main reason is that almost the entire force guarding the jail had been deployed for poll duty," he said.

Official sources said the Home Ministry was in touch with the Election Commission for redeployment of Central forces as there were two more rounds of polling left in the Assembly elections on November 16 and 18.

Security failure

Talking to reporters, Union Home Secretary V.K. Duggal said Jharkhand had also been alerted following the attack.

Asked whether intelligence inputs suggested a possible attack or was there any failure on the part of administration, Mr. Duggal said: "Obviously, nearly 500 cadres assembled in Jehanabad and the authorities cannot say that they were not aware of it. Somebody will have to be accountable for the security failure."

Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil presided over a high-level meeting in the Ministry to review the security in Jehanabad and other naxal-dominated areas in Bihar and neighbouring Jharkhand.

Mr. Duggal said one naxalite, who had been injured in the attack, had been taken into custody and would be questioned. He said the Home Minister had asked the officials to provide all possible assistance to the Bihar Government to counter the naxalites.

Helicopters would be used for airdropping troops in the dense forests where the naxals were suspected to having their hideouts. Mr. Duggal said an operation was already under way to smash the naxalite base responsible for the attack.

Salem has not confessed: lawyer

CBI says Salem was "fairly cooperative" but refuses to divulge further

NEW DELHI: The lawyer of Abu Salem, the prime accused in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, has denied that Salem had confessed his involvement in the blasts.

"We have already filed an application that Abu Salem does not want to make any confession...So there is no question of it," O. A. Siddique told NDTV over phone shortly after a senior CBI official told presspersons in Mumbai that Salem had "admitted [to] his role" in carrying out the bomb blasts that had claimed 257 lives and left more than 700 injured.

Asked whether Salem would cooperate with the CBI, the lawyer said: "he has to cooperate with the investigation but the

• CBI official tells presspersons in Mumbai that Salem had "admitted [to] his role"

• "Application had been filed that Salem does not want to confess"

question of confession stands on a different footing."

"But, I want to know who is the CBI official who told reporters that Salem has given a confessional statement," he said. Court had stated that no interview should be given to media in this regard.

"Focus on 1993 blasts"

CBI official O. P. Chatwal said in Mumbai that Salem was "fair-

ly cooperative" but refused to divulge further. "Our focus [of questioning] is on 1993 blasts."

A total of 257 people were killed and 713 injured on March 12, 1993 in the blasts at 13 places. Mr. Chatwal also refused to say whether Salem had revealed his links with politicians or Bollywood personalities.

A media report had said that Salem named some prominent personalities during interroga-

tion but Mr. Chatwal said he would not comment on that.

On the whereabouts of Dawood Ibrahim, Mr. Chatwal said no question was put to Salem in that regard. "Anyway everybody knows where Dawood is, where is the need to ask Salem?" he asked.

Mr. Chatwal said Salem told the interrogators that he had divorced his first wife before marrying Monica Bedi. Salem earlier stated in the TADA court that Monica was his only wife when the prosecution referred to her as his "second wife." — PTI

Another report on Page 14

Ayodhya catch has new claimant

A STAFF REPORTER

Calcutta, Nov. 13: The "courier" is in custody and congratulations are due. But who caught Abdul Baqi Mandal, charged with helping the Ayodhya attackers sneak into the country?

Two days after Delhi police paraded Mandal as a prize catch trapped in a chase outside New Delhi railway station, officials of a central intelligence agency said they picked him up three months ago from a frontier pocket in Bengal.

Accounts by Mandal's relatives at his home in Basirhat, 70 km from Calcutta, seemed to corroborate the time factor in the central agency's version.

Romicha Bibi, Mandal's sister-in-law, said today he had last visited the Basirhat house about four months ago. "He simply vanished and we have not heard about him since then," Bibi said.

However, Delhi police insisted that Mandal was arrested after a brief chase on Thursday. "The intelligence people can say anything they like, but we pounced on him the moment he stepped out of a train three days back," said Karnail Singh, joint commissioner (special cell), Delhi police.

"We have arrested Mandal on the charge of helping militants involved in the aborted Ayodhya attack in July sneak

into the country from Bangladesh. Besides, he is believed to be involved in helping several persons with terrorist links sneak out of the country," added Singh.

The police version had another hole — the name of the train on which Mandal was supposed to have reached the Delhi station from Calcutta. Delhi police had said he had arrived by the Poorvanchal Express but there is no train by that name which travels to the capital from Calcutta.

The central agency, which did not want to be named because such wings are not expected to go public, did not contest the police's charges against Mandal but stood by its claim that he was caught months ago.

"We detained him for so long because we wanted to get more information," an official said. Once interrogation is over, such suspects are handed over to the police for prosecution.



Mandal

14 NOV 2005

THE TELEGRAPH

Delhi blasts case cracked, claim police ✓

Amitabh Shankar
in New Delhi

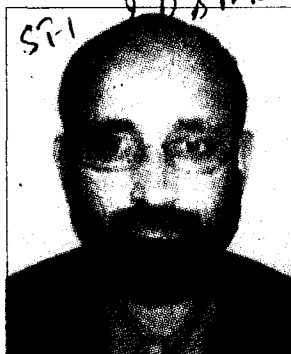
Nov. 13. — With the arrest of Kashmiri Lashkar-e-Taiyaba operative, Tariq Ahmed Dar, Delhi Police claim to have solved the serial bomb blasts which ripped through the Capital two weeks ago.

Delhi Police Commissioner, Dr KK Paul, confirmed LeT's role in the 29 October explosions that killed around 60 people and injured more than 200. Two other LeT operatives, Abu Al Qama and Abu Huzefa, wanted in connection with the bombing are still at large, Dr Paul added.

Tariq Ahmed Dar, a pharmaceutical sales executive for Johnson & Johnson, was arrested by Delhi Police on 10 November from Srinagar and brought to Delhi on 11 November. He appeared before a local court that evening and was remanded in police custody for 14 days, Dr Paul said.

More than 300 Special Cell personnel of Delhi Police were involved in the investigation. Some officers had been camped in Jammu and Kashmir since 1 November as clues from the blast sites suggested the accused had links with the Valley.

According to Dr Paul, although Tariq was not in



Tariq Ahmed Dar.

Innocent, say kin

SRINAGAR, Nov. 13. — Relatives of Tariq Ahmad, who has been arrested by Delhi Police in connection with the serial blasts in the Capital, today staged a demonstration here, claiming that he was innocent. "Tariq Ahmad has no links with militants," his parents and relatives told reporters at Pratap Park in the city. — PTI

Delhi on the day of the blasts, he was the main "coordinator, facilitator and spokesman" of the bombings. He added Tariq had last come to Delhi between 4 and 6 October, which was when he planned the blasts. Around Rs 5 lakh was deposited into Tariq's HDFC Bank account in Srinagar a few days before the blasts from West Asia. LeT has denied its hand in the blasts. But police said it was to put investigators off their trail.

Dar's profile on page 5

THE STATESMAN

14 NOV 2005

THE STATESMAN

TADA court questions Centre's promise not to hang Salem

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: In what is a setback to the CBI in its moment of glory, the TADA court on Friday implied that it was not incumbent on it to honour India's promise to Portugal that gangster Abu Salem would not face the death penalty if deported to his home country.

"There cannot be any conditional presence in my court," said special TADA judge P D Kode, describing Abdul Qayoom Ansari aka Abu Salem as a "terrorist accused". The court also rejected the CBI's plea for a 30-day custody and granted only a 12-day remand.

Twelve years after being declared an absconder and following three years in a Portuguese jail, it



AND QUIETLY FLEW THE DON:
Salem wept on way from airport

was a moment of high drama when the gangster finally stepped into a high-security courtroom at Arthur Road packed with media and police.

Judge Kode's remark that his court could not be bound by any undertakings given outside of his

courtroom is significant. Special CBI counsel C S Sharma, flown in especially for the remand plea, said that according to the extradition undertaking given to Portugal by the Vajpayee government, Salem could be tried in a TADA court "only with the condition that death sentence will not be given. If life sentence is warranted, then it cannot be for more than 25 years in prison for him".

The judge riposted, "Show me the law. His (Salem's) appearance is pursuant to a warrant issued by this court. You have executed the warrant. He cannot come with conditions." He added that the remand application made no mention of the undertaking.

► 'Don't tell my relatives about arrest', P 5

CBI NETS ABU SALEM, AT LAST

2-08 N. Lumbly

Underworld Don Remanded To Police Custody Till Nov 23 In Mumbai Blasts Case I Bedi Sent To Hyderabad To Face Passport Forgery Charge

New Delhi: In the first major success in an extradition battle, the CBI on Friday brought back Abu Salem, one of India's most wanted terrorists and a prime accused in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, along with his girlfriend Monica Bedi after a three-year legal process in Portugal. He was produced before a Tada court which remanded him to police custody until November 23.

Bedi will be taken to Hyderabad on a transit remand as she faces a passport forgery case registered there. The former actress, who has been booked under various sections of the IPA and Passport Act, will be produced before the court on or before November 14. She also faces a passport forgery case in Bhopal. She had travelled on forged documents to stay with Salem in Lisbon in the last few years.

Earlier in the day, capping a secretive three-week operation, a team of 20 CBI and police officials headed by a deputy inspector general brought the two from Lisbon to Mumbai on a chartered flight. They arrived in Mumbai between 7 and 8 am. The extradition of Salem, who is also wanted in various cases, in-

cluding the murder of noted film producer Gulshan Kumar, besides his role in the 1993 blasts masterminded by Dawood Ibrahim, comes after an assurance to Portugal that he would not be given death penalty, an important requirement in extradition proceedings in Europe.

At an hurriedly called press meet, CBI director Uma Shankar Misra said, "Salem and Bedi were handed over to the 20-member-strong CBI team headed by a DIG in the inter-

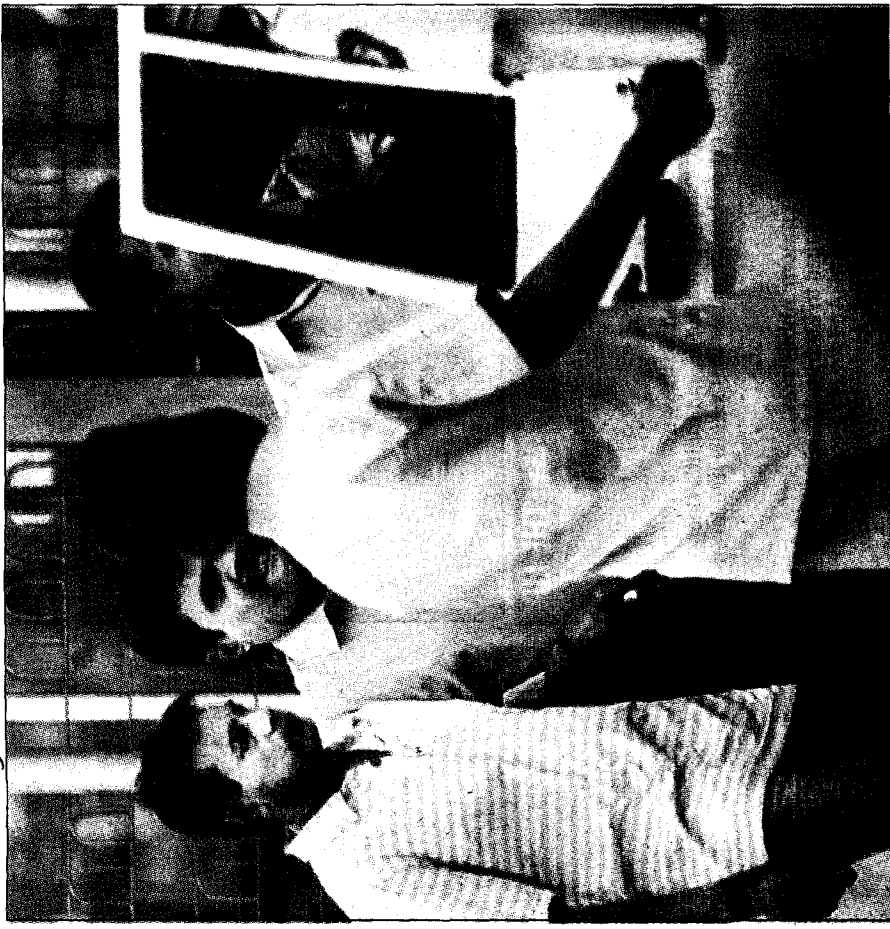
vening night of November 10 and 11. The duo, arrested in Lisbon on September 18, 2002, had given a tough time to the CBI, challenging every move of the agency in the high court, supreme court and the constitutional court in Portugal. They were arrested by the Portuguese police on charges of entering the country on forged passports and marrying local residents separately to get permanent resident status.

While Bedi was sentenced to two

years in jail, Salem was jailed for four and a half years on three counts, including perjury, entering Portugal on forged documents and preventing a police officer from performing his duty.

The interrogation of Salem is expected to provide a detailed insight into the ISI's role in the 1993 explosions. "I think we will get some information about this," Misra said when asked if the arrest could throw more light on Dawood Ibrahim and the ISI's role in the blasts. Misra said Salem's interrogation would be "kept open" and all inputs from the IB, RAW and other security agencies taken note of. Asked if the extradition could open a floodgate for other wanted criminals to follow, an exuberant Misra said, "We are trying our very best and one fine morning you will know that."

On Salem's security, Misra said, "We have made sufficient security and police arrangements. His movements will be kept a secret." Asked if Salem could get a bail, he said, "I don't think he will, but it is a matter for courts to decide. As far as our stand in the court will be, we will be seeking his remand." Agencies



Abu Salem is brought to the Tada court in Mumbai on Friday

Worries for ex-cricketer

New Delhi: With the arrest of underworld don Abu Salem, evidence could finally come out against a former Indian cricketer and a film actress whose names surfaced during the probe into the funding of Salem's expenses in Portugal.

Highly-placed investigation sources said Salem's bank transactions had been monitored closely, revealing the names of the cricketer and the actress, who had allegedly been laundering money for the gangster and taking care of his expenses in that country. Seeking to unravel the funding mystery, security agencies traced some of the financial transactions to the former Indian cricketer and the actress. Agencies

CRIME FILE

- Prime accused in Mumbai serial blasts
- Accused in murder cases, including Gulshan Kumar's
- Wanted in 25 cases in Delhi
- Passport forgery cases in Lucknow
- Extortion threats against Bollywood big guns

Bengal man held for Ayodhya terror strike

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, November 11

THE JULY 5 terror attack at the disputed site in Ayodhya was the handiwork of the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and the not the Laskar-e-Tayeeba (LeT), as the Uttar Pradesh Police had claimed.

In a major breakthrough in the case, a special cell team of the Delhi Police cell on Friday arrested a Jaish militant who was part of the conspiracy. Abdul Baqi Mandal (33), who was arrested from the New Delhi railway station around 9 am, is from Nadia, West Bengal.

"Mandal's arrest is the culmination of five months of hard work put in by our team and has exposed the entire network behind the attack," special cell joint com-



Abdul Baqi Mandal in police custody.

missioner Karnal Singh said. It was a difficult case for the special cell, which cracked it without assistance from any other agency. "We didn't even have such basic information as telephone numbers

of the slain militants," an officer said. On information about Baqi's presence in Kolkata, a special cell reached the city.

"Baqi was tracked down and surveillance maintained on him. On Thursday, he took the Poorva Express for Delhi," Singh said. The special cell team got train tickets for the same coach as Baqi's and travelled with him. The entire operation was coordinated by special cell DCP Ajay Kumar.

The team kept a close watch on the man as the purpose of his Delhi visit wasn't immediately clear. However, Baqi became suspicious and on reaching the New Delhi railway station tried to flee. He was overpowered and arrested.

"Baqi worked as a carrier for Jaish and was in charge of ferrying people for the outfit from India to Bangladesh and vice-

versa," the police said. The conspiracy for the Ayodhya attack, Baqi revealed, had been hatched in Bangladesh and he was taking directions directly from the Jaish headquarters in Bangladesh.

Baqi had been working for the militant outfit for three years and had helped the five militants involved in the Ayodhya attack cross the border from Bangladesh into India. He had also helped Mehmood — suspected to be the mastermind behind the Ayodhya incident — cross into India. Mehmood had set-up a base in south Delhi and had even enrolled for a spoken English course at Vasant Vihar. Baqi had taken the wife and the one-and-a-half-year-old daughter of Ghazi Baba to Bangladesh after the latter was killed in Kashmir.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 NOV 2005

States to get advance funds for security

Rajnish Sharma
New Delhi, November 19

In a move likely to have an impact on the country's internal security scenario, the Union Home Ministry on Thursday decided to provide the Security Related Expenditure to the states in advance. This, Home Ministry sources said, would be a shot in the arm for state governments as it would help them to further strengthen and modernise the police force.

Till now the Centre used to reimburse the amount after the expense had been incurred by the state government. Thus, police functioning in many states had been hampered on account of paucity of funds.

"At a time when the cash reserve of some states is so low that they cannot even pay wages to their employees, one should not expect them to spend money on modernisation of the police," said a senior ministry official. "So the police strength remained inadequate and there were no funds for modernisation of weapons, vehicles and communication equipment."

The Home Ministry decision will now have to be ratified by the Cabinet for which the ministry is already in the process of formulating a detailed note. The advance payment by the Centre, sources added, would help the states have adequate funds to spend on the police. Ministry officials claimed this would help improve the internal security and even the law and order situation.

Sources said initially the money would be released in installments to state governments. The move will in particular be of help to states affected by militancy and Naxal violence. Ministry officials claimed that in the past few months some state governments had expressed inability to spend on the police due to lack of funds.

The Home Ministry has also decided to set up a special institute to train paramilitary forces in guerrilla warfare. "The army has one such institute in Manipur but there is no training facility for paramilitary forces or state police," said an official. "In view of the increasing use of guerrilla tactics by insurgent groups there is need to train paramilitary forces in these tactics too."

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US crew flies in, takes protest in stride

ASTAFF REPORTER

Calcutta, Nov. 4: They climbed out of the two DC-10 aircraft chatting among themselves, oblivious of the demonstration outside the airport. For the nearly 100 US air force personnel who arrived at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International airport today, it would be only a few days' stay at Calcutta.

Unperturbed by the CPM protests at the airport and in front of the Hyatt Regency where they checked in, the personnel were looking forward to the Indo-US war games at Kalaikunda.

"We will be flying to Kalaikunda in a couple of days. This is our main contingent," said Colonel J. Paulk.

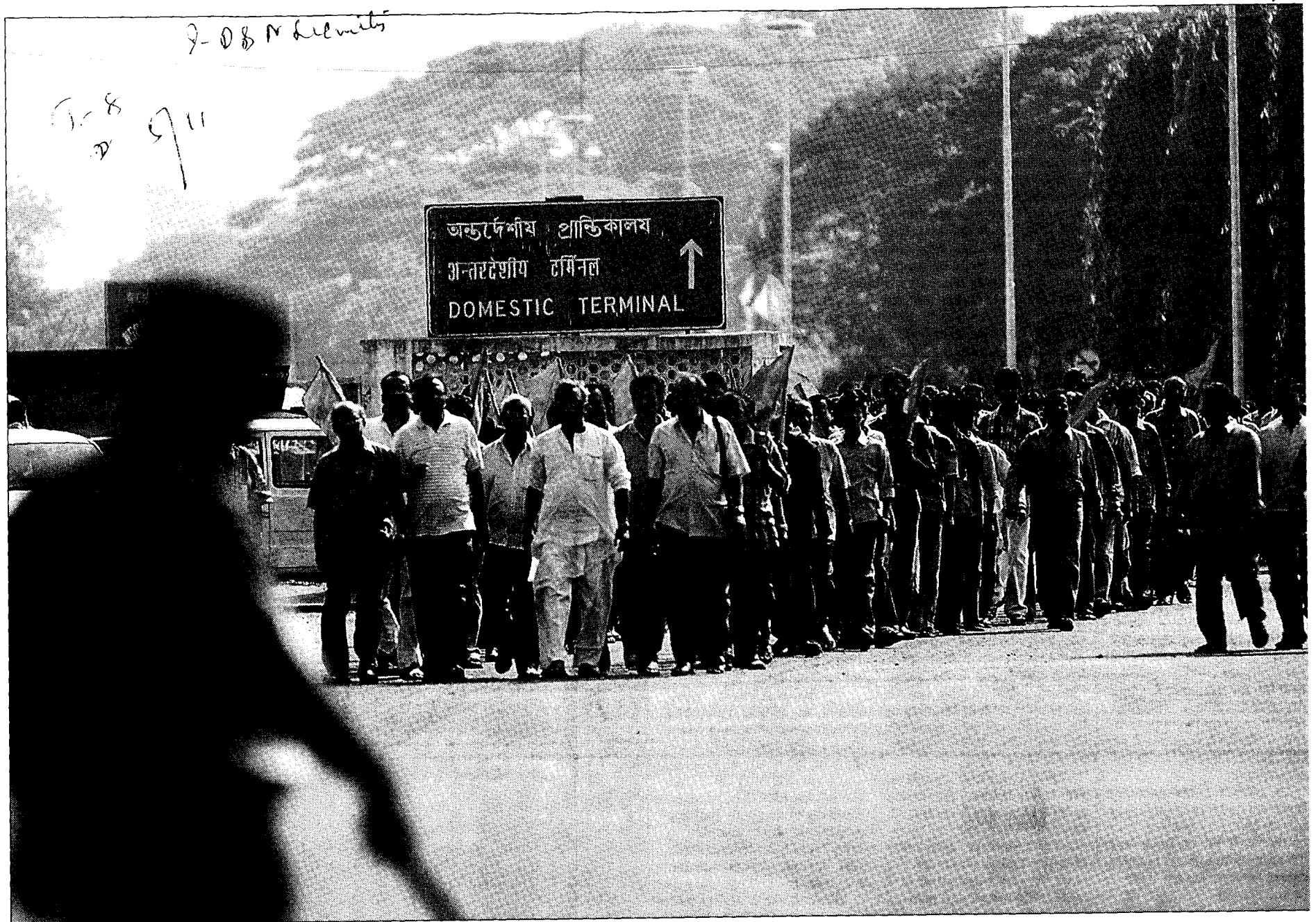
"Flying officers, engineers and other crew members have arrived in two aircraft with the equipment. There will be 250 personnel taking part in the operation and 12 F-16 planes will be reaching here."

The two aircraft touched down at 1.16 pm and 1.40 pm, airport officials said. The Americans were driven to their hotel in four luxury coaches amid tight security, a pilot car leading the way.

The buses entered the hotel around 4.30 pm amid chants of "down with imperialism" and "go back US army". The US personnel, some of them women, immediately checked in. Asked about the demonstration going on outside, one of the officers said, "Demonstration? Yes there is one but no comments on that."

The airport was abuzz with talk that six US air force F-16s had been diverted to Kalaikunda at the last moment. "We had received a message that these aircraft would land. But for some reason they were diverted," a senior airport official said.

The tarmac bustled with activity. Apart from the two DC-10s, several IAF aircraft — an IL-76, an Avro and two helicopters — also touched down. "More IAF planes are expected tomorrow," an official said.



Left supporters protest against Cope India 2005 outside Calcutta airport on Friday. Picture by Amit Datta

About 200 CPM activists led by Amitava Nandi, MP from Dum Dum, stood in front of the international terminal, condemning the Centre for holding a joint military exercise with the "imperialist" US.

"This exercise is a threat to the internal security of the country and we cannot be a

silent observer. We will demonstrate at every place where these US planes land or where the US team stays," Nandi said.

The demonstrators, however, kept about 100 feet between themselves and the terminal's gate and left long before the US crew emerged out

of the building.

Though chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee will not participate in any of the protest rallies, CPM state secretary Anil Biswas and Left Front chairman Biman Bose will.

Asked about Bhattacharjee's decision, Biswas averted

a direct answer. "There are many leaders in our party and all of them will participate in the protest rallies. For instance, while Bimanda will be at the Calcutta airport, I shall attend the rally near the USIS," he said.

Biswas added that defence minister Pranab Mukherjee

had already discussed the protest programme with Bhattacharjee.

For Cope India 2005, the US air force is flying in a squadron (between 12 and 15) of F-16 Fighting Falcons of the type that the IAF is considering for an order of 126 multi role combat aircraft. The F-16s

are being flown in from US airbases in Japan.

The US air force is also deploying airborne early warning aircraft to India for the first time for the exercise. IAF aircraft such as MiG 27s (based in Kalaikunda), Sukhoi 30K, Mirage 2000, and MiG Bisons will fly alongside them.

Govt to go ahead with Indo-US air exercises

New Delhi
4 NOVEMBER

BF-2
D.S. Mukherjee

NOTWITHSTANDING the opposition from the Left, the government on Friday decided to go ahead with the proposed biggest ever joint fighter exercises between the IAF and US Air Force to be held over Kalaikunda air base in West Bengal as the US military aircraft started arriving for these manoeuvres.

Announcing the decision to go ahead with the exercises starting on November 7 after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), defence minister Pranab Mukherjee said: "I am happy to say every-



thing has been sorted out."

This follows discussions with West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee and central CPI(M) leaders over the plans of the Left parties to hold demonstrations against the ex-

ercises across the state.

During the discussions, a request was made to the West Bengal government to make necessary security arrangements so that the exercises could take place. Maintaining that these exercises were routine, Mr Mukherjee said they were held for the last four-five years and there was nothing new.

Late last night, a meeting of the CCS was presided over by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, in which ministers of defence, external affairs and finance participated along with air chief SP Tyagi, army chief JJ Singh, national security adviser MK Narayanan and Cabinet secretary BK Chaturvedi. — PTI

INDIAN EXPRESS

05 NOV 2000

IAF to go ahead with joint exercises

Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI: Armed with an assurance from West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, the Centre on Friday decided to go ahead with the Indo-U.S. exercises at the Kalakunda airbase from November 7.

"The exercises will go ahead as scheduled. We spoke to the Chief Minister today [Friday]. ... They [workers of Left parties] would demonstrate but it will be peaceful," Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said here.

Mr. Mukherjee said an unscheduled meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Thursday night considered the implications of the Left Front's plan to hold a rally near the airbase as part of its Statewide protests against holding war games with the U.S.

U.S. concern

The Government took stock of the situation after the Americans expressed concern over the Left Front's opposition to the Indian Air Force holding war

games with the U.S. Air Force (USAF).

While expressing the Government's resolve to go ahead with the 12-day exercises, Mr. Mukherjee did not see anything amiss with the Left Front's plans. "It is the right of every political party to demonstrate. These exercises are also nothing new." Both sides had been conducting joint war games for some years now.

However, before receiving an assurance from Mr. Bhattacharjee, the Government had consid-

ered various options, including shifting the venue and requesting the State Government to ensure security around the airbase, where USAF aircraft started landing with stores and logistics support.

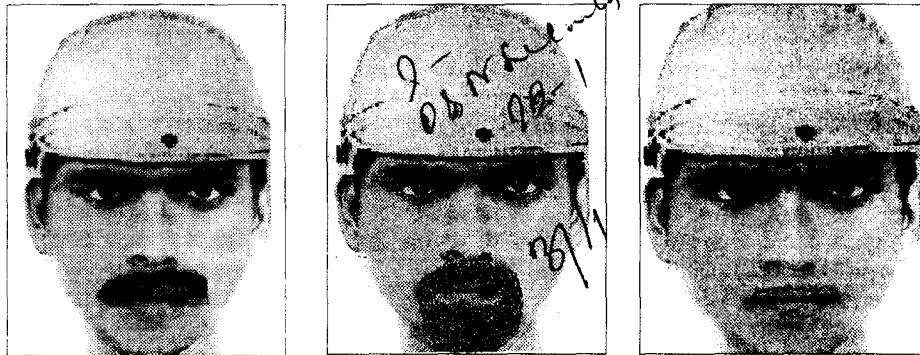
Chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the CCS meeting was attended by the Ministers for Defence, External Affairs and Finance along with IAF chief S.P. Tyagi, Army chief J.J. Singh, National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan and Cabinet Secretary B. K. Chaturvedi.

THE HINDU

05 NOV 2005

Delhi cops release sketch as they search all of western UP

No success yet, suspicion that they may have escaped



Sketches of the Govindpuri bus bomber based on eyewitness statements

AMAN SHARMA

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 2

INVESTIGATORS probing the Delhi serial blasts suspect that the bombers slipped into western UP immediately after the attack.

"We have concrete information that the bombers took refuge after the blasts around two cities of western UP—probably Saharanpur and Meerut—but have now slipped out of there as well. Delhi Police had traced some calls made to Saharanpur and nearly a dozen teams were in western UP looking for clues," said an officer of the UP Special Task Force which cracked the Ayodhya attack case.

The officer said that Delhi Police had not sought their help. "The bombers must have slipped out of the country and would not risk staying on. Even in the Ayodhya case, the remaining accused slipped out of western UP within three days of the attack," he said.

Sources say the western UP angle was the big hope since the police traced frequent calls between Delhi and Saharanpur, before and after the



attack. They suspect the attack was carried by a group of at least five, one of whom died in Sarojini Nagar. "Our teams are returning from western UP now. Some calls made from Delhi to Srinagar and from Srinagar to Muzaffarabad are also under scanner. But it seems the terrorists mostly avoided mobile phones," said an investigating

officer in Delhi.

"Telephone records show a call made from Delhi to Srinagar at 6:05 pm on the day of the attack and a call soon from Srinagar to Muzaffarabad, maybe to convey the success of the attack. But phone records are headed nowhere when it comes to tracing the bombers," said an officer of Delhi Police's Special Cell.

Armed with just one portrait after a five-day chase, the police now sense an uphill task. The fact that the terrorists have learnt from their 'mistakes' of the past—use of mobile phones that led the police to them in both the Red Fort and Ayodhya cases—has made it tougher for the investigators.

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লাল কেব্লা হানায় মৃত্যুদণ্ড ১ জঙ্গির, যাবজ্জীবন ২ জনের

দিগন্ত বন্দোপাধ্যায় • নয়াদিল্লি

৩১ অক্টোবর: মাত্র দু'দিন আগেই বিস্ফোরণ হয়েছে দিল্লিতে। সন্দেহের তির লঙ্করের দিকেও। এর মধ্যে আজই পাঁচ বছর আগে দিল্লিতে লাল কেব্লায় হামলার ঘটনায় যুক্ত লঙ্কর-ই-তইবার এক জঙ্গিকে মৃত্যুদণ্ড দিল দিল্লির এক আদালত। আরও দুই দোষীকে যাবজ্জীবন ও বাকি চার জনকে সাত বছরের কারাবাসের নির্দেশ দেওয়া হয়েছে। লঙ্কর-ই-তইবা জঙ্গি মহম্মদ আরিফকে (৩৪রফে আসফাক) মৃত্যুদণ্ড, এই হামলার যড়যন্ত্রের অন্যতম শরিক নাজির আহম্মদ কাশিদ ও তাঁর ছেলে ফারুককে যাবজ্জীবন এবং আসফাকের ভারতীয় স্ত্রী রেহমানা ইউসুফ ফারুকি এবং অভিমুক্ত বাগর মহসিন বাগওয়াল, সাদকত আলি এবং মতনূর আলমকে সাত বছরের সশ্রম কারাদণ্ডের আদেশ দিয়েছে আদালত।

পরশু বিস্ফোরণের পর আজকের রায়কে ঘিরে সাধারণ মানুষ, আইনজীবী, সংবাদ মাধ্যমের মধ্যে ছিল বিশেষ কৌতূহল। আদালত চরমে ছিল চাপা আতঙ্কও। আজ দিল্লির আদালতে অতিরিক্ত দায়রা বিচারক ও পি সাইনি তাঁর বিচার শোনাতে মাত্র পাঁচ মিনিট সময় নেন। লাল কেব্লা হামলা ঘটনার 'মাস্টারমাইন্ড' পাকিস্তানের মদতপুষ্ট লঙ্কর-ই-তইবা জঙ্গি আশফাকের বিরুদ্ধে প্রায় এক ডজন মামলা চলাছিল। এর মধ্যে পাকিস্তান থেকে অবৈধ ভাবে এ দেশে আসার মামলাও আছে। আসফাককে যে প্রমাণের ভিত্তিতে মৃত্যুদণ্ড দেওয়া হয়েছে, তা দেখতে চেয়েছে পাকিস্তান।

বিচারকের সামনে আসফাক আজ তার বক্তব্য শোনার অর্জি জানালেন। বিচারক তা কর্ণপাত করেননি। 'দেশদ্রোহিতার অভিযোগে আসফাককে মৃত্যুদণ্ডের আদেশ দেওয়া হয়। লাল কেব্লায় হামলার এক বছর আগে অন্য তিন জঙ্গির সঙ্গে আসফাক হীনগণের নাজির ও ফারুককে বাড়িতে গিয়েছিল। এই বাড়িতেই হামলার হুক ক্যা হয়।

আদালত যড়যন্ত্রে প্রত্যক্ষ ভাবে সামিল হওয়ার জন্য নাজির ও ফারুককে যাবজ্জীবন কারাদণ্ডে দণ্ডিত করে।

রেহমানা যড়যন্ত্রে শামিল না থাকলেও হামলার ঘটনা আগাম জানত। সবকিছু জেনেও আসফাককে সে মদত দিয়েছে। হামলার

বক্তৃদান করতে চায় আসফাক

হামলার ঘটনায় আসফাক ও তার সহযোগীদের শাস্তি ঘোষণা করছেন, তখন আসফাক কিছু বলার জন্য চিৎকার শুরু করে। বিচারপতি অবশ্য তার চিৎকার কানে না তুলে রায়দান পর চালিয়ে গেলেন। শাস্ত হলেই নিজের মৃত্যুদণ্ডের নির্দেশ শুনে লঙ্কর ই তইবা জঙ্গি আসফাক রায়দান পর শেষ হওয়ার পরে বিচারপতির হাতে পৌঁছে শনিবারের জঙ্গি হানায় মৃত্যুদণ্ডের বাঁচাতে রক্তদান করতে চায় লালকেব্লা হামলায় সে আদালতের অনুমতি চেয়েছে। আজ কারকাদমা আদালতে বিচারপতি ও পি সাইনি যখন লালকেব্লায়



নয়াদিল্লি, ৩১ অক্টোবর:

আগে সাদাকত আসফাককে দিল্লির ওখলাতে আশ্রয় দেয়। দু'জনে এক সঙ্গে একটি কস্পিউটার কেন্দ্রও চালায়। মহসিন দিল্লির গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভবনগুলি আসফাককে ঘুরিয়ে নিয়ে দেখায়। আর মতনূর এদেশে আসফাকের বেশন কাভ ও জালি কাগজ-পত্র বানিয়ে দিয়েছিল। আদালত আজ এই চারজনকেই সাত বছরের কারাদণ্ডে দণ্ডিত করে।

২০০০ সালের ২২ ডিসেম্বর দিল্লির লাল কেব্লায় ছয় জঙ্গি তুকে এলোপাথাড়ি গুলি চালাতে থাকে। এই ঘটনায় রাজপুতানা রাহেফেলের দুই জওয়ান ও এক নাগরিক মারা যান। হামলার পরে পুলিশের গুলিতে মারা যায় তিন জঙ্গি— আবু শাহদ, আবু বিলাল ও আবু হায়দার। ঘটনার চার দিন পর আসফাক ও তাঁর ভারতীয় স্ত্রী রেহমানাকে পুলিশ দক্ষিণ দিল্লির জামিয়া নগর থেকে গ্রেফতার করে। এই দু'জন-সহ মোট ১১ জন পুলিশের হাতে ধরা পড়ে। প্রায় পাঁচ বছর ধরে মামলার পর চার জনকে রেহাই দেয় আদালত। বাকি সাত জন দোষী প্রমাণিত হয়েছে।

গত শনিবার এই মামলার রায় শোনানোর কথা ছিল। সে দিনই একের পর এক বিস্ফোরণে কৈশে ওঠে দিল্লি। পুলিশ লাল কেব্লায় রায়ের সঙ্গে দিল্লির বিস্ফোরণের যোগসূত্রও উড়িয়ে দিচ্ছে না। কারণ, লাল কেব্লা হামলায় লঙ্করের যোগ প্রমাণিত। পরশুর ঘটনায় 'ইসলামিক ইনকিলাবি মাহাজ' নামে যে সংগঠন বিস্ফোরণের দায় নিয়েছে, তারাও লঙ্করের সহযোগী। সব ধরনের আশঙ্কার কথা মাথায় রেখে আজ সকাল থেকেই ত্রিভুজীয় নিরাপত্তা বলয়ে থেবা হয়েছিল গোটা আদালত চরকে। ছিল পুলিশ কুকুর, বম স্কোয়াডও। দিল্লি পুলিশ কেনও বুঝি নিতে চায়নি। বিস্ফোরণের ব্যর্থতার দায় এখনও তাদের মাথায়। তবে আদালতের রায়ে আজ খুশি দিল্লি পুলিশ। লাল কেব্লা মামলার তদন্তকারী দিল্লি পুলিশের অফিসার সুরেন্দ্র সও রায়ে পর বলেন, "বহুদিন ধরে এই মামলায় লড়াই করে আসছি। আজকের রায়ের পর দিল্লি পুলিশের মনোবল বাড়বে।"

— পি টি আই

DATE: NOV 2005

TIMES EDITORIAL

Enough is enough

We can either dismiss what happened in Delhi on Saturday as just another in a long line of terror attacks on Indian soil, and pray that there's at least a decent interval before we are hit again. Or, we can send out a hard-hitting, unambiguous message: that we are not willing to accept such outrages as part of our fate, and are determined to do whatever it takes to protect our citizens. This is no occasion to be genteel and 'civilised' in our response. It's time we got angry. Not a blind anger that lashes out at everything in its path—for that would play into the hands of the very people who perpetrate such acts of terror, and be self-defeating. But an anger that builds resolve, that ensures we do not forget the mothers, fathers and children who went shopping for Diwali and Id and whose pictures poured into newspaper offices a few hours later, except that they were disfigured and charred beyond recognition.

This is an act of war, doesn't matter that it's not been officially declared as one. It calls for a scale and intensity of response comparable to London's, where the number of deaths was actually fewer than Delhi's and far, far fewer than Mumbai's in 1993. This paper has consistently waged a war for peace, and we remain committed to that path. But it's equally clear that peace cannot be a one-way road. There are indications that the perpetrators of the serial blasts may have been schooled in jihadi hatred on Pakistani soil. The burden of evidence points to the Lashkar-e-Toiba; one of its offshoots has already claimed responsibility for the crime. LeT had tried to mar August 15 and were waiting for the next big celebration to hit India. The group has sleeper cells across the country and doesn't necessarily depend on Kashmir to ferry in terrorists. It can call in operatives based in Nepal and Bangladesh. That it continues to enjoy Islamabad's patronage is no secret.

It may be premature to walk away from the negotiating table, at least not until such time as there is clinching evidence of Islamabad's complicity. Besides, Indians have no animosity towards the people of Pakistan: the warmth, kindness and generosity with which our cricket team was received by our brothers across the border was truly overwhelming. India's quarrel is with the military-ISI-terror establishment that kills and maims in our cities for its own selfish reasons. New Delhi must tenaciously work at building a case that proves that it's this unholy nexus that is behind the terror attacks, and go international with it. On the domestic front, there is a crying need to strengthen our soft infrastructure: just as we need world-class roads and ports, we also need world-class law and order, intelligence and anti-terror agencies. Finally—and much as we may dislike the idea—we need to accept that in times such as these, even a democratic, civil society must accept that there can be limits to freedom. The US has made itself extremely unpopular with its new homeland security laws, but if that's what it takes to save innocent lives, it's a sacrifice worth making.

6 1 NOV 2005

LeT ultra gets death in Red Fort case

Two Key Conspirators Get Life Term, 7-Yr Jail For Woman Accomplice

New Delhi: A Delhi court on Monday awarded death sentence to Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba terrorist Mohammad Arif alias Ashfaq convicted in the December 2000 Red Fort attack case.

Additional sessions judge O P Saini awarded life imprisonment to two key conspirators Nazir Ahmed Qasid and his son Farooq Ahmed Qasid who were held guilty of waging war against the state along with Ashfaq. Ashfaq's Indian wife Rehmana Yousuf Farooqui, who was held guilty of harbouring the main accused, has been given a seven-year jail term. Accused Bagar Mohsin Baghwala, Sadaqat Ali and Matloob

Alam, who were pronounced guilty by the special judge on October 24 along with the other four accused, have also been sentenced to seven-year rigorous imprisonment.

Baghwala and Sadaqat Ali were held guilty of providing shelter to main accused Ashfaq while Matloob Alam was convicted of criminal conspiracy, cheating and forgery. The court also slapped a fine of Rs 1 lakh each on Ashfaq, Nazir and Farooq and Rs 20,000 each on rest of the accused.

Ashfaq and five other terrorists had sneaked into the 17th century Mughal monument around 9 pm on December 22, 2000 and opened



Ashfaq is escorted by policemen as he walks out of the court in New Delhi on Monday

indiscriminate fire, killing two jawans of Rajputana Rifles and a civilian. While convicting the accused, the court said "It has been established beyond doubt" that the conspiracy to attack the Red

Fort was hatched at Farooq and Nazir's house in Srinagar where Ashfaq had arrived in 1999 along with three other LeT militants. The three militants Abu Shaad, Abu Bilal and Abu Haider who had also entered the monument were earlier killed in separate encounters.

"These facts speak unmistakably and loudly that these people conspired to wage war against the Government of India", the judge said. "The foreign national and his accomplices had entered into the Indian territory with a view to subvert the functioning of the government and destabilise society," the special judge said.

Agencies

Clueless cops probe 'vital clues'



THE DAY AFTER... Relatives of a blast victim grieve at a Delhi hospital on Sunday. — AFP (Delhi blasts reports on page 3)

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Oct. 30. — Even as Delhi tried to limp back to normality today, intelligence agencies and police launched a massive investigation to find those responsible for yesterday's serial bomb attacks in the Capital, which killed at least 61 people and left 220 injured.

The police today claimed that they are looking into vital clues and also conducted raids at various parts of the city. They picked up some persons for questioning, but officers denied that they had arrested or detained anyone.

Even after prolonged investigations, police have been unable to establish whether a plastic device or an improvised explosive device was used in the blasts. "A single outfit could have been behind the serial bomb blasts and the Islamic Inquilab Mahaza, the group which has claimed responsibility for the explosions, is believed to be connected to the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tayyaba," said the joint commissioner of the special cell, Mr Karnail Singh, who now heads the probe.

He said an electronic timer device was used to trigger the blast in a bus in Govindpuri, but nothing could be said with certainty about what caused the explosions in Paharganj and Sarojini Nagar.

"The investigation is in progress and we have received some vital clues which we are investigating," Mr Singh said. He,

however, added: "It's premature to say anything now." On Inquilab Mahaza, he said: "The outfit was formed in 1996. But it's not active anymore. We are verifying the claim."

Meanwhile, more than 400

small guest houses and hotels in the Paharganj area were under surveillance. The police commissioner, Dr KK Paul, today announced a reward of Rs 1 lakh for information that may lead to the arrest of persons

involved in the blasts.

Meanwhile, the police along with shopkeepers' associations decided to open the markets. The malls and markets in Noida and Gurgaon also remained open amid heavy security.

Security has also been tightened at all important installations, including Delhi Metro, multi-storied buildings and the city's borders. The police have also put up barricades across the city.

Inquiry in right direction: Patil

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Oct. 30. — The Prime Minister today called a meeting of the Union Cabinet to take stock of the situation arising out of the serial bomb blasts that rocked Delhi yesterday killing at least 61 people and wounding many others.

Significantly, Dr Manmohan Singh appealed to the people to go about their normal activities as usual. "I urge the people to remain calm, not to panic or believe in rumours and ensure that we go about our activities normally."

After the hour-long Cabinet meeting, the Union home minister, Mr Shrivraj Patil, said the probe into the Delhi blasts was proceeding in the "correct direction" and "lots of information" about those behind the attacks has been gathered.

"We have lots of information with us," Mr Patil said when asked whether any Kashmiri militant outfit has taken responsibility for the explosions. "Please do not pressurise us to disclose that information. Once that kind of information is disclosed, its effectiveness gets reduced. After the results are achieved, we will explain it to you," he said.

"Our assessment is that our



Mr Patil: 'Mum's the word for now'

people in the investigation are proceeding in the correct direction. They are doing well in the investigation," the minister said when pressed further on the involvement of the outfits in the blasts. "We have enough information. But it is not scientific or correct to disclose at this point of time." He added: "At this point of time, our concentration is to see that relief is given to victims... In the next few days, we shall have to take all the precautions so that everything (Diwali and Id) goes in a peaceful manner."

The Cabinet made an assessment of the terror threat and the ways to counter them. Mr Patil said it would also be necessary to keep an eye on people streaming into the Capital from outside.

31 OCT 2005

THE STATESMAN

After mayhem, the whodunit

It's LeT backed by ISI: Sleuths

RAJNISH Sharma & Agencies
New Delhi, October 30

FOR ALL the planning and intrigue that must have gone into the weekend serial blasts in Delhi, the intelligence agencies aren't looking at an elaborate whodunit.

The mayhem, they say, bears clear fingerprints of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), egged on and aided by the ISI. This despite phone calls to some Kashmir newspapers from a man who spoke on behalf of a hitherto unknown outfit called Inquilab-e-Mahaz, claiming responsibility for the blasts.

The J&K police have dismissed the claim as an attempt to create confusion. But even without their inputs, the intelligence agencies in Delhi are convinced that the broader, political ramifications of the blasts, especially their timing, suggest the hand of players with far bigger stakes, the ISI.

POINTERS

■ Cell phone tracking provided early leads after the blasts when sleuths recorded repeated calls being made from some Paharganj, Sarojini Nagar and Govindpuri areas

■ Experts said RDX was not used. The explosives were locally assembled, low-intensity IEDs. But the operation was extremely well-planned with local support—a fact evident from how strategically bombs were planted

ing agencies on the wrong track. The reason why no major outfit has come forward to claim responsibility is not difficult to see. Even these ruthless militants are afraid that if they own up to killing so many civilians they might lose support in the Valley," he added.

According to sources, the sleuths are focused on the LeT because of another reason: Most other major outfits — including the Hizbul Mujahideen and the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) — are currently facing a severe manpower crunch. "You may safely rule out the JeM because it's no longer involved in joint operations with the LeT, though both outfits were responsible for the Parliament attack. Only the LeT has the resources now to carry out such elaborately planned strikes, though only with ISI support," a source said.

"Some elements in the ISI were clearly unhappy about India providing assistance to quake-hit Pakistan as also the relief work done by Indian agencies in the Kashmir Valley. The message they want to send is clear: Look what is happening in your own country while your government is busy providing relief to Pakistan," a top intelligence official said.

The other motive, he said, was to offset the media hype that the quake had destroyed the meticulously built terror infrastructure in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir: "While a little-known outfit called Inquilab claimed responsibility for the blasts, we see it as an attempt to put the investigat-



Sunita Devi in shock after seeing her 15-year-old daughter Neha's body at the Safdarjung Hospital. Neha died in the Paharganj bomb blast on Saturday.

REUTERS

Day after

THE TOLL
The police have scaled down the casualty count, saying 59 people had been killed and 210 injured. Earlier, they had said 61 people were dead and 188 injured

LOTS OF LEADS
Investigations were moving in the 'right direction' and 'lots of leads' had been found, the home minister said after an hour-long Cabinet meet chaired by the Prime Minister. But the PM told the media not to 'pressure us to disclose anything now'

DETENTIONS
Police raided scores of places across the capital and detained at least 22 for questioning. A massive hunt is on to nab the culprits

THE POTA ANGLE
BJP general secretary Arun Jaitley blamed repeal of Pota and soft borders facilitating illegal infiltration for the blasts

MARKETS OPEN
The blasts failed to dampen the Diwali and Id spirit. Delhiites thronged markets for some last-minute shopping. Shopkeepers in Sarojini Nagar and Paharganj, the sites of two of the three blasts on Saturday, also opened their establishments amid an uneasy calm

Another mom recalls a Diwali promise

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, October 30

SATYABRATA MUKHERJEE of 18C Kali Lane had promised his mother he would organise a Lakshmi Puja on his return from Delhi. That promise will remain unfulfilled, as he is never going to return. Satyabrata and his wife, Supriya, were killed in Saturday's blast at Sarojini Nagar. Their 13-year-old son, Sayan, is missing.

"He and Debabrata, eldest of four brothers, stayed at the Kali Lane house. Just before Durga Puja he refurbished the house and wanted to organise a Lakshmi Puja. His grief-stricken mother, Kalyani, kept recalling the promise," neighbour Chand Chatterjee said. She left for Delhi with youngest son Nababrata by the morning flight.



CITYWATCH

■ Security at the airport, railway stations, the Metro and other government buildings beefed up

■ Cops in plain clothes deployed at malls

◀ Security at Kalighat temple

Gloom descended on the narrow lane behind Kalighat temple on Sunday as word arrived. Even neighbours were in tears. They found it hard to believe Satyada and boudi were no more. They worried also for Sayan, a Class VII student of South Point and an able violin player.

Chatterjee said the Mukherjees rarely socialised. But Satyabrata and Supriya were different. "He was a member of the local club and took interest in its activities. We're in deep shock," Chatterjee said.

The Mukherjees wanted to be left alone in their grief. Neighbours said

Satyabrata, second of the four brothers, took care of his mother and Debabrata looked after father Sukumar, a retired railway officer. Another brother, Banibrata, died two years ago and Nababrata moved to a Kudghat apartment. Sister Gayatri stays with her husband in Garia.

"Satyabrata was visiting his brother-in-law, N.K. Bhattacharya, in Delhi. After identifying the bodies, Bhattacharya called up Nababrata and Gayatri, who broke the news to her parents," neighbours said.

Bhattacharya told media persons in Delhi that his sister and brother-in-law had been killed in the blast while shopping at Sarojini Nagar. "They had gone to the nearby Big Bazar in the afternoon and never returned," he said.



প্রতিরক্ষা নীতি স্বাধীন, বোঝালেন মনমোহন

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার, নয়া দিল্লি, ২৪
অক্টোবর: ভারতের প্রতিরক্ষা নীতি যে
পাকিস্তান-কেন্দ্রিকতা থেকে বেরিয়ে
আসার মতো সাবালক অর্জন করেছে,
সেনা কমান্ডারদের সঙ্গে বৈঠকে আজ
সেটাই বুঝিয়ে দিলেন প্রধানমন্ত্রী
মনমোহন সিংহ। বুঝিয়ে দিলেন,
ভারতের নীতি এখন কোনও নির্দিষ্ট
দেশকে ঘিরে নয়। বরং, বহু দেশকে
কেন্দ্র করে।

ভারত-পাকিস্তান সম্পর্কের ক্ষেত্রে
দু'দিন আগে পাক প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ
মুশারফ এক গুচ্ছ প্রস্তাব দিয়েছেন।
সন্ত্রাসবাদী হামলায় কাশ্মীরের মন্ত্রীর
মৃত্যুর ঘটনার স্মৃতি এখনও টাটকা।
ফলে, প্রধানমন্ত্রী পাকিস্তান প্রসঙ্গে কিছু
বলবেন, এমনই জল্পনা ছিল। অথচ এই
প্রথম সেনা কমান্ডারদের বৈঠকে
দেশের প্রধানমন্ত্রী পাকিস্তানের নামও
উচ্চারণ করলেন না। প্রতিরক্ষা
প্রস্তুতির জন্য বরাদ্দ বাড়ানোর কথা
বললেও আজ ঘুরেফিরে শান্তির কথাই
বলেছেন মনমোহন।

প্রধানমন্ত্রী বলেন, “আমি বিশ্বাস
করি, আমাদের জাতীয় নিরাপত্তার
স্বার্থেই প্রতিবেশী রাষ্ট্রগুলির
রাজনৈতিক, আর্থিক ও সামাজিক
স্থিতিশীলতা সুনিশ্চিত করা জরুরি।
এই প্রক্রিয়ায় কূটনীতির একটা বড়
ভূমিকা রয়েছে। দক্ষিণ এশিয়ায় একটা
মুক্ত সমাজ, মুক্ত অর্থনীতি গড়ে ওঠা
উচিত। এতে যেমন আমাদের স্বার্থ
রয়েছে, তেমনই স্বার্থ রয়েছে গোটা
দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার।”

একই সঙ্গে প্রধানমন্ত্রী আজ এ-ও
বুঝিয়ে দেন, নিরাপত্তার প্রসঙ্গে শুধুমাত্র
আমেরিকা-নির্ভরতা নয়, চীন, রাশিয়া
এবং ইউরোপের অন্যান্য রাষ্ট্রের সঙ্গেও
প্রতিরক্ষা সম্পর্ক সুদৃঢ় করতে চায়
ভারত। আজ দ্ব্যর্থহীন ভাষায় ভারতের
এই বহুকেন্দ্রিকতার কৌশলের কথা

তিনি ঘোষণা করেছেন। সেনাবাহিনীকে
তিনি জানিয়েছেন, ঠান্ডা যুদ্ধের পরে
পরিস্থিতি বদলেছে। হতে পারে
আমেরিকা অর্থনৈতিক, সামরিক,
প্রযুক্তিগত ও সাংস্কৃতিক দিক থেকে
অনেক বেশি ক্ষমতাসালী রাষ্ট্র। কিন্তু
ভারত আমেরিকার সঙ্গে সামরিক
সম্পর্ক গড়ে তুললেও অন্য দেশগুলির
সঙ্গে প্রতিরক্ষা সম্পর্ক বাড়াবে।

প্রধানমন্ত্রীর এই মন্তব্যের বিশেষ
রাজনৈতিক তাৎপর্য রয়েছে বলে মনে
করা হচ্ছে। সম্প্রতি ভারত-মার্কিন
প্রতিরক্ষা সমঝোতা নিয়ে বামেরা
মনমোহন সরকারের কড়া সমালোচনা
করে। ইরান প্রসঙ্গে মনমোহনের
নীতিরও তীব্র প্রতিবাদ জানায় তারা।
সেই পরিস্থিতি সহজ করতে আজ
মনমোহন সচেষ্ট হয়েছেন। এক দিকে
তিনি বলেন, “আমি আশা করি, গত
জুলাইয়ে আমার মার্কিন সফরে সে
দেশের সঙ্গে যে সমঝোতা হয়েছিল,
তার প্রয়োগ শুরু হলে প্রভূত উপকার
হবে।” আবার সেই সঙ্গে তিনি এ-ও
বলেন, “অনুমান করা যায়, ইউরোপীয়
ইউনিয়ন, রাশিয়া, চীন, জাপান ও
ভারত এক সময় সঙ্ঘবদ্ধ হবে।
আমাদের উচিত নিজেদের মধ্যে
সামরিক সহযোগিতা বাড়িয়ে
বহুকেন্দ্রিক বিশ্ব গড়ে তোলা। যাতে
বিশ্ব জুড়ে সন্ত্রাসবাদের সমস্যার
একসঙ্গে মোকাবিলা করা যায়।”

ঠান্ডা যুদ্ধের সময়ে আমেরিকা
এবং সোভিয়েত ইউনিয়ন, দুই মেরুই
ছিল ক্ষমতাসালী। ক্ষমতার এই
ভারসাম্যের রাজনীতি এখন লুপ্ত। এ
অবস্থায় ভারত আমেরিকার পাশাপাশি
রাশিয়া ও চীনের সঙ্গে ঘনিষ্ঠ সম্পর্ক
তৈরি করছে। তাতে আমেরিকার
অস্থিতি হলেও ভারত বহুকেন্দ্রিকতার
কূটনীতি থেকে সরে আসেনি। সেটাই
মনমোহন ফের বুঝিয়ে দিয়েছেন।

India, France ink *Scorpene* deal

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI, Oct. 6. — Giving a major push to submarine building capability, India and France today signed a Rs 15,400 crore deal to manufacture six advanced stealth characteristics *Scorpene* submarines at Mazagoan Docks in Mumbai.

Scorpene, billed as the world's most silent underwater killer machine, would be manufactured under full-technology transfer by the state-owned Mazagoan Docks and delivered between 2012 and 2017. The agreement was signed by French ambassador Mr Dominique Girard and Mr S Banerjee, additional secretary ministry of defence.

As part of the deal, the submarines will be armed with EADS SM39 Exocet sub-harpoon anti-ship missiles. The other powerful weapons payload on the subs include Black Shark and other advanced torpedoes. With the capability to strike targets underwater, on surface and on land, *Scorpene* has a radical new design with reduced sound emissions which enables the submarines to strike at long-distances without detection. The *Scorpene* is based on designs of the French Nuclear submarines.

The agreement gives India the option of incorporating the Advanced Air Propulsion technology for even lesser sound emissions, on the delivery of the third of the six submarines, Naval chief



Mr Dominique Girard and Mr S Banerjee sign the deal on Thursday. — AFP

admiral Mr Arun Prakash told reporters after signing the deal in South Block.

Stating that India had got a "fair deal", Defence ministry officials said for the first time, offset as well as an integrity clause had been built into the agreement. The integrity pact seeks to ensure avoidance of all forms of corruption and free, fair and transparent dealings in negotiations leading to the agreement. The agreement was signed by Mr Thomas Mathew, joint secretary (aquisitions) and Mr Pierre Legros, chairman of French makers, Armaris. Briefing the media on the deal, Mr Prakash said the agreement would ensure that Indian submarine-building lines, which were lying idle for the past 11 years would be revived. He said the Navy was going ahead with plans to equip itself with 24 submarines in 30 years.

THE STATESMAN

U.P. alert after fresh Al Qaeda threat

Handwritten notes:
P-
D & N Returns
1110
HD-5

Railways receives yet another letter threatening to blow up Charbagh station by RDX

LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh Government has sounded a red alert at all major railway stations following fresh threats within a month by international terrorist organisation Al Qaeda to blow up Charbagh railway station here by RDX.

Two letters have been received by the railways here in the last two days, taking the total number of such threats to three within a span of 25 days, Principal Secretary (Home) Alok Sinha said here on Friday.

A similar letter was sent to the railways here on September 5 last threatening to blow up the station on the eve of former US President Bill Clinton's city visit.

State police along with Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) have cordoned off the Charbagh station, while bomb detection and bomb disposal squads have been deployed to detect the explosives.

Superintendent of Police (Railway) Ajay Anand said the letters sent through normal post were received by the station superintendent of Charbagh station.

"The letters claimed that 30 kilograms of RDX is being sent to

• **Railways gets three letters of threat in a span of 25 days**

• **RPF, GRP cordon off Charbagh station**

• **Preliminary probe shows it as a prank, not real threat**

• **Letter, written in Hindi and Urdu, was sent from Lucknow**

blow up the station," Mr Anand said.

Senior police official said all the security agencies including Special Task Force (STF) had been engaged to find the culprits who sent the letter to the railways.

"Although the preliminary probe showed it was not a threat but a prank as the terrorist group never warns before attacks, yet the government is taking no chances," the official said. The government has alerted police in the state to maintain extra vigil at all major stations.

Earlier on September 5, the

railway department went into a tizzy after receiving a registered letter allegedly written by the self-styled area commander of Al Qaeda threatening to blow up the Charbagh station.

The letter -- written in Hindi and Urdu and sent from Lucknow's Nishatganj area by Mohd Ahmed -- addressed to NER divisional railway manager Amitabh Lal was received by the station superintendent.

Claiming to be Al Qaeda area commander, Ahmed in the letter threatened that "this week other railway offices would be blown up with RDX."

While sniffer dogs were called in, police had started the forensic examination of the letter bearing registry number 3671.

Police sources said no explosive was found even after the police launched a major exercise to detect any explosives at the railway station today after receiving the threatening letter.

Mr Sinha claimed that it was likely that all the three threatening letters were written by the same person, as the handwriting in the recent two letters matched with that in the September 5 letter. -- UNI

THE HINDU

Sleepy borders beget terror

Many threats
in New Delhi

Sept. 26. — Unmanned state borders have emerged as safe havens for Naxalite groups to recruit, train and set up their weapons manufacturing units, according to a recent Intelligence report.

In view of Intelligence warnings, the Union home ministry has asked state governments to intensify patrolling in unmanned bordering areas in close cooperation with security forces of their neighbouring states and exchange information to check Naxalite activities. Most Naxalite camps are spread within the eight-kilometre stretch along the border taking advantage of unmanned areas, the Intelligence agencies said. "This bordering stretch has not only become a protected area for Naxalites, but they are also using it to regroup

themselves, recruit, train new entrants and test sophisticated weapons manufactured in their makeshift weapons manufacturing units," said a senior official of an Intelligence agency.

Though the problem is common to most states, the worst-affected is Jharkhand where 21 of the 22 districts are in border areas. The rough terrain makes it difficult to police the border, the official said.

Naxalites have of late changed their strategy. They are now targeting "prominent" personalities, revealed the IB report submitted to home ministry. Inputs from border districts indicate that these groups have not only set up their own weapons manufacturing units but also "successfully" tested sophisticated weaponry, including rocket launchers. This phenomenon has not been witnessed even in Kashmir where militants rely on arms supplies from

across the border. Intelligence surveys revealed that while there has been a marginal increase in incidents, killings have gone up, mainly in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Orissa. The most disturbing trends are from Andhra Pradesh where killings rose from 73 in 2004 (till August) to 164 this year (till August). In Chhattisgarh, it rose from 55 to 86 and in Maharashtra from 11 to 45. In Karnataka, from one in 2004, eight killings were recorded till this August. "Another worry is the number of people joining the Naxalites is more than those surrendering, increasing the hardcore cadre. The recent attack in Madhubani is an example where Naxalites from Punjab, Jharkhand and Bengal jointly launched the operation," an Intelligence officer pointed out.

THE STATESMAN

Extremist solutions

Inter-state force not the final answer

As Union home minister, Shivraj Patil has not had an effective answer to problems of insurgency and terrorism in Kashmir and the north-east. But while there is a definite movement in the peace agenda for Kashmir at higher levels, there does not seem to be any clue on how to deal with Naxalites in different states — 12 by the latest count. Patil's latest move was a meeting of chief ministers of the affected states at which it was decided to set up inter-state joint task forces. This is a small step considering that extremists are now spread over several states. They are well armed, trained and have acquired a level of sophistication that demands a quick and appropriate response from the administration. The joint task force idea comes when a lot of damage has been done, the latest example being the bloodbath in Jharkhand in which the Naxalite resistance groups were the main victims. It is also evident that the police forces are helpless and villagers virtually left to the mercy of the extremist groups. Why did it take the minister so long to respond?

Administrative dithering is compounded by political factors. The Andhra Congress has a formal alliance with the Telengana Rashtra Samithi that is demanding separate statehood for Telengana. A TRS minister in the UPA government has even threatened to "kill" those who oppose the demand. Such explosive statements are as disturbing as the proclaimed offenders with criminal records in the UPA government. It makes Patil's task quite impossible. On paper, the inter-state joint task forces are better equipped because they can operate across state boundaries. At the same time, each Naxalite-affected state has its own set of problems. This means inter-state forces must coordinate with local police, whose record in protecting citizens in states like Bihar and Jharkhand has been abysmal. Getting this act together may become challenging and time-consuming, more so when the Naxalites have developed a large network with funds secured through terror tactics. The home minister cannot hope to pull off a miracle through one meeting with chief ministers. A more sustained and long-term drive must become visible on the ground. That should include confidence building measures for disillusioned and socially weaker sections, won over by extremists to their cause.

Satellite eye on Naxals

Centre to consult ISRO

RAJNISH Sharma
New Delhi, September 20

THE UNION home ministry is exploring the possibilities of tracking the movement of Naxal cadres at their camps operating in the remote areas and thick jungles through satellite. The issue, ministry sources said, would soon be discussed with the Indian Space and Research Organisation (ISRO).

The idea was mooted by Chhattisgarh chief minister Raman Singh at the first meeting of the standing committee of chief ministers of Naxal-dominated states held here on Monday. He emphasised the need for monitoring the Naxal camps through satellite since these were mostly operating in areas not easily accessible by the security forces. Singh argued that the strategy would be extremely effective. He gave a recent example of satellite images received by the Chhattisgarh government when it was looking for a suitable site for the new capital.

Singh said the satellite images were very clear, since even buildings, trees and animals could be easily identified. Even senior home ministry officials said the satellite pictures

TACKLING RED TERROR

Satellite images are very clear, since even buildings, trees and animals can be easily identified. Satellite pictures can scan an object within a 10-metre radius

could scan an object within a 10-metre radius.

Chhattisgarh is one of worst-affected states in terms of Naxal violence – with a dense forest area of nearly 4,000 sq km – where Naxal outfits are reported to be running training camps. Singh said this entire forest area should be scanned through satellite.

The home ministry has agreed to discuss the issue with Isro and, if possible, will get satellite images of forest areas in all the 13 Naxal-dominated states. “Even other states were keen to explore this possibility. If the Naxal camps can be obtained, the security forces can strike at the site”, a senior ministry official said.

Russia offers latest MiG fighter jet

40-13
2378

MiG-35 has advantage over its rivals

Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW: Russia has upped its bid to win the Indian tender for the purchase of 126 multi-role combat aircraft by offering the latest MiG fighter jet.

The MiG-35 fighter showcased at the Moscow International Air Show last week will have at least one crucial advantage over its competitors in the IAF tender — Dassault Aviation's Mirage 2000-5, Lockheed Martin's F16, and the SAAB's Gripen.

"It is the world's only plane to be powered by an all-axis thrust vectoring engine that enables it to fly safely at any angle of attack," said MiG corporation head Alexei Fyodorov.

The MiG-35 (export name of the MiG-29M/M2 version) is powered by the innovative RD-33OVT engine, whose nozzles can move in all directions. This makes it even more manoeuvrable than the Russian-built Su-30MKI, the world's first fighter jet with up-and-down thrust vectoring engines, which forms the backbone of the IAF's fleet of long-range fighter jets.

The MiG-35 belongs to the 4++ generation of fighter jets and incorporates many features of the 5th-generation aircraft. New avionics, a multi-mode radar and advanced weapons have more than doubled the plane's combat punch compared to the base-version MiG-29. Like its predecessor, the MiG-35 is a nuclear-capable aircraft and can be armed with a full range of airborne weapons.

It carries 50 per cent more fuel than the basic MiG-29 thanks to additional tanks built into the body and wings and can be refuelled in flight. The plane uses new radar-absorbent coatings that reduce its detection by enemy radars by a factor of five.

India's acquisition of the top-of-the-line MiG-35 and a license for in-depth technology transfer will stimulate the upgradation of the IAF's family of MiG aircraft, which includes MiG-21, MiG-27 and MiG-29, Mr. Fyodorov said.

"If we win the tender we will jointly create with India a more technologically advanced aircraft than even the Su-30MKI," he said.

THE HINDU

ATTACK Man who delivered them says he got them from a Sindh-based terrorist

Ayodhya weapons came from Pok

AMAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 22

WEAPON S and explosives for the Ayodhya attack came from across the Line of Control (LoC).

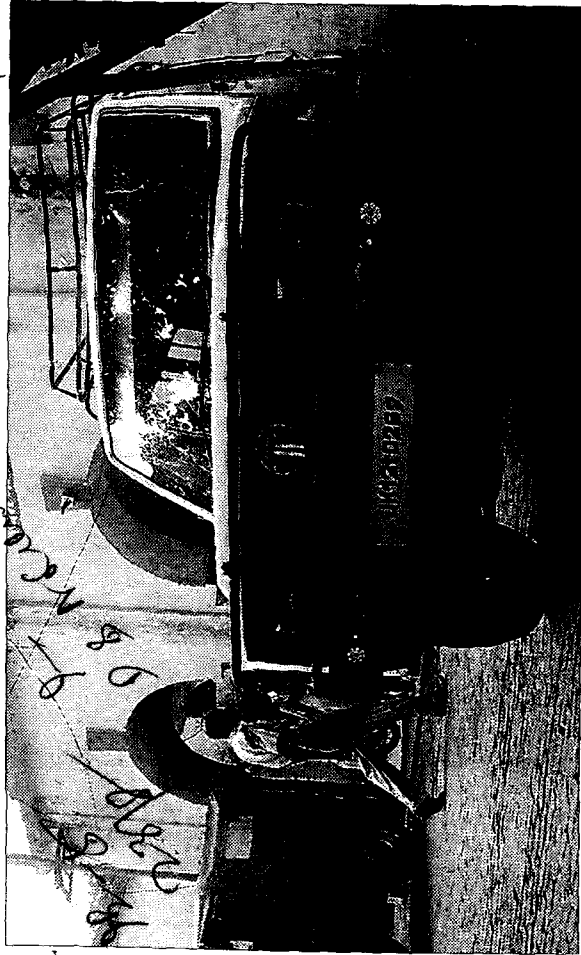
Aasif Iqbal alias Farooq, who carried four AK-47s, an AK-56, Chinese hand-grenades and a rocket launcher to Ayodhya in a Sumo has told the UP Police that Adnaan, a Sindh-based terrorist, handed him the weapons and explosives at Srinagar's Lal Chowk in the early hours of June 2. He said Adnaan got the weapons from Pak-occupied Kashmir (Pok).

"Adnaan is the second-in-command of Mohammad Qari, the LeT commander who masterminded the attack," the SSP of the UP Special Task Force, Akhil Shrivastava, told *Express* Farooq, who worked as a

teacher in a government school in a Mendhar village, told the police that on Qari's order, he bought the Sumo from Shakil for Rs 2.2 lakh. Adnaan stayed with Farooq and helped him make a cavity in the vehicle to hide the

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The Sumo that Farooq used to carry weapons to Aligarh. File photo



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teacher in a government school in a Mendhar village, told the police that on Qari's order, he bought the Sumo from Shakil for Rs 2.2 lakh. Adnaan stayed with Farooq and helped him make a cavity in the vehicle to hide the

the door. When it was dark, I fetched the weapons from the Sumo in a bag given to me by the girl and kept it in one of the rooms. I left for Srinagar after dinner at the house," Farooq's account in the interrogation report reads.

Now, the police are searching for the girl and Mushtaq, a Pak national who used to stay with her. It was Mushtaq who delivered weapons to the terrorists in Aligarh.

"After taking weapons from Mushtaq, the terrorists headed for Akbarpur. It seems the girl and Mushtaq were given the important role of hiding the weapons for almost three weeks. They were an important link in the chain of events," says a top UP police official.

The police have also found Sumo's mention in records at the Lakhampur check post in Sangrur district on the Jammu-Punjab border. The entry was made around 5:15 am on June 5.

handed the weapons to a girl in a house behind the Aligarh Muslim University.

"I reached Aligarh on the evening of June 5. The road to the house was narrow. I parked the vehicle at a distance. A girl received me at

Shun violence,

Hyderabad: Declaring firmly that extremist violence cannot be tolerated, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Sunday told Naxalites to seek redressal of grievances through "sustained dialogue and democratic means" and "test their popularity at the hustings".

In the backdrop of Andhra Pradesh Congress government reimposing the ban on Maoist groups, the PM asserted that no one had the right to take the law into their own hands and extremism in any form cannot be tolerated in any civilised and democratic society.

"I have said this to Hurriyat in Kashmir, to the ULFA in Assam and to Naxalites in Andhra Pradesh—there is no grievance that cannot be redressed through democratic means and sustained dialogue", Singh said after inaugurating a national seminar on 'Press and the Nation' organised by Prajasakti, a CPM Telugu daily.

"No society can tolerate those who kill innocent people", he said, stating that the power of



PM tells

"No society can tolerate those who kill innocent people. The power of people in a democracy flows through the ballot box and not from the barrel of the gun and I dare the Naxalite groups to test their popularity at the hustings"

Naxals

tolerated in any civilised democratic society", Singh said.

Recalling how he was heartened to hear revolutionary baladeer and former Naxalite emissary Gadar's remark on a TV channel that the killing of innocent people did not help win a cause, he said "This is an important liberal principle. Our democracy allows us freedom to champion our cause and win people over to our point of view".

Allaying apprehensions on possible restrictions on the media carrying statements of the extremist groups in the wake of ban on frontal organisations of CPI (Maoist), the PM made it clear that any political group can use the media to convey its views.

Stating that free press is the ultimate check against the tyranny of authority and a mirror that enables people in power to get a continuous reality check, he spoke of how the local media in the state had alerted the government to 'agricultural distress' in the past and had played a socially responsible and constructive role. Agencies

state unveiled a statue of former President late N Sanjeeva Reddy at the Secretariat here and briefly spoke to Nagarathnamma, the widow of Congress MLA C Narsi Reddy, who was killed in a Naxalite attack in Narayanpet town on Independence Day along with nine others.

"Faced with terror tactics, the government will have no other option than to fight such groups and their ideology of hatred. Extremism of any form, based on any divisive ideology cannot be

people in a democracy flows through the ballot box and not from the barrel of gun and dared the naxalite groups to "test their popularity at the hustings".

"Every political group that claims to represent the interests of people or of a section must test its popularity at the hustings. Go and ask people to vote for you. Come to legislatures and enact the laws that you wish to see in place", the PM said.

Earlier, Singh, who is on a brief four-hour-long visit to the

Jaish, not Lashkar, behind July 5 Ayodhya storming

*Attack on temple complex
was Masood Azhar's dream*

PRESS Trust of India
New Delhi, August 21

IT WAS Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), and not Lashkar-e-Tayeeba (LeT), behind the July 5 attack on the Ram Janambhoomi temple complex in Ayodhya. Investigating agencies, probing the attack, stumbled upon the fact while interrogating five people who had been arrested in connection with the attack.

Though UP and Jammu and Kashmir police were trying hard to piece together their stories of Lashkar being involved in the attack, several leads clearly indicated JeM as the perpetrators of the foiled bid. Evidences gathered by central agencies suggest that Mohammed Kari, the absconding mastermind, was a local commander of JeM and not Lashkar, as thought earlier.

During investigation, it was found that one of the five militants killed during the attack on July 5, had visited Deoband and had stayed there.

JeM is headed by Maulana Masood Azhar, who was released in 1999 in exchange of hijacked passengers of an Indian Airlines flight. Sources quoted the arrested militants as saying that it was one of the unfulfilled dreams of Azhar to attack the sanctum sanctorum at the temple complex in Ayodhya. Subsequently, Azhar's dream turned to one of the prime goals of the JeM, which was formed after breaking away from Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM).

There were some initial leads suggesting that JeM was behind the attack, but neither the Kashmir nor UP police tried

to work on it, the sources said.

The joint operation of the two states' police had led to the arrest of five people including Farooq and Nadeem from Mendhar area of Poonch district in Jammu region, who had helped in transporting the arms and ammunition in their vehicles from Jammu region.

Among others arrested by the police were Mohammed Aziz, Shakeel Ahmed and Dr Irfan Khan, a Unani medico, who was arrested from Delhi for allegedly being in the know of the plot to attack the disputed site.

The militants killed in the encounter with CRPF on the fateful day were Mohammed Amin alias Zubair, Arshad Ali, Arif, Yunus and Arshad alias Asif.

Out of these five, Yunus had visited Darul-Uloom Deoband, and is also alleged to have stayed there before moving to Faizabad to carry out the attack.

Militants belonging to Jaish-e-Mohammed are the followers of the controversial and orthodox Deoband sect, whereas the Lashkar cadres are supposed to be the followers of the Al-Hadees or Wahabi sect of Muslims.

Security sources had also earlier indicated the possibility of involvement of Jaish militants as the tactics used by the attackers were similar to those used by militants when they had tried to storm the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly premises on October 31 in 2001.

Even then, they had hijacked a vehicle, camouflaged it as a government-owned one, and blasted it at the outer perimeter to gain access into the heavily fortified Assembly premises.

TELL-TALE SIGN

DEOBAND LINK

One of the five militants who stormed Ayodhya had visited Darul-Uloom Deoband before the attack

A MATTER OF FAITH
Jaish militants follow the orthodox Deoband sect, whereas Lashkar men follow Al-Hadees or Wahabi sect



Bystanders look at the remains of the jeep used in the July 5 Ayodhya attack.

22 AUG 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

আল কায়দার নামে ছাপা হচ্ছে কলকাতাতেই

সুরবেক বিশ্বাস

আল কায়দার নামে কুপন বিক্রি শুধু নয়, ওই কুপন কলকাতা বা তার আশেপাশেই কোথাও ছাপা হচ্ছে বলে সন্দেহ করছেন গোয়েন্দারা। 'হুজি'র নামে প্রচারপত্রও সেই ছাপাখানা থেকে বেরোচ্ছে বলে গোয়েন্দাদের অভিমত।

সে-ক্ষেত্রে তিলতলায় ধৃত দু'জন বা মেটিয়াবুরুজের বিরজ নালা এলাকার বাসিন্দাদের বর্ণনা অনুযায়ী ফকিরবেশী বাংলাদেশি ছাত্রও আরও অনেকে কুপন বিক্রি ও প্রচারপত্র বিলিতে জড়িত বলে গোয়েন্দাদের ধারণা। যে-ভাবে মাস দুয়েকের মধ্যে কলকাতার বাছাই কিছু জায়গায় ওই কুপন ও প্রচারপত্র ছড়ানো হয়েছে, তাতে যড়যন্ত্রের আশঙ্কা করছেন তারা।

শহর ও সংলগ্ন বিভিন্ন এলাকায় এই কাজে 'নিয়োগ' করা হয়েছে বিভিন্ন লোককে। তদন্তকারীদের বক্তব্য, একটি এলাকার 'দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্ত' দলটি অন্য এলাকার দলটিকে না-ও চিনতে পারে। তবে উৎস সত্ত্ববত একই। তারা বলছেন, "একসঙ্গে এত কুপন ও প্রচারপত্র সম্ভবত টাকা থেকে আসেনি। তাতে বাক্সি ও বুঁকি— দুই-ই আছে। মনে হচ্ছে, প্রথমে কিছু এসেছিল। তার পরে সেগুলির আদলে এখানকারই কোনও ছাপাখানায় কুপন ও প্রচারপত্র ছাপানো হয়েছে।"

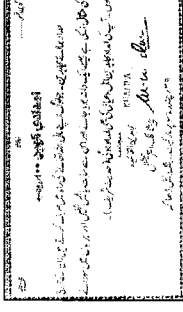
কেন্দ্রীয় গোয়েন্দা সংস্থা সূত্রের খবর, ওসামা বিন লাদেনের জঙ্গি সংগঠনের নামে কুপন বিক্রি এবং বাংলাদেশে বিশেষ ভাবে সক্রিয় জঙ্গি সংগঠন হুজি-র নামে প্রচারপত্র ছড়ানোর অভিযোগে তিলতলা থেকে শনিবার রাতে যে-দু'জনকে গ্রেফতার করা হয়, তাদের নাম মহম্মদ সিরাজ ও শেখ নাসির আলি। তাদের হেফাজতে ২৫ ও ৫০ টাকা দামের কুপনের গোছা গোছা বই এবং হুজি-র প্রচারপত্র মিলেছে। সেসমবার আদালত তাদের ২৫ অগস্ট পর্যন্ত পুলিশি হাজতে রাখার নির্দেশ দিয়েছে। পালিয়ে গিয়েছে ওই দলের তৃতীয় জন, মণ্টু শেখ। মঙ্গলবার রাত পর্যন্ত তাকে ধরা যায়নি। তার বাড়ি ৯ নম্বর কুষ্টিয়া রোডে, আর সিরাজ ও নাসির থাকে ৮ নম্বরে।

গোয়েন্দারা জানান, যে-কুপনে 'টাকা, বাংলাদেশ' লেখা আছে, সেই কুপন কেন কলকাতায় বিক্রি করে টাকা নেওয়া হচ্ছে, এই প্রশ্ন তুলে আপত্তি জানান তিলতলার কিছু বাসিন্দা। কুষ্টিয়ার একটি গ্রহাগারে এই ব্যাপারে একটি বৈঠকও ডেকেছিল সিরাজ, নাসিরের। কিন্তু কেউ তার বিরোধিতা করায় শেষ পর্যন্ত বৈঠক হয়নি। সিরাজ (৪০) বিহারের চম্পারনের বাসিন্দা আর নাসির (৩০) বাঙালি। লেভিজ ব্যাপের উপরে ধাতুর কারুকাজ করার ব্যবসা আছে সিরাজের। নাসির তার সহযোগী।

জেরা করে এবং সিরাজ ও নাসিরের পাসপোর্ট থেকে গোয়েন্দারা জেনেছেন, তারা প্রায়ই বাংলাদেশে যেত। ধৃতদের বক্তব্য, তবলিয়-এ-জামাত বা ধর্মশিক্ষা শিবিরের জন্যই তারা ঢাকায় গিয়েছিল বেশ কয়েক বার। গত ডিসেম্বরে ঢাকায় হুজি-র এক ব্যক্তি তাদের ওই কুপন ও প্রচারপত্র দিয়ে গরিবের কল্যাণে এই ভাবে টাকা তুলে দিতে বলেছিল।

কিন্তু এস আই বি-র তদন্তকারী এক অফিসার বলেন, "এই সমস্ত কথার বিশ্বাসযোগ্যতা নিয়ে সন্দেহ আছে। সিরাজ উর্দুতে চোস্ত। তা হলে 'আল কায়দা' কথটা থাকা সত্ত্বেও তারা কুপন বিক্রি করল কেন? তারা কুপন বিক্রির পাশাপাশি যে-প্রচারপত্র বিলি করেছে, সাম্প্রদায়িক উস্কানি দেওয়ার পক্ষে তা যথেষ্ট। কাজেই না-বুঝে তারা এই কাজ করেছে বলে মনে হচ্ছে না।" সিরাজ ও নাসির এক বার দিল্লি গিয়েছিল। তবে কেন গিয়েছিল, সেটা গোয়েন্দাদের কাছে এখনও স্পষ্ট নয়।

গোয়েন্দাদের খবর অনুযায়ী, আল কায়দার জঙ্গি শাখা সংগঠন হিসাবে হরকত-উল-জিহাদ-এ-ইসলামি (হুজি) কাজ করছে দীর্ঘদিন ধরেই। ১৯৯০ সালে ওসামা ঢাকায় হুজি-র কর্তাদের সঙ্গে বৈঠক করে যৌথ ইস্তাহারে স্বাক্ষরও করেছিলেন, যাতে দুনিয়ার মুসলিম শক্তিকে আমেরিকা ও তার সহযোগীদের বিরুদ্ধে ঐক্যবন্ধ করার কথা বলা হয়েছিল। কলকাতায় ছড়ানো হুজি-র প্রচারপত্রও ৫ জুলাইয়ের 'অযোধ্যা ধামাকা'কে যড়যন্ত্র হিসাবে উল্লেখ করে বলা হয়েছে, 'মুসলিমরা আর কত দিন এ-রকম অপমান সহ্য করবে? এ বার সময় এসেছে যুরে দাঁড়ানোর। জেহাদে মুখতোড় জবাব দিতে হবে। সারা মুসলিম সমাজই আমাদের পিছনে রয়েছে।'



৯/১১ রুখতে গুলি করে নামানো হবে ছিনতাই বিমান

9-11 Security

স্টাক রিপোর্টার, নয়াদিল্লি, ১৪ অগস্ট: তাবা হয়েছিল বাজপেয়ীর আমলেই। কিন্তু রাজনৈতিক পরিস্থিতির দিকে তাকিয়ে এত স্পর্শকাতর একটা বিষয়ে সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার সাহস দেখায়নি তারা। মনমোহন সিংহের সরকার দেখাল।

বিমান ছিনতাই রুখতে তাদের তৈরি নতুন নীতিতে বলা হয়েছে, ছিনতাই করা বিমান কোনও গুরুত্বপূর্ণ জায়গায় আঘাত হানার আগেই মাঝ-আকাশে গুলি করে নামানো হবে তাকে। অর্থাৎ, ৯/১১-র মতো ঘটনা আর ঘটতে দেওয়া হবে না। হৃৎপিঠ আগের কন্দহর-কাণ্ডের মতো জঙ্গির বিনিময়ে যাত্রীদের ছাড়িয়ে আনার পথেও আর হাটবে না সরকার। শ্বাহীদের নিরাপত্তা মুক্ত করতে ছিনতাইকারীদের সঙ্গে আলোপ-আলোচনা চালানো হবে চিকিৎসা, কিন্তু কোনও অবস্থাতেই তাদের দাবি মেনে নেওয়া হবে না। প্রতিরক্ষামন্ত্রী প্রণব মুখোপাধ্যায় আজ এই খবর দিয়ে বলেছেন, জাতীয় স্বার্থ ক্ষুণ্ণ হতে না-দেওয়াই সরকারের লক্ষ্য। শীঘ্রই এ ব্যাপারে আইন করতে সংসদে বিল পেশ করা হবে।

ছিনতাই-প্রতিরোধ নীতি নিয়ে নড়াচড়া শুরু ১৯৯৯-এর ২৪ ডিসেম্বর কাঠমাড় থেকে দিল্লিগামী ইন্ডিয়ান এয়ারলাইন্সের বিমান আই সি-৮১৪ ছিনতাই হওয়ার পর থেকেই। সে যাত্রায় ছিনতাই হওয়া বিমানের যাত্রীদের ছাড়াতে হরকত-উল-আনসারের কুখ্যাত জঙ্গি

মৌলানা মাসুদ আজহার-সহ তিন জনকে মুক্তি দিয়েছিল অটলবিহারী বাজপেয়ীর সরকার। তিন জঙ্গিকে নিয়ে একই বিমানে কন্দহর গিয়ে অপহৃতদের ছাড়িয়ে এনেছিলেন তৎকালীন বিদেশমন্ত্রী যশোবন্ত সিংহ। বাজপেয়ীর সরকারের সেই সিদ্ধান্তে বাম-কংগ্রেসের মতো বিরোধীরা তো ক্ষুব্ধ হয়েছিল বটেই, অসন্তোষ তৈরি হয়েছিল এনডিএ সরকারের তিতরেও। ছিনতাকারীদের দাবি মানার ব্যাপারে ঘোর আপত্তি ছিল লালকৃষ্ণ আডবানীর। কিন্তু প্রধানমন্ত্রী বাজপেয়ীর বলে দেন, নতুন সহস্রাব্দের মুখে: শত্রুপক্ষ পরিবারের শোক ভেঙে আনতে পারবেন না তিনি।

দেশের স্বার্থ, না ভাববেগ— গুরুত্বের বিচার নিয়ে দ্বিধা ছিলেন বাজপেয়ীর। মনমোহন সরকার অবশ্য সেই দ্বিধা রেড়ে ফেলেছেন। গত সপ্তাহে কেন্দ্রীয় মন্ত্রিসভার নিরাপত্তা বিষয়ক কমিটির বৈঠকে পাশ হওয়া নীতিতে বলা হয়েছে,

নির্দিষ্ট পথ থেকে সরছে। কথা বলবে এ টি সি। নির্দেশ মানছে না। যুদ্ধবিমানের সাহায্যে নামানোর চেষ্টা। গুরুত্বপূর্ণ এলাকার দিকে যাচ্ছে। গুলি করে নামানো হবে।

ছিনতাই হওয়া বিমানকে কোনও অবস্থাতেই ক্ষেপণাস্ত্র হিসাবে ব্যবহার করতে দেওয়া যাবে না। কোনও বিমান যদি তার নির্দিষ্ট পথ থেকে সরে যায়, তা হলে নিকটবর্তী বিমানবন্দরের এয়ার ট্রাফিক কন্ট্রোল (এটিসি) তার সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করবে। খবর দেওয়া হবে বিমান বাহিনীকে। এই পর্যায়ে বিমানটিকে 'সন্দেহজনক' হিসাবে ধরা হবে।

এটিসি বারবার যোগাযোগ করা সত্ত্বেও বিমানটি যদি উত্তর না-দেয় বা নির্দিষ্ট পথ থেকে সরে যেতেই থাকে, তা হলে তাকে 'অবাধা' হিসাবে গণ্য করা হবে। বায়ু সেনার যুদ্ধ বিমান তাকে নামিয়ে আনার চেষ্টা করবে। খবর যাবে প্রতিরক্ষা, বিদেশ, স্বরাষ্ট্র ও বিমান পরিবহন মন্ত্রকের পদাধিকারীদের নিয়ে তৈরি সচিব পর্যায়ের কমিটির কাছে। তারা যোগাযোগ করবে মন্ত্রিসভার নিরাপত্তা বিষয়ক কমিটির সঙ্গে।

যদি দেখা যায় ছিনতাই হওয়া বিমানটি রাষ্ট্রপতি

ভবন, সংসদ, প্রধানমন্ত্রীর বাড়ির মতো গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভবন বা এলাকার দিকে যাচ্ছে, তা হলে সেই 'বিপজ্জনক' বিমানটিকে গুলি করে নামানো হবে। এ ব্যাপারে সিদ্ধান্ত নেন প্রধানমন্ত্রী, প্রতিরক্ষামন্ত্রী বা স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী। সেই মুহূর্তে খাঁর সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করা যাবে তিনি। তবে পরিস্থিতি যদি এমন হয় যে তাঁদের কারও সঙ্গেই যোগাযোগ করার মতো সময় নেই, সে ক্ষেত্রে গুলি করার সিদ্ধান্ত নেন আ্যাসিস্ট্যান্ট চিফ অফ এয়ার স্টাফ (অপারেশন) বা তাঁর চেয়ে উঁচু পদের কোনও অফিসার। চরম সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার আগে অবশ্য বিমানটির উদ্দেশ্য ব্যতীয়ে দেখার সব রকম চেষ্টা করা হবে। বিমানকে গুলি করে নামানোটা একেবারে শেষ অস্ত্র। এবং সেই কারণেই নিতান্ত অসম্ভব না-হলে সর্বোচ্চ পর্যায়ে সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার কথা বলা হয়েছে।

ছিনতাই হওয়া বিমান যদি আত্মঘাতী জঙ্গিদের হাতে না-ও পড়ে তবু কোনও রকম সমঝোতার পথে যাবে না সরকার। ভারতীয় বিমান ছিনতাই হলে তাকে ভারতের মাটিতেই নামানোর চেষ্টা করা হবে। এক বার নামার পরে তাকে আর উড়তে দেওয়া হবে না। রানওয়েতে দরকলের গাড়ি এনে বা রানওয়ের আলো নিভিয়ে দিয়ে তার ফের উড়ে যাওয়া ঠেকানোর চেষ্টা করবেন বিমানবন্দরের কর্তারা। এবং এই কাজ করার জন্য তাঁদের আগাম কোনও অনুমতির দরকার হবে না।

এর পর পাঁচের পাতায়

শাহীদের নিরাপদে মুক্ত করতে ছিনতাইকারীদের সঙ্গে আলোচনা চালাতে সরকারের আপত্তি নেই। কিন্তু কোনও অবস্থাতেই ছিনতাইকারীদের দাবি মানা হবে না। বিমান ছিনতাইয়ের খবর পাওয়ার দু'ঘণ্টার মধ্যে রওনা দেবে ন্যাশনাল সিকিউরিটি গার্ডের দল। বলপ্রয়োগ করে বিমানটিকে মুক্ত করার দরকার হলে কাজে লাগানো হবে তাদের। তবে বলপ্রয়োগ করা হবে কি না, সে ব্যাপারে নিরাপত্তা বিষয়ক কমিটিই সিদ্ধান্ত নেবে।

বিমান ছিনতাইয়ের ক্ষেত্রে এই নীতি নিলুই চলে আমেরিকা, ব্রিটেন-সহ ইউরোপের অধিকাংশ দেশ। কন্দহর-কাণ্ডের সময় তৈরি ক্রাইসিস ম্যানেজমেন্ট গ্রুপ সফট কাটার পরেও ভেঙে দেয়নি বাজপেয়ীর সরকার। তাদের উপর চার্লিস মনমোহন-বন্দিতা আমেরিকা-ব্রিটেনের বিমান ছিনতাই বিরোধী নীতি খতিয়ে দেখার। নিরাপত্তা বিষয়ক কমিটিতেও বিষয়টি নিয়ে আলোচনা হয়। পশ্চিমের খাঁচে নীতি প্রণয়নের সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েও শেষ পর্যন্ত অবশ্য তাকে কাজে পরিণত করতে পারেন এনডিএ সরকার।

তাদের আশঙ্কা ছিল, এই ধরনের একটা স্পর্শকাতর বিষয়ে রাজনৈতিক ঝকমতা হবে না। তার উপর ছিনতাইয়ের মতো ঘটনা ঘটলে সারা দেশে একটা আবেগজনিত জনমত তৈরি হয়ে যায়। বন্দিদের পরিবারপরিজনদের তরকে যে চাপ তৈরি হয়, তা উপেক্ষা করা কোনও সরকারের পক্ষেই সম্ভব নয়। জাতীয় স্বার্থ ও নাগরিকদের সুরক্ষার মধ্যে সংঘাতের সেই ক্ষণে রাজনৈতিক দলগুলিও দ্বিধাবিভক্ত হয়ে পড়ে।

মনমোহন সরকারের সিদ্ধান্ত জানাজানি হওয়ার পরে কিন্তু রাজনৈতিক মহলে মোটের উপর সমর্থনের সুর। বিজেপির মুখপাত্র মুখতার আব্বাস নকভি বলেছেন, "সম্মতবাদ ও বিস্ত্রিয়তাবাদ মোকাবিলাই যদি সরকারের উদ্দেশ্য হয়, তা হলে আমাদের পূর্ণ সমর্থন আছে।" সিপিএম নেতা সীতারাম ইয়েচুরির মতে, এই নীতির ফলে বিমান ছিনতাই ঠেকানো যাবে। তবে সম্মত দমন ও অভ্যন্তরীণ নিরাপত্তা নিয়ে সরকার কতটা কড়া মনোভাব দেখাতে পারে, তার উপরেই সব কিছু নির্ভর করছে।

সমর্থন জামিয়ে, অপর বাম দল সিপিআইও। কন্দহর-কাণ্ডে যশোবন্ত সিংহের ভূমিকার নিন্দা করে দলের সাধারণ সম্পাদক এ বি বর্ধন বলেছেন, "উনি রাজকীয় বন্দন্যতা দেখিয়েছিলেন এবং সে জন্য ক্রমা পর্যন্ত চাননি। সম্মত দমনের জন্য সরকারকে কর্তা হতেই হবে। তবে বিমানকে গুলি করার সিদ্ধান্ত যথেষ্ট ভাবনাচিন্তা করেই নেওয়া হবে বলে আশা করি।" আর কলকাতায় তৃণমূল নেত্রী মমতা বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের সতর্ক মন্তব্য, "শান্তি ও নিরাপত্তার স্বার্থে সরকারকে অনেক ক্ষেত্রেই সিদ্ধান্ত নিতে হয়। তবে চরম সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার আগে, নিরীহ সাধারণ মানুষের কথাও সরকারের মাথায় রাখা উচিত।"

Brave, new anti-hijack policy unveiled

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Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Aug 14. — Giving its anti-terror stand a brave, new dimension, the government today disclosed a tough anti-hijack policy under which any hijacked plane, being used as a missile to target vital installations as in the 9/11 terror attack, will be shot down.

Under the policy, already cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Securities (CCS), no negotiations whatsoever with the hijackers (on their demands) will be entertained and any talks would only be aimed at preventing the loss of life or ending the incident. "If the hijacking takes place on Indian soil, the aircraft will be immobilised and not allowed to take off," the Defence Minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, said.

On not holding talks with the hijackers, he said these would only be aimed at rescuing the aircraft and passengers, and if the plane was hijacked to a third country, negotiations would be conducted with the authorities concerned. If the aircraft was in Indian air space, Air Force fighters would be scrambled to intercept it and force it to land on Indian soil, he said. About the possibility of shooting down

the aircraft, the minister said it would be undertaken in extreme circumstances, like the 9/11 terror attack. He said the aircraft would be shot if it chose not to identify itself and appeared to have evil intentions of targeting vital installations.

The CCS gave its approval to fresh proposals by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, the Indian Air Force and other agencies to tighten existing guidelines in view of the 11 September terror attack in the USA and the Kandahar hijack in December 1999. The policy, which provides for death penalty to hijackers, also reduces bureaucratic hassles for permission for armed intervention.

The new policy came in for overall appreciation by both the BJP and the Left parties. BJP spokesman Mr Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said if the government's intention was to take on terrorism and separatists then it was a welcome step.

The CPI-M Politburo member, Mr Sitaram Yechuri, said the party was hopeful that the policy would act as a deterrent. "We only hope that the commitment towards internal security of our country is strengthened by these measures." CPI general secretary, Mr AB Bardhan, said such a policy was long overdue.

Hijacked plane if used as missile can be shot down

I. D. S. National Security 1578

Govt Unveils Tough Anti-Hijack Policy

New Delhi: Unveiling a tough anti-hijack policy, the government on Sunday said any hijacked plane being used as a missile to target vital installations like the 9/11 terror attack would be shot down.

The policy, cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Securities (CCS), ruled out negotiations with hijackers on their demands and said talks would only be aimed at preventing the loss of life or ending the incident. Outlining the measures, defence minister Pranab Mukherjee said if the hijacking took

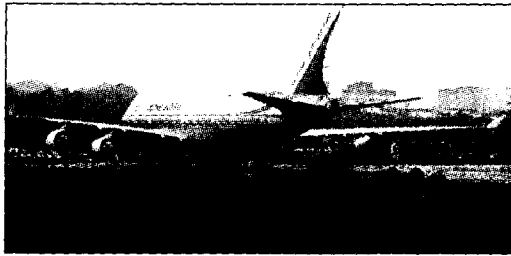
place on the Indian soil, the aircraft would be immobilised and not allowed to take off.

On not holding talks with hijackers, he said these would only be aimed at rescuing the aircraft and passengers, and if the plane was hijacked to a third country, negotiations would be conducted with concerned authorities.

Mukherjee said if the aircraft was in Indian air space, Air Force fighters would be scrambled to intercept it and force it to land on the Indian soil. On shooting down the aircraft, the minister said these would be undertaken in extreme circumstances as happened in the 9/11 terror attack. He said the aircraft would be shot if it chose not to identify itself and appeared to have evil intentions of targeting vital installations. The CCS gave its approval to fresh proposals by

Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, Indian Air Force and other agencies to tighten the existing guidelines in view of the September 11 terror attack in the US and Kandahar hijack in December, 1999.

The policy, which provides for death penalty to hijackers, also reduces bureaucratic hassles for



permission for armed intervention. The IAF has been given the authority to take necessary steps for scrambling fighter jets to guard and guide the hijacked aircraft and force it to land on an Indian airport. However, a decision in this respect has to be taken by an official of the rank of Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Operations) or above.

The new policy lays down procedures to ensure that NSG commandos, accompanied by a central negotiating team, are airborne within two hours of the hijack. A commercial plane can be used for the purpose in case IAF or Aviation Research Corps aircraft is not available. The policy also lays down a detailed coordination chain starting from ATC to the Air Force to the Crisis Management Group till CCS. Agencies

15 AUG 2001 THE TIMES OF INDIA

আল কায়দার নামে চাঁদা আদায় কলকাতায়

শর্মিষ্ঠা গোস্বামী

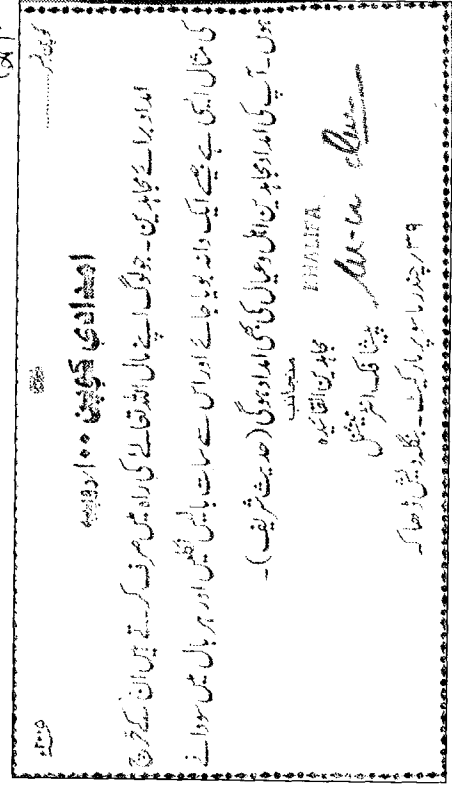
এ বার খাস কলকাতাতেও আল কায়দা। কোনও জঙ্গি হানার ঘটনা নয়। কিন্তু মহানগরীতেই যে ওসামা বিন লাদেনের ওই সংগঠনের ছত্রছায়ায় থাকা গোষ্ঠীগুলির সমর্থকেরা সক্রিয়, তার প্রমাণ পেয়েছে পুলিশ। কেন্দ্রীয় গোয়েন্দা সংস্থার খবরের ভিত্তিতে শহরের সংখ্যালঘু-প্রধান কিছু এলাকায় নজরদারি চালিয়ে পুলিশের হাতে এমন কিছু তথ্য এসেছে, যাতে পরিষ্কার, 'মুজাহিদিন আল কায়দা প্যাসিফিক ইন্টারন্যাশনাল' নামে একটি সংগঠন কুপন ছাপিয়ে চাঁদা তুলছে।

২৫ টাকার ওই কুপন উর্দুতে লেখা। তার বাঙলা করলে দাঁড়ায়, 'একটি বীজ পুতলে তার থেকে গাছ হয়। গাছের শাখাপ্রশাখা বাড়ে। সেই শাখাপ্রশাখায় ফল হয়। ফল থেকে পাওয়া যায় শত শত বীজ। সেই রকম 'আল্লাহতালার নামে দেওয়া এক জনের

'সাহায্য' নামা ভাবে ছড়িয়ে পড়ে।' ওই সব কুপনের তলায় 'খলিফা' নামে রাবার স্ট্যাম্পের পাশে একটি ঠিকানাও দেওয়া হয়েছে। সেটি অবশ্য ঢাকার।

কুপন কেটে চাঁদা তোলা হচ্ছে মূলত মুজাহিদের সাহায্য করার নামে। তওপিয়া, রিপন স্ট্রিট, জাকারিয়া স্ট্রিট, কলুটোলা স্ট্রিট এলাকায় ওই কুপন বিক্রি হচ্ছে। কুপনের সঙ্গে বিলি করা হচ্ছে দু'টি প্রচারপত্র— একটি 'হরকত-উল-জিহাদ-ইসলামি' (হুজি)-র, অন্যটি 'আল জেহাদ ইসলামি ওহা আল কায়দা মুজাহিদিন' নামে সংগঠনের। যারা কুপন কিনছেন না, তাঁদের কাছে শুধু প্রচারপত্রই বিলি করা হচ্ছে। কলকাতার পুলিশ কমিশনার প্রসূন মুখোপাধ্যায় কুপন বিক্রি ও প্রচারপত্র বিলির কথা স্বীকার করে শুক্রবার বলেন, "আমরা এই বিষয়টি সম্পর্কে অবহিত। গোয়েন্দা রিপোর্টের ভিত্তিতে আমরা অনুসন্ধান চালাচ্ছি।"

'যে ধামাকা সাজিশ হায়' শিরোনাম দিয়ে



আমরা একাই করতে পারি এবং এক সেক্ষেত্রে বিশ্বের অন্যান্য দেশ মুসলিমদের পক্ষেই থাকবে। প্রাণ গোলে বা জেলে যেতে হলেও পিছপা হওয়া উচিত নয়। শেষে বলা হয়েছে, 'শহিদ হয়ে বা শহিদদের পাশে দাঁড়িয়ে এই চক্রান্তের জবাব দেওয়ার সময় এসেছে। একেবারে শেষে লেখা 'উঠো', 'জাগো', 'তৈয়ার হো যাও'। 'হুজি'র প্রচারপত্রের নীচেও ঢাকার উল্লেখ রয়েছে। আল কায়দার সহযোগী অন্য সংগঠনের প্রচারপত্রে বলা হয়েছে, কাম্বীর-সমস্যা এক দিন আমেরিকারির মতো ফেটে পড়বে। এবং সেই পরিস্থিতির সামাল দেওয়ার জন্য বিভিন্ন জায়গায় মুসলিম যুবকদের প্রশিক্ষণ দিয়ে তৈরি করা হচ্ছে। আরও বলা হয়েছে, গোপনে একবন্ধ হওয়ার এই কর্মসূচি সফল করতে 'আমাদের লোকেরদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ রাখতে হবে।

'হুজি' পাকিস্তানের দেওবন্দ জঙ্গি গোষ্ঠীর অংশ। ওসামা বিন লাদেনের আল

কায়দার সঙ্গে তাদের ঘনিষ্ঠ যোগাযোগ আছে। কলকাতার মার্কিন তথ্যকেন্দ্রের সামনে হামলায় মূল অভিযুক্ত আফতাব আনসারির সঙ্গে 'হুজি'র প্রত্যক্ষ যোগাযোগ ছিল বলে তদন্তে জানা গিয়েছে।

বাংলাদেশে ওই সংগঠন বিশেষ ভাবে সক্রিয় এবং পাক গোয়েন্দা সংস্থা আই এস আই তাদের সব দিক থেকে সাহায্য করে। কাম্বীর জেহাদি হয়ে কাজ করার জন্য 'হুজি' বাংলাদেশ ও ভারতের যুবকদের প্রশিক্ষণও দেয়।

কলকাতার বিভিন্ন এলাকা থেকে এই ধরনের প্রচারপত্র হাতে আসায় গোয়েন্দা দফতর চিন্তিত। তাদের বক্তব্য, খুব আন্তে আন্তে হলেও কলকাতার বিভিন্ন এলাকায় ঘাঁটি গড়ে তোলার চেষ্টা করছে ওই সব সংগঠন। এই ধরনের প্ররোচনামূলক প্রচারপত্র অল্পবয়সীদের মনে সহজেই প্রভাব ফেলাতে পারে। টাকা বা খেফ আড়াভেঙ্কারের লোভেও তারা বিপথে পরিচালিত হতে পারে।

Shortcomings found in DRDO purchases

PAC seeks report on procurements

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), under criticism for major slippages in its armament programme, has been pulled up by the Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) for "serious procedural shortcomings" in the purchase of plant and equipment by its laboratories and establishment.

In what would be the first time a public body is holding the DRDO accountable for its expenditure, the PAC has asked it to furnish a status report about the procurements made after the procedures were revamped last year.

The PAC in its report tabled in Parliament found fault with the DRDO on several counts: the practice of general tendering was waived in most cases and the equipment was ordered on the basis of limited tendering; delivery schedules that warranted limited tendering were not adhered to; and, the practice of blacklisting firms was absent.

Taking serious note of these shortcomings in the purchase of 17 systems for five premier laboratories, the PAC said it wanted taxpayers' money to be valued and accountability to expenditure ensured. It, therefore, urged the DRDO to look into the observations and recommendations made in the report in the right perspective.

Since almost half of the

DRDO's budget is spent on the purchase of materials, a fool-proof procurement planning and effective utilisation of plant and equipment needed to be ensured to derive maximum value for money.

The laboratories that were found wanting include the Defence Research Laboratory and Defence Metallurgical Research Lab (Hyderabad), Armament Research and Development Establishment (Pune), Integrated Test Range (Balasore) and Combat Vehicle Research and Development Establishment (Avadi, Chennai).

"What is disturbing to note was the fact that in five cases processed as urgent, orders were placed after 13 to 21 months and in 12 other cases, the time gap was over 12 months. Eight systems costing Rs. 1.75 crores, required for specific projects undertaken by the five labs, were received either after closure of the project or at the fag end and could not be put to use," noted the report.

• General tendering waived

• Limited tendering resorted to

• Delivery schedules not adhered to

• Practice of blacklisting firms absent

THE HINDU

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D.S.R. Srinivas

Just acquittal, unjust suspicion

H.D.-10

In some ways, the Supreme Court's verdict in the December 13, 2001 Parliament attack case is a corroboration of the ruling delivered by the Delhi High Court two years ago. The apex court has confirmed the conviction and sentence awarded to Mohammed Afzal, the key accused in the case, and upheld the acquittal of S.A.R. Geelani, the Delhi college lecturer, and Afsan Guru, the wife of another accused. However, there are key differences between the two judgments. While the Supreme Court did the right thing by confirming the acquittal of Mr. Geelani, it made some observations that are essentially irrelevant and should have been avoided. In contrast to the Delhi High Court, which held that the evidence "does not even remotely, far less definitely" establish Mr. Geelani's guilt, the apex court recorded the unwarranted observation that the "needle of suspicion" pointed towards him. It is one thing for a court to maintain that the evidence is insufficient to convict someone; this is the equivalent of saying the charge against that person cannot stand in law. It is quite another to give expression to mere feelings of 'suspicion' that have no bearing on evidentiary matters and are no basis at all "to convict a person," as the court itself has stated in the judgment.

Mr. Geelani, who has already suffered much, could have done without the smear of judicial suspicion. He was arrested, detained, and accused in a case in which the prosecution relied on extraordinarily flimsy evidence. He was awarded the capital punishment by a designated POTA court that made a string of speculative inferences. The court's shockingly ill-reasoned judgment bore a similarity to that of the designated TADA court, which sentenced 26 accused wholesale to death in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case. In February 2005, Mr. Geelani was shot and injured in mysterious circumstances that showed the Delhi police in very poor light. At another level, the apex court's verdict in the Parliament attack case highlights the inherent danger of capital punishment, which, aside from its inherent inhumanity, provides no safeguard against innocent people being legally murdered. The Supreme Court's modification of the death penalty imposed on Shaukat Husain Guru to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment is another instance of the award and withdrawal of this barbaric punishment all too frequently — a phenomenon that suggests that neither the trial court nor the High Court showed the mandated restraint before imposing a punishment supposed to be imposed only in "the rarest of the rare cases." *The Hindu* has long been opposed to all capital punishment. However, there is no warrant for any special sympathy for Mohammed Afzal whose role as a conspirator in the Parliament attack case — which has been detailed by the prosecution and confirmed by three courts of law — has been established beyond a shadow of doubt.

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THE HINDU

‘বাংলা ভাই’ হামলা করতে পারে, সতর্কতা

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা, বেলডাঙা: স্বাধীনতা দিবসের আগে বাংলাদেশের সন্ত্রাসবাদী ‘বাংলা ভাই’ গুরুফে আজিজুর রহমান তার সঙ্গীদের নিয়ে রাজ্যে হামলা চালাতে পারে। কেন্দ্রীয় গোয়েন্দা সংস্থা ‘র’-এর কাছ থেকে এই খবর পেয়ে সব থানাকে সতর্ক করে বার্তা পাঠিয়েছে রাজ্য গোয়েন্দা বাহিনী। মালদহ ছাড়া কলকাতাতেও তারা হামলা চালাতে পারে বলে আশঙ্কা করছেন গোয়েন্দারা।

গোয়েন্দা দফতরের খবর, মালদহের মেহেদিপুর সীমান্ত দিয়ে ‘বাংলা ভাই’ পশ্চিমবঙ্গে ঢুকতে পারে। তার সঙ্গে রয়েছে ১২ জন কটুর অনুগামী। তাদের কাছে রয়েছে উন্নত ধরনের আগ্নেয়াস্ত্র ও শক্তিশালী বিস্ফোরক। সব ক’টি থানাকে তাই সতর্ক থাকতে বলে রাজ্য গোয়েন্দা দফতর রেডিও ট্রান্সমিটার (আর টি) বার্তা (১৪৪৫/২৭-০৭-২০০৫) পাঠিয়েছে। সীমান্তবর্তী সব থানাকে সেই সঙ্গে সীমান্তরক্ষী বাহিনী ও

কেন্দ্রীয় গোয়েন্দা সংস্থা এস এস-বি-র সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ রেখে চলতে বলা হয়েছে।

বার্তায় জানানো হয়েছে, ‘র’-ও এই ব্যাপারে ওয়াকিবহাল। বাংলা ভাইয়ের চেহারারও একটি বর্ণনা রয়েছে ওই বার্তায়। তাতে বলা হয়েছে, বাংলা ভাই প্রায় ৫ ফুট ৯ ইঞ্চি লম্বা। মাঝারি গড়ন। বাংলাদেশের নওগাঁ জেলার পাঠানতোলা থানা এলাকার বাসিন্দা।

‘জাগ্রত মুসলিম জনতা’ নামে বাংলাদেশের একটি সন্ত্রাসবাদী সংগঠনের প্রধান ‘বাংলা ভাই’ কিন্তু এখন একটু কোণঠাসা হয়ে পড়েছে। কিছু দিন আগে রাজশাহী কলেজের অধ্যাপক, আওয়ামি লিগ সমর্থক ইউনুসকে হত্যার অভিযোগ ওঠে তার বিরুদ্ধে। তারপরে বাংলাদেশ সরকার তাকে গ্রেফতারের নির্দেশও দেয়। প্রবল চাপে পড়ে এরপরেই ভারতে ঢুকে পড়ার চেষ্টা করছে বাংলা ভাই।

ওই বার্তায় জানানো হয়েছে, বাংলা ভাইয়ের সঙ্গীদের মধ্যে দু’জন কটুর

সন্ত্রাসবাদী আজিজুল হক ও কাইসুল আলম। দু’জনেই তরুণ। গত বছর এই দু’জনেই চট্টগ্রামে সন্ত্রাসবাদী সংগঠন হিজবুল মুজাহিদিনের পরিচালিত জঙ্গি শিবিরে প্রশিক্ষণ নিয়েছিল। তারা এখন বাংলা ভাইয়ের সঙ্গেই পাঠানতোলা থানার কোনও গ্রামে আশ্রয়গোপন করে রয়েছে।

‘র’-এর পাঠানো তথ্য সব জেলায় পাঠিয়েছেন রাজ্য পুলিশের অতিরিক্ত মহানির্দেশক (আই বি)। ওই তথ্য পাওয়ার পরে আর টি বার্তা জেলার থানাগুলিকে পাঠিয়েছেন জেলার এস পি (ডিআইবি)। তবে বিষয়টি নিয়ে এখনই মুখ খুলতে রাজি নন কোনও পুলিশকর্তাই। কিন্তু থানাগুলিকে সতর্ক করে দেওয়া হয়েছে। স্বাধীনতা দিবসের আগে থানার প্রহরা আরও বাড়িয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে। সেই সঙ্গে বাংলাদেশ লাগোয়া মালদহ, মুর্শিদাবাদ ও নদিয়ার সীমান্তবর্তী থানাগুলিকে বিশেষ ভাবে সতর্কতামূলক ব্যবস্থা নিতে বলা হয়েছে।

রেহাই দিয়েও গিলানির দিবে সন্দেহের তির সুপ্রিম কোর্টের

নয়াদিল্লি, ৪ অগস্ট: মহম্মদ আফজলের প্রাণদণ্ড বহাল। শওকত হুসেন গুরুর সাজা কমে ১০ বছরের সশ্রম কারাদণ্ড। এবং এ বারেও বেকসুর খালাস শওকতের স্ত্রী আফসান ও দিল্লির কলেজের অধ্যাপক এস এ আর গিলানি।

সংসদে হামলার ঘটনায় আজ সুপ্রিম কোর্ট যে ২৭১ পাতার রায় দিয়েছে, এটাই তার নির্যাস।

তবে, সর্বোচ্চ আদালতের রায়ে দু'টি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয় উঠে এসেছে। প্রথমত, অভিযুক্তদের বিরুদ্ধে দিল্লি পুলিশ যে তথ্যপ্রমাণ দিয়েছে, অনেক ক্ষেত্রেই তা যথেষ্ট নয়। দ্বিতীয়ত, দিল্লি হাইকোর্টের রায় বহাল রেখে গিলানিকে বেকসুর বলা হলেও তাঁর কাজকর্ম এবং ভাবগতিক নিয়ে গভীর সন্দেহ রয়েছে সুপ্রিম কোর্টের মনে।

বস্তুত, সংসদ ভবনে হামলার ঘটনায় সব থেকে আলোচিত নামটি এস এ আর গিলানির। দিল্লির জাকির হুসেন কলেজের এই অধ্যাপককে গ্রেফতার করার পর থেকেই পুলিশ বিতর্কে। গিলানিকে সন্দেহের আওতায় রেখেও বাস্তবে তাঁর বিরুদ্ধে টেলিফোন কথোপকথন ছাড়া অকাটা কোনও প্রমাণই পেশ করতে পারেনি পুলিশ। এই কারণ দেখিয়েই ২০০৩ সালের অক্টোবরে পোটা আদালতের প্রাণদণ্ডের আদেশ খারিজ করে তাঁকে বেকসুর ঘোষণা করে দিল্লি হাইকোর্ট।

প্রমাণের অভাব যে রয়েছে, আজ সুপ্রিম কোর্টও স্বীকার করেছে সে কথা। তবে, বিচারপতি পি ভি রেড্ডি এবং বিচারপতি পি পি নাওলেকরের ডিভিশন বেঞ্চ একই সঙ্গে গিলানির দিকে সন্দেহের আঙুল তুলেছে।

সুপ্রিম কোর্ট বলেছে, সেই সময় গিলানি যে আচরণ করেছেন তা অত্যন্ত 'উদ্বেগজনক'। পরে তিনি এই জঙ্গি হানার ঘটনাকে একাধিক বার সমর্থন করেন। দুই প্রধান অভিযুক্ত আফজল এবং শওকতের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ নিয়েও পুলিশের কাছে মিথ্যে বলেছিলেন গিলানি। সব মিলিয়ে কিন্তু তাঁর উপরে 'সন্দেহ গভীর হয়'।

বিচারপতির অবশ্য শেষ পর্যন্ত বলেছেন, কোনও প্রমাণ ছাড়া, শুধুই সন্দেহের বশে কাউকে দোষী সাব্যস্ত করা যায় না। তা সে সন্দেহ যতই



রায় শোনার পরে সাংবাদিকদের সামনে গিলানি। — এ এফ পি

জোরালো হোক না কেন। সর্বোচ্চ আদালতের এই সন্দেহের তির কিন্তু গিলানিকে নিয়ে নতুন করে বিতর্কের জন্ম দিল। আজকের রায়ে 'ক্লিনচিট' না পেয়ে গিলানি বলেছেন, "এই ধরনের মন্তব্য অপ্রয়োজনীয়। প্রমাণ ছাড়াই কেন আমাকে প্রাণদণ্ড দেওয়া হয়, এখন সে দিকে নজর দেওয়া দরকার।"

অভিযুক্তদের বিরুদ্ধে প্রমাণ

সংগ্রহের ক্ষেত্রে পুলিশ যে কতটা পিছিয়ে, তার আর একটি উদাহরণ হতে পারেন শওকত। পোটা আদালত এবং দিল্লি হাইকোর্ট, দুই জায়গাতেই শওকতের মৃত্যুদণ্ড হয়। কিন্তু আজ সুপ্রিম কোর্ট সেই শাস্তি কমিয়ে এনেছে ১০ বছরের কারাদণ্ডে। এর সঙ্গে ২৫ হাজার টাকা জরিমানা, অনাদায়ে দণ্ডের মেয়াদ আরও এক বছর বাড়বে।

সর্বোচ্চ আদালত বলেছে, আফজলকে সাহায্য করেছিলেন শওকত। কিন্তু তিনি যে ষড়যন্ত্রে সরাসরি জড়িত, সেই সিদ্ধান্তে পৌঁছানোর মতো যথেষ্ট প্রমাণ পাওয়া যায়নি। তবে, জানা গিয়েছে, চক্রান্তের কথা তিনি জানতেন। তাঁর অপরাধ, বিষয়টি প্রশাসনের কানে তোলেননি। রায়ে সুপ্রিম কোর্ট তাই শওকতকে ভারতীয় দণ্ডবিধির ১২৩ ধারায় ১০ বছরের সশ্রম কারাদণ্ড দিয়েছে। অন্যতম প্রধান অভিযুক্তের শাস্তির বহর এই ভাবে কমে যাওয়াকে প্রায় সব মহলই দিল্লি পুলিশের ব্যর্থতা হিসাবে দেখেছে। নিজেদের সাফাই গেয়ে দিল্লি পুলিশের যুগ্ম কমিশনার কার্নেল সিংহ বলেন, "গিলানির দিকে সুপ্রিম কোর্ট যে সন্দেহের আঙুল তুলেছে, সেটা তো আমাদের প্রমাণের ভিত্তিতেই।"

আফজলের ক্ষেত্রে অবশ্য সুপ্রিম কোর্ট জানিয়েছে, সাক্ষ্যপ্রমাণ থেকে স্পষ্ট, হানাদারির চক্রান্তে তিনি জড়িত ছিলেন। যে ভাবে তিনি 'রাষ্ট্রের বিরুদ্ধে যুদ্ধের ষড়যন্ত্র করেন এবং তাকে বাস্তবে রূপ দিতে জঙ্গিদের সাহায্য করেন, তাতে দেশের পক্ষে আফজল বিপজ্জনক। তাই, তিনি বেঁচে থাকার অধিকার হারিয়েছেন। — পি টি আই

● সংসদ-হানা মামলা... পৃঃ ১০

SC upholds Afzal death sentence

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI, Aug. 4. — Nearly four years after the terrorist attack on Parliament, the Supreme Court today upheld the death penalty imposed upon Jaish-e-Mohammed militant Mohd Afzal but reduced for his cousin Shaukat Hussain Guru to imprisonment for 10 years. It also endorsed the acquittal of Shaukat's wife Afsan Guru and Delhi lecturer Mr SAR Geelani.

In its 271-page judgment on cross appeals filed by the Delhi Police, Afzal and Shaukat, a Bench comprising Mr Justice PV Reddi and Mr Justice PP Naolekar said though Mr Geelani's role in the "diabolical act" was not above suspicion, there was no direct evidence to convict him.

The trial court had awarded death penalties to Shaukat, Afzal and Mr Geelani while sentencing Afsan to five years of imprisonment for their roles in the 13 December 2001 attack which had led to mobilisation of



By committing treason on the nation and waging war against it, Afzal has lost his right to life... the collective conscience of the society will be satisfied only if the death penalty was imposed on him — Supreme Court

troops on the Indo-Pak border.

The Delhi High Court upheld the death penalty against Afzal and Shaukat under Sections 302 (murder), 121 (waging war against the nation) and Sections 3(2) and 4 of Pota but acquitted both Mr Geelani and Afsan. Describing the attack as an unparalleled assault on the supreme seat of democracy, Mr Justice Reddi said there was clinching evidence against Afzal regarding his links with the slain terrorists who attacked Parliament.

The verdict came in for criticism from Afzal's lawyer, Mr Sushil Kumar, who felt that his client had

not been treated on a par with his cousin Shaukat. He said Afzal had not been represented before the trial court though there was an amicus curie for him before the Special Court. "I thought if his confession under Pota was excluded there was a chance of his acquittal... but even after that the court felt he was party to the conspiracy."

Shaukat's counsel Mr Shanti Bhushan said his client's conviction and sentencing for the offence of not disclosing the conspiracy to attack Parliament, surprised him. For, it was a point he never argued.

Mr Geelani today termed "unnecessary" the observation that his conduct after the incident was suspicious.

Pervez peeve

Asserting that Pakistan was not responsible for terrorism in other nations, President Pervez Musharraf told BBC he got "annoyed" when his country was blamed for fostering extremism in the world.

THE STATESMAN

Navy theft suspect was in Pak recently

By Rajat Pandit/TNN

New Delhi: One of the three officers now being interrogated for the theft of classified information from the navy war room visited Pakistan earlier this year. But the navy remains firm that "greed, not espionage," was the motive behind the startling security breach.

"The officer visited Pakistan as part of an official delegation in May. Investigations have shown, the stolen data pertained to specifications of some equipment we wanted to buy.. It was handed over to unauthorised persons outside for pecuniary benefits. It then probably reached some armament companies," said an officer.

The "background and bank accounts" of the three middle-rung officers are now being actively investigated, after the "list of suspects" was narrowed down from the

initial 20, by the ongoing Board of Inquiry (BOI) headed by Rear Admiral Ganesh Madhavan. "Their lifestyles are being investigated to ascertain if they lived beyond their known sources of income," said a source.

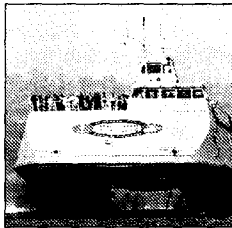
While one of the three officers is a Captain (equivalent to a Colonel in the Army), the other two are Commanders (Lt-Cols). TOI has the three names but they are being withheld since the investigation is still in progress.

The three officers, virtually under house-arrest, are facing extensive questioning by senior officers from both the Naval Intelligence as well as the Intelligence Bureau. "One of the officers, in fact, wanted to resign, but has been asked to stay back till the investigation is completed," said a source.

"One of them or all three could be part of the conspiracy to download the commercial and other files from the secure computer in the war room. Some data was also lifted from a presentation made to senior officers," he added.

But the navy is quite sure that there was no possibility of the "leaked data", which in any case "did not contain any operational plans or secrets", having found its way across the border.

The fact, however, remains that wheeling and dealing is still very much part of defence procurements, despite much-touted attempts by successive governments to clear up the mess. Middle-men, for instance, are yet to come forward to register themselves as authorised agents in the defence ministry, despite the ban on them being lifted in 2001.

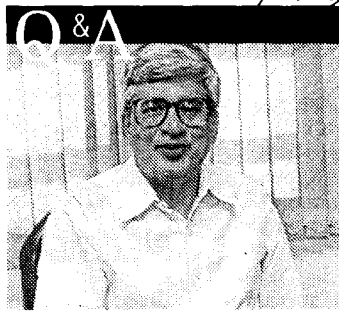


Left is worried about defence pact with the US'

Be it the BHEL disinvestment or the Indo-US joint statement, the Left parties and the UPA have been at loggerheads. CPM general secretary Prakash Karat speaks to Akshaya Mukul about the Left's reservations:

■ Why is the Left upset about Indo-US joint statement during PM's recent visit to the US?

The joint statement continues with the trend of India accommodating itself to US's global strategy. Whether it is the joint democracy initiative or accepting America's leadership in the fight against terror, taken together with the Indo-US defence agreement they reveal a willingness to acquiesce to US designs. We are particularly concerned about the defence agreement because it addresses US interests in this region and



in Asia. We should not go ahead with the framework since it would put India in the league of Japan and South Korea, traditional allies of the US. In the US, India is being viewed as a counterweight to China.

■ What about cooperation in the field of nuclear energy?

Unlike the BJP, we are not critical of the military component in the framework. We would like strict reciprocity and

nothing should be done unilaterally which weakens our independent capacity to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

■ It has been quite some time since the Left suspended participation in the UPA coordination committee.

We consider disinvestment of the BHEL a serious breach of the common minimum programme. Since the government seems determined to go ahead with the sale, we have suspended our participation in the coordination committee. The issue is not if 10% or 5% shares should be sold. Since the matter is unresolved, the coordination committee mechanism is not functioning. There is floor coordination and consultation in Parliament.

■ What are the larger labour issues that have come to the

fore after the recent incident of police brutality against workers in Gurgaon?

The savage incident in Gurgaon typifies the approach to trade unionism in many industrial areas of our country. Especially big companies, foreign and Indian, view unionisation as undesirable. They seek to subvert unions in various ways. The second bogey raised is of external interference. Factory-based unions have the right to affiliate to industrial federations and central trade unions.

In West Bengal, we welcome private sector investment, Indian and foreign, but we also protect the rights of workers and their right to unions. In Haryana and regions around Delhi, the norm is that labour laws are brazenly violated and the administration acts as the agent of employers.

02
F 11

Navy orders probe into data leak

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In yet another security breach in the country's defence establishment, some classified information stored in a computer in the navy's war room at South Block is learnt to have been stolen earlier this month, sparking off a high-level inquiry.

Although there were fears of war plans, including movement of war ships, being leaked, top navy sources claimed this wasn't the case. But the fact that some information from the secured computer has leaked, raising the possibility of it reaching hostile interests, has got the Navy HQ into a tizzy.

A four-member board of inquiry, headed by Rear Admiral Ganesh Madhavan, is now investigating how the data was stolen from the computer.

A senior navy officer, however, asserted on Sunday, "There has been no loss of any security-related information. No war plan was stored

Mukherjee was tight-lipped when contacted in Birbhum district of West Bengal by TOI. Mukherjee said he would not like to comment on the matter until he had talked to navy chief Admiral Arun Prakash, currently in Jakarta, and obtained all details.

Still, the fact remains there was leakage of information from the war room, located on the first floor of defence ministry's office in South Block and is heavily guarded. What has stunned navy is that how someone could get access to the computer whose password—as a top source said—"is more than triple-protected" with several other "security features".

"Naval formations have been directed to tighten security levels. Apart from other data, the war room computer stores information on positioning of warships, which is updated on a daily basis," said the sources. Senior senior officers receive a daily briefing in the war room from directors of naval opera-

tions, intelligence and signals, among others.

This isn't the first theft of information from defence computers. TOI had earlier reported how in August 2003, 18 computers had been stolen from Defence Research and Development Organisation's Scientific Analysis Group (SAG) and Institute for Systems Studies and Analyses (ISSA) from the highly-guarded Metcalf House in the capital. The stolen computers had stored encryption codes, algorithms and other data, though the defence ministry had later denied any loss of "sensitive data".

But while these facilities are located in north Delhi, the navy's war room is at the very heart of the country's governance on Raisina Hill. It is on the first floor of South Block, adjacent to the PMO, and next to the offices of the defence minister, the three Service chiefs and the defence secretary, apart from the military operations direc-

Security breach?



● Classified information stored in a navy computer at its heavily-guarded war room near the PMO is learnt to have been stolen

● War plans, including critical information on movements of warships, are feared to have fallen into the wrong hands

on that computer."

Defence minister Pranab

Gunbattle in Srinagar

MUKHTARAHMAD

Srinagar, July 29: Srinagar's heart was left convulsing after a daring attack this evening, igniting a fierce gunbattle to smoke out militants holed up in a hotel.

Appearing out of nowhere at Lal Chowk that was bustling with shoppers, commuters and tourists, fidayeen threw grenades and opened fire on a police post before setting off a powerful explosion at the information department office, just metres away.

A CRPF jawan was killed and at least 20 people, including three civilians, 10 security personnel and seven journalists, were wounded. Sources said a Sahara TV cameraman Muzaffar, who was hit in the abdomen, is in a critical condition.

Panicky people ran helter-skelter in an effort to flee the crowded commercial hub as shopkeepers downed shutters and took cover behind the stocks in their shops.

A passing police escort vehicle blew up in flames after a grenade landed on it. A BSF armoured vehicle at a bus stand close to the Dashnami Akhra temple was fired at.

When securitymen returned fire, the attackers rushed into a nearby Gujarati hotel, around which a tight cordon has been laid. Paramilitary forces suspect more militants could be hiding in other buildings as bursts of gunfire were



The police vehicle in flames after the shootout. (Reuters)

coming from many directions.

In minutes of the flames and smoke rising, the area took on the look of a ghost town. All that could be seen were mobile bullet-proof bunkers and swarms of securitymen.

"Bullets were raining from all sides. I didn't know where to run for cover. I somehow managed to hide inside a shop. I finally gathered courage to jump out and run as far away from the site as my crumbling legs could carry me," said Mehraj-ud-Din, a shopkeeper.

A police officer said efforts

were under way to flush out the militants. "We have surrounded the area, evacuated the injured and barred civilian movement to ensure minimum damage to civilian life.

"Now we are moving in to finish the encounter as the militants, whose exact number is not known, are holed up in the hotel. We have plugged all exit points."

However, operations had to be later suspended for the night as it got dark.

Militant groups Al-Mansuriyan and Jamiat-ul-Mujahid-

Tiff crossover

Srinagar, July 29: Furious at her husband, Kafur Jan walked out of home and across the Line of Control, reports our correspondent.

A resident of a village in Bagh district in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Kafur realised her mistake when she was caught by Indian troops in Uri in Baramulla district.

She told the Border Security Force personnel that she had "no malicious intentions" and had run away from home after husband Yaqub Mir thrashed her.

The BSF's 109 battalion then handed Kafur over to police, who are exploring the legalities of taking her back to her parents in Balian Wali Dhok village in Bagh district.

een have claimed responsibility for the attack, agencies said.

Cable blackout

Cable channels in Srinagar and other towns have gone on the blink with cable operators protesting against the killing of two colleagues last night.

Hilal Ahmed Sheikh was shot dead and his associate Mehrajuddin critically wounded in an attack in Nowgam on the outskirts of Srinagar.

A cameraman associated with a cable operator, Riyaz Ahmad Dar, was killed in Tral.



বাদশা চকে তখন চলছে গুলির লড়াই। প্রাণ বাঁচিয়ে পাল্টা মারের প্রস্তুতি জওয়ানদের। পাশে আহত সহকর্মী। শুক্রবার শ্রীনগরে। — এ এফ পি

হোটেল ঘিরে সেনা-জঙ্গি গুলির লড়াই

রশিদ আহমেদ • শ্রীনগর

২৯ জুলাই: বিকেল সাড়ে চারটে। শ্রীনগরের লাল চক লাগোয়া বাদশা চকে হঠাৎই কান ফটানো বিস্ফোরণের শব্দ। দাউদাউ করে জ্বলছে পুলিশের একটা জিপ। বৃষ্টিভেজা রাস্তার এক এক জায়গায় কোনও ক্রমে মাথা ঢেকে শুয়ে বেশ কয়েক জন সাংবাদিক। শহরের ব্যস্ততম এলাকায় সাধারণ মানুষের আতঙ্কিত ছোটাছুটির মাঝেই বেশ কয়েক জন চিত্র-সাংবাদিক আর স্বয়ংক্রিয় রাইফেল-কাবাইন হাতে নিরাপত্তারক্ষীরা তখন ঠিক করে 'পজিশন' নিতে ব্যস্ত।

আর যাদের হামলায় এই অবস্থা, সেই জঙ্গিরা তত ক্ষণে লুকিয়ে পড়েছে এ দিক-ও দিক। অজানা ঘেরাটোপ থেকে গুলির নিশানা বানাচ্ছে নিরাপত্তারক্ষীদের পাশাপাশি, সাংবাদিক এবং সাধারণ পথচারীকেও। অন্য দিকে তখন নিরাপত্তারক্ষীদের সাহায্যে রক্তাক্ত সঙ্গীদের কোনও রকমে গাড়িতে তুলে দিতে ব্যস্ত কয়েক জন সাংবাদিক। শ্রীনগরের লালচকে জঙ্গি হামলার খবর করতে গিয়ে জঙ্গিদের গুলিতে আহত হয়েছেন ওই সাংবাদিকেরা। সংখ্যায় তাঁরা আট। কাশ্মীরে সন্ত্রাসের প্রায় দুই দশকের ইতিহাসে সম্ভবত এই প্রথম এত জন সাংবাদিককে জঙ্গিদের গুলিতে আহত হতে হল।

পুলিশ জিপে গ্রেনেড ছুড়ে গুলিবৃষ্টি করতে করতে জঙ্গিরা আশ্রয় নেয় স্থানীয় দু'টি হোটেল। সেখান থেকেই শুরু হয় গুলিবর্ষণ। পাল্টা জবাব দিতে শুরু করেন নিরাপত্তারক্ষীরাও। প্রথম দিকে হোটেলের আবাসিকদের নিরাপত্তা নিয়ে চিন্তিত হয়ে পড়লেও সন্ধে নাগাদ তাঁদের নিরাপদে সরিয়ে নিয়ে আসা হয়। জঙ্গিদের গুলিতে মৃত্যু হয়েছে দুই নিরাপত্তারক্ষীর। সব মিলিয়ে আহত অন্তত ২০ জন, যার পায় অর্ধেকই খবর করতে যাওয়া সাংবাদিক। স্থানীয় দু'টি সংবাদপত্রে আলাদা ভাবে বিবৃতি দিয়ে এই হামলার দায় স্বীকার করেছে পাক মদতে পুষ্ট জঙ্গি সংগঠন আল মাসুরাইন ও জামাত-উল-মুজাহিদিন।

নিরাপত্তারক্ষীরা গোড়ায় বলেন, দু'জন জঙ্গি এই হামলা চালিয়েছে। বিএসএফ-এর ডিআইজি কে শ্রীনিবাসন জানিয়েছেন, এটি আত্মঘাতী হামলা নয়। জঙ্গিদের লক্ষ্য ছিল, যত বেশি সম্ভব ক্ষয়ক্ষতি করা। প্রাথমিক ভাবে মাত্র দু'জন জঙ্গি আছে বলে মনে করা হলেও রাতের দিকে ঘটনাস্থলে উপস্থিত পুলিশ কর্তারা জানান, সংখ্যায় তারা আরও বেশি। গভীর রাত পর্যন্ত গুলির লড়াই চলেছে।

যে এলাকায় জঙ্গিরা হামলা চালিয়েছে, সেখানে বিখ্যাত দশনামি আখড়া-সহ বেশ কয়েকটি ধর্মস্থান রয়েছে। তার উপরে এই সময়ই চলছে অমরনাথ যাত্রা। কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্র প্রতিমন্ত্রী শ্রীপ্রকাশ জয়সওয়াল জানিয়েছেন, ভারত-পাকিস্তান শান্তি প্রক্রিয়া বানচাল করতেই জঙ্গিরা এই হামলা চালিয়েছে। তবে কোনও অবস্থাতেই দু'দেশের শান্তি আলোচনা বন্ধ হবে না বলেও মন্তব্য করেন তিনি। একই বক্তব্য পাকিস্তানের প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ মুশারফেরও। রাওয়ালপিণ্ডিতে এক সাংবাদিক বৈঠকে মুশারফ জানিয়েছেন, ভারতের সঙ্গে শুরু হওয়া শান্তি আলোচনা কোনও ভাবেই থামবে না। পাকিস্তানে জঙ্গি ঘাঁটি প্রসঙ্গে তিনি আশ্বস্ত করে বলেছেন, পরিস্থিতির উন্নতি হচ্ছে।

দিল্লি থেকে স্টাফ রিপোর্টার জানাচ্ছেন, লাল চক হামলাকারী আল মাসুরাইন ও জামাত-উল-মুজাহিদিন, দু'টি সংগঠনই পাক মদতে পুষ্ট। ১৯৭৪ সালে গড়ে ওঠা জামাত-উল-মুজাহিদিনের মূল কর্মক্ষেত্র শ্রীনগর, পুলওয়ামা, বারামুলা ও অনন্তনাগ। কাশ্মীরের শিক্ষিত জনগোষ্ঠী ও সমাজকর্মীরাই এই জঙ্গিদের হামলার লক্ষ্য। অন্য দিকে, আল মাসুরাইনের প্রধান কর্মক্ষেত্র বারামুলা-সহ উপত্যকারই বেশ কিছু এলাকা। এবই মধ্যে গোয়েন্দা রিপোর্টারের ভিত্তিতে জম্মু-কাশ্মীরের আই জি (প্রশাসন) কে রাজিন্দরন জানিয়েছেন, স্বাধীনতা দিবসের আগে উপত্যকায় জঙ্গিদের হামলার সংখ্যা বাড়বে বলেই তাঁদের আশঙ্কা।

কাশ্মীরের বেশ কয়েকটি এলাকাতোই জঙ্গি হামলার ঘটনা ঘটেছে আজ। বিকালে যখন শ্রীনগরের লাল চকে জঙ্গিরা হামলা চালিয়েছে, প্রায় সেই সময়ই ডোডায় স্পেশাল টাস্ক ফোর্সের একটি দলের উপরে আচমকা হামলা চালিয়ে দু'জনকে হত্যা করে জঙ্গিরা। রাজৌরিতে ঘুম থেকে তুলে জঙ্গলে নিয়ে গিয়ে গলা কেটে হিন্দু সম্প্রদায়ের পাঁচ জনকে হত্যা করেছে জঙ্গিরা। প্রতিরক্ষা মন্ত্রকের মুখপাত্র জানিয়েছেন, আজ ভোরে এক দল জঙ্গি রাজৌরির প্রত্যন্ত এলাকার গ্রাম ধার সাকরিতে পাঁচ জনকে বাড়ি থেকে তুলে নিয়ে যায়। রাজৌরিতে গত দু'বছরে

এর পর চারের পাতায়

গাড়িতে এসে ক্যান্টনমেন্টে আচমকা গুলিবৃষ্টি

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার, নয়াদিল্লি, ২৯ জুলাই: রাস রাজধানীর নিরাপত্তা ব্যবস্থা নিয়ে গুরুতর প্রশ্ন তুলে দিয়ে সেনাঘাঁটির 'সিংদরওয়াজায়' এসে গুলি চালিয়ে দিবি পালিয়ে গেল জঙ্গিরা।

শুক্রবার বিকেল তখন সওয়া চারটে। দিল্লি ক্যান্টনমেন্টে সেনাবাহিনীর ইঞ্জিনিয়ার্স রেজিমেন্টের প্রধান ফটকের সামনে এসে দাঁড়াল একটি কালো রঙের কোয়ালিস গাড়ি। গেটে প্রহরারত জওয়ান চালককে বললেন, গাড়িটি গেটের সামনে থেকে সরিয়ে রাখতে। ব্যাক গিয়ারে আক্সিলেটরে প্রবল চাপ দিয়ে মুহূর্তেই গাড়িটিকে শ'দুয়েক গজ পিছিয়ে নিয়ে গেল চালক। কিন্তু তার পরেই গিয়ার

বদল করে তুমুল গতিতে ফের ছুটে এল গেটের দিকে। তার পরে এক মুহূর্তও নয়, প্রশিক্ষিত প্রহরীর মাথায় বিপদ-ঘণ্টা বেজে উঠতে যেটুকু সময় নিয়েছে, তার থেকেও দ্রুতগতিতে ছুটে এসেছে বৃষ্টির মতো গুলি। অনুমান করা হচ্ছে, কোনও স্বয়ংক্রিয় আগ্নেয়াস্ত্র থেকে। হঠাৎ গুলিবর্ষণ হয়ে ততক্ষণে বসে পড়েছেন ওই জওয়ান। তা সত্ত্বেও পাল্টা গুলি চালিয়েছিলেন তিনি। কিন্তু প্রচণ্ড গতিতে থিমায়ার মার্গের ধুলো উড়িয়ে ততক্ষণে দুশ্যের আড়ালে চলে গিয়েছে ঘাতক কোয়ালিস। পালান বিমানবন্দরের দিকে।

ঘটনার পরেই অবশ্য নড়েচড়ে বসেছে প্রশাসন। আহত জওয়ান শিব

কুমারকে সেনা হাসপাতালে স্থানান্তরিত করা হয়েছে। সতর্কতা জারি হয়েছে গোটা রাজধানী জুড়ে। সেনাছাউনির বাইরে তড়িঘড়ি বসানো হয়েছে কাঁটাতারের ব্যারিকেড। কোয়ালিস ও তার যাত্রীদের খোঁজে শহর তন্নতন্ন করে টুড়ে ফেলাছে পুলিশ। আলাদা ভাবে তদন্ত শুরু করেছে সেনাবাহিনীও। হাসপাতালে শিব

কুমার জানিয়েছেন, দাড়িওয়ালা চালকের পরনে ছিল কালো পোশাক। আর এক যাত্রীর মুখ ছিল কালো কাপড়ে ঢাকা।

কোন জঙ্গি-সংগঠন এই ঘটনার সঙ্গে যুক্ত সে ব্যাপারে স্পষ্ট করে কিছু

না বলে দিল্লি পুলিশের যুগ্ম কমিশনার বি এস বাসি জানিয়েছেন, "সন্ত্রাস সব দিক খতিয়ে দেখছে পুলিশ।" প্রতিরক্ষামন্ত্রী প্রণব মুখোপাধ্যায়ও রাতে সাফ জানিয়ে দিয়েছেন, এটা সন্ত্রাসবাদী হামলা।

গত ৬ জুলাই অযোধ্যার হামলায় লক্ষর-এ-তইবার হাত ছিল। সে বারও 'গাড়ি নিয়ে লক্ষ্যস্থলের খুব কাছে পৌঁছে গিয়েছিল জঙ্গিরা। তার পরেই প্রচণ্ড বিস্ফোরণ হয়। এই দিনের হামলার কায়দা আর জয়গাও লক্ষণীয়। তবে এখনও কোনও জঙ্গি গোষ্ঠী যেমন এই ঘটনার দায় স্বীকার করেনি, তেমনই কোনও গোষ্ঠীর হাত থাকার কথাও জানায়নি পুলিশ।

গুলির লড়াই

প্রথম পাতার পর এই প্রথম, কাশ্মীরের সংখ্যালঘু হিন্দুদের এই ভাবে হত্যা করল জঙ্গিরা। হামলার নিন্দা করেছেন জম্মু ও কাশ্মীরের মুখ্যমন্ত্রী মুফতি মহম্মদ সঈদ। কুপওয়ারাতেও কাল রাতে এক পুলিশ অফিসারের বাড়িতে ঢুকে এলোপাথাড়ি গুলি চালিয়ে জঙ্গিরা দু'জনকে হত্যা করেছে। বাদগামে এক কেবল অপারেটরকে গুলি করে হত্যা করেছে জঙ্গিরা। এই হত্যার প্রতিবাদে রবিবার রাত পর্যন্ত উপত্যকায় কেবল পরিষেবা বন্ধ রাখার সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েছে অপারেটরদের সংগঠনগুলি।

ট্রেনে বোমা, নিহত ১০ থাকতে পারে জঙ্গি হাত

নয়াদিল্লি, ২৮ জুলাই: ফের
বিস্ফোরণ ট্রেনে। তবে লন্ডনে নয়,
ঘরের মাটিতে।

পটনা-দিল্লি শ্রমজীবী এক্সপ্রেসের
সাধারণ কামরায় বিস্ফোরণে আজ এক
মহিলা-সহ অন্তত ১০ জন নিহত এবং
১০০ জন আহত হন। ৪৩ জনের
অবস্থা আশঙ্কাজনক। বারাণসী রেঞ্জের
আইজি দেবরাজ নাগর এই ঘটনায়
মৌলবাদী সংগঠনের হাত থাকার
সম্ভাবনা উড়িয়ে দেননি। রাজ্য পুলিশও
মনে করছে, অযোধ্যা-কাণ্ডের পরে
ফের হামলার শঙ্কা ছিলই। এই ঘটনায়
তার সত্যতা প্রমাণিত হতে চলেছে।
তদন্ত চলছে। রেলমন্ত্রী লালুপ্রসাদ
যাদব ঘটনাস্থল পরিদর্শন করেছেন।

স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী শিবরাজ পাটিল এখন
মুম্বইয়ে। বিহারের ডিঞ্জির সঙ্গে ফোনে
কথা বলেন তিনি। উত্তরপ্রদেশের
মুখ্যমন্ত্রী মুলায়ম সিংহ যাদব
নিহতদের পরিবারকে এক লক্ষ এবং
গুরুতর আহতদের জন্য ৫০ হাজার
টাকা ক্ষতিপূরণ ঘোষণা করেছেন।

প্রথমে গ্যাস সিলিন্ডার ফেটে
দুর্ঘটনার সম্ভাবনা খতিয়ে দেখা
হচ্ছিল। পরে অবশ্য বোমার উপস্থিতি
প্রমাণিত হয়। ব্যবহৃত বিস্ফোরক
আরডিএক্স জাতীয় বলে সন্দেহ।
লালুপ্রসাদ ইঙ্গিত দেন, সম্ভবত কোনও
যাত্রী বোমা নিয়ে ট্রেনে উঠেছিল।
তবে সে পরিকল্পিত ভাবে বিস্ফোরণ
ঘটিয়েছে, না কি ভিড়ের খাঙ্কায় সেটি
আচমকা ফেটে গিয়েছে, তা বলা
যাচ্ছে না। ঘটনাচক্রে আজই খানবাদে
একটি ট্রেনে ২২টি দেশি বোমা উদ্ধার
করেছে পুলিশ। এ ব্যাপারে ৪ জনকে
আটক করাও হয়েছে। পটনা-দিল্লি
এক্সপ্রেস ট্রেনে বিস্ফোরণের সঙ্গে এই
ঘটনার কোনও যোগ আছে কি না, তা
অবশ্য এখনও জানা যায়নি।

জৌনপুর ও সুলতানপুর স্টেশনের
মধ্যে হরপালগঞ্জ স্টেশনের কাছে
আজ বিকেল সওয়া পাঁচটা নাগাদ
বিস্ফোরণ ঘটে। রেলওয়ে বোর্ডের
চেয়ারম্যান আর কে সিংহ জানান,
যাত্রীদের মধ্যে রেলের এক অফিসার
ছিলেন। বিস্ফোরণের আওয়াজ শুনে
তিনি ট্রেন থামানোর নির্দেশ দেন।
ইঞ্জিনের পরে দ্বিতীয় সাধারণ কামরার
শৌচাগারের কাছে বিস্ফোরণ ঘটেছে।
বিস্ফোরণের খাঙ্কায় কামরার দরজা-
জানলা ভেঙে চুরমার। কাঠের আসন
এবং ছাদ ভেঙে চাঙড় ঝুলছে।
কামরার মধ্যে ছড়িয়েছটিয়ে যাত্রীদের
ছিন্নভিন্ন অঙ্গপ্রত্যঙ্গ।

পটনা থেকে নির্ধারিত সময় বেলা
সওয়া এগারোটা নাগাদই ছেড়েছিল
২৯৩১ আপ শ্রমজীবী এক্সপ্রেস।
বিকলে জৌনপুরের প্রত্যন্ত এলাকা
দিয়ে যাওয়ার সময় বিস্ফোরণ ঘটে।
জায়গাটি জাতীয় সড়ক থেকে খুব দূরে
নয়। তবে ৪০ কিলোমিটারের আগে
কোনও শহর নেই।

সাধারণ কামরায় সাধারণত
জিআরপি বা আরপিএফের নজরদারি
কম থাকে। তাই বিস্ফোরক নিয়ে
যাওয়ার জন্য এই জাতীয় অসংরক্ষিত
কামরা বেছে নেওয়া হয়ে থাকতে
পারে। ট্রেনের বাকি কামরাগুলি
সম্পূর্ণ পরীক্ষা না-করে ট্রেনটিকে ফের
দিল্লির উদ্দেশে ছাড়া হচ্ছে না।

বিস্ফোরণের শব্দ শুনে প্রথমে
ছুটে আসেন আশপাশের গ্রামের
মানুষ। তাঁরাই উদ্ধারে হাত লাগান।
পরে পুলিশ, রেল ও স্বাস্থ্য দফতরের
কর্তারা ঘটনাস্থলে যান। আহতদের
নিয়ে যাওয়া হয় বদলাপুর
হাসপাতালে। এই ট্রেনটি ব্যবহার
করেন সাধারণত গরিব ও নিম্নমধ্যবিত্ত
মানুষই। আজকের ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত কামরার
যাত্রীরাও মূলত বিহারের গয়া ও
নালন্দা জেলার মানুষ। রেলের
আশঙ্কা, প্রত্যন্ত অঞ্চল থেকে
হতাহতদের পরিজনের পক্ষে খবর
পাওয়া মুশকিল হবে। ফলে, কাল
স্থানীয় সংবাদপত্রে বিজ্ঞাপন দেওয়ার
কথা ভাবছেন তাঁরা। —পি টি আই

29 JUL

BJP criticises handling of internal security

Accuses UPA of mismanaging economy

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Bharatiya Janata Party on Saturday accused the Manmohan Singh Government of allowing the internal security situation to deteriorate, betraying the "aam aadmi" [common man] by mismanaging the economy and indulging in vote bank politics for narrow gains.

Resolutions to this effect were adopted at the party's office-bearers meeting, convened here to discuss the agenda originally drawn up for the July 21-23 national executive meet, since postponed. Briefing presspersons, senior leaders Jaswant Singh and Sushma Swaraj said party matters were not discussed. The focus was on the UPA Government's performance in 14 months of office. "The office-bearers expressed grave concern at the "sharp deterioration" in the country's internal security situation ever since the Congress party, in a post-election arrangement of unprincipled convenience with the Left Front, installed itself into office...." Mr. Singh said reading out from a resolution.

The BJP demanded that the Government "honestly" implement the Supreme Court judgment on the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act; wind up the Group of Ministers established for the purpose; prevent illegal migration by vigorously enforcing the Foreigners Act 1946 and complete border fencing on the Bangladesh border at the earliest.

Other demands included a

white paper on "Illegal migration, its status, consequences and remedial action needed," checking the growth of madrasas and proselytising activity in the entire north-east, a multipurpose identity card and a national register of citizens, status report on the spread of naxalism and restoration of the Prevention of Terrorism Act or similar legislation to thwart anti-national activities.

FDI in retail trade

In a resolution on the economy, the BJP opposed the proposal to open up the retail sector to foreign direct investment. It would affect the viability of small enterprises and have a debilitating effect on the livelihood of lakhs of people engaged in retail trade, it said.

The Congress-led Government had not only eroded the living standards of the common man, its mismanagement of the economy had stymied progress as well. The Government had failed to cushion consumers against the rise in petroleum prices, which rose by 30 per cent in a year. The condition of farmers had worsened and the "share of agriculture in India's Gross Domestic Product had dropped. Expressing alarm over "the effects of policy incoherence on the overall economic progress of the country," the BJP said that "after inheriting an economy that was heading for double-digit growth, the UPA has squandered the legacy of the erstwhile National Democratic Alliance Government."

2/1 2006

Pota court convicts Afroze

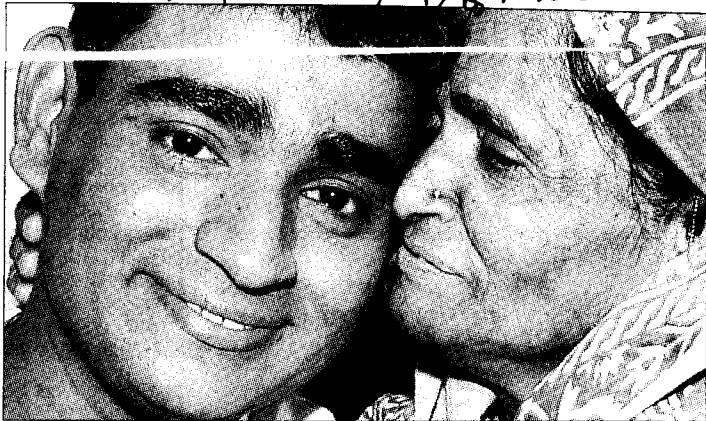
PRESS Trust of India
Mumbai, July 22

HI-3
A SPECIAL Pota court on Friday convicted suspected al-Qaida operative Mohammad Afroze facing a charge of developing terrorist links to create explosions worldwide.

Afroze has been found guilty under Sections 120-B, IPC (conspiracy), and Section 126, IPC (committing deprecation on territories of power at peace with the Government of India). On this count, he will get five years' rigorous imprisonment.

Afroze was also found guilty under Section 467, IPC (forgery of valuable security), read with Section 471, IPC (using as genuine forged documents). On this count, he was sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment.

Designated judge A.P. Bhangale, however, acquitted him of the charge of conspiring to wage war against the nation (Section 121-A, IPC). Afroze's brother, Mohammad Farooq Abdul Razaq,



An AFP file photograph of Afroze with his mother in Mumbai in July.

was acquitted by the judge since the police could not produce substantial evidence against him. He was charged with helping Afroze to go abroad to join the al-Qaida and undertake pilot training on forged documents to accomplish their mission of bombing important places.

The state had booked Afroze under Pota, but, later, dropped

the charges against the Act. However, he faced trial under the IPC for various offences, prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam said.

Mohammad Afroze was arrested on December 3, 2001, on charges of conspiring with terrorist outfit al-Qaida to bomb the House of Commons in UK, Parliament House in India and Radio Towers in Australia.

23 JUL 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Calls to 'underworld don' traced to Salman

Our Political Bureau
MUMBAI 20 JULY

THE Maharashtra government on Wednesday said that Bollywood actor Salman Khan's phone was under 'surveillance' from August to October 2001 after the police discovered that calls from the actor's phone were made to an underworld don.

"The police had stumbled upon a number from where calls were found to have been made to Abu Salem. That number belonged to Salman Khan and as such it was kept under surveillance from August 2001," RR Patil, the state home minister said on the floor of the state Assembly.

But he declined to elaborate on whether the actor was ever found talking to the underworld. "The government is seeking legal opinion to find out whether police can book someone for conversing with friend. We want the case to be foolproof," Mr Patil said.

He also assured the House that no one would be spared if found guilty. "We will not shield anyone," he assured. The home minister announced the appointment of two senior police officials, additional police commissioner KL Bishnoi and assistant police commissioner TK Yengde, to will probe the case. Both Mr Khan and Ms Rai have said that the voices on the tapes were not theirs.

Mr Patil made it clear that there was no reason for transferring the case from Mumbai police to the state CID as sought by BJP leader Gopinath Munde in the House.

On the issue of the recent expose by the me-

dia, wherein Salman Khan purportedly boasts of his underworld connections while talking to his friend Aishwarya Rai, the home minister said that the voice samples of both — Salman Khan and Aishwarya — have been sent to a forensic laboratory in Chandigarh to compare them with the voices figuring in the controversial tape. The audio tapes, the contents of which were aired by television channels and the transcripts published by a newspaper, has Salman flaunting his underworld connections and ask-

ing Aishwarya to perform in a show organised by gangster Abu Salem, warning her of dire consequences if she refuses. The voice samples of Salman and Aishwarya were taken by the police after the Maharashtra government ordered a probe to ascertain the genuineness of the tapes.

The Salman-Aishwarya tapes issue had triggered noisy scenes in the assembly with the opposition trying to grill the government for not taking action against the actor. The government had promised to make a formal statement on the controversy on Wednesday. Besides the actors, the police have also recorded statements of four top officers, namely inspectors Pradeep Sharma, P Bhandari, Ashok Borkar and sub-inspector Daya Nayak, in

connection with the ongoing tape probe to know if they were aware of the existence of such a tape. The police also recorded the statement of former DCP Pradip Sawant, who was one of the senior most officers in the Mumbai Crime Branch when the alleged conversation between the two stars is believed to have been recorded in 2001.



Navy sails catch winds of diplomacy

SUJAN DUTTA

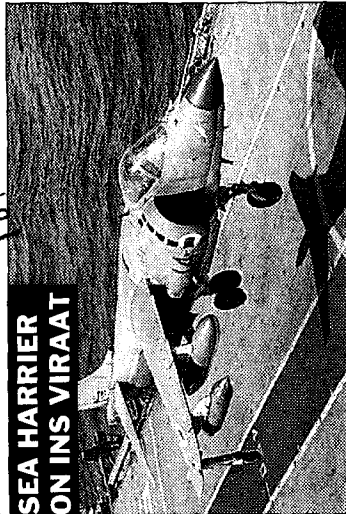
New Delhi, July 17: The Indian Navy will deploy its aircraft carrier overseas for a first series of exercises in Southeast Asia this month and will follow it up with joint exercises on India's eastern and western seaboard with the US, French and Russian navies.

The navy is emerging as New Delhi's service of choice to implement policies of military diplomacy. An intensification of exercises with the navies of the West off India's coasts and with those of Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia in pursuance of a look-east policy is placing the Indian Navy at the centre of an emerging military diplomatic grid in the Indian Ocean region.

The exercises come in the wake of the navy's rapid deployment to the tsunami-hit countries earlier this year.

Sources in naval headquarters here said INS Viraat, the navy's flagship carrier, INS Rajput and INS Ranjit, two guided missile destroyers, INS Shakti, a replenishment tanker and INS Khukri, an indigenously built missile corvette, will be deployed to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia between July 19 and August 1.

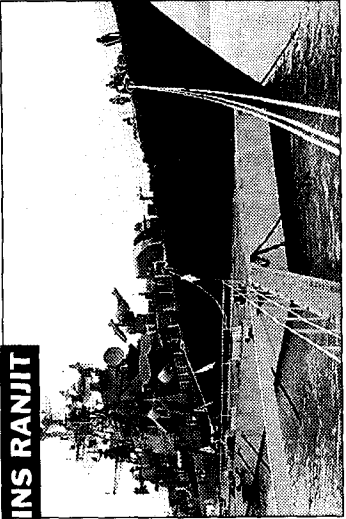
The carrier group for



SEA HARRIER ON INS VIRAAAT



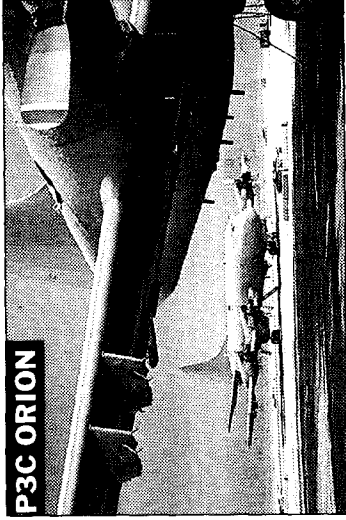
BRAHMOS MISSILE ON INS RAJPUT



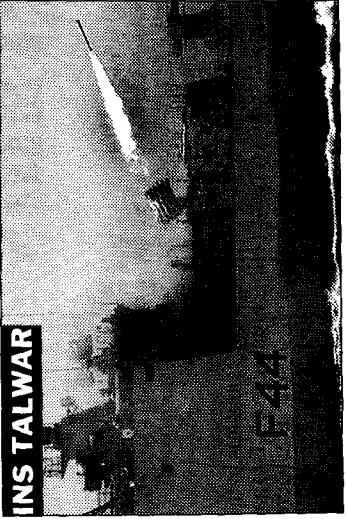
INS RANJIT



CHARLES DE GAULLE



P3C ORION



INS TALWAR

Southeast Asia will be commanded by Rear Admiral Sanjeev Bhasin, the flag officer commanding the Eastern region deployments, the carrier will engage in the Malabar series and Varuna series of exercises with the US and French navies off the west coast and the Russian Navy off the east coast. The sources said the US and French navies are expected to deploy a compatible force, including carriers and nuclear submarines for the exercises.

The exercises were being graduated to a higher level. The manoeuvres with the US Navy will involve US P3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft that the Indian Navy is considering for procure-

ment, the navy's own Dornier and TU-143 aircraft. For the first time, the India-US exercise will also involve the flying of naval combat aircraft (Sea Harrier from India) and possibly the F/A-18 Super-hornet by the US Navy.

France is likely to use its nuclear-powered carrier, the Charles de Gaulle, for the exer-

cises and vessels from the Indian Ocean base at Djibouti.

But before the drill with the French in November, the Indian Navy and the Russian Navy will conduct war games in the Bay of Bengal that will involve India's Talwar-class stealth frigates and a Russian Akula class nuclear submarine.

France is likely to use its nuclear-powered carrier, the Charles de Gaulle, for the exer-

cises and vessels from the Indian Ocean base at Djibouti.

No defence pact with U.S., assures PM

Special Correspondent

KOLKATA: The Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, has reportedly assured leaders of Left parties that India has not entered into any defence agreement with the United States.

What had been formulated during Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee's talks with U.S. officials recently was a framework

for defence relationships, the Left leaders were told by Dr. Singh.

Disclosing this here on Friday, the newly elected Rajya Sabha member and member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Sitaram Yechury, said the Left would continue to oppose any defence agreement with the U.S. and would pursue the issue after the

Prime Minister's return from the U.S.

Mr. Yechury said the Prime Minister had explained to Left leaders that the framework of defence relationships formulated during Mr. Mukherjee's visit to the U.S. was only a follow-up on a 1995 arrangement between the two nations.

The Left parties were opposed to any agreement or pact with

the U.S. which would mean participating in multilateral defence moves without the sanction of the United Nations. He also said that the Left leaders would oppose any move to allow representatives of India's Election Commission into Iraq for purposes of helping in the process of formulating electoral reforms in Iraq as long as the regime there was under the control of the U.S.

THE HINDU

Lashkar hand seen in Ayodhya attack

Police claim breakthrough; two held in J&K

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Ten days after the attack on the Ramjanmabhoomi complex in Ayodhya on July 5, the Uttar Pradesh police on Friday claimed to have cracked the case, identifying two of the five slain militants as Pakistani nationals belonging to the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

In a related development, the Jammu and Kashmir police arrested two militants — Mohammed Naseem and Asif Iqbal alias Farooq in Mehndhar area of Poonch district. They allegedly supplied arms and ammunition to the attackers.

The Director-General of Police, Uttar Pradesh, Yashpal Singh, told the media in Lucknow that the militants, identified as Mohammad Yunus and Mehmood, and their associates had rented houses at Devli in south Delhi and at Kishangarh in South-West Delhi and had been living in the capital for the past one year.

While Yunus began selling vegetables in the locality, Mehmood joined an English-speaking course in Munirka. Three

other militants stayed with them. They even helped one of the landlords, Ishwar Singh, when he was in need of money. Later, they began using his mobile phone to communicate with their handlers in Jammu and Kashmir.

Giving details of the conspiracy unearthed by the Special Task Force of the U.P. police, with active help from the Jammu and Kashmir police, Mr. Singh said the "operation," had apparently been planned for the past many months. It was set in motion in the third week of June when Yunus and his associates received arms and ammunition from Asif Iqbal and Mohammad Naseem at Panipat in Haryana.

Senior Jammu and Kashmir police officials said that Asif had been asked by an LeT operative, Adnan, in Srinagar to get a special "cavity" carved in his Tata Sumo vehicle. Five AK-rifles and explosives were stacked there. Asif drove the vehicle to Panipat and handed over the consignment to Yunus. He then returned to the Kashmir Valley. The vehicle has since been seized. The police said they traced Asif

and Naseem while tracking the mobile phone numbers recovered from one of the slain militants.

The militants, who had called up their LeT operatives minutes before the attack, had destroyed the SIM card. But with the help of the unique identification number, the phone was traced to Naseem, who had bought the phone at the behest of two LeT operatives, Dawood and Umer, in Srinagar. All of them were working for the LeT area commander, Mohammad Kari, who is said to be active in Kashmir.

The Uttar Pradesh police said the trail of the militants after they got the arms and ammunition is yet to be ascertained. So far, they had information that Yunus, Mehmood and their associates left Delhi in two groups on June 24 and then on June 30. Yunus made several calls from Akbarpur in U.P. to his superiors in Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi. The person to whom the calls were made in Delhi has also been identified. But the police suspect that the militants also went to other places before finally reaching Ayodhya.

Gurez proves Pak camps intact: Pranab

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BANGALORE, JULY 15

THE infiltration attempt by militants into the Gurez sector of Jammu and Kashmir substantiates the fact that the infrastructure for launching militants is intact across the border, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said here today.

While the attempt cannot be called another "Kargil-type attack", it shows that infiltration attempts have not stopped, Mukherjee said at a press conference following the handing over of the last nine of a batch of 17 HAL-upgraded Jaguars, and a pilotless target aircraft 'Lakshya', to the IAF.

Describing the infiltration bid, the Defence Minister said a battle has been on between the Armed forces and militants for over two days.

When the infiltrators were stopped by Armed forces, "they started firing. We tried to encircle them. This hap-

2 more militants killed

SRINAGAR: The gunbattle between security forces and militants in snow-bound Gurez sector near the LoC continued for the fourth day today as bodies of two more infiltrators were found, taking the official toll in the stand-off to nine. With rain, intensive cold and low visibility hampering operations, Army troops, who have surrounded the militants at a height of over 14,000 feet, are using heavy firepower to flush them out from snow-bound areas, a Defence spokesman said.

pened two days ago. It has taken some time because there has been rain and snow," he said.

The Army Chief had informed him on Wednesday night that eight of the infiltrators had been killed, Mukherjee added. "I don't think anyone will be able to escape," he said.

"This substantiates the point I am repeatedly making that infrastructure for launching infiltrators is intact on the

other side of the border. It is not that these attempts stopped completely, it is the vigil of our men that has prevented it," Mukherjee said.

Foreign Minister K Natwar Singh has already indicated to Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz the exact locations where militant camps are located in that country, he said.

The infiltration bid by the Pakistan-trained militants should not derail the peace process, he warned.

"It is the psychology of extremists to disturb the process. We must not fall into that trap. The peace process should continue," the Defence Minister said.

On the issue of objections by the Left to the recently inked Indo-US defence framework agreement, Mukherjee said there was no question of a rethink. The pact provides a framework agreement for technology transfer, co-production and does not compromise national security or foreign policy, he said.



Army personnel carrying the body of a militant killed at Barabe Gurez on Friday. Javed Shah

LOOKING AHEAD: India must tread carefully with the US when it comes to the defence pact

Charm defensive

BY PREM SHANKAR JHA



SO YOU DIDN'T LIKE THE FLOWERS?: Pranab Mukherjee and Condoleezza Rice

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EVER SINCE Pranab Mukherjee signed a ten-year defence pact with the US in Washington last week, Indian spokesmen have taken pains to reassure the Indian media and the rest of the world that this does not reflect any change in India's foreign policy. "We have only built upon the 1995 agreement," they point out, referring to the 'Agreed minute on defence proposals' signed with the Clinton administration. Technically this is true, but it is not the whole truth. For between 1995 and today, two seminal events occurred that have changed, almost beyond recognition, the context within which enhanced defence cooperation is being planned, and thus also its significance. The first was the Pokhran nuclear weapons test in 1998. The second was 9/11.

India's motives for entering into the defence agreement stem from the first event. The US's motives — and much of the world's uneasiness over the agreement — stem from the second. Pokhran brought down a head-load of sanctions against the transfer of cutting edge technologies to India (and Pakistan). Ever since then, India's goal has been to level the playing field with regard to technology once again and put Indo-US relations back at least where they used to be before May 1998.

In this, it has more than succeeded. For while little has changed in concrete terms, the Bush administration is clearly far more disposed to accepting India's claim to responsible nuclear status than the Clinton administration was. This is reflected by the sharp rise in technology transfers from the US to India during the past 18 months.

What is more important is the intangible change that has taken place in the tenor of India-US relations. This was captured succinctly by Nicholas Burns, Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, when he wrote in a brochure describing the state of Indo-US relations that "the United States and India are implementing habits of cooperation that characterise US relations with our closest friends and allies".

But what does the US expect to gain from the agreement? That is the question to which most nations in the world would like an answer. For, in conventional terms the agreement makes no sense whatever. What can India contribute to the defence of a country that has no significant enemies, that accounts, singly, for more than half the defence spending of the

world, and has a technological edge in its military hardware that no nation on earth can erode?

Five years ago, the question would have reflected curiosity. Today, it is being asked with apprehension. One frequently voiced belief is that the US wants India to act as a counterpoise to China. This is the global architecture favoured by the neo-conservatives who dominate the White House and are eternally looking for potential challengers to American global supremacy. But the threat from China is too distant and too ephemeral to provide a convincing answer. American politics is like a steam engine that puffs once every four years. It simply does not permit planning for events that are more than one or two puffs away.

The real cause for apprehension is that India may have been seduced by visions of weapons and hi-tech transfers into endorsing the American quest for a global empire. The American far Right has been touting the virtues of a unipolar world since 1990. But till 9/11 most people even in the US dismissed this as a form of megalomania. But all that has changed. In the past 45 months, the US has declared war against an abstract noun — terrorism. It has announced a new security doctrine that declares that it no longer respects national boundaries and will attack terrorists wherever they are to be found.

More ominously, it has declared that it will attack States that it suspects of harbouring terrorists. It has already acted upon its new doctrine and launched two wars, more or less unilaterally, in Afghanistan and Iraq. It has thus formally reneged upon the treaty obligations to which it bound itself when it signed the United Nations charter.

A pre-emptive war against an abstraction is a war without end. Add

to this the fact that the US concedes the right to wage such a war to no one else, not even the European Union. And what one confronts is the end of a world order based upon the principles of Westphalia and the uncertain beginnings of one shaped as an American empire. The Indo-US defence agreement has legitimately raised the question, "Where does India stand in relation to this new US?" Newspaper reports that the agreement will allow American warships free use of Indian ports, and that India allow the peremptory search of ships suspected of carrying proscribed weapons even within its exclusive economic zone, have reinforced the suspicion that it has.

The world in which India has completed its quest for rehabilitation is, therefore, very different from the one in which it began it, after Pokhran. That is why the plea of continuity falls flat on sceptical ears. In the coming months, India must weigh what it does with the defence agreement with the utmost of care. A minimal use would be to purchase American weaponry to replace its ageing weapons systems. A slightly more ambitious use would be to obtain state-of-the-art anti-missile batteries to lessen the threat from Pakistan's missiles.

A still more ambitious one would be to aim for a transfer of military technology and enter into joint production programmes. But it will do well to remember that with each step up the ladder, the price it will have to pay in concessions to the US will be correspondingly higher. And the only coin in which India can pay it is to support the American grand design for the 21st century. In the immediate future that would mean becoming a part of the US plan for extricating itself from Iraq.

Even this would be only a part of

the cost. Today America has few friends and just about none in India's neighbourhood. The defence agreement has already aroused great misgiving in Pakistan, in China and in Russia. India runs the risk, therefore, of stalling the move towards peace with Pakistan, of hardening China's attitude to the demarcation of the northern boundary, and above all, losing the most steadfast ally it has had in the last five decades. In exchange, it will have as an ally a country that does not really need its support beyond the immediate crisis in Iraq, which has consistently maintained that its domestic law supercedes all international treaty obligations and which, as the Pakistanis could tell us, has no hesitation in reneging on its treaty commitments just when they are invoked.

However, so great is the flux in the post-9/11 world that despite these misgivings I cannot rule out the possibility that if India appreciates its own importance and plays its cards well, the treaty could open the gates for it to play a constructive role in international affairs. For instance, if India agrees to send troops to Iraq but only on condition that it is asked by a transitional government that contains genuine nationalist leaders from among the Sunnis, with the purpose of replacing US and British troops as rapidly as possible, then it could well make the difference between worsening chaos and a gradual return to peace and order in Iraq. If it makes this offer jointly with Pakistan, it could simultaneously build bridges between the two armed forces that would make the task of peace-building in Kashmir much easier.

Finally, India could join the EU in quietly persuading the US to abandon the hard unilateralism that has landed it in such a mess in Iraq, and return to multilateral, UN-endorsed initiatives that rely more on the carrot than the stick to create an orderly world. Behind the rhetoric of empire, Bush's second team has already moved a short way in this direction. India could hasten the process by putting the US on notice, as the EU has done, that it will only support military interventions that are backed by a specific Security Council resolution. Even if it fails, the effort will have been worth making for there is one certainty about American politics (as about any democratic politics): no government lasts forever.

15 JUL 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Give us F-35s, not F-18s: Navy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kolkata: Unlike the IAF, the Indian Navy is not looking forward to procuring US-made F-18s for its aircraft carriers. However, the F-35s, which are expected to go into commercial production in the next few years is an option, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Arun Prakash said in Kolkata on Monday. Admiral Prakash was in the city to commission the latest state-of-the-art guided missile frigate — the INS Beas, into the Navy.

“The F-18 variants for carriers use a steam catapult system. Indian aircraft carriers use the ski-jump system and the F-18s are not an option for replacement of the existing squadron of Sea Harriers. We have plans to induct MiG-29Ks and the indigenous LCAs. We are also interested in the F-35s and may procure them when they become available,” Admiral Prakash said.

The navy is also looking for reconnaissance aircraft, but not of the AWACS kind, the naval chief said. “We already have helicopters that function as AWACS. What we require are reconnaissance aircraft,” he said. While claiming that the navy had gone in for major indigenisation in the last three decades, Admiral Prakash warned Indian shipyards against delay in supply.

“We have built 80 indigenous



A navy band performs a number during the commissioning of the guided missile frigate INS Beas in Kolkata on Monday

ships in the last 60 years and will try and encourage Indian shipyards. However, force levels will have to be maintained and if production in our yards is not adequate, we may have to look abroad for vessels. Let this be considered as a warning to our shipyards,” the Admiral said.

He admitted that India still does not have the capability to build submarines. The Rs 10,000 cr project to procure Scorpene submarines from France, develop Indian shipyards and then start building the vessels in India under transfer-of-technology is still awaiting clearance from the cabinet, Admiral Prakash said. Six submarines will be built at the Mazgaon shipyard after the deal is cleared. It will be six

years before the first Indian-built submarine is ready.

“The INS Beas will replace its namesake — an older vessel. This is an unique example of interfacing of Russian, western and Indian technologies. This ship is the last of the Brahmaputra-class frigates. The Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers is the only other shipyard after Mazgaon that has the capacity to build frigates,” he said, adding, “Very soon, the navy will have five new classes of ships. While stealth frigates are being built at Mazgaon, offshore patrol vessels are under construction at Goa. The Cochin shipyard is involved in building the air defence ship, while GRSE has orders for anti-sub warfare corvettes”.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

অস্ত্র সাহায্য চেয়ে নেপালমুখী কে এল ও, হুশিয়ারি কেন্দ্রের

অগ্নি রায় ● নয়াদিল্লি

১২ জুলাই: বাঁকুড়া, পুরুলিয়ার পরে নতুন করে রাজ্য সরকারের মাথাব্যথা বাড়তে পারে উত্তরবঙ্গ। দক্ষিণের দুই জেলায় মাওবাদী সন্ত্রাসের সঙ্গে তাল রেখে বাড়তে পারে উত্তরে কামতাপুরীদের তাণ্ডব। কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রকের সাম্প্রতিক এক রিপোর্টেই তৈরি হয়েছে এই আশঙ্কা।

কেন্দ্র জানতে পেরেছে, কে এল ও জঙ্গিরা যোগাযোগ স্থাপন করছে নেপালের মাওবাদীদের সঙ্গে। উদ্দেশ্য, সীমান্তের ও পার থেকে অত্যাধুনিক অস্ত্র-সহ বিভিন্ন সহায়তা লাভ। এই লক্ষ্যে তারা সফল হলে সেটা শুধু পশ্চিমবঙ্গ নয়, গোটা দেশের কাছেই বড় বিপদ। স্বয়ং কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী শিবরাজ পাটিল এই নিয়ে সতর্ক করে বলেছেন, “বিষয়টি নিয়ে তদন্তের নির্দেশ দিয়েছে সরকার।” একই সঙ্গে মূল স্রোতে ফিরতে চাওয়া জঙ্গির পুনর্বাসন নিয়ে মুখ্যমন্ত্রী বুদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্যের পরামর্শকেও গুরুত্ব দিয়ে ভাবছে কেন্দ্র।

বাঁকুড়া-পুরুলিয়ায় সাম্প্রতিক মাওবাদী তাণ্ডবের পরে দিল্লির নর্থ ব্লকে কাল দীর্ঘ বৈঠক হয়। সেখানে আপৎকালীন ভিত্তিতে একাবদ্ধ বাহিনী তৈরি নিয়ে কথা হয়। পাশাপাশি ভাবা হচ্ছে জঙ্গিদের মূল স্রোতে ফেরানোর কথাও। সেই প্রসঙ্গেই বুদ্ধবাবুর পরামর্শটি তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ হয়ে ওঠে। বুদ্ধবাবু বলেছিলেন, মূল স্রোতে ফিরতে চাওয়া নকশালদের সিআরপিএফ বা সমমানের কোনও বাহিনীতে যোগদানের সুযোগ দেওয়া হোক। জম্মু ও কাশ্মীরে প্রক্রিয়াটি পরীক্ষামূলক ভাবে শুরু হয়েছে। সেই পথ এ ক্ষেত্রেও নিতে বলছেন মুখ্যমন্ত্রী।

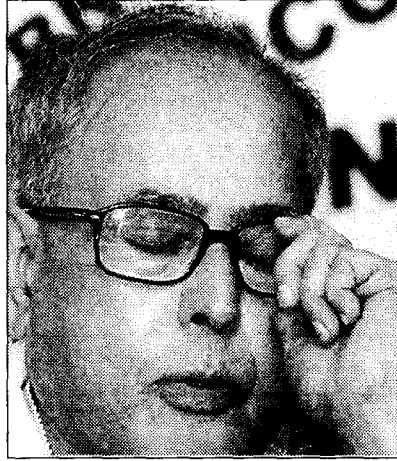
গত মাসের ৮ তারিখ হায়দরাবাদে দেশের সব ক’টি নকশাল অধ্যুষিত রাজ্যের স্বরাষ্ট্রসচিবদের সঙ্গে আলোচনায় বসে কেন্দ্র। সেখানে যে নোট রাজ্যগুলিকে দেওয়া হয়েছিল তার একটি অংশে ছিল আগাম সতর্কতাও। নোটে বলা হয়, “সি পি আই এম এল-জনযুদ্ধ এবং এম সি সি আই এক হয়ে যাওয়ায় নকশাল আন্দোলন নিঃসন্দেহে আরও শক্তিশালী হয়েছে। প্রাথমিক বিশ্লেষণে দেখা যাচ্ছে, এই সংযুক্তির ফলে ওড়িশা, উত্তরপ্রদেশ এবং পশ্চিমবঙ্গে নকশাল হামলা বাড়বে। অনেক বড় এলাকা নিয়ে এরা নাশকতা চালাতে পারে, যা সংশ্লিষ্ট রাজ্যের নিরাপত্তার পক্ষে বিরাট চ্যালেঞ্জ।”

এর সঙ্গে এ বার যোগ হচ্ছে উত্তরবঙ্গের কামতাপুরীদের নিয়ে নতুন উদ্বেগ। স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রকের এক শীর্ষকর্তা জানান, মাওবাদীদের কাছ থেকে প্রশিক্ষণ, অস্ত্রশস্ত্র নিয়ে রাজ্যে নিজেদের ভিত জোরদার করছে কামতাপুরীরা। সহযোগী আলফা। স্বরাষ্ট্র প্রতিমন্ত্রী এস রঘুপতি বলেন, “নেপাল সীমান্তবর্তী রাজ্যগুলির উপর নজরদারি বাড়ানো হয়েছে। সেখানে সশস্ত্র সীমা বল নিযুক্ত হয়েছে। রাজ্য সরকারগুলির কাছেও সতর্কবার্তা গিয়েছে।” এর মধ্যেই পশ্চিমবঙ্গের নকশাল জঙ্গিদের ক্ষেত্রেও জম্মু ও কাশ্মীরের সমাধান সূত্র কাজে লাগানো যায় কি না, তা খতিয়ে দেখছে কেন্দ্র। শিবরাজ পাটিল বহু বার বলেছেন, নকশাল সমস্যা শুধু আইনশৃঙ্খলা সংক্রান্ত সমস্যা নয়, এর আর্থ-সামাজিক দিকও রয়েছে। তার মোকাবিলা কী ভাবে হবে, তা নিয়ে ধোঁয়াশা রয়েছে। মূল স্রোতে ফিরতে চাওয়া নকশালরা কতটা বিশ্বাসযোগ্য, বিতর্ক তাই নিয়েও। সে ক্ষেত্রে বুদ্ধবাবুর পরামর্শ কতটা যথোপযুক্ত, তা নিয়ে প্রশ্ন চিহ্ন থাকছে।

প্রতিরক্ষা সমঝোতার পথে দিল্লি-প্যারিস

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার: আমেরিকার পরে ফ্রান্স। দশ বছর মেয়াদি চুক্তির পরে এ
বারে যৌথ উদ্যোগের প্রস্তাব।

প্রতিরক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে ক্রমেই নতুন দরজা খুলছে ভারতের সামনে। আমেরিকার
মতো ফ্রান্সও চাইছে ভারতের সঙ্গে প্রতিরক্ষা সরঞ্জাম তৈরি, বিক্রি এবং প্রযুক্তি
বিনিময় নিয়ে সামগ্রিক বোঝাপড়া করতে। সম্প্রতি মার্কিন সফরে গিয়ে
দীর্ঘমেয়াদি চুক্তিটি সেরে এসেছেন প্রতিরক্ষামন্ত্রী প্রণব মুখোপাধ্যায়। এ দিন
বেঙ্গল ন্যাশনাল চেম্বার অফ কমার্স অ্যান্ড ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ আয়োজিত আলোচনাচক্রে
যোগ দিতে এসে তিনি বলেন, “ফ্রান্সও আগ্রহী। তারা প্রতিরক্ষা সরঞ্জাম তৈরি
থেকে শুরু করে প্রযুক্তি বিনিময়েও যৌথ উদ্যোগ চায়। তবে আমরা এখনও চূড়ান্ত
সিদ্ধান্ত নিইনি। বিষয়টি এখনও প্রতিরক্ষামন্ত্রকের বিবেচনামূলক।” প্রতিরক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে
যে তিনটি দেশ ভারতের পছন্দের তালিকায়, সেখানে আমেরিকা ছাড়া রয়েছে



কলকাতায় প্রতিরক্ষা সংক্রান্ত আলোচনাচক্রে
প্রণব মুখোপাধ্যায়। মঙ্গলবার। — রাজীব বসু

ফ্রান্সের নামও। তৃতীয়
দেশটি রাশিয়া। প্রণববাবু
অবশ্য এ দিন বলেন,
“ওদের সঙ্গে আমাদের
সম্পর্ক তিন দশকের।
সুতরাং নতুন করে চুক্তির
প্রশ্ন উঠছে কোথায়?”
ভারতে বাজার ধরতে
ফ্রান্স কতটা উদগ্রীব,
পরিস্কার হয়ে যাচ্ছে আরও
একটি ঘটনায়। প্যারিস
থেকে পিটিআই জানাচ্ছে,
প্রতিরক্ষা সরঞ্জামনির্মাতা
সংস্থা থালেস তাদের
রেডার বেচতে চায়
ভারতকে। শুধু তাই নয়,
এর প্রযুক্তি বিক্রি এবং
যৌথ সংস্থা গড়তেও
আগ্রহী তারা।

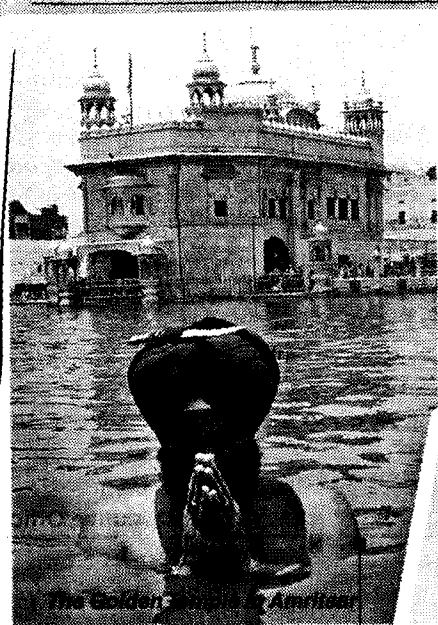
এক দিকে যখন
প্রতিরক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে শক্তিশালী দেশগুলির সঙ্গে ভারতের সহযোগিতার সম্ভাবনা
বাড়ছে, তখনই আঞ্চলিক ভারসাম্যের অভাব নিয়ে শোরগোল তুলেছে পাকিস্তান।
তবে তাদের জন্য সাঙ্ঘনা আমেরিকার নজরদারি গোয়েন্দা বিমান হকআই-২০০০
বিক্রির প্রস্তাব। এই নিয়ে প্রাথমিক আলোচনায় হয়ে গিয়ে দু’পক্ষের। করাচির
সৈকত থেকে ১৭১ কিলোমিটার দূরে, সমুদ্রে নোঙর করে রয়েছে মার্কিন
বিমানবাহী যুদ্ধজাহাজ মিসিংজ। পাকিস্তানের প্রতিরক্ষাসচিব তারিক ওয়াসিম
গাজিল সোমবার সেখানে বিমানগুলি দেখেন এবং রিয়ার অ্যাডমিরাল পিটার
ডালের সঙ্গে কথা বলেন।

13 JUL 200

ANADABAZAR PATINA

AYODHYA ATTACK

PLACES OF WORSHIP THAT BECAME BATTLEFIELDS



Hazratbal

Where: On the banks of Dal Lake in Srinagar on October 15, 1993

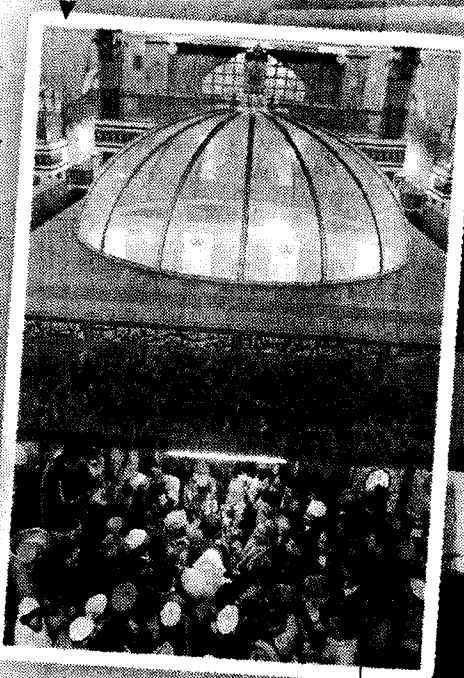
What: Militants holed up in Kashmir's most sacred shrine. The army surrounded Hazratbal. The siege continued for a month

Why: The government believed the shrine was being used as a terror base. The militants vacated the shrine after an agreement

Casualty: No deaths, but during a related protest in Bijnor 60 agitators were killed

Now: Shrine guarded round the clock, but peaceful

Devotees troop into the Char-e-Sharif shrine



Char-e-Sharif

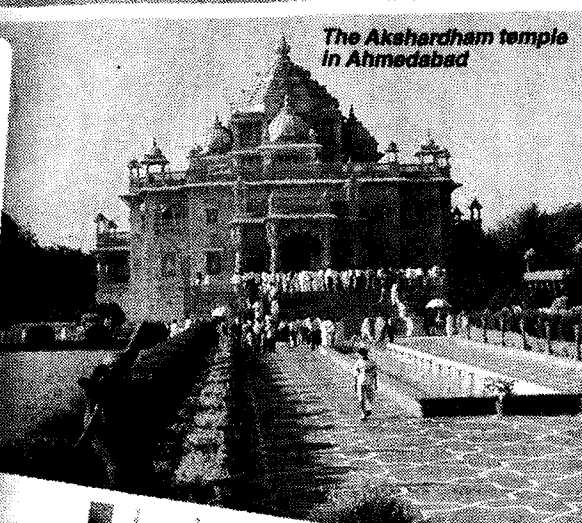
Where: In central Budgam district in mid-March, 1995

What: The army was deployed to break a siege that continued till May. The government claims the shrine was destroyed in the crossfire

Why: Militants, led by Mast Gul, seized the Char-e-Sharif town and the shrine

Casualty: Six militants were killed

Now: State police guard the town



Akshardham temple

Where: In Ahmedabad on September 24, 2002

What: Two heavily-armed militants stormed the temple. National Security Guard carried out a 12-hour flushout. Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Toiba were said to be behind the attack

Why: Suspected to be a revenge attack for the Gujarat riots

Casualty: 33 people died in the crossfire. Both militants were gunned down

Now: A high wall has been erected around the compound

Raghunath temple

Where: In the heart of Jammu city on March 30 and November 26, 2002

What: In both instances, two militants struck the 150-year-old shrine. Al Mansooran was blamed for the attacks

Why: The home ministry believes the militants wanted to trigger communal unrest before the Gujarat Assembly elections in December

Casualty: Nine killed in the first case, 13 in the second. The militants were gunned down in both instances

Now: The temple is heavily guarded, only one gate allows pilgrims into the premises

Operation Bluestar

Where: Golden Temple in Amritsar on June 5, 1984

What: The army stormed the shrine to dislodge Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his Khalistani followers occupying the Akal Takht

Why: The separatists had turned the shrine into a storehouse of arms

Casualty: Official death toll is around 1,000. Bhindranwale was killed on June 6

Now: The SGPC wants a memorial to those killed in Bluestar and June 6 observed as "black day"

An imam at the Hazratbal mosque displays the holy relic of the Prophet as securitymen stand guard

The Raghunath temple in Jammu

OTHER BIG HITS

Kashmir Assembly:

At least 31 people were killed when a Jaish-e-Mohammad suicide attacker detonated an explosives-loaded jeep near the Assembly in Srinagar in October 2001. Two militants entered the complex. Both were killed after a gunbattle that lasted seven hours

Parliament:

On December 13, 2001, five militants attacked Parliament. They lobbed grenades and breached the first ring of security but were killed before they managed to enter the House. Six security personnel and a gardener were killed

Bombay blasts:

A chain of blasts on March 12, 1993, left over 250 dead in the city. The first bomb went off at the stock exchange around 1.30 pm, followed by 12 more explosions in various parts of the city

Mumbai blasts:

The country's trade capital was rocked again by two successive blasts at the Gateway of India and Zaveri Bazaar on August 25, 2003. The explosions, said to be a revenge attack after the Gujarat riots, claimed around 50 people

New friends get a reminder of old habits

Natwar offers Pak proof

PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, July 5: The militants who struck in Ayodhya could be from either side of the border, but India today told Pakistan it can give "concrete evidence" that cross-border terrorism continues.

External affairs minister K. Natwar Singh made a formal complaint during a 45-minute meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Astana, Kazakhstan.

"We will give you concrete evidence of cross-border terrorism," Singh told Aziz.

His remark indicates that Delhi is perhaps trying to draw a distinction between the Pakistani establishment and militants based in that country. But it might prove difficult for the government to convince people at home that it was not the Musharraf regime but hardliners in Pakistan who are trying to derail the peace process.

Aziz said his government did not make any distinction between "good terrorists" and "bad terrorists" and was "institutionally against terrorism".

Later, condemning the Ayodhya attack, Pakistan foreign ministry spokesperson Jallil Abbas Jilani echoed the same sentiment. "Pakistan is against terrorism in all its forms," he said.

Both Aziz and Singh maintained that the peace process was "irreversible" though there have been "some hiccups".

This may be the view of the Indian establishment but there are indications that in the past few weeks, the normalisation process has slowed.

Asked whether the involve-

ment of Pakistan-based militants was suspected in the Ayodhya attack, South Block officials said it was too early to comment but added that infiltration and terrorism have continued despite the peace process.

"Infiltration has not stopped, it has only decreased," a senior foreign ministry official said. The official pointed out that despite the talks, there was evidence that Pakistan has done nothing to dismantle the terrorist apparatus.

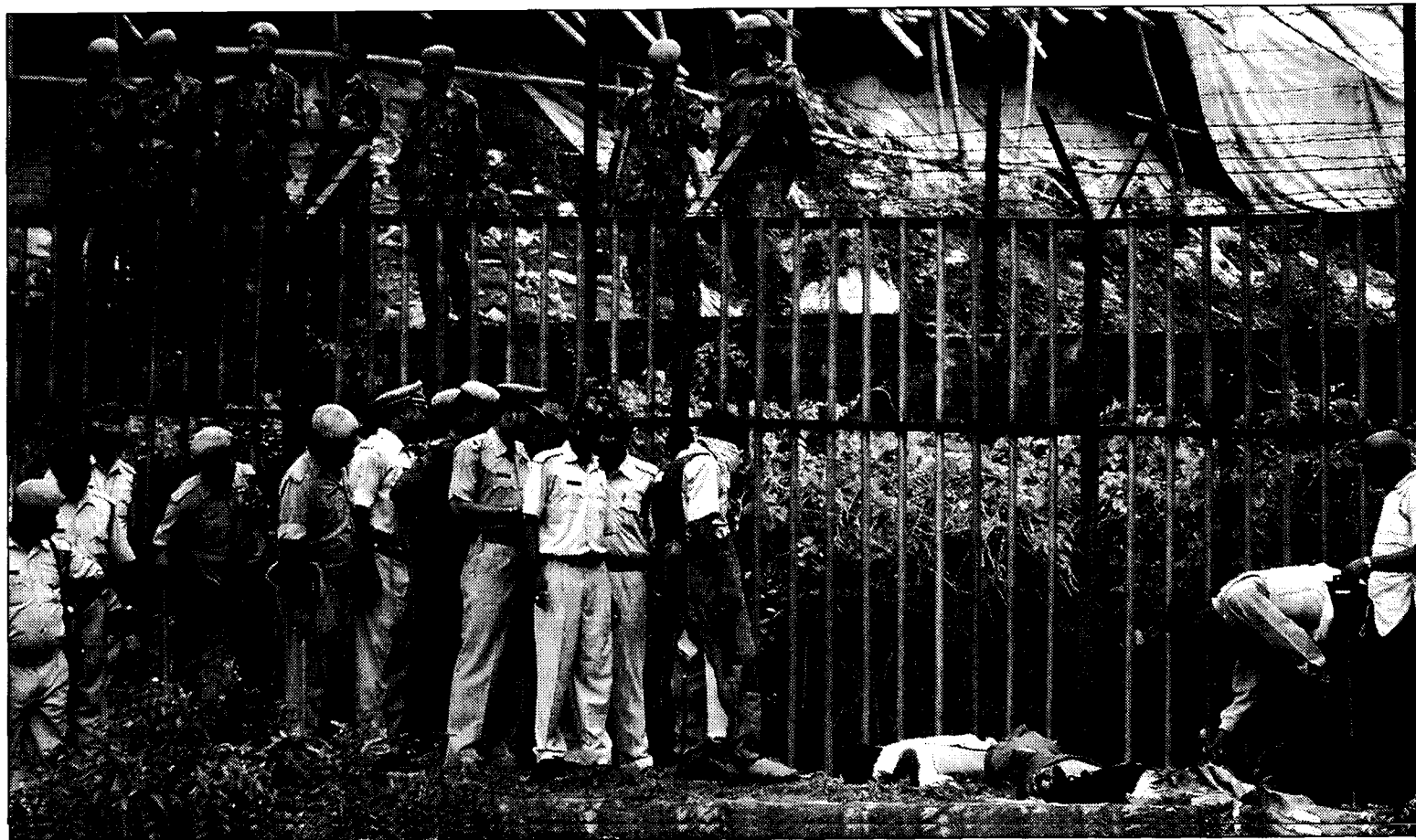
"We would not like to jump the gun by pointing our finger at terrorists based in Pakistan for today's attack but Islamabad has not yet taken any step to destroy its terror infrastructure. If need be, the structure can be put together and used against India," he added.

Nobody in South Block is willing to write off the peace efforts, but in the past months there has been no "tangible progress" on issues like Sir Creek, Siachen or the Tulbul navigational project.

"How can you go into the third round of talks without progress on any of the issues?" a foreign ministry official wondered.

Also, some of the past strain has returned with officials claiming stepped-up vigilance against India's diplomats in Islamabad and Pakistan making the visa regime for Indian visitors stricter.

The second round of talks will give the sides an opportunity to discuss all issues in the composite dialogue. The leaderships will make assessments on the progress made in the talks after that. But officials are sceptical whether the foreign will have much to show when they meet in September for the review.



Soldiers inspect bodies of two militants in Ayodhya on Tuesday. (Reuters)

Neighbour keeps up peace hope

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, July 5: Pakistan has reacted cautiously to the militant attack on the Ayodhya complex, declaring it an "act of blatant terrorism" and saying it will not derail the peace process.

Foreign office spokesperson Jallil Abbas Jilani emphasised that Pakistan abhors terrorism in any form. "We have strongly condemned the incident. Such incidents, especially when religious sites are involved, are condemnable," Jilani said.

"It will not have any impact on Pakistan-India relations as it is a local issue. Pak-

istan is committed to the peace process."

Analysts believe that the caution with which Islamabad has reacted shows that it wants to avoid being sucked into a controversy. But many of them fear that New Delhi would implicate Islamabad in the attack.

"I believe it was a wise approach (on the part of Pakistan) to issue a brief and carefully worded reaction," said Hassan Askari Rizvi, a political analyst. "Pakistan's government needs to remain watchful to counter any Indian accusation holding Kashmiri militants responsible for masterminding the incident."

Rizvi, however, was confident that such militant attacks will not disrupt the peace process.

A senior leader of the Opposition group, the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy, too, feared that India may try to implicate Pakistan in the incident.

"Pakistan is already under severe American pressure on the issues of democracy, reforms and the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project," Syed Zafar Ali Shah said. He added that India will definitely use the Ayodhya attack to mount further pressure on Islamabad.

Shah, a former minister,

claimed that the "pattern of the incident proves the involvement of the Indian intelligence apparatus in the attack".

Liaquat Baloch, a central leader of the six-party Islamic Opposition alliance, Mutahida Majlis-e-Ammal, saw the attack as directed against a minority place of worship. He said terrorism against minorities and their places of worship in India has exposed the "real face of the country, which claims to be a secular state".

Baloch predicted a strong reaction in India to the attack. "The incident reflects the complete failure of the

Indian government in ensuring safety and protection to the minorities," he alleged.

The chairman of the Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy, rights activist Afrasyab Khattak, said: "The Pakistani and Indian governments must remain vigilant of any efforts made by the elements who want to subvert the peace process."

He believes that only a "determined support" by the people of Pakistan and India can save the peace process, which remains a source of major disappointment to the "hawks" in both countries.

Caught napping, despite April arrest warning

TAPAS CHAKRABORTY

Ayodhya, July 5: The hint of a possible attack came in April.

Lucknow police caught two 19-year-old boys with sensitive army documents and maps of the temple town. After the arrests, police officers in both Lucknow and Faizabad, where Ayodhya is situated, had said the two were recruiting people for the militant outfit, Lashkar-e-Toiba, and one of them had trained in Kashmir.

A month later, on May 6, Uttar Pradesh police chief Yashpal Singh visited Ayodhya.

"I don't think there is any need to keep so many policemen engaged in Ayodhya," he said after a review of the security set-up.

Exactly 60 days later, a group of militants drove straight down to the sensitive temple complex and breached the high security area before being killed by the guards.

The attack came despite the double barricades and 12 watchtowers, from which guards of the Provincial Armed Constabulary have a bird's eye view of the complex, and before a decision could be taken on what the director-general of police had suggested.

While chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav refused to comment on what the DGP had told reporters, home secretary Alok Sinha said he had not received any feedback from the Intelligence Bureau or any other central agency on a probable strike.

But residents and priests in the ancient town of hundreds of temples and narrow, winding streets infested with monkeys said the attack was waiting to happen.

Streams of people visit the area every day and some of them drive straight in without being stopped by the security personnel, said a resident. "For the last few years, the checking system has been thrown to the

winds, making the area vulnerable,"

said Ram Vedanti, a mahant and former MP.

"There was a system to check vehicles and use sniffer dogs but nothing happens now. The nightlong power cuts also make the area open to threats," added Champa Pandey, another resident.

"What are they (the police) supposed to do when there is no power supply?" she asked.

Faizabad DIG Narendra Bahadur Singh said nearly 400 policemen guard the complex, but local police officers said it was impossible to "search" every visitor.

"I don't agree with the police chief that the security should be reduced," said an officer.

The DIG also said the militants had planned their operation meticulously. The six — one blew himself up while the others were killed — he added, were very fair, which suggested they

could be from Kashmir.

The security lapse has triggered a storm of protest from Opposition politicians. BJP Uttar Pradesh unit chief Kesrinath Tripathi, who has called a statewide bandh tomorrow, demanded immediate dismissal of the Mulayam Singh government for not taking the threat to the makeshift temple seriously.

Tripathi, who arrived in the town with party colleague Rajnath Singh in the evening, said the central government's complicity could not be ruled out, as both are responsible for the security of the sensitive area.

He said the state government has in recent months been regularly alerted to the possibility of militant strikes in Ayodhya. "It simply did not take any cognisance of such reports," he added.

"This is not a simple security lapse. It is a far more serious criminal act of refusing to take security threats seriously."

SOUND BITES

The government is resolved to deal firmly with all such acts of terrorism which are a threat to India's security and polity
— Manmohan Singh

Ram Janmabhoomi has been a very sacred place and the response to the attack shall be fitting
— L.K. Advani

Incident is regrettable as it took place even after 50 years of Independence
— Jyoti Basu

I appeal to all leaders making inflammatory statements aimed at disrupting communal harmony (against making such statements)
— Shivraj Patil

There was no security lapse, this is why the militants could not reach the makeshift temple and all of them were liquidated
— Mulayam Singh Yadav

Nation must stand as one; this is not the time for emotional reaction or arousing communal sentiments
— Congress

It is an attack on (the) Hindu faith. Union and Uttar Pradesh home ministers should resign
— BJP

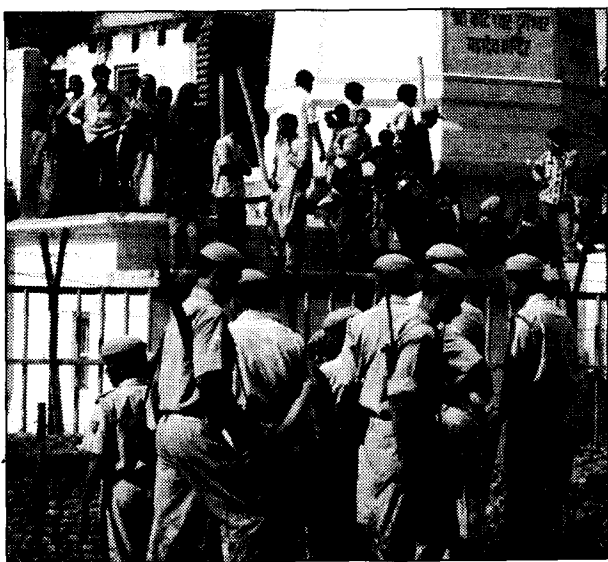
People should protest against the very unfortunate incident in a peaceful manner
— Ram Madhav of the RSS

(I announce) a reward of Rs 10 lakh for the CRPF jawans who fended off the attack
— Narendra Modi

It is an act of blatant terrorism... it will not have any impact on Pakistan-India ties
— Pakistan

Violence directed towards religious places... is a condemnable act, it is not acceptable
— Hurriyat

Vote-bank politics and appeasement of Muslims with reservation... are the real reasons for the growing terrorist trend
— VHP



Securitymen keep vigil near the outer security fence of the complex after the attack on Tuesday. (PTI)

NATION SHOCKED

Intelligence briefed Centre, states about LeT plans

Statesman News Service

MUMBAI, July 5. — The Union government and states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi and UP were adequately briefed by the Intelligence agencies about Lashkar-e-Taiyaba's plans to attack select sensitive spots in India. The Intelligence was based on the proceedings of an LeT meeting held at Muridke on the

outskirts of Lahore in Pakistan on 6 January this year.

The dossier of that eventful meeting of LeT under ISI shadow collected by Central agencies has been the basis of briefing to the government recently as it uncovers a larger design to terrorise India.

Confirming this to The Statesman here today sources said the purpose of the meeting was to defeat the peace

process between India and Pakistan.

Intelligence sources say they do not wish to differentiate between terrorist outfits like LeT and Hizbul Mujahideen and Pakistan's official agency the Inter Services Intelligence which is known to work at the cross purpose with President Musharraf. Even as the peace process via talks at various levels of both administrations is

on, terrorist groups like LeT and HM have worked out their "diabolical game plan" to unsettle India, said sources.

Detecting presence of human bombs in Delhi and Tuesday's failed attempt to blow up disputed structure in Ayodhya was a part of this plot, Intelligence sources said. Sources rue that the government have not been as serious about the briefing they receive

from time to time on the matters related to the national security. "We only react to the events like the one in Ayodhya today," sources said.

Maharashtra and Gujarat governments have been asked to guard against the landing of weapons and explosives like RDX along their long coastal line. In view of this alert by Intelligence agencies, Maharashtra government, about two

months back, has stepped up vigil along Konkan's sea face.

Shekhadi was the coastal town in Konkan where RDX for igniting bomb blasts in Mumbai on 12 March 1993 had landed. The government has now decided to recruit and train marine police — a new concept in India — to guard this belt. Each district in the coastal region is being given six high-speed patrol boats. Little

deeper in the sea vigil will be Coast guard's responsibility while international waters are under Indian Navy's protection. Intelligence sources peace process should not eclipse matters concerning national security. They doubt whether Pakistan President's writ runs over ISI and LeT or HM which, sources claim, operate like extension or subsidiaries of ISI.

No compromise: PM

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, July 5. — Holding that the terrorist attack in Ayodhya was aimed at destabilising the country's society and polity, the Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh tonight asserted that the government was determined to deal firmly with all such acts of terrorism and that there will be no compromise on this front.

"The government views the Ayodhya incident as a serious one and all states have been alerted to take adequate precaution for protecting monuments, security installations and religious places," Dr Singh said in a statement after chairing a meeting of Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs here.

The PM appealed to all citizen to be calm and

requested all political leaders to help in maintaining public peace and communal harmony.

Strongly condemning the Ayodhya terror attack, the PM declared the government's "determination and resolve" to staunchly tackle all such acts of terrorism, which pose a threat to the country's security and interests.

Security has been tightened across the country even as the Central government has also issued an appeal for the need to maintain communal amity and desist from any bid to incite communal passion.

The Prime Minister, who was scheduled to undertake an aerial survey of the flood-affected areas in Gujarat today, cancelled his visit in view of the attack. He called an emergency meeting of his Cabinet close on the heels

of the Ayodhya incident to take stock of the situation.

Reaffirming the country's resolve not to allow terrorist elements to succeed in their nefarious designs, Dr Manmohan Singh stressed on the need to maintain communal harmony, peace and public order. "It is also fortunate that no damage occurred to the physical structures at the site of the incident".

The Union home minister Mr Shivraj Patil briefed the PM and the Cabinet about the developments. The PM also spoke to the Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav on phone to discuss the incident and asked him to take all necessary measures to maintain communal harmony.

The Cabinet Committee on Security, presided by the Prime Minister, also reviewed the security sce-

nario across the country.

In the wake of terror attack, security forces were put on high alert across the country with strict vigil being maintained around religious places and communally sensitive areas.

The Centre has sent advisories to state chief secretaries to keep a close tab on "non-political and mischievous elements" who could use this incident to create communal disharmony.

Among the places of worship, where security has been tightened are Jagannath Temple in Puri in Orissa, the Char Dham shrines in Dehradun, the Vaishnodevi shrine, Raghunath and Shankaracharya temples in Jammu and Kashmir and in the temples of Mathura and Varanasi.

Security forces have also been asked to be on alert in view of protests.



A policeman stands guard in front of the Kherudin Jama Masjid in Amritsar on Tuesday. — PTI

Centre lauds swift action Senior officers stress role of NSG

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, July 5. — Expressing satisfaction over the security forces' "swift action" in foiling today's terrorists' attack on the makeshift temple at the disputed Babri Masjid-Ram Janambhoomi site in Ayodhya, the Centre said it had "intelligence information" about the possibility of a militant strike at religious places and monuments of national importance, holding that the quick Ayodhya operation this morning was facilitated by such intelligence inputs.

"We had intelligence information in late May and meetings of all directors general of police and chiefs of Central para-military forces were convened immediately to discuss this," said the Union home secretary, Mr Vinod Kumar Duggal. The intelligence indicated some militant modules planning to target religious places of national importance, he said.

Mr Duggal refrained from answering any question about the identity of militant group involved in today's terror attack. "We are checking and we will come out with all the facts after the inquiry is over," he said, adding "all we can share, as of now, was that they were not locals." He also parried a question about the religious identity of the militants.

Security agencies, however, suspect the involvement of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiyaba (LeT) militant outfit in the Ayodhya attack. LeT has been planning to target the makeshift Ayodhya temple for long and one such plot had been uncovered when the BSF killed a top LeT leader in Kashmir in 2003, security sources said.

After striking the Akshardham temple in Gandhinagar in 2002, LeT had planned a suicide attack in Ayodhya to trigger communal disturbance in the run-up to the Babri Masjid demolition anniversary the same year, sources said. The plan, however, failed as the terrorists supposed to execute it were killed in an

encounter with the Delhi Police in the Capital in November 2002 while they were en route to Ayodhya.

Asserting that the Central government had not issued red alert in any part of the country after receiving the intelligence information, Mr Duggal said the government had then, however, sent advisories to state chief secretaries to keep a tab on "non-political and mischievous elements" who could use such an incident to create communal discord.

Flanked by the director general of the CRPF, Mr J K Sinha, Mr Duggal said the Centre had asked the states to ensure that nobody exploited the situation and tried to incite communal passion.

Praising the CRPF's action at Ayodhya, he said today's operation was executed with finesse and militants were not allowed to gain any further access near the makeshift temple. Mr Sinha later left for Ayodhya to make an on-the-spot assessment of the situation and review the security arrangements.

Senior officers stress role of NSG

Syed Asim Ali in New Delhi

July 5. — Today's militant attack in Ayodhya has again brought to the fore the need for stationing special forces like the National Security Guards in various parts of the country.

Senior police officers have called for strategic positioning of these special forces who are well prepared to deal with the terrorist threat. "Such attacks can only be thwarted if each part of the nation is made accessible to these forces within minutes," said a senior police officer.

He pointed out that precious time was lost in the transportation of these forces, as the first few minutes are the most crucial, from their present headquarters at Manesar. Another senior officer said: "When forces like CRPF and CISF can be deployed in various states, why can't the NSG be stationed?" he asked.

Mulayam rules out lax security

LUCKNOW, July 5. — The Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav today rejected the allegations of state government's security lapses behind the Ayodhya terror attack.

"There was no security lapse at the campus and this is why the militants could not reach the makeshift temple and all of them were liquidated", said Mr Yadav.

The security forces were "fully alert", Mr Yadav said, or else how could all the heavily armed militants be stopped a good 150 meters short of the Ram Lala makeshift temple. He said tight security around the Ayodhya complex was a routine affair, adding it was reviewed at regular intervals.

Mr Yadav also said the state government would seek help from the Centre to further tighten the security in and around the complex, but added that the his government did not think it necessary at the moment.

Meanwhile, the Director General of UP Police Mr Yashpal Singh said there was no intelligence input from the Centre on the possibility of the strike. He denied having any specific intelligence input from the Centre with regard to any possible terrorist attack on the disputed complex.

Rejecting reports that deployment of security personnel in the makeshift temple complex area had been reduced, Mr Singh said despite complaints that heavy deployment of forces was causing hardships to devotees there had been no cut in the strength of security forces.

Rewards for jawans
Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav announced a reward of Rs 25 lakh and out of turn promotion to the CRPF jawans, who foiled the terrorist attack. Earlier, Gujarat chief minister Mr Narendra Modi also declared a reward of Rs 10 lakh for the jawans. — SNS & PTI

High security in key temples

VARANASI/BHUBANE SWAR, July 5. — Security around the Kashi Vishwanath temple-Gyanvapi mosque and vital installations were bolstered today in the wake of the red alert sounded by the Uttar Pradesh government throughout the state, official sources said.

Puri measures
Similarly security will be beefed up in Puri for the

Jharkhand bandh today

RANCHI, July 5. — A statewide bandh and a chakkajam (blockade) has been called tomorrow by the BJP in Jharkhand in protest against today's attack.

A high alert was declared at the Shiv temple at Deoghar. The BJP will observe anti-terrorism day in Bihar tomorrow. — PTI



Security beefed up at Siddhivinayak Temple in Mumbai on Tuesday after a high alert was sounded all over the country. — PTI

Between condemnation & carping

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, July 5. — The moderate faction of the Hurriyat Conference today condemned the terrorist attack in Ayodhya saying violence at religious places is not acceptable while the hardliners viewed it to be stage-managed.

"Violence directed towards religious places, irrespective of the faith, is a condemnable act, it is not acceptable", a spokesman of the moderate faction led by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq said here.

The hardline faction led by Syed Ali

Shah Geelani said nothing could be said with certainty about the attack.

"Similar stage-managed incidents have been enacted in the past as well to eliminate innocent and unarmed youths in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India," a spokesman of the Geelani-led faction said.

He said involvement of Hindu extremists, who were responsible for demolition of the Babari mosque, cannot be ruled out.

It can also be a conspiracy to trigger communal riots directed against the Muslims, he said.

In a similar reaction, pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen, the largest mili-

tant group in Jammu and Kashmir, alleged that the incident was the handiwork of Hindu extremists to trigger anti-Muslim riots.

The attack in Ayodhya is condemnable and is the handiwork of Hindu extremists to trigger anti-Muslim riots, spokesman of the outfit Junaid-ul-Islam told local news agencies here.

IG Jammu Mr SP Vaid said security forces had been alerted and security at all religious places including the famed Raghunath temple, which has come under fideyeen-suicidal-attack twice in the past, has been beefed up.

Saffron hardliners in revive-Ram mode

SNS & PTI

SURAT/NEW DELHI, July 5. — Seeking to revive the Ayodhya movement after a long hiatus, an aggressive VHP today said the terrorist attack on Ramjanambhoomi was aimed at destroying the proof of the temple's existence and announced a week-long country-wide protest from tomorrow.

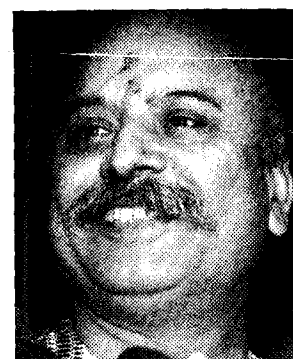
Bandh would be observed in Uttar Pradesh and Orissa tomorrow to be followed by Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh on 7 July, VHP secretary general Mr Praveen Togadia said in Surat even as VHP supreme Mr Ashok Singhal left for the temple town to take stock of the situation.

Similarly, the RSS also called for a nationwide "peaceful" protest in the

next two days. "RSS calls for a peaceful protest in the form of bandh, hartal, rally against the incident," the Sangh spokesman Mr Ram Madhav said.

The VHP has exempted Gujarat from the bandh as cadres were engaged in flood relief while other state units have been authorised to take decisions for their areas.

Alleging that the



Mr Pravin Togadia

"appeasement" policy of UPA led by Mrs Sonia Gandhi towards Muslims was responsible for the "jehadi attack in Ayodhya," he demanded the defunct POTA be revived through an Ordinance.

He called for a week-long "Anti-Jehadi Terrorism and Save India" protest week from 6-13 July featuring "bandh, dhama and rallies across the country".

Despite attack, Advani under fire

SURAT, July 5. — Notwithstanding the terrorist strike on Ramjanambhoomi at Ayodhya, BJP president Mr LK Advani was the target of attack in the discussions on the final day of the three-day RSS conclave here today. The RSS criticised Mr Advani for his controversial remarks in Pakistan last month.

'Attack on the soul'

GANDHINAGAR, July 5. — "It is an attack on the very soul of India", said Gujarat chief minister Mr Narendra Modi, in his

immediate reaction to the attack. "Whether it is on Akshardham or in Ayodhya, the attempt is on the very soul of the country", he said. Like the VHP, he also felt that Pota should be revived.

Intelligence reports had warned of attacks: Duggal

HO-12 67 9-28 N Limits

Meetings held at May-end to review security

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Government had intelligence information that militant groups could target religious places, vital installations and places of national importance. Tuesday's "unqualified success" of the Ayodhya operation, in which six terrorists were killed, indicated the high level of alertness of the security forces, Union Home Secretary V.K. Duggal told a press briefing here.

He had held two meetings with the chiefs of the Central paramilitary forces and the State police in the last week of May on receipt of the information.

"We held detailed discussions and meetings after receiving inputs from intelligence agencies on the possibility of militant

"They were not locals. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack."

strikes at a religious place or vital installation. India is a vast country and the intelligence at the national level has to be matched with the information from the States and at the local level."

Mr. Duggal refused to divulge either the names of the militant groups or the identity of the terrorists who were killed at Ayodhya.

"They were not locals. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack."

Advisories were sent to all State Governments and police

chiefs, asking them to ensure that vested interests and mischievous elements did not exploit the situation to spread communal disharmony.

Mr. Duggal and Central Reserve Police Force Director-General, J.K. Sinha, asserted that there was no damage to the makeshift temple as the CRPF personnel shot down all the terrorists at the outer periphery itself.

"All terrorists have been accounted for, and no person except the driver of the car that brought the terrorists has been arrested. The driver is being questioned," Mr. Duggal said.

Praise for CRPF

Mr. Sinha lauded the "quick response" of the CRPF men, the Uttar Pradesh police and the

Provincial Armed Constabulary deployed at the outer security cordon in the temple complex.

The terrorists attempted to breach the outer ring security by blasting an explosives-laden jeep and firing indiscriminately from their AK-47 assault rifles.

"Our men retaliated with controlled firing and all the six were killed at Sita-ki-Rasoi," said Mr. Sinha, who rushed to Ayodhya to review the security measures. Three CRPF personnel, including a sub-inspector, were injured in the encounter.

Apart from manning the inner cordon, CRPF personnel had security pickets in the complex.

A women platoon and a quick reaction team were deployed in the complex at all times, he said.

Bid on life of lawyer Majid Memon

9-11 & N. K. K. K.

Gunmen Belonging To Ravi Pujari Gang Fired At His Car

Mumbai: High-profile criminal lawyer Majid Memon on Monday escaped a bid on his life as two hitmen of underworld gangster, Ravi Pujari, fired at him outside his residence in suburban Bandra, police said.

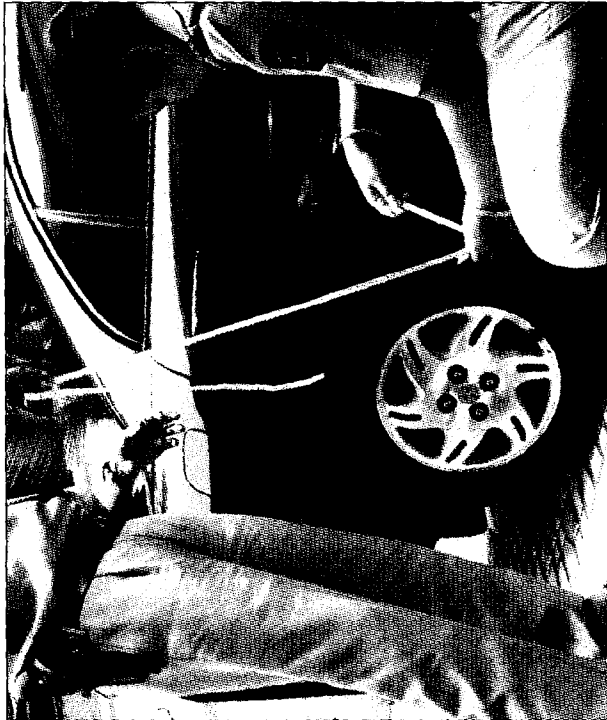


Memon, who has taken up the cases of several TADA and POTA detenus, including the December 2002 Chatkopar bomb blast accused leading to their acquittal, was getting into the car with his son, on his way to the court, when two assailants on a motorcycle sprayed bullets, damaging the rear windscreen of the vehicle, police said.

Memon and his son, however, escaped unhurt as they ducked the volley of bullets. A police gunman accompanying them returned the fire, but the shooters managed to escape.

A visibly shaken Memon, who had recently been provided security cover following intelligence inputs of threat to his life from the underworld, later said he had not received any threats "personally from the underworld".

"I have always defended the



Police investigate at the scene of the shoot-out

needy and deserving people. If judges and lawyers also start getting threats in a civilised society, then people will lose faith in the system".

Soon after the attack, Pujari, based in Australia, called up a reporter of a TV channel to own responsibility of the attack. He also telephoned Memon's resi-

Dhananjay Kamalakar of Mumbai crime branch said.

Memon, who fought several high-profile cases, including the public-interest litigation filed by social activist Anna Hazare demanding action against politicians involved in the Telgi fake stamps paper scam, had recently refused to accept police security.

In a letter to the Maharashtra DGP rejecting the security cover, Memon had said that he does not feel any threat from the underworld. "If at all it was, it could be posed by my advocacy through judicial proceeding in the courts," he said. Memon had demanded a probe into the police claim of threat from the underworld.

Meanwhile, the police on Monday beefed up Memon's security. "The number of armed security men escorting Memon will be increased, while security arrangements will also be made outside Memon's office and residence," a senior Mumbai police official said.

Apart from providing additional security to Memon, the lawyer is also likely to be asked to take certain precautions while travelling and moving at public places, the official added. PTI

DEFENCE AGREEMENT | CPI, CPI-M to hit the streets on Friday; Karat, Bardhan to attend Delhi protest rally

Left frowns again, this time on US ties

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 4

THE framework agreement on the Indo-US defence relationship is threatening to become another area of confrontation between the UPA and the Left. After a meeting between CPI(M) general secretary Prakash Karat and his CPI counterpart A B Bardhan last evening, the Left parties have decided to organise a mass movement against the decision. Countrywide rallies have been planned on July 8.

The framework was agreed upon between the two countries during the recent visit by Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee to Washington.

The fresh turbulence in the UPA comes on top of the Left's disenchantment with the Congress-led coalition on the proposed disinvestment in BHEL and the hike in prices of petrol and diesel. Already, the Left has announced it would stay away from the UPA-



We're waiting over BHEL

KOLKATA: As serious that Left parties were firm on reversal of the Centre's move to dilute stake in BHEL, CPI(M) Politburo member Sitaram Yechuri on Monday said he was hopeful that the government would clarify its position before PM Manmohan Singh's visit to Scotland for the G-8 summit or immediately on his return. "The Prime Minister is leaving for Scotland on July 6 and returning on July 9. We are expecting that the government will clear its position before he leaves the country or immediately after his return," Yechuri told reporters. —PTI

Left coordination committee on the BHEL issue.

After yesterday's high-level meeting, senior Left leaders, including Bardhan and Karat, decided they would themselves be present at the national-level rally in Delhi on July 8.

CPI secretary D Raja said the

framework agreement could mean "serious consequences for India's strategic and security interests." Speaking from Kolkata, RSP's Abani Roy said it "would compromise the country's interests".

The Left leaders expressed the apprehension that this agreement would trigger off an arms race in South Asia and only keep the military infrastructure of the US and Europe ticking.

The Left parties have been insisting that an agreement of this nature would "reduce interests" to a "strategic ally" of the USA. The Left, which wants the UPA government to pursue an "independent" foreign policy, believes that India would be in the company of Japan, South Korea and the Philippines by entering into these long-term military relationships with the US.

Sitaram Yechuri and Brinda Karat file nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha from West Bengal on Monday. PTI photo

ভারত-মার্কিন প্রতিরক্ষা চুক্তিতে অসন্তুষ্ট বামেরা

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার, নয়াদিল্লি, ২
জুলাই: প্রতিরক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে ভারত-মার্কিন
সম্পর্কের ঘনিষ্ঠতা নিয়ে উদ্বিগ্ন
বামপন্থীরা। তাঁরা মনে করছেন অভিন্ন
ন্যূনতম কর্মসূচি অনুযায়ী যে স্বাধীন
বিদেশনীতি নিয়ে কেন্দ্রের চলার কথা,
তা থেকে বিচ্যুত হয়েছে কেন্দ্রের
মনমোহন সিংহের সরকার। তবে এই
মুহুর্তে ভেল নিয়ে উত্তপ্ত পরিস্থিতিতে
বামেরা আপাতত নিজেদের শুধু
বিবৃতির মধ্যেই সীমাবদ্ধ রাখছেন।

বামেদের অস্বস্তি বাড়িয়ে
ইতিমধ্যেই বিজেপি এই চুক্তিকে স্বাগত
জানিয়েছে। রাজ্যসভায় দলের নেতা
এবং প্রাক্তন বিদেশমন্ত্রী যশোবন্ত সিংহ
কাল এই চুক্তিকে প্রতিরক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে
একটি স্মরণীয় ঘটনা বলে মন্তব্য
করেন। তিনি বলেন, “প্রতিরক্ষা
প্রশ্নটির ক্ষেত্রে কোনোর বিষয়টি
যত বেশি করে দেশের মধ্যে ছড়িয়ে
যাবে, ততই স্বাগত।” তিনি বিষয়টিকে
সামরিক কূটনীতি হিসাবে উল্লেখ
করেন। তবে বাস্তব ক্ষেত্রে এ বিষয়ে

যথেষ্ট সাবধান থাকা উচিত বলেও
সতর্কবার্তা জারি করেছেন তিনি।

অন্য দিকে, সি পি এম মনে করছে,
সাম্প্রতিক প্রতিরক্ষা চুক্তিগুলি
ভারতকে ক্রমশ আমেরিকার সনাতন
মিত্র জাপান, দক্ষিণ কোরিয়া বা
ফিলিপিনসের সঙ্গে এক গোত্রে নিয়ে
যুগ্মবে। বামপন্থীরা আগের এনডিএ
সরকারের সময়েও মার্কিন-যেঁষা
বিদেশনীতির প্রতিবাদ করে এসেছে।
সে সময়ে, বিশেষত ইরাক যুদ্ধের
ক্ষেত্রে কংগ্রেসও তাদের পাশে ছিল।
কিন্তু প্রণব মুখোপাধ্যায়ের সাম্প্রতিক
সফরে যে সমস্ত প্রতিরক্ষা চুক্তি স্বাক্ষর
হয়েছে, তা নিয়ে কমিউনিস্টদের প্রবল
আপত্তি রয়েছে। যেমন বৃশ প্রশাসনের
সঙ্গে ক্ষেপণাস্ত্র প্রতিরক্ষা ব্যবস্থা নিয়ে
কোনও সহযোগিতা তাঁদের
একেবারেই না-পসন্দ। এবং এই
বিষয়গুলি স্পষ্ট করে দিয়ে ইতিমধ্যেই
বিভিন্ন বামপন্থী দল বিবৃতি দিয়েছে।

কিন্তু যে সূত্রে বিজেপি এই চুক্তিকে
স্বাগত জানাতে শুরু করেছে, তা

বামপন্থীদের আরও চাপে ফেলবে।
যশোবন্তের কালকের বিবৃতির পর
বামেরা আজ এই বিতর্কে নতুন কোনও
মাত্রা চড়াতে রাজি হয়নি। তবে দলীয়
সূত্রে বলা হয়েছে, অর্থনীতি থেকে শুরু
করে অনেক প্রশ্নেই যে বিজেপির সঙ্গে
কংগ্রেসের কোনও তফাৎ নেই, সে
কথা তাঁরা আগে থেকেই বলে
আসছেন। এই বিষয়গুলি নিয়ে
ভবিষ্যতেও তাঁরা প্রচার চালাবেন।

এই মুহুর্তে অবশ্য বামেরা অনেক
বেশি চিন্তিত ভেল-এর বিলম্বকরণের
বিষয়টি নিয়ে। এ নিয়ে মনমোহন
সরকারের সঙ্গে তাঁদের যে ব্যবধান
তৈরি হয়েছে, তা কী ভাবে কমবে তার
স্পষ্ট উত্তর এখনও মেলেনি। এর পর
সংসদের অধিবেশন শুরু হলে পেনশন
নিয়ন্ত্রক কর্তৃপক্ষ বিলের মতো দু’একটি
বিল নিয়েও সরকারের সঙ্গে তাঁদের
সংঘাত অনিবার্য। অথচ তা সত্ত্বেও
তাঁদের সরকারকে সমর্থন করে যেতেই
হবে। এই অবস্থায় কী করণীয়, তা নিয়ে
শীঘ্রই চার বাম দল বৈঠকে বসবে।

ANANDARAZA PATRIKA