

Second car used by LeT terrorists found with arms

1915
Tarachand Mhaske & Syed Rizwanullah | TNN

Ahmednagar: In a major breakthrough in the Aurangabad terrorists' case, the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) recovered 50 hand grenades, one AK-47 rifle and 200 bullets hidden under a culvert, five km from Manmad on the Manmad-Ahmednagar highway on Saturday.

The recovery follows the discovery of an Indica car used by the suspected Lashkar-e-Toiba terrorists to give the Aurangabad police the slip near Malegaon in Nashik on Thursday.

On Tuesday night, the Aurangabad rural police and the ATS had seized 11 AK-47 rifles, 33 kg of RDX and 800 live cartridges from a Tata Sumo which was travelling along with an Indica. While the three persons taken into custody in Malegaon on Tuesday are suspected activists of the banned SIMI, the hunt continued for the other suspected terrorists who were travelling in the Indica.

After giving the Aurangabad police the slip, the terrorists in the Indica are believed to have passed through Shirdi and entered Yeola before reaching the Ankai Fort area in Manmad.

14 MAY 2006

9/11 tapes evoke horror, confusion

ELLEN BARRY

NEW YORK | APRIL 1

It was 9:50 am, and the caller simply refused to hang up. He was trapped on the 105th floor of one of the World Trade Centre towers, and the 9/11 dispatcher was trying to get him off the phone. "Just stay where you are. Don't do nothing. Just stay where you are," said the dispatcher, identified only as Fire Department 408. "We're coming. Yeah. Hang up, sir. We're on the way." But the man would not hang up.

Nine hours of recordings released by New York on Friday evoke the horror and confusion that swept through emergency services on the morning of September 11. Addressing callers as "Hon," "Sir," or sometimes "Lady," dispatchers repeated one message to people who couldn't breathe and were beginning to panic: Sit

stay where they were, put wet towels over their heads and under the doors, to stay low and not to panic—the standard procedure for emergencies in high-rise buildings. Only a handful advised that they try to get out of the buildings.

New York officials fought hard to prevent the release of the recordings, which were requested by *The New York Times* in 2002 under the state's Freedom of Information Law. The city argued that other records sought by the paper contained information needed to prosecute Zacarias Moussaoui, and that the last moments of the victims in the towers were intensely personal and should remain private. Lawyers for the newspaper, joined by a group of victims' relatives, made the case that the recordings contained critical information about how emergency services functioned in the crisis. The New York State Court of Appeals in March 2005 or-



tight. We're coming. The recordings, which do not include the words of the callers, show that people stuck in the towers received contradictory and sometimes misleading advice. Some dispatchers recommended opening windows, not realising they were sealed shut. Dispatchers repeatedly instructed callers to

dered the city to release the operators' words, but said the victims' appeals could be redacted.

Norman Siegel, a lawyer who represented the family members, on Friday called the operators' comments "inconsistent and contradictory"—proof that they were not properly trained or working from a uniform script. But he took pains to praise their compassion. "We don't want the 9/11 operators to become scapegoats," he said. "They were themselves in the dark."

Police and fire officials said the recordings gave them reason to be proud. In a statement, police chief Ray Kelly said they "remind us once again of the remarkable performance of our 9/11 operators, who displayed professionalism and compassion under trying of circumstances, often staying on the line with anguished callers until the very end."

—LAT/ WP

Zarqawi died of blast injuries: Autopsy report

Baghdad: A US military doctor said on Monday that Al Qaida terrorist leader Abu Musab Al Zarqawi died 52 minutes after an airstrike against his safe house north-east of Baghdad and that an autopsy showed his injuries were consistent with those caused by a bomb blast.

Col Steve Jones, command surgeon for Multinational Forces said that Zarqawi's spiritual adviser, Sheik Abdul Rahman, was killed instantly. He added that an FBI test positively identified Zarqawi.

Maj Gen William Caldwell said 140 military operation were carried out since Zarqawi's death and 32 insurgents were killed and 178 detained, he said 11 raids were directly connected to intelligence gleaned from Zarqawi's death.

Maj Gen William Caldwell said that US

forces arrived about 28 minutes after the airstrike and treated Al Zarqawi, who was breathing with difficulty. Jones and a medical examiner who was not identified said that Al Zarqawi had "no evidence of beating or any firearm injuries."

He said the first bomb was dropped by an F-16 at 6:12 pm and that US troops arrived at 6:40 pm but found Iraqi police at the site. A US military medic provided care at the scene and that "his carotic pulse was such that he was not going to live. It was very evident that he had extremely massive internal injuries," Caldwell said.

"At 7:04 pm on 7 June, Zarqawi was dead," Caldwell said. He added that no decision made on remains on Al Zarqawi and his lieutenant.

"Right now we are still in discussions



The blast site where Zarqawi was killed

with the government of Iraq. They're still currently under coalition control," Caldwell said. Caldwell said that two women and a young girl killed at the scene were turned over to Iraqi authorities as had the body of another man. None had been identified.

According to Caldwell, Zarqawi was not wearing an explosives vest. The Jordanian-born Al Qaida leader often claimed he wore one to prevent capture by American troops. "He was wearing some black outfit. There is nothing that said he was wearing a suicide belt on," Caldwell said.

He added that a timeline of events he had promised was not yet ready but would be in the next few days. Because of the confusion over the sequence of events following the bombing, the military has promised to release a chronology. AP

NY

CHICAGO ■ FBI foils home grown plan to blow up Sears Towers

Seven charged with terror plot

AGENCIES

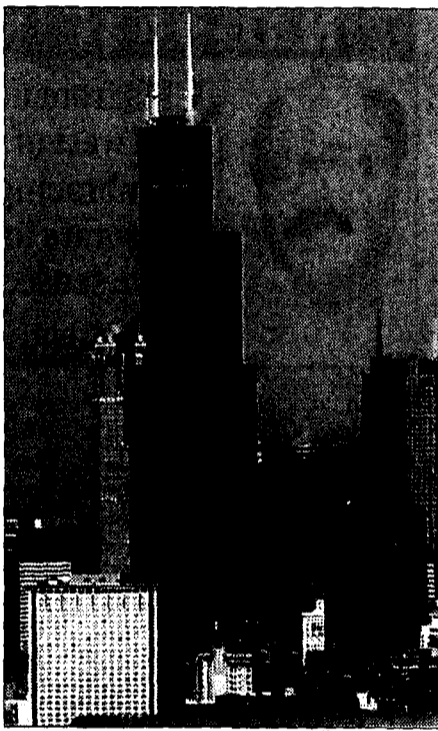
MIAMI, JUNE 23

24/6
MIAMI, JUNE 23 (AP) — A GROUP of young men seized in a Miami warehouse have been charged in a federal indictment with conspiring with al-Qaeda to commit acts of violence in the United States, including blowing up Chicago's Sears Tower.

The seven individuals indicted by a federal grand jury were taken into custody on Thursday when authorities swarmed the warehouse in the Liberty City area, removing a metal door with a blow torch. The indictment also alleges plans to blow a federal building in Miami in conjunction with the al-Qaeda network.

According to the indictment handed up on Thursday, a young man identified as Nurseal Batiste, beginning in November 2005, recruited and trained the others "for a mission to wage war against the United States government," including a plot to destroy the Sears Tower.

To obtain money and support for their mission, the conspirators sought help from al-Qaeda, pledged an oath to the terrorist organization and supported an al-Qaeda



Sears Tower in Chicago. AP

plot to destroy FBI buildings, the four-count indictment charged.

Batiste met several times in December 2005 with a person purporting to be an al-Qaeda member and asked for boots, uniforms, machine guns, radios, vehicles and \$50,000 in cash to help him build an "Islamic Army to wage jihad," the indictment said. It said that Batiste said he would use his "soldiers" to destroy the Sears Tower.

In February 2006, it said, Batiste told the "al-Qaeda representative" that he and his five soldiers wanted to attend al-Qaeda training and planned a "full ground war" against the United States in order to "kill all the devils we can." His mission would "be just as good or greater than 9/11," the indictment accused Batiste of boasting. In Washington, Richard Kolko, spokesman for FBI headquarters told the media "There is no imminent threat to Miami or any other area because of these operations."

"It would be inappropriate for us to confirm or deny the details of the news reports about federal law enforcement action before an official statement from Justice department," CNN quoted Managing Director of the Sears Tower Barbara Carley as saying.

MIAMI HERALD
JUN 23 2006

Plot to blow Sears Tower busted

Seven nabbed in terror plan thought to be bigger than 9/11

USA Today
Miami, June 23

A GROUP of young men arrested from a Miami warehouse have been charged in a federal indictment with conspiring with the al-Qaida to "levy war against the United States" by committing acts of violence, including blowing up Chicago's Sears Tower. The seven individuals — aging from 22 years to 32 years — were indicted by a federal grand jury in Miami and were taken into custody on Thursday when authorities swarmed a warehouse in the Liberty City area, removing a metal door with a blow torch.

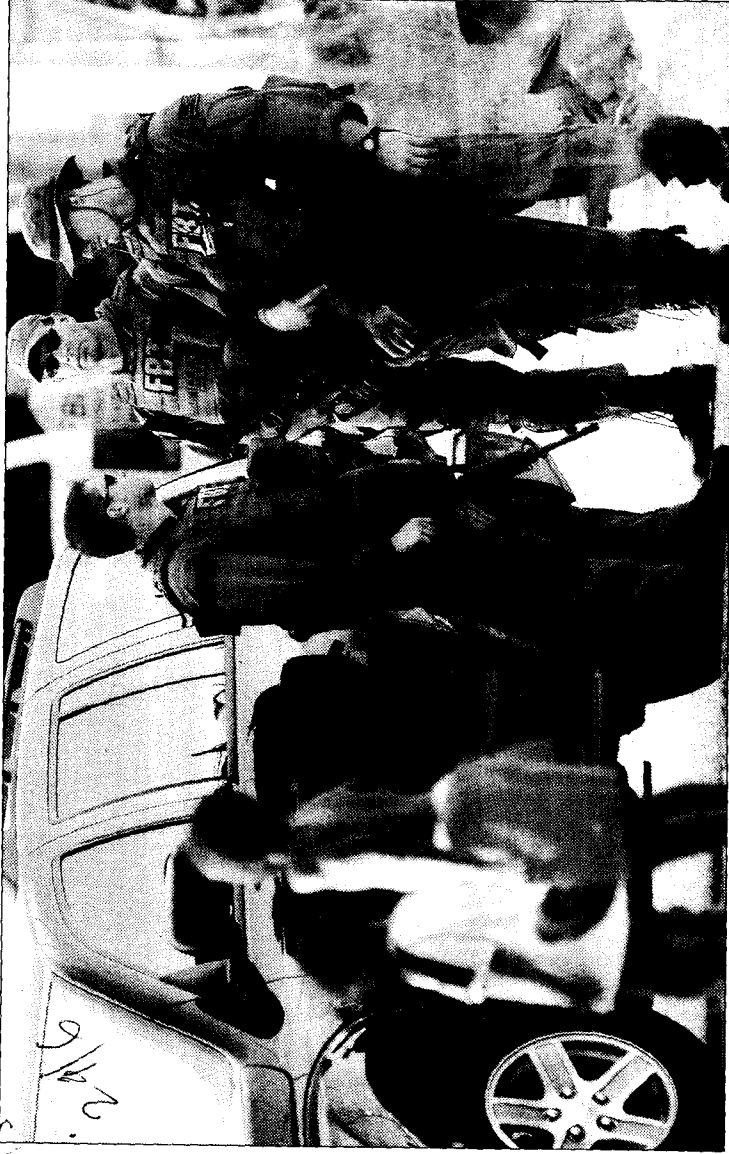
"Their goal was simple: To commit terrorist attacks against America," deputy FBI director, John Pistole said at a news conference on Friday.

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said that the investigation was continuing and declined to comment when asked if there would be any more arrests. "They were persons who, for whatever reason, came to view their home country as the enemy," Gonzales said of those arrested.

The alleged terrorists — five US citizens, a legal immigrant from Haiti and a Haitian national who was in this country illegally — were expected to appear in federal court in Miami later on Friday. They had taken an oath to al-Qaida, the indictment alleged.

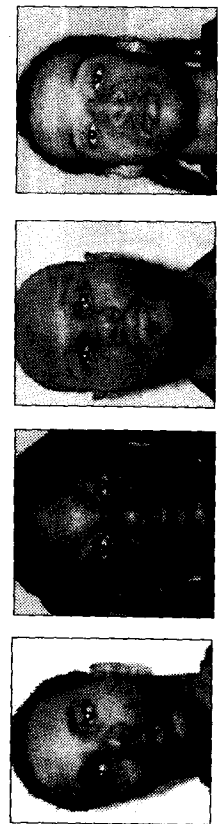
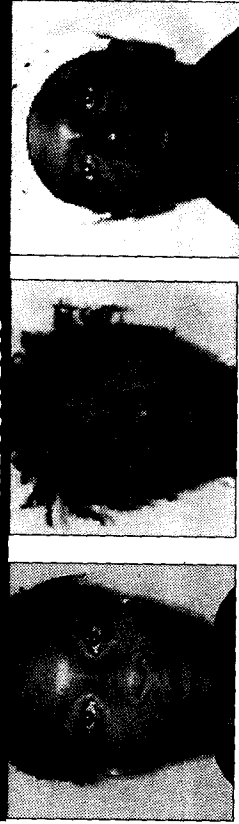
Gonzales outlined the contents of an indictment handed up on Thursday, which identified Narseal Batiste as having recruited and trained others beginning in November 2005 "for a mission to wage war against the US government", including a plot to destroy the Sears Tower.

To obtain money and support for their mission, the conspirators sought help from al-Qaida and supported an al-Qaida plot to destroy



FBI agents conduct a terrorism-related investigation in Miami, Florida on Thursday. AFP

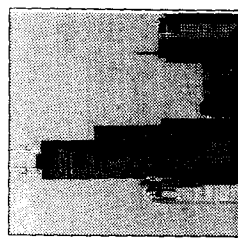
THE SUSPECTS



(Top left to right) Burson Augustin, Lyglenson Lemorin, Patrick Abraham (Below left to right) Stanley Grant Phanor, Rotschild Augustine, Narseal Batiste and Naudimar Herrera. REUTERS

TOWERING FACTS

- The Sears Tower is a 110-story office building containing a total enclosed area of approximately 4.56 million gross square feet.
- It has 25 miles of plumbing, 1,500 miles of electric wiring, 80 miles of elevator cable, and 1,45,000 light fixtures.
- The building weighs more than 2,22,500 tons, and it cost more than \$175 million to build it.



they thought was a member of al-Qaida was present at their meetings and was working with South Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force."

In February 2006, it said, Batiste told the "al-Qaida representative" that he and his five soldiers planned a "full ground war" against the US in order to "kill all the devils we can". His mission would "be just as good or greater

than 9/11", the indictment accused Batiste of boasting. The seven defendants were charged with conspiring to "maliciously damage and destroy by means of an explosive" the FBI building in North Miami Beach and the Sears Tower in Chicago.

In addition to Batiste, the defendants were identified as Burson Augustin, or "Brother Naz"; Patrick Abraham, or "Brother Pat"; Stan-

ley Grant Phanor, or "Brother Sunni"; Naudimar Herrera or "Brother Naudy"; Lyglenson Lemorin, also known as "Brother Levi" or "Brother Levi-Eli"; and Rotschild Augustine, or "Brother Rot".

Residents living near the warehouse said the men taken into custody described themselves as Muslims and had tried to recruit young people to join their group.

বাসে গ্রেনেড, ভূস্বর্গে রক্তাক্ত কলকাতাও

রশিদ আহমেদ ● শ্রীনগর

৩১ মে: ঠকঠক করে কাঁপছিলেন ভদ্রলোক। চার পাশে রাইফেলধারীদের ছোট্টাছুটির মধ্যেই কে এক জন দৌড়ে জলের গ্লাস নিয়ে এল। কাঁপা হাতে গ্লাসটা ঠিকমতো ধরতেও পারলেন না। পাশে লাল পুলওভার পরা কিশোরী তত ক্ষণে মুখ গুঁজেছে অপরিচিতা কাশ্মীরি মহিলার বুকে। আতঙ্কের গ্রে কোনও ভাষা হয় না, অনুভবটুকু ছাড়া। বিড়বিড়িয়ে তাই সাঙ্ঘনা দেন মহিলা। বাঙালি কিশোরী বোঝে...বোঝে বোধ হয়, তা-ই আরও আঁকড়ে ধরে অপরিচিতাকে।

ভূস্বর্গে এ বার অক্রান্ত হলেন কলকাতার পর্যটক। তাঁদের দু'টি বাসে আজ গ্রেনেড হামলা ঢালাল জঙ্গিরা।

চিনার গাছের ছায়া-মাথা পথ দিয়ে আসছিল বাস দু'টো। গুলমার্গ ঘুরে এ বার ডাল লেকের কাছে। গোপুলির আলোয় আশেপাশের পাহাড়গুলো তখন কেমন যেন স্বপ্ন-স্বপ্ন। প্রকৃতির সৌন্দর্য কেমন যেন বিম ধরায় বাস ভর্তি বাঙালি যাত্রীর মনে। ডাল গোটের কাছে চিনার বাগে বাক ঘুরতেই একটা কাঁকনি! অদ্ভুত ডাল লাগাটা এক বটকায় এলোমেলো হয়ে যায়। পরপর কান ফাটানো আওয়াজ! আর্তনাদ-ছড়াছড়ি-রক্ত, মুহূর্তে বাসের এ-দিকে ও-দিকে ছিটকে পড়ে মানুষগুলো। মিনিট দুয়েকও কাটেনি। ৫০০ গজ পিছনে থাকা পর্যটক-ভর্তি দ্বিতীয় বাসটাতেও বিস্ফোরণ। গ্রেনেডের স্প্লিনটার বাসের এ ফোঁড় ও-ফোঁড় হয়ে চলে যায়।

জঙ্গি হামলা: সেই হল! তখনও কী ভীষণ অবিশ্বাস বাঙালি ভদ্রলোকের চোখে মুখে। "সবাই পইপই করে বারণ করেছিল। কী দরকার বাবা জঙ্গি-টঙ্গির ঝামেলার মধ্যে যাওয়ার! কখন কী হয়.....! কথা শুনিনি। কলকাতা থেকে এত লোক যাচ্ছে। কাশ্মীর-নস্টালজিয়া থেকে স্বভাব রোম্যান্টিক বাঙালি কী সহজে বার হতে পারে, বলুন? কিন্তু সেই হল! বেঁচে আছি, ভাগ্যিস"— কথা বলতে বলতে বাসে পড়েন ভদ্রলোক। পাশে তখনও রাখা জলের গ্লাসটা, আর সামনে গায়ে স্প্লিনটারের অসংখ্য ছিদ্র নিয়ে কাঁচ হয়ে দাঁড়ানো 'ত্রিকি' আর 'মহাশক্তি' চণ্ডীগড় ও জম্মু-কাশ্মীর পর্যটন বিভাগের দু'টি বাস, 'টার্গেট অফ দ্য টেররিস্ট মিশন'।

সারা দিনের চ্যানেল-যুদ্ধে কিছু ক্ষণের মধ্যেই 'ব্রেকিং নিউজ' এ ভেসে ওঠে শ্রীনগরে পর্যটকদের উপরে হামলার কথা। শিরদাঁড়া সোজা হয়ে যায় বাঙালি দর্শকের। টেলিভিশনের পর্দায় যে তত ক্ষণে ভেসে উঠেছে, বাঙালি পর্যটক-ভর্তি বাসে হামলার কথা। ভেসে উঠেছে, 'আহতদের

২২ জনই কলকাতার।' কয়েক সেকেন্ড সামলে নেওয়ার জন্য। তার পরেই উদ্বিগ্ন হাতে টেলিফোনের বোতাম টেপা— "ছেটি পিসিরা কাল শ্রীনগর পৌঁছেছে না? আর আমাদের অফিসের কৌশিকের বাবা মা-ও তো....."

পরের পর পরিসংখ্যান আসতে শুরু করেছে তত ক্ষণে। আহত ২২ জনের মধ্যে মোট ১৬ জন পুরুষ, চার জন মহিলা, একটি শিশু রয়েছেন। তাঁদের মধ্যে আবার কসবার একই পরিবারের তিন জন। আহতদের হাসপাতালে নিয়ে যাওয়া হয়েছে। টেলিভিশন ক্যামেরার ছড়াছড়ি সেখানে। উল্লেখ্যস্কো চেহারা খাঁটি বাংলা টানে অনভ্যন্ত হিন্দিতে 'বাইট' দিচ্ছেন— "হামারে কলকাতামে আয়াসা নেহি হোতা।"

হামলায় দু'জন নিহত, নাকি নিহত নন, গুরুতর আহত— রাত পর্যন্ত সংশয় কাটেনি। পশ্চিমবঙ্গের মুখ্যমন্ত্রী বুদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্য মুখ্যসচিব অমিতকিরণ দেবের সঙ্গে কথা বলে জানান, "আমাদের কাছে খবর, ৩০ জন আহত। তিন জনের অবস্থা আশঙ্কাজনক।" জম্মু-কাশ্মীর পুলিশের আইজি এস এন সহায় বলেন, "পর্যটকদের বাসে হামলা বিচ্ছিন্ন ঘটনা। গুরুতর আহত দু'জন অচৈতন্য রয়েছেন।"

কিন্তু বিচ্ছিন্ন ঘটনা কী করে হয়? পাঁচ দিনও কাটেনি, মনমোহন সিংহের গোলটেবিল বৈঠকের পরে পরেই ২৫ মে উপত্যকার পর্যটকদের বাসে হামলা হল। সে-বার বাসে বেশির ভাগ গুজরাতি পর্যটক ছিলেন। তা হলে কি এটা জঙ্গিদের নয়া ছক? নিরাপত্তাকর্মী, সেনা বা আধা-সামরিক বাহিনীর বদলে পর্যটকদের মতো 'সফট টার্গেট'-এ আঘাত করে কাশ্মীরের অর্থনীতি পঙ্গু করে দেওয়া? হাতে না-মেরে ভাতে মারা? আই জি পাশ কাটিয়ে যান। টেলিফোনে ভেসে আসে— "ইস বারমে অভি কুছ নেহি কহ সাকতে। যাঁচ করনেসে পতা চলগা।" সামনে জুনে আবার অমরনাথ যাত্রা। তাই বেফাঁস কিছু বলে ফেললেই যে মুশকিল।

কিন্তু জঙ্গিরা যে হামলার দায় নিতে চায়নি। লস্কর-ই-তইবা আর আল-মানসুরিয়ান হামলার তীব্র নিন্দা করেছে। হিজবুল মুজাহিদিনের বক্তব্য, তাদের স্বাধীনতার লড়াইকে বদনাম করতে ভারতের গোয়েন্দা সংস্থাগুলোই এই নোংরা খেলা খেলছে। কিছু দিন ধরে আজাদ কাশ্মীরের দাবিতে প্রচার চালানো কিছু ওয়েবসাইটেও জঙ্গিরা একই অভিযোগ

এর পর সাতের পাতায়

- পর্যটনশিল্প ধ্বংস করে ফের বেকারত্ব চায় জেহাদিরা...৫
- তীব্র আতঙ্কে পর্যটকদের ফেরাচ্ছে সব ভ্রমণ সংস্থা...৫
- তিন হাসপাতালে ২২ জন...৫

বাসে গ্রেনেড

প্রথম পাতার পর করছিল। অর্থনীতি খতমের চাল চাললে উপত্যকার মানুষের সহযোগিতার আশা ছাড়তে হবে, এ কথা তাদের অজানা নয়। তা হলে....?

এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর অবশ্য ভাবার অবস্থাতেই নেই পর্যটকেরা। অনিবার্য ভাবে ভয়-ভরসার চরম টানা পোড়নে পড়েছেন তাঁরা।

ছগলির একটি পর্যটন সংস্থার সঙ্গে এসেছেন কসবার মঞ্জুলি মৈত্র। এ দিন বিকালেই ডাল লেক যাওয়ার কথা ছিল। শেষ পর্যন্ত যাননি। উদ্বিগ্ন বাড়ির লোকেরা ফোন করে খবর নিয়েছেন। ডলফিন ট্র্যাভেলসের অংশীদার রঞ্জিম রায় মাস খানেক ধরে কাশ্মীরেই রয়েছেন। রঞ্জিমবাবু বলেন, "বাজার করতে যাচ্ছিলাম। হঠাৎ বিস্ফোরণ। চোখের সামনে দু'টি বাসের জানালার কাঁচ ভেঙে পড়ল। দৌড় লাগালাম।"

কলকাতার আর এক পর্যটন সংস্থা ৩৫ জনকে নিয়ে গিয়েছিল কাশ্মীরে। অধিকাংশই দমদম, ব্যারাকপুর ও বেলঘরিয়ার বাসিন্দা। ওই পর্যটন সংস্থার প্রতিনিধি সুরজিৎ ঘটক কলকাতায় ফোনে জানিয়েছেন, তাঁদের হোটেল সেনাবাহিনী ঘিরে রেখেছে।

তা-হলে ডাল-লেক, শিকারা, গোলাপি-গাল কাশ্মীরি-কন্যা, বরফের পাহাড়, চিনার গাছের সঙ্গে কি আবার বিচ্ছেদ হবে বাঙালির? ছুটি কাটাবার পরিকল্পনায় ফের সচেতন ভাবে এড়িয়ে যেতে হবে কাশ্মীরের মানচিত্র?

01 JUN 2006

China, Arab states pledge anti-terror cooperation

Ministerial meeting attended by delegates from 22 Arab countries

BEIJING: China and Arab states agreed on Thursday to step up anti-terror cooperation in bilateral, regional and multi-lateral fields.

The agreement is part of a communique signed in the wake of the second Ministerial Meeting of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum which concluded here on Thursday afternoon.

"China and Arab states condemn terrorism of any form and oppose linking up terrorism with certain nationality or religion," the communique said.

"China and Arab states support Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz's proposal on establishing an international anti-terror centre," it said. King Abdullah's proposal was put forward at the international anti-terror conference held in Riyadh in February 2005.

As for the nuclear situation in West Asia, the communique said China supports the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in West Asia and all the countries in the region

• China-Arab Cooperation Forum issues communique

• Saudi proposal for global anti-terror centre gets support

• Meet stresses adherence to West Asia road map

should abide by relevant pacts on prohibiting nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Secretary-General of the League of Arab States Amr Mahmoud Moussa has called for establishing a nuclear-free zone in West Asia during an exclusive interview with Xinhua.

"It is not a nuclear issue of Iran but a nuclear issue of the Middle East (West Asia)," Mr. Moussa said. The communique said that China supports the Arab states' strategic choice to realise the just and all-round peace of West Asia,

which is based on their adherence to relevant U.N. resolutions, the land-for-peace principle, the Arab peace initiative and the roadmap peace plan for West Asia.

China supports restoration of the legitimate rights of Arab people, particularly the rights of Arab people in Palestine to establish their independent country, and accomplish the lasting peace of West Asia, the document said.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Mahmud al-Zahar said on Wednesday that the Palestinian Government would study the Arab peace initiative with a "serious and positive attitude" to seek a just solution to the Palestinian issue.

The two-day meeting was attended by delegates from China and 22 Arab countries, who also signed an action plan for 2006-2008, an environmental cooperation plan and a memorandum of understanding for a meeting between Chinese and Arab entrepreneurs. — Xinhua

Terror strike on RSS headquarters foiled

High drama at Nagpur as alert policemen gun down 3 terrorists; Lashkar-e-Taiba principal suspect

Praveen Swami and Agencies

NAGPUR/NEW DELHI: Three terrorists were shot dead on Thursday during an abortive attempt to storm the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's headquarters in Nagpur — the latest in a series of terror strikes across India that have brought enormous pressure to bear on the India-Pakistan détente process.

Police said the terrorists attempted to drive a white Ambassador car, fitted with a red command-light, towards the RSS headquarters shortly before dawn. When guards at the perimeter of the three-level security cordon attempted to flag the car down, its driver attempted to crash through the barriers. RSS chief K.S. Sudershan and other top functionaries were not present in the building at the time of the attack.

Attackers were Pakistanis?

Intelligence sources in New Delhi said all three men were thought to be Pakistani nationals, but no details of their identities was available so far. "We had reason to believe an operation of this kind was being planned," a senior official said, "but did not know precisely when it would be executed." Officials said the attack came just a day after Home Secretary V.K. Duggal and his Pakistani counterpart, Syed Kamal Shah, met in Islamabad to discuss New Delhi's concerns on continued cross-border terrorism.

Investigators believe that either the Lashkar-e-Taiba or the Jaish-e-Mohammad could have carried out the attack. Both organisations have demonstrated the capability to execute suicide-squad attacks in the recent past. In July last, Jaish operatives attempted to storm makeshift temple erected at the site of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya using similar tactics. An Ambassador

rigged to resemble an official vehicle was also used in the 2001 Jaish attack on Parliament House.

Deep networks

Of the two, the Lashkar appears to have developed deeper networks in Maharashtra — a fact demonstrated by the massive recoveries of explosives last month from a terror cell it set up in the Aurangabad area. Such activities are not new. In June 2004, for example, Pune-based Lashkar operative Javed Sheikh and his girlfriend, Ishrat Jehan Raza, launched an operation seeking to assassinate the former Home Minister, L.K. Advani, and bomb the Bombay Stock Exchange.

Maharashtra-based Lashkar cells have, from the outset, sought to eliminate politicians of the Hindu rightwing, particularly those seen as complicit in communal violence. As early as November 2000, police arrested three Pakistani nationals who had set up a covert cell in Mumbai, near Mumbai, hoping to assassinate Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray. Again in July 2001, police in Jalgaon arrested nine members of a Hizb ul-Mujahideen cell, which wanted to destroy the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's offices in Nagpur.

Disturbing evidence that such recruitment is gathering scale is emerging.

Yesterday, *The Hindu* broke the news that several persons from Maharashtra and Gujarat were provided training in Jammu and Kashmir by the Hizb on behalf of the Lashkar. One such recruit, Kolhapur resident Mohammad Irfan was shot dead in an encounter on Tuesday on the outskirts of Tral, south of Srinagar.



More reports on Page 14

ENCOUNTER SPOT: (Top) Authorities inspect the site of the shootout between suspected Islamic militants and police in Nagpur on Thursday. (Above) The bodies of the three who were shot dead in the incident. — PHOTOS: AP, AFP

'Drug lord' Dawood faces US sanctions

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Notwithstanding its spotty record of bearing down on fugitive terrorists and outlaws in the sub-continent, or helping India do so, the US administration on Thursday designated Dawood Ibrahim and his organisation as drug traffickers under the so-called Kingpin Act.

The action underscores President George Bush's determination to do everything possible to pursue drug traffickers, undermine their operations and end the suffering that trade in illicit drugs inflicts on Americans and other people around the world, as well as preventing drug traffickers from supporting terrorists, the White House said in a statement.

Dawood, an accused in the 1993 Mumbai blasts and other criminal activities, is one of three foreign individuals and two foreign entities named in the seventh annual set of determinations of drug traffickers who will be subject to the curbs provided in the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act. The others are Fahd Jamil Georges (Brazil) and Ali Naway (Iran).

The December 1999 Act targets foreign narcotics traffickers, their organisations and operatives worldwide, denying them access to the US financial system and all trade and transactions involving US companies and individuals, the White House notification explained. It was not immediately clear how this would translate into ground level action. The US has shown little inclination to go after Dawood or help India get him despite connecting him to the Al Qaida and



worldwide terrorist activity in previous determinations. Dawood has been widely reported—including in the Pakistani media—to be living in Pakistan under official patronage.

But then Washington has shown little resolve in getting its hands on one of the Kandahar hijackers, Omar Sheikh, or for that matter, nuclear smuggler A Q Khan. Sheikh was convicted of killing of Wall Street Journal reporter and US citizen Daniel Pearl.

The ostensible reason for shielding Sheikh, as also Dawood, is that they served the needs of Pakistan's intelligence agencies, according to previously published reports. Absorbed in the larger war on terrorism, the US administration has had little inclination to pursue these cases, even as it is strung along by Islamabad which periodically produces a "high ranking" Al Qaida operative to mollify US disquiet.

The notification naming helpfully explained that the Kingpin Act "does not target the countries in which these foreign individuals and entities are operating or the governments of such countries". So from all accounts, the man accused of murdering 258 people in Mumbai in 1993, continues to live comfortably in Pakistan.

Lashkar now targets Hindu outfits

Aarti Tikoo Singh | TNN

Jammu: From targeting Hindus and temples, the foiled strike on the RSS headquarters has shown that the Lashkar-e-Taiba plan encompasses Hindu right wing parties as well. Thursday's strike was just an extension of the strategic LeT plan that began with the attack on Akshardham temple of Gujarat in 2002.

According to intelligence reports, a terror and destruction plan was formulated soon after the com-

The Lashkar attack on the high profile RSS HQ comes when India is pushing for the extradition of 20 wanted persons from Pakistan, including the outfit's chief Hafiz Sayeed

munal riots of 2002 in Gujarat drew the whole world's attention. It must have been easy for the Lashkar to convince its cadres that the Hindus and their groups like RSS were committing atrocities on Muslims and they needed to be annihilated, a top intelligence officer said.

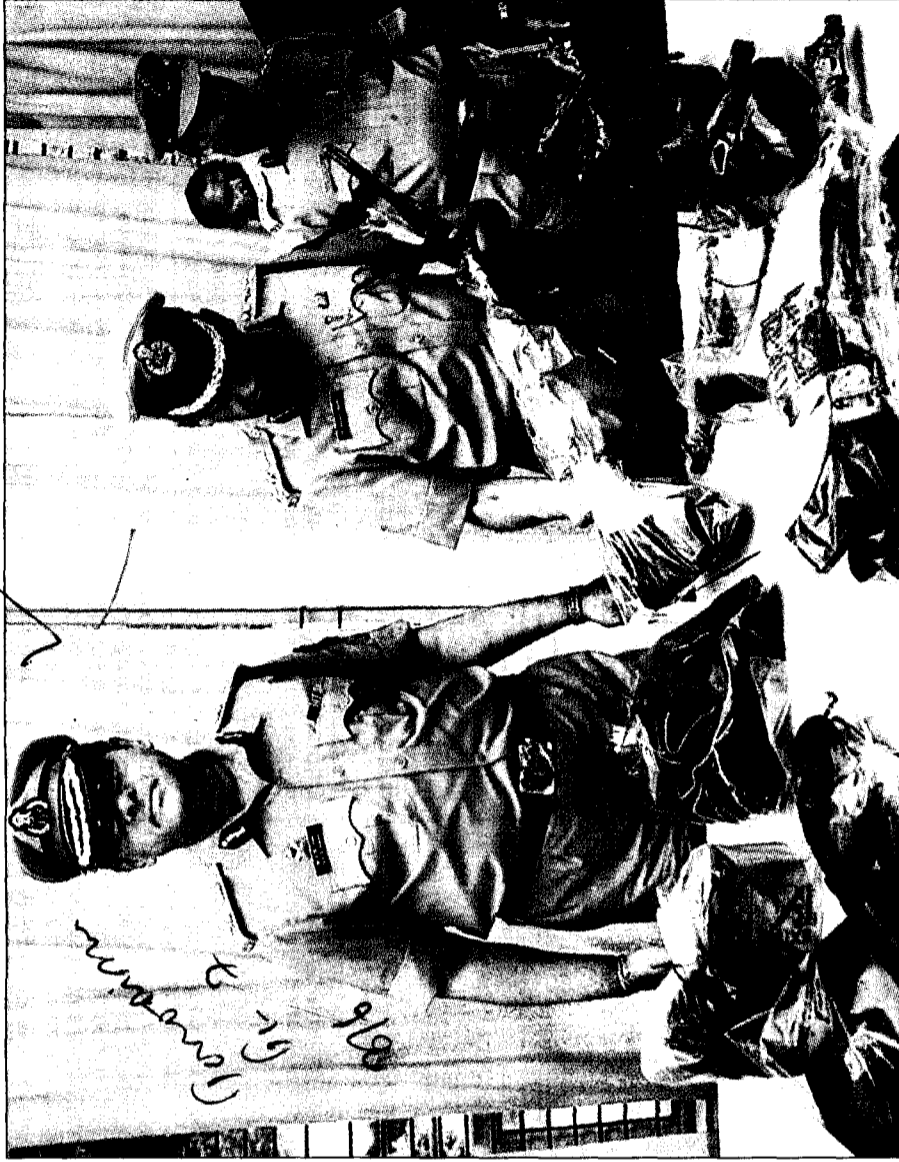
It was Chand Khan of LeT, the main accused in Akshardham temple attack who had revealed to interrogators that Lashkar, which believes in estab-

lishing Nizam-e-Mustafa (the rule of Islam) throughout the world, would destroy Hindus and Hindu groups like RSS and BJP for having dared to touch Muslims in Gujarat. The recent communal killings in Vadodara may have set the tone for the attack on RSS headquarters in Nagpur, intelligence officers in J&K said.

Officers in J&K who have studied Lashkar said the outfit is also trying to make its presence felt when the home secretary level meetings are being held. India is pushing for the extradition of 20 terrorists and underworld dons from Pakistan. The name of LeT chief Hafiz Sayeed figures on the list. "It is now that Hafiz would want to appear most powerful. He wants to use this power to threaten India and Pakistan, the way Osama bin Laden is doing," one said.

RSS headquarters is a high profile target. Lashkar has always been fond of such strikes, like parliament in 2001, to make themselves appear audacious.

Lashkar-e-Taiba is the military wing of Markaz Dawa ul Irshad (MDI), founded by Zafar Iqbal and Prof. Hafiz Sayeed (University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore) and Abdullah Azam of the International Islamic University in the 1980s. It is affiliated to the Jamaat Ahle Hadis, Pakistan, and prop-



PRIZED CATCH: Nagpur commissioner S P Yadav (left) displays arms seized from the slain militants on Thursday

agates the pan-Islamic Wahabi ideology. The MDI believes that democracy is the tool of infidels (non-Muslims). Many MDI terrorists have fought Soviets in Afghanistan along with the Jamaat Al Dawa Ilal Quran va Sunna. It has nearly 500 offices in Pakistan. After

the Afghan war, it initiated the induction of its cadres into J&K. LeT cadres are drawn from this radical Sunni sect. At a meeting held at Tehran in 1993, LeT forged an understanding with a renowned Kashmiri separatist who was later killed

and Tajmul Islam (Amir, Al Burq). This paved the way for LeT's entrance into J&K. Soon locals were also recruited for LeT. The advanced course for LeT is called Daura Khas. The advanced course focuses on guerrilla warfare. It also has training camps in Kasur and Muzaffarabad towns of PoK as well.

Bangla link to London terror

Chemicals for explosives found in house

HT Correspondent
London, June 3

THE ARMED police raid and search of a house in East London's Forest Gate area confirmed the suspicion that terror masterminds have shifted their focus to Bangladeshis for recruiting for terror

Toronto suspects

CANADIAN AUTHORITIES said on Saturday that they had foiled plans for terrorist attacks in southern Ontario with the arrests of 17 people who were "inspired by al-Qaida."

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said that they had arrested 12 male adults and five youths on terrorism-related charges, including plotting attacks with explosives on Canadian targets. The suspects were either citizens or residents of Canada and had trained together, they said. *AP, Toronto*

concentrated in areas where Pak-origin people are concentrated and the young among them are monitored if there is slightest suspicion. It has become difficult to recruit and train in such areas. Which is why now Bangladeshis are being enticed into terrorism, added the source.

cells within Britain. Since so far most terrorists, including three of the four suicide bombers in the July 7 bomb attacks on London transport system last year, have been of Pakistani origin or linked with people there, the switch to Bangladeshi community was a strategic move, confided a source.

Scotland Yard, MI5 and other anti-terror agencies have so far



A police officer stands guard outside the house in London.

AFP

The Forest Gate raid was also organised after a watch by officers from MI5 of a group of British young people of Bangladeshi origin for weeks.

Their e-mail messages, phone calls and movements were logged tapped and they were suspected of planning a terrorist attack in the UK. Police were convinced there could be a bomb in the East London house.

The fact that a group of around 20 Asian men gathered outside the gates of the Royal London Hospital to protest at what they believed was heavy-handed treatment by the police in the raid confirmed further that the community was being concentrated upon by jihadi recruiters. The Yard did not identify the arrested men but BBC said one was Abdul Kahar, who was shot during the raid, and Abdul Jalal, both of Bangladeshi origin.

Toronto plot targeted PM

ASSOCIATED Press
Brampton (Ontario), July 7

SOME OF the 17 Muslim men accused of plotting terror bombings in Canada also planned to storm Parliament, take hostages and behead the prime minister and other leaders, according to accusations revealed on Tuesday by the lawyer for one of the suspects.

Authorities further allege that the suspect, Steven Vikash Chand, plotted to take over media outlets, including Canadian Broadcasting Corp., his attorney said after a brief hearing at the Ontario Court of Justice.

Specifics of the charges against the other suspects were not released, but Chand's lawyer, Gary Batasar, asked that the allegations against his client be read in court. He told later that others face similar accusations, but did not say who or how many.

An eight-page document prepared by the prosecution summarising the charges against all the suspects was

not read in open court or distributed to the media, making it difficult to assess how sophisticated the alleged plot was or its progress.

But the purported plot to take political leaders hostage and behead them if Muslim prisoners were not freed and Canada did not pull its 2,300 troops out of Afghanistan added a chilling dimension to a case that has led the US authorities to toughen security along the border and

unsettled Canada's large Muslim community. Other defense attorneys declined to discuss the detailed charges. Batasar said that other suspects were facing similar allegations.

"It's just generally speaking that the allegations are against my client as well as the other parties," he said. "That's what all the parties are facing." "The only reason I'm coming out and saying this is that my client is innocent of the charges; he protests his innocence and that's not being heard," Batasar added.

TERRORISM IN CANADA



AFP
Veiled family members of the accused in the Toronto terrorism plot try to hide their faces.

08 JUN 2006

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Al-Zarqawi group threatens attacks

Iraqi Government to implement new Baghdad security plan

General
11-12

Michael Howard



DESTRUCTION: An Iraqi inspects his shop following a roadside blast in central Baghdad on Sunday night.

— PHOTO: AFP

IRBIL (IRAQ): Al-Qaeda in Iraq, the militant group created by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, issued a defiant declaration on an extremist website on Sunday, vowing to “prepare major attacks that will shake the enemy like an earthquake and rattle them out of sleep”.

Al-Zarqawi died last Wednesday after a U.S. air-strike near Baquba, north of Baghdad, prompting speculation that the brutal network he founded would disband or merge with other Sunni extremist groups.

The statement said the surviving leadership of the Iraqi affiliate of Osama bin Laden’s Al-Qaeda, had met after Al-Zarqawi was killed and “agreed to continue *jihad* and not be affected by his martyrdom”. It said: “The organisation has strengthened its back, regained its footing and has been renewed from fresh blood.” Senior members of the group had been killed in the past, it said, but the group’s ability to strike had not diminished. “For those who were wag-

ing holy war for the sake of Al-Zarqawi, Al-Zarqawi is dead. But for those who were fighting for the sake of God, God is alive and eternal,” it said.

Post-mortem on Al-Zarqawi

Two U.S. military specialists finished a post-mortem examination on Al-Zarqawi’s remains on Sunday. The autopsy comes after U.S. authorities altered their initial account of his death, first saying that he died outright in the airstrike, then saying that he survived but died soon after.

Iraq’s Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki is hoping to capitalise on the death to blunt the Sunni-Arab militancy. Adnan al-Azawi, the Deputy Minister of Interior, said: “I believe the security situation will improve structurally and significantly next week after we implement the new Baghdad security plan.”

He did not reveal the details of the plan, but said it would be “rolled out” to other restive areas around the capital. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2006

11-12-06

THE HIND

Shanghai group to sign pacts

China welcomes Iran's participation; Ahmedinejad to address summit

Pallavi Aiyar

19-13 1876
BEIJING: China on Monday called the upcoming summit meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Thursday as "one of the most important diplomatic activities of the year." The organisation will celebrate its five-year anniversary on the day of the summit and according to China's Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui, the event will demonstrate the SCO's rising international stature.

Mr. Li told a news conference in Beijing that a large number of countries, both from Asia and elsewhere, have displayed interest in joining the group either as observers or permanent members. While he declined to give specific names, he stressed that this interest was indicative of the fact that the SCO was "broadening its influence and garnering international attention."

At the summit meeting on Thursday, a series of agreements will be signed on security and economic cooperation. Mr. Li said the SCO meeting will touch upon "issues of regional and international importance" in addition to reviewing "the

Regional Alliance
Mr. Li said the SCO was "broadening its influence and garnering international attention"

past development of the organisation and evolving future plans."

But when the SCO meets, the world's attention is likely to be on Iran, which has observer status at the organisation. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will be attending the summit. Mr. Li said China "would like to welcome the Iranian President's participation" at the SCO, pointing out that Iran had attended the organisation's events in the past as well.

Mr. Li added that Mr. Ahmadinejad would make a speech at the summit "in accordance with the rules for observer countries" but that it was not known what the contents of the speech will be. He declined to specify whether Iran's nuclear situation would be a specific topic for discussion at the summit.

Chinese President Hu Jintao will hold bilateral talks with Mr. Ahmadinejad on the sidelines of the summit

meeting, where the nuclear issue is expected to be discussed.

Iran, the world's fourth-largest oil producer, says it has a right to a civilian nuclear programme, and denies U.S. accusations that it is trying to build nuclear weapons.

Iran is currently considering a plan drawn up by Britain, France and Germany and approved by the United States, China and Russia. If Iran rejects the package, including incentives and penalties, the Western powers may push for U.N.-backed sanctions, a step China and Russia have resisted.

Iran has reportedly asked to be admitted to the SCO as a full member. However, Mr. Li said the SCO so far lacks a legal basis for expanding its membership and is yet to decide on the criteria for any new members. The SCO, one of China's first concerted forays into regional diplomacy, was formed on June 15, 2001, and comprises six members — China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Mongolia, Pakistan, India and Iran have observer status. India will be represented at Thursday's summit meeting by Petroleum Minister Murli Deora.

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2006

Death of a terrorlord

10/6
Geronimo
10-10

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi had the highest profile among the militants fighting the United States-led occupation of Iraq. He assiduously projected his image by periodically releasing video footage of his most gruesome deeds and playing up a rather nebulous link with Osama bin Laden. Washington contributed to the myth-building exercise since it was desperate to show that the insurgency was the handiwork of a transnational terrorist network. So it was natural that U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and the commander of the occupation forces, General George Casey, lined up alongside Iraq's Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki to announce that the militant had been killed in an air strike. Mr. Khalilzad connected with reality when he observed that the militancy would not end with Zarqawi's death. It will no longer be possible to pretend that the vast majority of the insurgents are not home-grown Iraqis. While the Jordanian-born Zarqawi professed a vaguely Salafist strain of militant Islam, the indigenous resistance includes people belonging to diverse ideological persuasions. Most of the active Sunni fighters, in fact, appear to have turned against the foreign jihadists who gave a sectarian orientation to the resistance. The hope that all sections of the Iraqi people would join the resistance was destroyed when Zarqawi and others of his ilk began to murder Shias *en masse*. With the majority community, which exercised constructive restraint for many months, beginning to retaliate, Iraq is a bitterly divided and in-feuding society.

If the attacks on the U.S.-led forces have gone a long way towards undermining the occupation, the sectarian strife threatens to disrupt efforts to recover lost ground. The policy Washington seeks to implement is one of driving militants out of pockets of territory and holding these areas until infrastructure can be rebuilt. The calculation is that the hearts and minds of ordinary Iraqis cannot be won when they lack water, power, hospitals, and schools. This plan is unlikely to take off. A process of ethnic cleansing is under way in parts of Iraq with Shia and Sunni families moving out of localities controlled by the other community. Administrators and technicians are not likely to volunteer for work in areas where they might be killed because of their sectarian religious identity. These conditions are unlikely to change although Mr. Maliki has finally been able to appoint Defence and Interior Ministers. The police forces in many parts of the country are indistinguishable from the Shia militias that have abducted and murdered Sunnis. The Interior Minister might not be able to control his forces unless he is a leading figure in one of the militias; but if he is that, he might not have the inclination to perform his official duties in a fair manner. The occupiers know that the elimination of one terrorlord will not help them escape from a quagmire.

10 JUN 2006

THE HINDU

13 HURT, ULFA HAND SEEN IN EXPLOSION AT STATE'S LARGEST VEGETABLE MART

5 die in Guwahati blast

10/5
Guwahati
5/15

Statesman News Service

GUWAHATI, June 9: Five persons were killed and 13 others injured in an explosion suspected to have been triggered by United Liberation Front of Asom (Ulfa) militants at the state's largest vegetable market at Machkhowa behind the North-east business hub, Fancy Bazar, in the heart of the city at 4.10 p.m. today.

Inspector general of police (Special Branch), Mr Khagen Sharma, claimed that the blast was the handiwork of the banned outfit Ulfa. Four persons, including two vendors of the market, died on the spot. One person died later after being taken to Guwahati Medical College Hospital (GMCH). All the 13 injured were admitted in the hospital.

City additional superintendent of police (ASP), Mr Bedanta Rajkhowa said the blast might have been from an improvised explosive device (IED), as all the victims suffered burn injuries,



The vegetable market in Machkhowa, Guwahati after a powerful blast ripped through it on Friday. ■ MANOJ DEKA

and not splinter injuries. The official said there could have been more casualties had the explosion happened an hour later than it did, when there would have been a larger number of people in the

vegetable market. Top state police officials rushed to the spot after the explosion. The area was immediately cordoned off by the police and paramilitary force personnel. No one has been arrested so far. No militant group

claimed responsibility for the blast as yet. Police said there were intelligence inputs about the outfit's plan to trigger a series of explosions in the state from 9 to 11 June. There were a series of explosions yesterday in the central and western parts of the state. The attacks came less than two weeks before the third round of talks on 22 June between the Centre and the People's Consultative Group nominated by Ulfa.

Top Al Qaeda leader in Iraq killed

Al Zargawi and his spiritual adviser die as F-16s pound their "safe-house" 9/6 H01 Penetration



ELATION OVER KILLING: A video image shows the body of leader of 'Al-Qaeda in Iraq,' Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was killed in an air strike near Baquba in central Iraq on Thursday. At right, Iraqis dance with soldiers in Baghdad after hearing the news of his death.

— PHOTOS: AP/U.S. MILITARY AND AFP

Atul Aneja

DUBAI: The Jordanian-born wanted militant Abu Musab Al Zarqawi has been killed in an air strike near Baquba in central Iraq.

Al Zarqawi, who was known as the Al Qaeda leader in Iraq, died 10 minutes after a safe house where he was confabulating with his group was attacked. Along with Al Zarqawi, his spiritual adviser, Sheikh Abdul Rahman, was also killed.

The head of US-led forces in Iraq, George Casey, said that the "isolated safe-house," located 48 km from Baghdad was targeted at 6.15 p.m. local time on Wednesday. F-16 fighter jets were used in the strike and two 500-pound bombs were dropped at the site.

Gen. Casey explained that the

Jordanian militant's body was identified through facial recognition, fingerprints, and known scars. The US military showed a picture of Al Zarqawi's face after the attack, where his eyes were closed and spots of blood visible behind him. Gen. Casey said that Al Zarqawi's killing was the result of a manhunt that began two weeks ago. Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari pointed out that that a serious effort to nab Al Zarqawi had begun in April after he appeared on videotape. The location that appeared on the video had been identified, he said.

In a statement posted on the Internet by an umbrella organisation representing "Jihadi groups" confirmed that Al Zarqawi was dead. "We want to give you the joyous news of the martyrdom of the Mujahed Sheikh

Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. The death of our leaders is life for us. It will only increase our persistence in continuing holy war so that the word of God will be supreme."

The Al Qaeda in Iraq has been blamed for a spate of attacks on Shias, kidnappings and beheadings of foreigners. Al Zarqawi had also been accused of masterminding suicide bombings last November that targeted three upscale hotels in the Jordanian capital, Amman, resulting in 60 deaths.

Among his victims were two American civilians — Nicholas Berg and Eugene Armstrong — as well as Ken Bigley, a British citizen. All were beheaded and their grisly killings had been videotaped and made available on the internet.

Analysts say that Al Zarqawi

was a "significant leader" of the Salafi Jihadi school of Islamist volunteers. But it might be too early to conclude that his death would have a significant impact on the surging violence in Iraq. Juan Cole, a historian at the university of Michigan points out that Al Zarqawi was "less important than local Iraqi leaders and groups."

'A great success'

He added that he did not "expect the guerilla war [in Iraq] to subside any time soon." The US ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad described Al Zarqawi's killing a "great success." He, however, acknowledged that Al Zarqawi's death would not end violence in the country.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki described Al Zarqawi's killing as "a message to those

who choose the path of violence to change their direction before it is too late."

Addressing a press conference in Baghdad, he said: "What happened today is a result of cooperation for which we have been asking from our masses and the citizens of our country."

Likely successor

There is speculation that the Egyptian born Abu Al Masri could succeed Al Zarqawi as the head of the Al Qaeda in Iraq.

The Ansar al Sunna, led by Wariya Arbili is also seen as another Al Qaeda affiliated organisation that could now increase its profile beyond its present strongholds in northern Iraq.

More reports on Page 15

U 9 JUN 2006

THE HINDU

বিমান হানায় হত 'ইরাকের লাদেন' জারকোয়াই

বাগদাদ, ৮ জুন: নিজের শহরে তাঁর পরিচয় ছিল, 'মাথা গরম ছোকরা'। বাহুতে অঁকা ট্যাট। হাতে পেনসিল-কাটা ছুরি নিয়ে ঘুরতেন সব সময়। সময়ের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে আবু মুসা'ব আল জারকোয়াইয়ের গ্রাসের ক্ষেত্র পাল্টে গিয়েছিল। সাদ্দাম হুসেন জমানার পতনের পরে ইরাকে আল কায়দাকে সংগঠিত করে তিনিই ব্যতিব্যস্ত করে রেখেছিলেন মার্কিন-ব্রিটিশ যৌথ বাহিনীকে। পরপর আত্মঘাতী হামলা, মসজিদে হানা, অপহরণ এবং নির্বিচারে গলা কেটে খুনের অজস্র ঘটনার পিছনে মূল মাথাটি ছিল তাঁরই। বুধবার রাতে এক মার্কিন বিমান হানায় মৃত্যু হয়েছে ৩৯ বছর বয়সী এই জঙ্গি নেতার।

বৃহস্পতিবার ইরাকের প্রধানমন্ত্রী নুরি আল মালিকি সাংবাদিক সম্মেলনে ডেকে এই কথা ঘোষণা করেন। তাঁর পাশে ছিলেন ইরাকে মার্কিন রাষ্ট্রদূত জালমায় খালিলজাদ। ছিলেন ইরাকে

মার্কিন বাহিনীর সর্বসর্বাঙ্গীণ জেনারেল জর্জ কাসে। আল-মালিকি এক কথায় পরর সেন, "আল জারকোয়াই খতম!"

পরে একটি ওয়েবসাইটে জারকোয়াইয়ের মৃত্যুর কথা স্বীকার করে আল কায়দা। তবে সেই নেট-বার্তার সত্যতা সঙ্গে সঙ্গে যাচাই করা সম্ভব হয়নি। বিশেষজ্ঞরা শুধু বলেছেন, এই ওয়েবসাইটটির মাধ্যমেই নিজেদের যাবতীয় খবর, কতোয়া সব দিয়ে থাকে আল কায়দা।

জেনারেল কাসে জানানেন, দিয়াল প্রদেশের রাজধানী শহর বাকুবা থেকে মোটে ৮ কিলোমিটার দূরে এক বাড়িতে ঘাঁটি ছিল জারকোয়াইয়ের। 'সুরক্ষিত ঘাঁটি' বলে পরিচিত সেই বাড়িতে কাল স্থানীয় সময় সন্ধ্যা সাতটার একটু আগে কয়েক জন ঘনিষ্ঠ সঙ্গীকে নিয়ে সেখানে আলোচনায় বসেছিলেন জারকোয়াই।



নানা সময়ে নানা রূপে আবু মুসা'ব আল জারকোয়াই।

এক রকম: খুব ভাল! খবর পাওয়ার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে আন্তর্জাতিক বাজারে তেলের দাম কমেছে। গত দু সপ্তাহের মধ্যে এই প্রথম তেলের দাম ৭০ ডলারের নীচে নামল।

শুধু তেলের কুফোয় অন্তর্গতই নয়, ইরাকে নিরবচ্ছিন্ন জঙ্গি হানা চলাচ্ছিল জারকোয়াইয়ের

সংগঠন। তাই তাঁর মৃত্যুর খবর যে বুশ-ক্রেয়ারকে খুশি করবে, সন্দেহ নেই। সন্ত্রাস ছড়িয়ে ইরাকের নতুন প্রশাসনের নান্দিশ্বাস তুলে দেওয়ার লক্ষ্য নিয়েছিলেন তিনি। কিন্তু সে ক্ষেত্রে বেঘোরে প্রাণ হারাছিলেন নিরীহ ইরাকিরা। আজ ডার্টনিং স্ট্রিটে সাংবাদিক ঝেঠকে সেই কথাই বললেন ক্রেয়ার। অন্য দিকে বুশের সাক্ষ্য কথা, এই লোকটা আর খুন করতে পারবে না।

কিন্তু ইসলাম ও ইরাক বিশেষজ্ঞরা

বুশ-ক্রেয়ারের সঙ্গে একমত নয়। তাঁদের মতে, জারকোয়াইয়ের সংগঠন ছিল মুজাহিদিন কাউন্সিলের অঙ্গ। সেই ছাত্তর তলায় আরও অনেক জঙ্গি দল একই লক্ষ্যে কাজ করে যাচ্ছে। সেটা হচ্ছে যৌথ বাহিনী এবং বর্তমান ইরাকি প্রশাসনের বিরুদ্ধে জেহাদ চালিয়ে যাওয়া। এঁদের মতে, জারকোয়াইয়ের মৃত্যুর মধ্যে তাই বড় সাফল্য খুঁজে লাভ নেই। নতুন জঙ্গি নেতা উঠে আসবেই।

ইরাকে জারকোয়াইয়ের হাতেই খুন হয়েছিলেন মার্কিন ব্যবসায়ী নিক বার্গ। তাঁর বাবা মাইকেল বার্গ ও জারকোয়াই মারা যাওয়ায় খুশি নন। বরং বুশকে কটাক্ষ করে তাঁর বক্তব্য, "ইরাকে সাদ্দামের বদলে বুশ রাজা হলে তফাৎটা কী? আর আমি প্রতিহিংসায় বিশ্বাস করি না। কেনও মানুষের মৃত্যু সংবাদে খুশিও হই না।" জারকোয়াই মারা গেলেই ইরাকে হিংসার অবসান হবে, এমন আশা দেখছেন না তিনিও।

Both had pleaded for mercy by ing them both in the state register.

Three terrorists nabbed in Aurangabad

Syed Rizwanullah | TNW

Aurangabad: Three suspected terrorists armed with AK-47 rifles and RDX escaped from the clutches of the Aurangabad rural police on Tuesday night as the police jeep could not match the speeding Tata Sumo and Indica vehicles in which the suspects were fleeing.

Although three other suspected terrorists were arrested by Aurangabad police on Tuesday night along with a cache of 11 AK 47 rifles, 800 live cartridges and 33 kg of RDX explosive, the other group remained untraceable till Wednesday evening. Special inspector general of police (Anti-terrorist squad) Laxminarayan confirmed the arrests but refused to reveal much as investigations could get ham-

pered. "We will take the arrested terrorists to Mumbai," he said.

One of the arrested persons is a member of the banned Student Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). Police have seized 11 AK-47 rifles, 800 live cartridges and 33 kg of RDX from their possession.

The first arrest took place on Tuesday night following a hot chase in the Ellora Ghat area when one of the suspected terrorists was arrested in a Tata Sumo (Tata Sumo MH 14 X 4380). The vehicle was found loaded with the arms and ammunition. Two other persons were picked up later from Aurangabad.

However, a second group of suspected terrorists which was travelling in an Indica car (MH 20 W 1240) managed to escape from the scene. Their car was believed to be

containing three boxes of arms, ammunition and RDX explosive.

The speeding vehicles arriving from Mumbai towards Aurangabad not only outpaced a Shiur police jeep with PSI Syed Asif in hot chase but also outwitted the Deogaon Rangari police who also failed to stop the vehicles. It was the third police team under the Khuldabad police station which finally managed to bring the Tata Sumo to a halt in the Ellora ghat area. However, the Indica with its three occupants vanished into the dark of the night.

Aurangabad rural police swung into action after superintendent of police Brijesh Singh received a tip-off from Mumbai police seeking interception of a group of terrorists who were on their way to Aurangabad.



Terrorists who were nabbed in Aurangabad being produced in a Margaon court in Mumbai on Wednesday

11 MAY 2005

Defiant convict, dissenting Americans

He calls US Satan, Qaida God's soldiers

AGENCE France-Presse
Alexandria (US), May 4

ZACARIAS MOUSSAOUI branded America Satan and Al-Qaeda the soldiers of God and vowed he would be free before President George W. Bush leaves office.

As he was led from court to be impounded in the most severe conditions in the US prison system can offer, Moussaoui shouted the final words he will ever say in public.

"I will see you before the end of George W. Bush," he bellowed towards the public benches, continuing relatives of victims of the September 11 attacks.

"My liberation will be proof we are the soldiers of God and you are the army of Satan," he cried.

"I will be free before the end of George W. Bush!" he said, a day after a jury refused to order his execution over the 9/11 attacks.

One woman, Lisa Beilke, who lost her husband in the September 11 attacks hit back from the public benches: "In your dreams."

Earlier, invited to speak from the witness stand, before he was sentenced to life in prison for conspiring to fly airliners into US buildings, Moussaoui traded insults with three victims who had asked to address the court.

"I have seen an amount of hypocrisy beyond any belief, your humanity is very selective humanity," he said.

Addressing one victim, Lisa

Dolan, whose husband, a navy captain, died at the Pentagon on September 11, he said sardonically: "Of course, he was working for the development of peace and love in this world in his warship."

To another victim he said, "Maybe one day she should think how many people the CIA have destroyed their lives. You say we're a hate organisation, I say the CIA is a peace and love organisation."

Prosecutor Rob Spencer objected that Moussaoui should not be allowed to use his formal sentencing as a platform for political vitriol. Judge Leonie Brinkema agreed, and told Moussaoui sharply, he was only allowed to raise matters relevant to the type of sentence he should receive.

"You have branded me a terrorist... you should look at yourselves first... I am a mujahed, and you think you own the world, and you must admit you are wrong."

He branded the trial a "wasted opportunity for this country to understand and to learn why people like me and people like Mohammed Atta (a September 11 hijacker) and the rest have so much hatred for you."

He said, angrily: "You don't want to hear America. You will feel. We will come back another day. I have nothing more to say, you don't want to learn the truth."

"God curse America, God save Osama bin Laden, you will never get him!"



God save
Osama bin
Laden — you
will never
get him

Zacarias Moussaoui



My son will be
buried alive
because France
didn't dare
contradict the
Americans

Aicha El Wafi (mother)

TAKING IT IN



He's bad man, but we
have a fair society.

Rosemary Dillard
(Photo above. She lost her husband Eddie aboard the hijacked plane that hit the Pentagon)

I hope that al-Qaida
operatives held
overseas will now be
brought to justice here
in the United States. I
can move on now.

Abraham Scott
(He lost his wife Janice Marie at the Pentagon)

Personally I'm
disappointed. My son
didn't see his 33rd
birthday

David Beaman
(Father of a passenger on the flight that crashed in Pennsylvania)

firefighter, was killed that day. "He would shout to the families, 'Burn in the USA,'" she said, referring to one courtroom outburst. "I don't think he is worthy to breath free American air."

Marion Fontana, whose husband, Dave, a firefighter, died that day, didn't testify, but she said she thought the verdict was correct.

"I think if I indulged in hate, I would be similar to him," Fontana said. "I do not believe in the death penalty. I am just glad he will be spending the rest of his life in jail."

Alexander Santora, who lost his son Christopher, a firefighter, agreed that there were more important matters to deal with than deciding the fate of Moussaoui. But he said he believed Moussaoui should not have been allowed to live. "He's going to have the best life he ever had with three square meals and exercise every day. He doesn't deserve compassion. It would be better to pay the 28 cents and put a round in his head."

Still, in a reflection of the range of emotion prompted by the jury's verdict, Santora's wife, Maureen, was more conflicted. "I really don't want him to be a martyr," she said of Moussaoui. "I want him to be forgotten in prison, surrounded by the very people he hates and despises."

The New York Times

Some are satisfied, some disappointed

MARC Santora
Alexandria (US), May 4

THERE IS no consensus among the families of those killed on Sept. 11 as to whether Zacarias Moussaoui should have been sentenced to death.

Even those who agreed with the jury's verdict to spare his life differed as to their reasons why.

For some, life in a cell seemed a worse fate than a quick death, while others just don't believe in the death penalty in any case.

Yet others, like Debra Burlingame, whose brother, Charles, was the pilot of the plane that hit the Pentagon on Sept. 11, were disappointed the Moussaoui would go on living. "I totally accept and respect the jury's verdict," Burlingame said. "But I think it is very dangerous to show compassion to the cruel because they will bring the compassionate."

Though she hadn't been a supporter of the death penalty, fearing a mistake could be made, she said there was no danger of that happening in this case.

"This guy was absolutely a hard-core terrorist," she said.

Moussaoui himself testified that he was proud to be a member of al-Qaida while openly mocking the pain of the victims' families in court.

This behaviour only hardened the opinions of people like Rosemary Cain, whose son George, a

J&K terrorists massacre 19

Lashkar Main Suspect, Azad Promises To Bring Guilty To Book

Jammu: Striking in a big way, terrorists shot dead 19 Hindus, including a nine-year-old girl, after dragging them out of their houses in two villages of Doda district in the wee hours of Monday.

Of the nine injured in the attack, that has come two days before Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's meeting with moderate Hurriyat leaders, eight have been airlifted to Jammu in army choppers and admitted to a hospital.

Several heavily-armed suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists, in combat fatigue, reached the remote hamlets of Panjoli and Thava at about 2 am and ordered the villagers to come out of their houses. The ultras then lined them up outside the houses of the local village heads and opened indiscriminate fire at them, killing 19 people and injuring nine. While ten were killed in Thava, the other nine victims were from Panjoli.

The attack, the first major strike against the minority community in three years, came hours after terrorists killed four of the nine Hindus they had abducted from a village in neighbouring Udhampur district. Senior police officials have rushed to the twin villages to take stock of the situation.

According to reports reaching here, some of the villagers rushed to the nearby army camp and informed the authorities about the killing. Among those gunned down was the entire family of Sham Lal, a local village head.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack so far, but inspector general of police (Jammu) S P Vaid said Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists were behind the massacre.

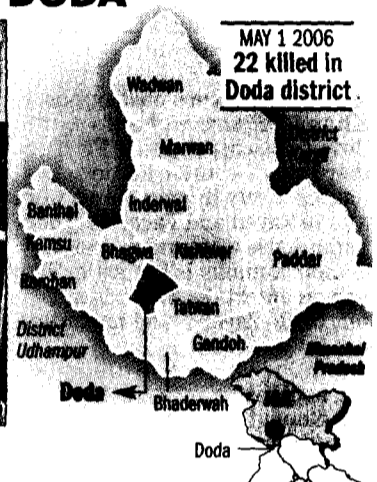
Condemning the strike, deputy chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffar Baig said the attack a bid to ruin the Indo-Pak peace process. "By singling out Hindus for such a major massacre, they are sending a message to the entire Indian nation that this exercise undertaken by the government is futile." He added that it was also aimed at spoiling the environment for the second round-table conference convened by the Prime Minister later this month.

Union minister of state for home Sriprakash Jaiswal said in Delhi that the attack was borne out

NIGHTMARE IN DODA



J&K chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad with an injured person at a Jammu hospital on Monday



MAJOR TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN J&K SINCE 2001

2004 Apr 5: 7 killed in Anantnag district	nath temple in Jammu	May 14: 33 killed as militants fire on a bus and storm an army camp on the Jammu-Pathankote highway	July 22: 15 killed in Doda district
2003 Mar 4: 24 killed in Pulwama district	Aug 29: 10 killed in Rajouri and Doda districts	Jan 7: 17 killed in Jammu district	July 21: 7 Amarnath pilgrims among 13 killed in Anantnag
2002 Nov 24: 14 killed during attack on Raghunath temple	Aug 6: 9 Amarnath pilgrims shot dead at a base camp near Pahalgam	2001 Aug 4: 15 killed in Doda district	Mar 17: 8 killed in Doda district
	July 13: 28 killed in Qasim Nagar area		Feb 11: 15 members of Gujjar families killed in Rajouri district

of the frustration of terrorists over Jammu and Kashmir gradually returning to normalcy. The last major attack against minorities in the state was in 2003, when terrorists gunned down 24 Kashmiri Pandits in Nadimarg village near Shopian in Pulwama district. CM Ghulam Nabi Azad held a high-level meeting with senior civil and police officers. He also

visited the Government Medical College Hospital here and inquired about the condition of the injured.

Condemning the barbaric act of militants, azad said the state is the protector of lives and property of the people and no stone would be left unturned till the culprits are apprehended and brought to justice. AGENCIES

02 MAY 2006

ashingtonpost.com

Six-Nation Bloc Plans Anti-Terror Maneuvers

Advertisement

By Edward Cody
Washington Post Foreign Service
Thursday, April 27, 2006; A20

BEIJING, April 26 -- China, Russia and four Central Asian nations announced Wednesday that they will hold joint anti-terrorism exercises next year, emphasizing a desire to balance U.S. military influence in Asia with stepped-up preparations of their own.

The regional security grouping, known as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Its activities have centered mainly on guarding against cross-border threats to internal stability, particularly from militant Islamic groups.

Guo Boxiong, vice chairman of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Military Commission, said the plans for joint drills demonstrate the group's growing role in maintaining security in the region, the official New China News Agency said. He vowed that defense ministers from the six nations will work together to combat what China calls the "three forces" -- separatism, terrorism and extremism -- that threaten to provoke unrest in the area.

In a communique, the six nations said next year's exercises will be held in Russia. They did not detail what activities were planned. But the Russian defense minister, Sergei Ivanov, told reporters here that the exercises will be designed by a group of military and anti-terrorism experts to enhance regional security coordination and are not aimed at any third country.

In China's case, the threat has mainly come from Uighur separatists in the heavily Muslim Xinjiang autonomous region of western China. Through common Turkic languages and history, the estimated 8 million Uighur people have maintained ties to their Central Asian neighbors even as the region increasingly is populated by China's Han majority. As a result, Beijing is eager to cultivate influence with the governments of those nations, lest Uighur militants find support and encouragement from across the borders.

China also has a growing stake in maintaining a stable environment in Central Asia, which is a source of oil and gas for the energy-hungry Chinese economy. Although Russia traditionally has played a leading role in the region -- the nations of Central Asia were Soviet satellites -- Chinese diplomacy and trade have established a significant presence in recent years. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was formally organized in 2001 under Chinese leadership.

The first joint anti-terrorism maneuvers by the group were held in 2003, although Uzbekistan did not participate. They included some exercises in the Xinjiang region.

Separately, China and Russia held bilateral military exercises last August. They were billed as a drill

against ethnic unrest but also were interpreted as a demonstration that Beijing and Moscow want the United States to understand it is not the only guarantor of security in the region despite its dominant role since World War II.

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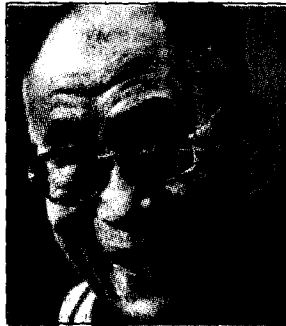
Tibetan monks storm monastery

Beijing: Tibetan Buddhist monks loyal to the exiled Dalai Lama stormed a monastery near Lhasa and attacked statues of a deity denounced by him, Chinese state media reported in a rare glimpse of religious dissension in disputed Tibet.

Seventeen lamas entered the Ganden Monastery on March 14 and tore down two statues, including an image of Dorje Shugden, a deity criticised by the Dalai Lama since the 1970s, the Xinhua news agency reported on Wednesday.

Police were mobilised to prevent Buddhists from going to the large monastery, government officials told a news conference in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, on Tuesday.

The dispute between the Dalai Lama and the much



Chinese authorities have lashed out at the Dalai Lama

smaller Shugden stream of his Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism is part of complex doctrinal currents dating back four centuries.

But China's authorities used the latest incident to criticise the Dalai Lama—the

most senior figure in Tibetan Buddhism who has been in exile since 1959 and campaigned for autonomy for Tibet.

"What the Dalai Lamahas done violates the religious freedom of believers," Zhang Qingli, the acting Communist Party secretary of Tibet said, according to Xinhua.

In 1996, the Dalai Lama called on his followers to reject the Shugden deity, calling it a divisive offshoot. Supporters of Shugden—Tibetan and foreign—have protested the Dalai Lama's ban as a violation of religious freedom.

The Mayor of Lhasa, Norbu Dunzhub, told the news conference the Dalai Lama, who is revered by most Tibetans, was using the dispute to stir conflict in tightly controlled Tibet. REUTERS

11 MAY 2006

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Taliban threatens to kill Indian hostage



Suryanarayana's wife and children pray for his safe release at their Hyderabad residence on Saturday

Kandahar: "The Taliban will kill an Indian engineer being held hostage in southern Afghanistan if all Indians don't leave Afghanistan within 24 hours." That was the message from Qari Yousaf Ahmadi, a purported spokesman for the insurgent group, on Saturday.

Ahmadi, who releases regular statements on behalf of outlawed Taliban fighters, accused A Suryanarayana, the Indian engineer who was abducted from the southern Zabul province on Friday, of being an "American spy". "We warn all Indians working here to leave Afghanistan within 24 hours starting 6 pm local time today. Or we will kill him," Ahmadi told a news agency over the phone.

India's ambassador to Kabul Rakesh Sood said the threat was "not a very positive development". Suryanarayana, a father of three from Hyderabad, is in his early 40s and had been working here since January for Bahrain-based company Al-Moayed. The firm has been contracted by an Afghan mobile phone company, Roshan, to expand its mobile phone network across volatile provinces in southern Afghanistan. Sood said he was in contact with officials from Roshan, the Afghan government and the US military to secure Suryanarayana's release.

In Hyderabad, Suryanarayana's shocked family members have appealed to the Taliban to release him without causing any harm. Disturbed over the news of the kidnapping of his son, Suryanarayana's father Chandrashekar urged the Indian government to take immediate steps to secure his safe release.

Meanwhile, a high-level meeting chaired by cabinet secretary B K Chaturvedi on Saturday reviewed the situation arising out of Suryanarayana's abduction. Condemning the abduction, Chaturvedi said it was an attempt by the Taliban and "other hostile elements" to intimidate Indian and other international and Afghan workers engaged in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and improving the lives of its people. AGENCIES

30 APR 2006

Zawahri lashes out at India, Pak

Dubai, April 29 (Agencies): Al Qaida's deputy leader Ayman al-Zawahri said hundreds of suicide bombers had "broken America's back" in Iraq and accused President George W. Bush of giving a "strong impetus" to India's nuclear programme while "doling out orders" to Pakistan, according to a video posted on the Internet today.

Zawahri singled out a visit by Bush in March this year to India during which he signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with New Delhi. "He gives a strong impetus to the Indian nuclear programme, while doling out orders to Pakistan," Zawahri said.

He also lashed out at Pak-

istan President Pervez Musharraf for his support to the US-led war on terror. "Musharraf is fighting Islam in Pakistan and threatens national security in Pakistan... He has placed Pakistan's nuclear programme under American, therefore, Jewish and Indian control."

"I call on the people of Pakistan to work to remove this traitor from power... And I call on every officer and soldier in the Pakistani army to disobey their commanders' orders to kill Muslims in Pakistan and Afghanistan," Zawahri said.

He said "Musharraf was prepared to flee abroad where he had bank accounts when

the popular revolution breaks out."

Speaking to reporters in Shawal, a mountainous region in tribal North Waziristan, Major General Shaukat Sultan said: "The President has full support of the army and there is a complete unanimity and unity for taking the war against terrorism to its logical end."

The release of the video came just days after the broadcast of an audio tape from al Qaida leader Osama bin Laden and a rare video from Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the group's leader in Iraq.

"Al Qaida in Iraq alone has carried out 800 martyrdom operations in three years, be-

sides the victories of the other mujahideen. And this is what has broken the back of America in Iraq," Zawahri said in the video posted on an Islamist website.

Many thousands of Iraqis have been killed in a relentless insurgent campaign of suicide and car bombings that mostly target US soldiers and Iraq's fledgling security forces. Nearly 2,400 American soldiers have died in Iraq since the US-led invasion in 2003, many by roadside bombs, and April has been the bloodiest month of the year so far for US forces.

"America, Britain and their allies have achieved nothing but losses, disasters

and misfortunes," the Egyptian Islamic militant leader said in the video.

Zawahri, bespectacled and wearing a black turban and a white robe, sat in front of a curtain. He did not appear to have his customary assault rifle next to him. A statement accompanying the video said it was made in the latter part of the Muslim month, which ended yesterday.

Zawahri also condemned the leaders of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia as "traitors" for their close ties to the West.

Zawahri and bin Laden are believed to be hiding in restive tribal borders areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan.



Ayman al-Zawahri in a picture taken from the video. (AP)

7 0 APR 2005

3 0 APR 2005

22 dead, 150 hurt in Egypt resort blasts

Cairo: At least 22 people were killed and 150 wounded when three explosions rocked a market and a busy restaurant area in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Dahab on Monday, state television said.

There was no immediate word on the nationality of the victims. The resort is popular with Western backpackers and budget Israeli tourists as well as Egyptians.

Witnesses reported hearing the blasts and said they saw smoke coming from a market in the middle of the Sinai Peninsula town. Because of the Coptic Easter holiday, the resort town is crowded with tourists. "Around 7 pm, we heard three explosions close to the seafront alongside a supermarket in the centre of Dahab," French tourist Frederic Mingeon told AFP from the town.

"There was a plume of smoke and people started running and screaming."

State television said the blasts appeared to have been the result of remote-controlled bombs not suicide bombers.

All exits from the town were sealed off by police, he added. Israel immediately offered to send emergency teams to help with rescue efforts. Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz "offered to send army rescue teams and doctors", his ministry said.

Hundreds of Israeli tourists were rushing home after the blasts on Monday evening, Israeli police said. A state of alert was declared at the main hospital in the Israeli border town of Eilat, both to handle any casualties sent for treatment there and to free up doctors for dispatch to the scene.

Meanwhile, in Israel, the country's rescue service said it had raised the alert level. Israeli Channel 10 TV reported that Israel had closed the border crossing at Taba, prevent-

ing vehicles from entering Sinai. It said a stream of Israeli vehicles were leaving Sinai.

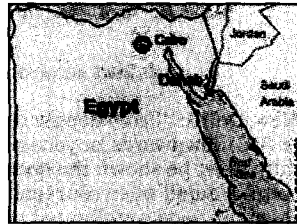
Many Israelis travel to the Sinai for beach holidays.

Israel's ambassador in Cairo, Shalom Cohen, told Channel 10 there were three explosions—in a hotel, a police station and a marketplace.

"We don't know of Israelis" who were hurt, he said, though some Israelis were known to be in Dahab.

Cohen said the best thing Israeli tourists in Sinai could do now would be to "go home."

In a telephone interview



with the Israeli TV station, Cohen said there have been repeated warnings from the Israeli government against visiting the Sinai Desert, where Israelis have been targeted in attacks in the past.

"Unfortunately, the warnings came true," he said.

The Israeli rescue service, Magen David Adom, offered help through the International Red Cross and the Egyptian Red Crescent but has not received a reply, the service said in a statement.

Dahab is located on the Gulf of Aqaba on the eastern side of the Sinai Peninsula and is about 110 km south of Taba, Egypt, near the border at the southern tip of Israel. Dahab is 350 km southeast of Cairo.

Sinai is a vast mountainous area inhabited mainly by Bedouin tribes. Of high strategic importance for its proximity to Israel, Gaza, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, it is increasingly seen as Egypt's Achilles heel in security terms.

AGENCIES

Many dead in Egypt resort blast

Three explosions rock hotel, market

AGENCIES
Cairo, April 24

MORE THAN 90 people were reported killed or injured in at least three explosions on Monday night in the Red Sea resort town of Dahab, an Egyptian interior ministry official said.

The explosions, triggered by terrorists, took place in a market and a hotel.

The Egyptian government has said the militants who carried

out the bombings were locals without international connections, but other security agencies have said they suspect the hand of al-Qaida.

This is high tourist season in the region, and hotels all along the Egyptian coasts could be expected to be at near capacity, mainly with Europeans, Israelis and expatriates living in Egypt. In Israel, the country's rescue service said it had raised the alert level following the blasts.

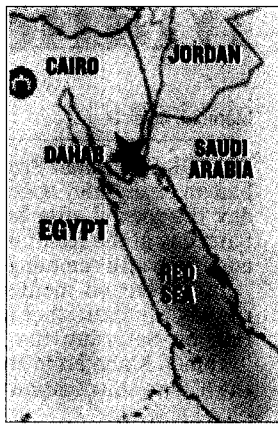
"There were body parts and debris in the street ... There are ambulances and cars taking people to hospital," one witness, who refused to be named, said. "There is smoke coming from the area and there are people running everywhere." Because of the Coptic Easter holiday, the resort town is crowded with tourists.

Israeli Channel 10 TV reported that Israel had closed the border crossing at Taba, preventing vehicles from entering Sinai. It said a stream of Israeli vehicles was leaving Sinai.

Many Israelis travel to the Sinai for beach holidays. Israel's ambassador in Cairo, Shalom Cohen, told Channel 10 there were three explosions — in a hotel, a police station and a marketplace. Police officials said more than 20 ambulances and police cars were rushing to the el-Masbat section of the city.

There have been a string of attacks in Egypt's Sinai peninsula over the past 18 months, including the deadly bombings in the Egyptian resorts of Taba and Ras Shitan in October 2004 and in Sharm el-Sheik in July.

Groups claiming links to al-Qaida took responsibility for those attacks, and Egyptian authorities say new Islamic militant groups have arisen in the peninsula but they are still trying to determine if they have any real connection to al-Qaida or other international terrorists.



West waging war against Islam: Osama

REUTERS

Dubai, April 23

AL-QAIDA leader Osama bin Laden said the West's shunning of the Hamas-led Palestinian government showed it was waging a "Crusader-Zionist war" on Muslims, according to an audiotape attributed to him and aired on Sunday. And the people in the West share responsibility for their countries' "war against Islam," he said.

The tape, broadcast on Al Jazeera television, had the Saudi-born militant urging Muslims around the world to focus on the Darfur crisis in western Sudan and render all Western efforts to isolate the Hamas government futile. "Their rejection of Hamas affirms that it is a Crusader-Zionist war against Muslims," bin Laden said.

In the brief excerpts aired, he did not repeat his assertion in an audiotape issued in January that al-Qaida was preparing attacks in the US but was open to a conditional truce with Americans.

But his remarks about the complicity of Westerners in the policies of their governments appeared to be an argument that they were fair game for revenge attacks by militants. "The war is a responsibility shared between the people and the governments. The war goes on and the people are renewing their allegiance to its rulers and masters," he said. "They send their sons to fight us and they continue their support while our countries are burned."

The Qaida leader said Western leaders had ignored his truce offers. "They do not want a truce unless it is from our side only ... they insist on continuing their campaign," bin Laden said.



Osama bin Laden
Terror talk

He urged militants to prepare for a long struggle in Darfur. The US is pressing for UN sanctions against the Sudanese government for its part in the conflict.

"I call on *mujahideen* to prepare all that is necessary to wage a long-term war in western Sudan," bin Laden said. The Darfur conflict erupted in 2003 when mostly non-Arab tribes revolted, accusing the Arab-led government of neglect. Khartoum retaliated by arming mainly Arab militia, known as Janjaweed, who began a campaign of murder, rape and plunder that drove more than 2 million villagers into squalid camps in Darfur and in neighbouring Chad. Khartoum denies responsibility.

Bin Laden also called for boycotting the US and European countries over the controversial cartoons lampooning Islam's Prophet Mohammad first published by a Danish newspaper.

24 APR 2006

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Five killed, ^{Gammam} 40 injured in ^{HD-1} ^{15/4} Srinagar blasts

Four militant outfits claim responsibility

Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR: Five people were killed and 40 injured on Friday in a series of blasts caused by grenade attacks in Srinagar.

Jamiat-ul-Mujahedin, Islamic Front, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Al-Mansoorain have claimed responsibility for the attacks.

The outfits said the security forces were the targets.

Five attacks were executed in the day and two in the evening.

The blasts in the day occurred as people were preparing for prayers.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (Kashmir Range) Farooq Ahmed told *The Hindu* that the blasts claimed the lives of five civilians.

"It is outrageous"

"They have attacked after a long time but the motive is not clear. Today [Friday] was an auspicious day and people were busy with prayers. It is outrageous," he said.

In the first attack, militants hurled a grenade at a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) bunker outside the Central Telegraph Office. It missed the target but one person was injured.

In the second blast at Hari Singh High Street, six people were injured and two of them died in hospital.

Within minutes, there was an attack at the Magharmal Bagh crossing.

This was followed by a blast at Batmaloo in which a police vehicle was the target.

Three die in Dalgate

The subsequent blast at Dalgate, on the banks of the Dal Lake, claimed three lives and injured several persons.

• Five blasts in the day as people were preparing for prayers

• Two occurred in the evening

• Security forces were the targets, say militant outfits

• First attack on a Central Reserve Police Force bunker

In the evening, militants hurled a grenade at a police patrol in Sekkidafar area of downtown Srinagar.

Fifteen people, including three CRPF personnel, three policemen and three civilians, were injured in the attack, sources said.

Late in the evening, another blast rocked Bohri Kadal. Five people were injured and they were immediately taken to hospital.

The condition of some of them was stated to be critical.

Enemies of peace: Azad

Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad said those responsible for the blasts were enemies of peace and humanity.

"But such attacks will not deter us from carrying forward the peace process," he said.

Mufti expresses grief

The former Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, expressed grief over the loss of lives and said. "All of us need to condemn such blasts aimed at disrupting peace," he said.

Photographs on Page 12

15 APR 2006

THE HINDU

Twin blasts inside Delhi's Jama Masjid, 14 persons injured

Low-intensity crude devices used; Shahi Imam appeals for calm

Devesh K. Pandey

NEW DELHI: Fourteen persons, including a woman and a girl, sustained injuries in two explosions inside the Jama Masjid in the Walled City area here soon after the evening prayers on Friday. Initial investigations indicated that low-intensity crude bombs were used. No outfit has claimed responsibility.

According to eyewitnesses, the first explosion took place at 5-20 p.m., soon after the 'namazis' approached a tank situated at the centre of the mosque to clean themselves after offering prayers. "As soon as I got up after 'namaz,' I heard a loud explosion. When I turned around, I saw a person standing near the tank being thrown away due to the impact of the blast. He sustained injuries in the thigh and legs," said Mohammad Adil.

Realising it was a bomb blast, the mosque authorities immediately urged the 'namazis' to stay away from another polythene bag that was near the reservoir. Policemen stationed outside Gate No. 1 of the mosque rushed inside.

Just then, the second bomb exploded and more people were injured. The injured were taken to the Jayaprakash Narain Hospital, where they were stated to be out of danger. The injured were identified as Shahid, Tahir, Mohammad Iqbal, his son Asif, Shabbir Ahmed, Rehan Ahmed, Naseem Ahmed, Faizal, Rehana, Nadeema, Sarazuddin, Tahir and Sahid Raja.

Soon after the blasts, the Jama Masjid's Shahi Imam appealed to the people over the mike to maintain calm. He said the explosions were the acts of certain people who wanted to



PROBE UNDER WAY: Police personnel examining the blast site inside the Jama Masjid in New Delhi on Friday.

- PHOTO: KAMAL NARANG

flare up communal passions and create disturbance in the country. Asking them to pray for communal harmony, he said the real culprits behind the explosions at Varanasi had not yet been arrested.

Police Commissioner K.K. Paul, who arrived at the spot, urged the people not to pay heed to rumours. He said those be-

hind the incident would be identified and brought to book. Even as the forensic team was busy gathering evidence from the explosion sites, hundreds of people gathered outside Gate No. 1 and shouted slogans.

Lieutenant-Governor B.L. Joshi visited the masjid and he along with Dr. Paul went to the hospital to meet the victims.

Bombs in bags

Enquiries showed that both bombs were kept in two polythene bags near the tank. An examination of the spot indicated that they were of low intensity and contained shrapnel.

Among the injured was 65-year-old Mohammad Asif from Gaya in Bihar who recalled: "I

had just reached there when the blast occurred. There was thick smoke all over. Before I realised that I was injured, I heard people screaming and saw them running in all the directions."

Manmohan, Sonia condemn: Page 12

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

Bengal suspect in Varanasi blast net

OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

Lucknow, April 5: Jawaharlal Nehru's three-time constituency Phulpur was today thrown up as the seat of a terror outfit's Indian module that masterminded the Varanasi blasts last month.

Uttar Pradesh police claimed the five persons arrested this morning in connection with the blasts belonged to the Harkat-ul-Jehadi-al-Islami, which has links with modules in Karachi and Bangladesh.

Blast brain Waliullah was, however, taken into custody from his Phulpur home on the night of March 29. The arrest of the 32-year-old cleric, who was earlier with the Jaish-e-Mohammad, was confirmed today.

Twenty-one people had been killed in twin blasts at the Sankat Mochan Temple and a railway station on March 7.

The five arrested are Mahbook Ali, Syed Suhaib Hasan, Farhan, Mohammad Rizwan Siddique and Mohammad Saad.

While Mahbook is from Bengal, Hasan and Farhan are from Lucknow and Rizwan and Saad from Amroha in Uttar Pradesh. All are in their 20s. A cache of arms was found on them.

Although the police here claimed Mahbook was from North 24-Parganas, Murshidabad SP Niraj Kumar Singh quoted special task force SSP S.K. Bhagat as saying he was from Murshidabad.

STF IG Jagmohan Yadav



One of the Varanasi blast suspects in Lucknow on Wednesday. (PTI)

told reporters Harkat's Bangladesh head Maulana Asadullah had asked Waliullah late last year to go to Bangladesh to recruit unemployed youths for arms training in Pakistan.

Along with one Bashiruddin, whom he met during his student days at Deoband, Waliullah went to Bangladesh. After returning to Allahabad, he sent 10 youths to Karachi

for training, Yadav said.

The final plot may have been hatched around late February this year, STF sources said. Waliullah had called Asadullah in Bangladesh on his mobile on February 22 and asked him to send a team to Allahabad for a festival on February 24-25.

Closer to the blasts, in early March, another call was made to the same number from a public booth. The PCO owner claimed the call had been made by a man close to the cleric.

Residents of the area said there had been a constant flow of visitors to the cleric's house between February 23 and March 6, with a sharp increase from March 3. After the March 7 blasts, the flow dried up.

The STF sources said Bashiruddin landed up in Phulpur along with two Bangladeshis — Mustafez and Zakaria — on March 3 and put up in a room adjacent to a madarsa.

They left for Allahabad the next day, from where Waliullah and Bashiruddin moved on to Varanasi. On March 6, the Bangladeshis bought three pressure cookers, pulled off the safety valve and stuffed them with explosives.

The next day, they took the Bundelkhand Express to Varanasi. None of the Bangladeshis has been arrested.

"We are working on the instructions of our commander in Bangladesh. Our coordinator in Allahabad is Imam Waliullah," said one of the arrested youths at the news conference, face covered.

06 APR 2006

THE ILLUSTRATED

EU puts Tamil rebels on terror list

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

BRUSSELS, MAY 30

THE European Union put Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers on its list of terrorist groups, despite a warning from the rebels that the move could force them back to war. The EU ban, agreed in principle on May 18, was made official at a meeting of ministers yesterday from the 25-member bloc to discuss competition issues. It will deprive the LTTE of some of the vital funds they collect from members of the Tamil diaspora in Europe.

As well as freezing rebel funds, the move, which came at the urging of the US and the Sri Lankan government, also provides for special EU cooperation measures to combat the group.

Sri Lanka had hoped a ban would force the rebels to the negotiating table, and the EU move comes just as the rebels have accepted an invitation to take part in talks in Norway next month.

An EU diplomat said the LTTE had brought the ban on itself. "If they had been serious at the negotiating table we could have thought about another way, we would have set up a virtuous circle, instead of this vicious circle that we're in at the moment," he said.



Norwegian special envoy Jon Hanssen-Bauer (left) with Erik Solheim, Norwegian minister of International Development, at their one-day meeting of the Sri Lanka peace process in Tokyo on Tuesday. AP

31 MAY 2006

INDIAN EXPRESS

22 MAY 2006

Terror strikes at YC rally

MS SM

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, May 21: Four days ahead of the Prime Minister's second round table conference on Kashmir, terrorists struck in Srinagar this afternoon, killing six persons including two policemen and injuring 22 others including the state police chief in an attack on a Youth Congress rally at Sher-e-Kashmir Park.

Militant groups Al-Mansoori and Lashkar-e-Taiyaba (Army of the Pure) called up a local news agency Current News Service claiming responsibility for the suicide attack.

Eyewitnesses said two militants in police uniform forced their entry into the park where hundreds of Congress workers had gathered in connection with the 15th death anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi.

"They started hurling hand grenades and sprayed bullets from automatic weapons towards the dais," said the eyewitnesses. The Jammu and Kashmir Congress chief, Peerzada Mohammad Syed, and other party leaders were sitting on the dais. The attack took place minutes before chief minister Mr Chulam Nabi Azad was scheduled to arrive at the venue.

Two civilians and one policeman died on the spot while 13 others including the IGP Kashmir zone, Mr K. Rajendra Kumar, were injured in the shooting. Mr Kumar was admitted to hospital where his condition was stated to be stable. Two DSPs were also injured in the attack.

Security forces managed to evacuate Congress workers. Two militants involved in the attack were later

killed in the exchange of fire between security forces and ultras.

The Centre has rushed special secretary (internal security) Mr S Rajgopal along with two Kashmiri specialist doctors to Srinagar.

Mr Azad termed the attack as "a desperate bid of isolated and vanishing militants to show their presence".

Defence minister Mr Pranab Mukherjee said in Kolkata: "Pakistan must understand that terrorists can never be anybody's friend." He didn't rule out the ISI's involvement in today's attack. "May be (it was involved). We believe these attacks have been designed to disrupt the roundtable meeting on the Kashmir issue. However, India will not allow to derail the peace process."



The slain militant being carried away by paramilitary forces. ■ AFP

LASHKAR OWNS UP ■ Despite attack ahead of roundtable, PM says going ahead with J-K visit

Target talks, militants storm Srinagar rally, kill 7, injure 20

MUZAFFAR RAINA &
MIR EHSAN
SRINAGAR, MAY 21

TWO militants, one in police uniform, opened indiscriminate fire at a Congress rally this afternoon, killing seven persons and leaving another 20 injured. Both militants were later gunned down by police.

The attack comes three days ahead of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Srinagar for a crucial roundtable conference on Kashmir. Only yesterday, four militant outfits—the Save Kashmir Movement, Al Mansoorian, Farzandaan Milat, and Al Arifeen—had threatened to disrupt the conference.

The Lashkar-e-Toiba and Al Mansoorian have claimed responsibility for the attack.

In New Delhi, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said he would go ahead with his visit to Srinagar despite the attack. A statement from his media adviser Sanjaya Baru said: "The Prime Minister is looking forward to visiting Srinagar and participating in the second round-table meeting on Jammu & Kashmir scheduled for May 24-25."

The militants entered the Sher-e-Kashmir Park venue while top Congress leaders of the state, including Peerzada Mohammad Sayeed and some ministers, were sitting on a podium, awaiting the arrival of Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, who was to address the rally. Some 2,000

people were present, and many more were waiting to enter the grounds.

The state government had deployed hundreds of police and securitymen at the venue and people going inside were being thoroughly frisked. For the last three days, the administration had been busy securing the place, laying barbed wire and bamboo barricades.

Mohammad Imtiaz, a Congress worker from Anantnag, said he was standing in queue to enter the venue when he saw a man in police uniform entering the main gate unchecked.

"A policeman shouted at him, perhaps suspecting something was amiss," said Imtiaz. "The militant turned around and opened fire."

He said Congress leaders on the dais mistook this initial burst of gunfire for fireworks and asked people to remain calm.

Then the firing intensified and everyone was running for cover. Leaders rushed to find place behind a bulletproof screen. Some even hid behind piles of pillows.

Below them, people threw themselves to the ground and started crawling for safety under bamboo barricades.

One militant had reached closed to the dais and was firing continuously. IG K Rajinder and some other officers started moving towards the podium when a volley of bullets came their way. Rajinder and another officer, Faisal Ahmed, were injured. They are being treated in hospital.

22 MAY 2006

INDIAN EXPRESS

Three terrorists with arms arrested

RDX seized exceeded the amount used in Mumbai serial blasts: Maharashtra Minister



IN THE HANDS OF LAW: The arrested terrorists being taken to a court in Mumbai on Wednesday. — PHOTO: VIVEK BENDRE

Special Correspondent

MUMBAI: At the end of three days of painstaking highway searches and a 150-km long daring chase, the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of the Maharashtra Police intercepted a car last night near Aurangabad and captured a huge cache of arms, ammunition and explosive besides arresting three terrorists.

The seizure includes ten AK-47 assault rifles, 2,000 rounds of ammunition, 40 magazines, six magazine pouches and 30 kg of the dreaded RDX. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister R.R. Patil said at a press conference that the

quantity of the RDX seized last night exceeded the amount used in the serial Mumbai bomb blasts in 1993. He said that the ATS operation had pre-empted a major terrorist attack.

While the ATS team was checking vehicles, a Tata Sumo broke the line of the vehicles and sped away to avoid checking. The ATS party chased it for around one and a half hour. Finally, it was intercepted at Kannad on a branching out road, about ten km away from the Manmad-Aurangabad Highway.

The occupants abandoned the vehicle and ran away. While

the ATS team caught one of them with the help of the villagers, the Aurangabad Rural Police nabbed two others. The ATS believes that one or two more could have escaped. Arms, ammunition and explosive were neatly packed and concealed in server cabinets.

The arrested persons, Mohammed Amer Shakeel Ahmad Shaikh, 30, Sayyad Zuber Sayyad Anwar, 26 and Mohammed Muzaffer Mohammad Tanvir, 24, were brought to Mumbai and produced before a magistrate. They were remanded to police custody till May 24.

A visibly beaming Mr. Patil, who holds the Home portfolio,

announced a special award of Rs. 5 lakh to the ATS and said that this is the fourth time the ATS had caught terrorists with weapons and explosive before they could mount an attack. He felicitated the ATS chief, A.P. Raghuvanshi and other officers "for very big success."

The Deputy Chief Minister announced that two new ATS would be raised and based at Aurangabad and Nagpur in view of rising incidence of terrorism in the State. The ATS was undermanned, he said, so more personnel would be posted to it and the squad would be provided with better arms and equipment.

Osama urges tribals to kill Musharraf



Pamphlets handed out by Osama bin Laden's men in Pakistan's tribal belt are exhorting the locals to rise up against Pervez Musharraf.

Al-Qaida tries to take advantage of tribal unrest
On Pakistan, calls Pervez a Bush slave

ASSOCIATED PRESS
 Miran Shah, May 7

A MESSAGE distributed among Pakistani tribesmen on Saturday, apparently by associates of al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden, called for the assassination of Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, declaring him a "slave" of US President George W. Bush.

Bin Laden also purportedly called for help of the tribesmen whose homes, the message on the pamphlets said, were destroyed by the Pakistan army in the Waziristan tribal region for "American pleasure."

"I pray to Allah, without whom there is no other God, that Bush, Pervez and his army meet the fate that they deserve, and give someone among the lions of God the opportunity to kill this slave of Bush in Pakistan," bin Laden purportedly said in the message. The pamphlets were distributed by suspected local tribal militants on Saturday in Mir Ali, a town in the North Waziristan tribal re-

gion that borders Afghanistan. The message begins with a paragraph in Arabic that mentions bin Laden's name, then says in Urdu, Pakistan's primary language: "(A) new message by Sheikh Osama bin Mohammed bin Laden to Muslims about the atrocities by the Pakistani army on the tribes of Waziristan, the bloodshed and destruction of their homes."

Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan, the top spokesman for Musharraf, would not comment on the authenticity of the statement on Sunday. But he urged the media not to "spread" it, referring to a line in the message saying that Muslims who receive it should reprint it and distribute it.

Pakistan was a key supporter of Afghanistan's Taliban militia before it was ousted from power by a U.S. military campaign in late 2001 for harboring al-Qaida.

After the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, Musharraf severed ties with the Taliban and allied Pakistan with the US-led war on terror.

Radical Islamists have op-

posed Musharraf for his alliance with the United States and he has survived at least three known assassination attempts — all blamed on al-Qaida-linked militants. The North and South Waziristan tribal regions have been the suspected hide outs of al-Qaida-linked militants. Military officials have said that Arab, central Asian and Afghan militants are present in the two rugged regions, where bin Laden and his top aide Ayman al-Zawahri are also thought to be hiding. But in recent weeks, local tribal militants — allegedly linked to the Taliban — have been blamed for deadly fighting with security forces. Some 317 militants and 51 soldiers and four police have reportedly died in clashes in the tribal border regions.

On Sunday, pamphlets circulated in Mir Ali purportedly by local tribal militants call for war against the Pakistan army. Pakistan has deployed about 80,000 troops along its border with Afghanistan to track down militants.



Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf angered militant groups by severing ties with the Taliban after the September 11, 2001, attacks in the US.

Evidence of Lashkar role in Doda, Udhampur massacres

Survivors identify member of group that carried out killings

Praveen Swami

UDHAMPUR: Jammu and Kashmir Police investigators say hard evidence has begun to emerge that a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) unit carried out the April 30 massacre at the Lalon Galla meadow near Basantgarh, in which 13 shepherds were killed.

Investigators also registered the first successes against the LeT unit thought to have carried out a simultaneous massacre in the adjoining district of Doda. A Pakistani LeT commander, so far identified only by his *nom de guerre* "Abu Talha," was shot dead near Bholderwah, Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad's constituency, in a joint operation by the police and the Army.

Mohammad Siraj-ud-Din and his son, Rukun-ud-Din, who survived the Lalon Galla massacre, identified one of the terrorists as Aijaz Ahmad, a long-standing LeT operative who hails from Raichak village, near Basantgarh. They recognised Ahmad when shown photographs of local terrorists known to be operating with the LeT's mainly Pakistani cadre.

• Survivors provide critical information on Lalon Galla attack

• Three terrorists surrounded by security forces in Somoli forests

Siraj-ud-Din and Rukun-ud-Din were kidnapped with the 13 Hindu shepherds, but released after the terrorists established their religious identity. They then reported the kidnapping to the police. Sources said they subsequently cooperated with investigators, providing critical information on the attack.

Police and Army authorities were optimistic of engaging the terrorists who carried out the Lalon Galla killings after sighting them in a high-altitude forest near Basantgarh. However, the dense forest made it difficult to encircle the group. "We shall continue tracking the terrorists," said Udhampur Senior Superintendent of Police Rajesh Yadav, "however long it takes."

Lashkar commander shot

In Doda, however, the oper-

ations registered some success with the possible elimination of "Abu Talha," the division commander believed to have ordered the massacres. He was killed in a brief exchange of fire on the fringes of the Somoli forests in Bholderwah, while three other members of his group are thought to be trapped in a cordon.

While conclusive identification has not been possible, intelligence sources confirmed that a cellphone found on the body of the killed terrorist had been used by "Abu Talha" in past months. Officials said the phone, one of several used by the LeT commander to issue orders to over-ground supporters as well threats to the Lashkar's opponents, had been monitored for the past several months.

Still unclear

However, it was still unclear if the terrorists now surrounded had a direct role in the massacre of 19 villagers at the mountain hamlet of Kulhand, in Doda. Survivors said that six men, including one who spoke the local dialect, had carried out the killings.

9/11
9/11
9/11

Top Qaida plotter held in Pakistan

Kabul: A top Al Qaida strategist with a \$5 million bounty on his head and followers from Afghanistan to Europe has been captured in Pakistan, a US law enforcement official confirmed.

Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, who once wrote a 1,600-page autobiographical book on ways to attack Islam's enemies, has been flown out of the country after being interrogated by Pakistani and American authorities, Pakistani officials said on Tuesday. They did not specify where he was taken.

Terror analysts said Nasar's capture has dealt a blow to Al Qaida and other militant movements he aided through his virulent anti-Western writings and weapons training. His movements have been traced to Sudan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria and two European capitals.

Nasar, a 47-year-old Syrian-Spanish national, was seized in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta in November 2005, said the American official, who declined to be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue. Nasar was arrested in a sting operation, which sparked a gunfight in which one person was killed, the official said.

The raid apparently took place on November 1. At the time, Pakistani officials said they had captured two possible Al Qaida suspects and a third man with ties to a Pakistani extremist group. Intelligence officials had said they were investigating whether one of the suspects was Nasar.

Nasar, an Islamic ideologue wanted by American and Spanish authorities for terror-related activities, "may have been turned over to the US"

after his capture, the American official said late last week. He would not say where Nasar may have been sent, and US officials in Washington declined to comment on Tuesday.

Pakistani and American officials have long been tight-lipped on the status of Nasar, described by the US Justice Department as a former trainer at Osama bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan who



Mustafa Setmariam Nasar

helped teach extremists to use poisons and chemicals before the US-led invasion of this country after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

The Syrian native's dual citizenship—he was married to a Spanish woman— and his Western appearance made him difficult to find. When he grew out his beard, Nasar—whose aliases ranged from Abu Musab Al Suri to Blond Blond—blended into Islamic society.

He was believed to be in Afghanistan at the time of the 9/11 attacks, which he says were predicted by the Prophet Mohammed as events leading to victory for Islam. "The duty of jihad is a must until the end of days," he wrote. AP

04 MAY 2006

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Serial terror strikes claim 35 lives in Doda and Udhampur

Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizb ul-Mujahideen cadre principal suspects

Terrorism
HD /
2/5



TERROR VICTIM: A victim of the militant attack being taken to hospital in Jammu on Monday. Thirty five persons were killed in two separate strikes in Udhampur and Doda districts. - PHOTO: REUTERS

Praveen Swami and Luv Puri

DODA / UDHAMPUR: At least 35 Hindu villagers were killed in separate communal terror strikes in the districts of Doda and Udhampur, northeast of the city of Jammu, in the worst single night of violence since 2000.

Twenty two residents of the mountain hamlets of Kulhand and Tharva, including a three-year-old girl, were shot dead outside their homes late on Sunday night. A further 13 shepherds were shot dead north of the Lalon Galla, a high-altitude meadow above the town of Basantgarh. Sources said ten survivors of the killings in Kulhand and Tharva were in a critical

condition. Witnesses told *The Hindu* that terrorists surrounded Kulhand and Tharva at around 11 p.m. on Sunday. Men from some 40 adjacent buildings were ordered to gather at the home of Gopi Chand, the village headman. Once there, the victims were made a queue, and then fired on with assault rifles at point-blank range. The terrorists continued to fire until their ammunition was exhausted. Hours before the killing began in Kulhand and Tharva, a separate terrorist unit rounded up a group of shepherds who had taken their herds up to the pastures on the high mountains, a common practice in the summer.

Two men, Siraj-ud-Din and his son Rukun-ud-Din, were released by the terrorists after establishing their religious identity, but the other 13 were then marched into the adjoining forests and shot.

Officials believe the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which has carried out over a dozen major communal massacres in the Jammu region in recent years, most likely executed both attacks, acting with the assistance of local cadre of the Hizb ul-Mujahideen. According to the testimony of Siraj-ud-Din, two of the men who executed the Lalon Galla massacre spoke Kashmiri, while the rest used Punjabi — a language often used by the Lashkar's Pa-

kistani cadre.

Both Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad have condemned the killings, which most observers believe were directed at derailing the peace process. Similar serial communal massacres had taken place on August 1, 2000, to undermine a ceasefire declared by pro-dialogue leaders in the Hizb ul-Mujahideen. One hundred people had been killed on that occasion.

CRPF headquarters attacked

UNI reports from Srinagar: Militants on Monday attacked a Central Reserve Police Force

(CRPF) battalion headquarter here.

A CRPF spokesman told UNI that militants hurled a hand grenade at the CRPF headquarter, set up in Shiraz cinema at Khanar in downtown Srinagar at about 3.40 p.m.

The blast was followed by heavy firing, he said.

Shopkeepers in the area fled for safety, leaving their shops open. Traffic on the road leading to the Hazratbal shrine was also suspended for about an hour.

A report from Baramulla said one labourer was killed and three injured when an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded in north Kashmir on Monday, official sources said.

Qaida tapes reveal cracks in leadership

David Johnston & Mark Mazzetti

ON A SHAKY WICKET

Washington: The broadcasts last week by three of the world's best-known terrorist leaders shared at least one common goal, American intelligence officials say. They sought to embarrass the West by showing the terrorists were still able to communicate with their followers, despite the intensive efforts to capture or kill them and the \$25-million bounty that is on each of their heads.

But the officials interviewed on Sunday also said the messages of the three men: Osama bin Laden, Ayman Al Zawahiri and Abu Musab Al Zarqawi show the differing motives and political interests of Al Qaida's leadership.

Though messages from the three leaders have never before surfaced in the same week, the officials said there was no evidence the men coordinated the timing of the release of the statements or collaborated on the language used in them.

Zarqawi, the leader of a terrorist group in Iraq that has allied itself with Al Qaida, used his message to assert his primacy as a leader within the insurgency in Iraq and perhaps beyond, the officials said.

Bin Laden and Zawahiri both of whom have diminished control over terrorist operations seemed to be trying to position themselves as the inspirational voices of a broader militant movement.

Some intelligence experts said the tapes were likely to fuel the belief that Bin Laden and Zarqawi were emerging



The broadcasts last week by three of the world's best known terrorists show the differing motives and political interests of Al Qaida's leadership. The State Department's annual survey of global terrorism, issued on Friday, has described the insurgency in Iraq as increasingly fractured

as rivals for pre-eminence within Al Qaida. Although Zarqawi pledged loyalty to Bin Laden in 2004 and referred to him in his most recent videotape as "our prince", there was little else in his fiery message to suggest he was operating under orders from Bin Laden.

While analysts are continuing to pore over the messages looking for hints of code words, phrasing or images that might be a signal of a future terrorist attack or yield clues to where or when the messages were created, the officials said the broadcasts had not yet furnished fresh evidence that might help the hunt for the terrorist leaders.

The officials, including some with access to highly classified intelligence on counter-terrorism issues, were given anonymity to speak more freely about delicate information.

American officials said

Zarqawi's 34-minute video was the most surprising of the three statements. In the video, Zarqawi claimed responsibility for the hotel bombings last November in Amman, Jordan. Intelligence officials have said such claims of responsibility are an effective fund-raising tool.

Zarqawi's video was shown two days after an audio message by Bin Laden was broadcast by Al Jazeera.

Then on Friday, a video by Zawahiri surfaced on the internet. Zawahiri, who is Bin Laden's chief deputy and is also regarded as one of his spokesmen, seemed to be asserting himself as the most aggressive presence within Al Qaida.

The State Department's annual survey of global terrorism, issued on Friday, described the insurgency in Iraq as increasingly fractured. NYT NEWS SERVICE

Terror group threatens to 'slaughter' Fatah top echelon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JERUSALEM, APRIL 30*

SECURITY has been beefed up for the Fatah leadership, including Palestinian Authority (PA) Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, after an unknown group claiming affiliation to Al-Qaeda distributed leaflets here threatening to "slaughter" them, a media report said.

"We hereby declare that we have begun operating in Palestine," the leaflet distributed in the name of Al-Tawhid and jihad said heaping praises on Al-Qaeda head Osama bin Laden and Abu Musab Zarqawi.

"We have decided to revive the Sunnah (one of the sources of Islamic jurisprudence) of slaughter against these people to avoid dissension," the *Jerusalem Post* quoted the leaflet circulated in Gaza as saying.

The leaflet specifically mentioned names of five Abbas loyalists—Muhammad Dahlan, Yasser Abed Rabbo, Samir Mashharawi, Nabil Amr and Abu Ali Shaheen, who it said would soon be "slaughtered" as apostates.

The threats have prompted PA security forces to take strict measures to guarantee the safety of the leaders, including Abbas whose villa in Ramallah has been cordoned off.

This is the first time the group, believed to be headed by Jordanian terrorist Zarqawi, has issued a leaflet in Gaza.

A Hamas spokesman denied any connection to the threats, saying they did not believe Al-Qaeda had set up cells in Gaza. "Hamas does not have any links with Al-Qaeda," government spokesman Ghazi Hamad was quoted by the daily as saying.



Fatah Insignia

01 MAY 2006

INDIAN EXPRESS

Taliban kills Indian engineer

Did Not Have Negotiations In Their Agenda

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Taliban claimed yet another Indian on Sunday, killing and beheading telecom engineer K Suryanarayana, less than 48 hours after abducting him from Zabul province on the main highway linking Kabul to Kandahar. This is the second killing by the Taliban of an Indian in Afghanistan in the past four months.

Suryanarayana (41) was working for a Bahrain company, Al Moayed, which is currently undertaking a project for Roshan Telecom, an Afghan mobile telephone service provider. His beheaded body was found on the road between Qalat and Ghazni on Sunday morning. He is survived by his aged parents, wife and three children aged between 5 and 13.

The Taliban spokesman, Qari Yousef Mohammed, told news agencies in Kabul that Suryanarayana's death was "unintentional". Interestingly, there have been at least three voices which identify themselves as Mohammed, said sources. Initial reports said Suryanarayana was killed while trying to escape. But this was quickly disproved by the fact that the body was found beheaded, an old Taliban tactic.

Foreign secretary Shyam Saran said: "Suryanarayana was brutally murdered even before the MEA team landed in Kabul this morning. It is obvious that the kidnappers were not interested in negotiating for his release but had premeditated his killing. The outrageous demand that all Indians should leave Afghanistan within 24 hours testifies to the real motivation behind this act of terror."

Indian officials said the Taliban never had any intention of negotiating since the body, after it was found, showed that he must have been killed on Saturday evening.

The first reports came from the police patrol of the area which found the body. A police spokesman said: "This morning, a driver from an area called Karez-e-Hasan, where the Indian engineer was kidnapped, came to us and informed us of a dead body. We went to the area and found the body of the Indian engineer beheaded in a bag." The Taliban spokesperson was quoted as saying: "The Indian engineer was in a room with one guard. He attacked the guard, punched him and went running out of the building as another mujahideen shot him dead." Ahmadi said the Taliban's council of leaders was "saddened" by the incident, as New Delhi had shown its willingness to negotiate for Suryanarayana's release.

"We are sorry. The leading council had decided to extend the deadline for another 24 hours since the Indian side had showed gestures that they were ready to negotiate," the Taliban spokesman said. The Taliban had set 7 pm, Sunday, as the deadline for India to pull out all its people from projects in Afghanistan. Indians are deeply involved in the reconstruction process in the war-torn country and are working in infrastructure, telecom, roads, hospitals, schools, radio and TV and even in building the Afghan parliament.

In Hyderabad, Suryanarayana's family was inconsolable, shocked into profound grief as they watched the breaking news of his death on TV, almost minutes after his wife Manjula returned from meeting chief minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy, who reassured her of the government's help.

The AP CM has announced Rs 5 lakh compensation and a job for the family, since Suryanarayana was the sole earning member. This came after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called Reddy and asked him to take care of the family.

TALIBAN TOLL



Around 1,400 people killed in Afghanistan just since January 1, 2006

- **P Murli and G Vardharaj**, employed in a US-funded \$270-million road project, abducted on **December 6, 2003**. Fortunately, they were released on December 24
- **Telecommunications engineer Sanjeev**, working for the Afghan Wireless Company, shot dead on **November 8, 2003**
- **BRO driver Maniyappan Raman Kutty** abducted on **November 19, 2005**. His body found on **November 23, 2005**
- **Bharat Kumar**, an engineer with a Turkish firm, among four killed in a bomb blast in Farah on **February 7, 2006**



Family members of K Suryanarayana grieve his death. Wife Manjula (centre right), daughters Anisha (top right), Manisha (bottom right) and son Satya Teja grieve the death of K Suryanarayana in Hyderabad on Sunday. Taliban militants said they shot Suryanarayana dead as he tried to escape.

Condemning the killing, the PM's media adviser said: "The PM has expressed grief and sorrow and has asked the nation to remain united in the fight against terrorism." President A P J Abdul Kalam joined in, calling it "highly condemnable". Saran blamed the Taliban and "its sponsors" for the "dastardly and inhuman act of terror...which has resulted in the tragic and untimely death of an innocent Indian citizen, who, like many of our other compatriots, had been making a contribution in Afghanistan's reconstruction".

In Kabul, President Hamid Karzai condemned the killing and ordered the security forces to hunt down those responsible. "The enemies of Afghanistan...want to stop Afghanistan from developing and standing on its own feet."

Karzai's statement comes days after he invited the Taliban back into Afghan mainstream in a reconciliatory gesture. But as recently as a few months ago, Karzai blamed the resurgence of Taliban and Al Qaida on Pakistan and even exchanged heated words with Pervez Musharraf on the subject.

Reiterating India's stand on the Taliban, Saran said: "The government of India regards Taliban a terrorist organisation and calls upon the international community to recognise its true colours and join hands together to defeat this scourge to humanity."

'He went there for a few dollars more'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Hyderabad: Gloom engulfed the Hyderabad home of slain Indian engineer—Suryanarayana, with his family members hoping against hope that something positive will happen before the Taliban deadline and that the technician will be released without harm.

When wife K Manjula heard in the morning news that a decapitated body was found near Kandahar, she collapsed in the living room of their modest house in East Anandbagh area.

"I thought something could be done before the deadline. How could this happen to us?" she kept murmuring as tears welled up her eyes. "How will I bring up my children?" she constantly muttered.

Manjula had been up the whole night, glued to the TV, imagining that the news of her husband being released unharmed by the Taliban would be flashed across the screen. She had been without any food ever since the news of her husband's abduction became public on Saturday morning.

However, with her worse fears being confirmed, Manjula's health worsened and soon doctors had to be summoned to check her blood pressure and heart condition. An ambulance was put on standby to meet any emergency.

By evening, family elders forced Manjula to eat something. She relented when they told her: "How will you take care of your fatherless children, if you don't take care of yourself." The three children—daughters Anisha (13), Manisha (9) and Satya Teja (5)—were wailing the whole day, mindful of the tragedy that had unfolded. But once the TV cameras started prying and the VIP rush began, relatives whisked away the kids into an inside room.

Indonesia, U.K. to combat terrorism

JAKARTA: Britain and Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, will increase cooperation against terrorism and improve understanding between the Islamic and non-Islamic worlds, the countries' leaders said on Thursday.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and visiting British Prime Minister Tony Blair were speaking to reporters after two-way discussions and joint talks with Islamic leaders and scholars.

Britain is moving to normalise defence ties with Indonesia and launching an initiative to combat Islamic extremism during Mr. Blair's 24-hour visit to the sprawling archipelago of 220 million people, 85 per cent of them Muslims.

"We want in defence terms now to treat Indonesia as it should be, as our friend and our ally," Mr. Blair said, "and in respect of counter-terrorism ... we are going to work closely together."

British officials said this would allow moves such as joint exercises or exchanging military observers. Defence relations had been at a lower level because of Indonesia's authoritarian past.

Mr. Blair's visit, the first by a British Prime Minister in 21 years, seals an improvement in relations between the countries, both of which have been targets of Islamic militant bombings, and marks British recognition of Indonesia's shift to democracy. — Reuters

3 1 MAR 2006

THE HINDU

A terrorist organisation rises again

Praveen Swami

A MARCH 17 encounter in Ahmedabad shows that the Pakistan-based Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, until recently thought to be defunct, has been reborn from the ashes and has joined the growing Islamist terror campaign against India. A register in the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen's office in Islamabad lists the names of those who gave their lives for its cause: 238 men who were killed fighting the forces of first the Soviet Union and then the United States in Afghanistan, and another 433 in Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier this month, a clerk at the Harkat office may have added a new entry to the list of countries against which the terrorist organisation had gone to war — and then written the names of the first men to die in this campaign.

On March 17, police in Ahmedabad shot dead Sialkot resident Imran Shehzad Bhatti, the commander of the first Harkat terror cell to attempt strikes against India outside of Jammu and Kashmir. Bhatti, who had earlier served for three years as a field commander in Jammu and Kashmir, died along with his lieutenant Mohammad 'Furkan' Iqbal, who hailed from Karachi, and two long-standing ethnic-Kashmiri Harkat operatives, Mohammad Ayub Butt and Mudassar Rather, both from the apple-growing region of Shopian.

Last summer, Bhatti had been given charge of building a new house for the Harkat: a house from which it could wage war across India. Bhatti, Indian counter-intelligence officials have found, travelled across much of India, scouring towns for both recruits and base. He seems to have had more than a little success in this enterprise. From Punjab, for example, the Harkat commander had succeeded in purchasing for himself false documents that identified him as a policeman serving in the State's vigilance organisation.

Much of Bhatti's network was set up by Butt, a fruit trader from the village of Laddi, near Shopian in southern Kashmir. Butt's brother, Yakub, had served for several years with the Jaish-e-Mohammad, before being shot dead in an encounter last year. Although he worked closely with Bhatti's south Kashmir Harkat group, Butt's apparently unremarkable life helped him stay off the radar of the Jammu and Kashmir

The Harkat-ul-Mujahideen's revival makes it clear that Pakistan's Islamist armies have no intention of joining in a *détente* with India that promises them only their obliteration.

police. His fruit business, however, would be critical to Bhatti's plans to expand the Harkat's terror capabilities.

Travelling with Butt on his visits to fruit markets across India, Bhatti was introduced to some of the businessman's associates as a friend — and to an inner circle by the *nom de guerre* 'Azaan,' the term Muslims use for the call to prayer at mosques. One of Butt's contacts in Punjab helped the Harkat commander obtain his fake identification; others provided homes and references to right-wing clerics in New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, and at least half-a-dozen smaller cities.

By late last year, the basic elements of Bhatti's new network were falling in place. Iqbal, who had long been one of the Harkat commander's most trusted lieutenants, was able to make contact with newly recruited associates in New Delhi, Goa, Gwalior, Agra, and Kota. Like Bhatti himself, Iqbal travelled posing as a businessman linked to Butt's fruit business, using fake identification — in this case, a driver's licence obtained from the Yashwantpur Regional Transport Office in north Bangalore, issued against a false address.

A house of war

For his part, Rather succeeded in obtaining admission to a madrassa near the southern Gujarat town of Valsad, on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route both Bhatti and Butt were now regularly using. Investigators have found that at least three seminars in the State rejected the ethnic Kashmiri's application to study there, unimpressed by his credentials. The fourth, however, proved less suspicious of Rather's claims that he wished to become a cleric. Soon afterwards, in January, Bhatti rented the Ahmedabad apartment.

Bhatti's Harkat cell now had a home, soon to be stocked with explosives and weapons. Days after

the house was rented, Butt told his parents he was going to close a fruit deal. He never returned. His worried family filed a missing persons report later that month, but the Jammu and Kashmir police had no success in locating Butt — until, that is, the morning of March 18, when photographs of the four terrorists killed in Ahmedabad reached the police headquarters in Srinagar.

Jammu and Kashmir police officials had been increasingly concerned about the Harkat's rebirth long before those photographs arrived. Late last year, investigators had learned that a new commander, operating under the code-name 'Talha,' had been despatched across the Line of Control to rebuild the group's apparatus. The commander, they discovered, had hidden out in the Bandipora forests in northern Kashmir, before moving to a safe house in Srinagar.

Weeks of work finally led the Jammu and Kashmir police's crack Special Operations Group to a small shop in Srinagar's Soura area. Local residents thought the shop, which specialised in embroidering woollen shawls and cloaks, was owned by an Urdu-speaking migrant from Uttar Pradesh. Officers of the Special Operations Group, however, had learned he was a long-standing Harkat operative named Mohammad Shehzad, a resident of Sialkot in Pakistan — the man who called himself 'Talha.'

On December 21, a brief fire fight outside the shop led to Shehzad's death — and to the uncovering of a sophisticated communications centre equipped with satellite phones. Before the week was out, however, the Harkat appointed a successor. Abdul Qadir Mughal, a resident of Rawlakot in Pakistan-administered Jammu and Kashmir, was given charge of the networks Shehzad had begun to build. Mughal's term in office proved remarkably short, though: before dawn on January 1, he was shot dead.

Several second-rung Harkat commanders were eliminated as a consequence of these

strikes targeting the terrorist organisation's top leadership. Mohammad Iqbal Khan, the Pakistani national who was ordered to succeed Mughal, was shot dead by police in Baramulla. So too was Azad Ahmad Bhatti, a Harkat commander from the Pakistani city of Multan who had served as the terrorist group's division commander in southern Kashmir for over five years.

As investigators interrogated suspects detained during these operations, the scale of the Harkat's plans became clear. Between January 14 and February 18, at least nine Jammu and Kashmir residents were arrested on charges of helping the Harkat. Each member of the network had been assigned a specific task aimed at providing key operatives cover identities. Pulwama resident Mohammad Yunus Mir, for example, had applied for Indian passports for the Harkat's key commanders, using fake names and photographs.

But why should the Harkat's revival be of particular concern? Answers lie in the special place the outfit has in the history of Islamist terrorism. Until 1984, the Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami was the largest clerical organisation engaged in the U.S.-funded *jihad* against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. After the death of its founder, Maulana Mohammad Irshad, the HuJI began to disintegrate. Maulana Qari Saifullah's succession as the HuJI's supreme leader led his opponents to form the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.

Under Maulana Fazl-ur-Rahman Khalil, the Harkat dramatically increased its presence in both Afghanistan and Jammu and Kashmir. Factional disputes with the HuJI, however, continued to be a serious concern. In June 1993, a committee of clerics arranged for both organisations to merge into a new group, the Harkat-ul-Ansar. Maulana Azhar Masood Alvi, the terrorist released from jail in return for the lives of the hostages on Indian Airlines flight 814 in 1999, was one of the key figures in this new group.

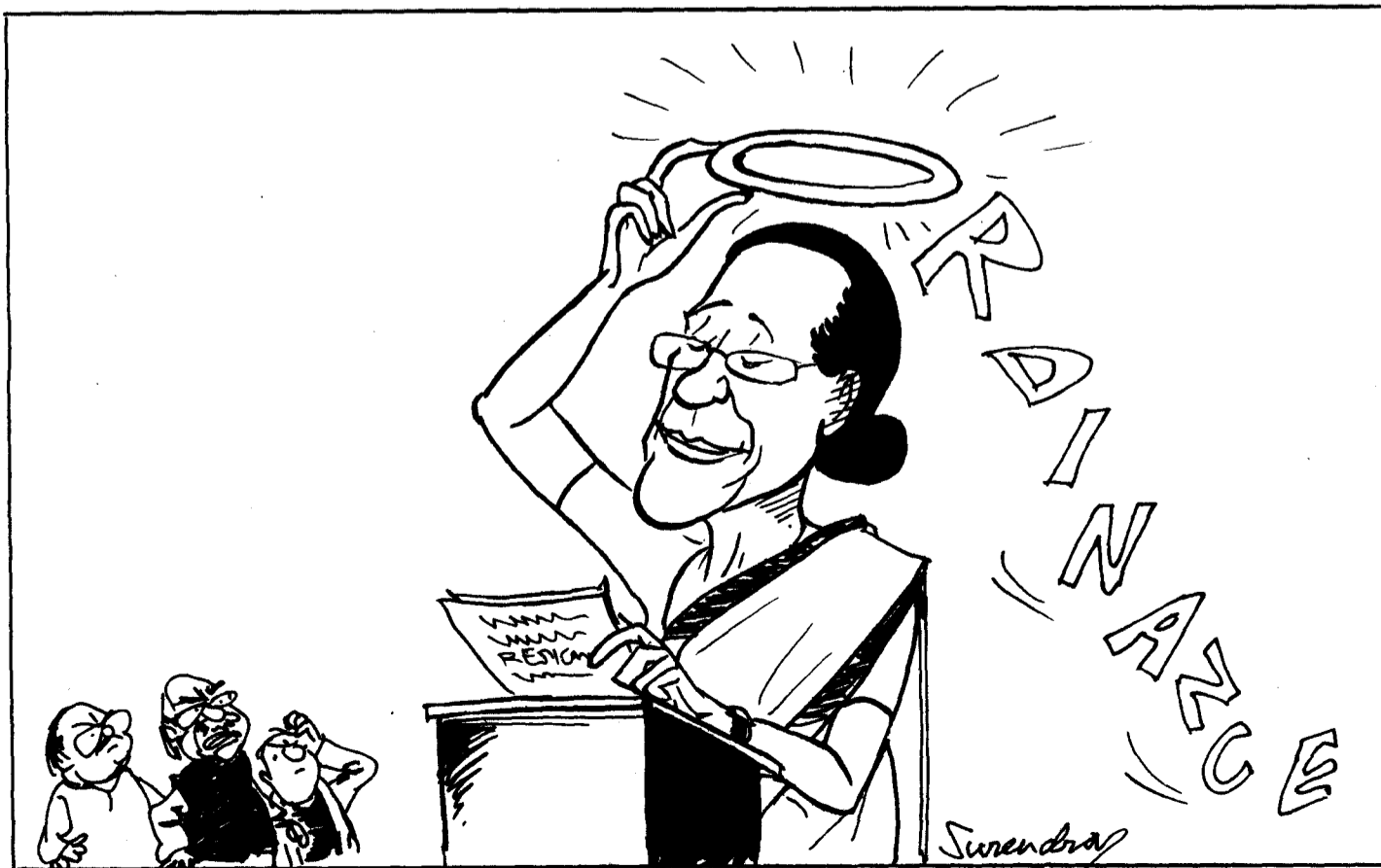
The HuA gained international attention when it kidnapped European and American hostages in 1994 and 1995, in murderous efforts to secure Azhar Masood's release. In 1997, the U.S. declared the HuA a terrorist organisation, which led the group to resume calling itself the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. A year later, the U.S. fired missiles at two Harkat-run camps in Afghanistan. The hijacking of IC 814, however, demonstrated that its capabilities had not been diminished.

Ironically, however, Azhar Masood's first action on his return to Pakistan was to found a new organisation, the Jaish-e-Mohammad. Much of the Harkat's cadre defected to the new group, which also took over its offices and financial assets. Matters came to a head in 2001, when the Harkat provided support to the Taliban in Afghanistan against the U.S. By 2003, both the Harkat and the Jaish had lost their primacy to the Lashkar, which did not challenge Pakistan's new pro-U.S. stance in Afghanistan.

Now, though, it seems clear that the Harkat is being reborn from the ashes it was reduced to by the events of September 11, 2001, and the U.S. war in Afghanistan. Indian intelligence officials estimate that of the 240-odd terrorists who have crossed the LoC since the Kashmir earthquake in October 2005, upwards of 80 belong to the Harkat. If these figures are accurate, it would suggest that the group is rivalled, in terms of cadre recently pumped into Jammu and Kashmir, only by the Lashkar.

Does this rebirth have state patronage? It has become clear in recent weeks that Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf finds himself in increasing conflict with some of his one-time allies, notably Islamist hardliners in the Lashkar. As such, Pakistan's covert services could be throwing their weight behind the Harkat as a counterweight. On the other hand, the Harkat revival could be part of a generalised Islamist offensive leading into the 2007 elections in Pakistan, in which pro-*jihad* clerical parties hope to acquire power. What is clear, though, is this: Pakistan's Islamist armies have no intention of joining in a *détente* with India that promises them only their obliteration.

CARTOONSCAPE





Police say the four were planning to target VVIPs, the public and religious places. AP photo

Four Harkat men on VVIP trail killed in Gujarat encounter

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, MARCH 17

IN a pre-dawn encounter, the Ahmedabad police today shot dead four men reportedly having links with the Kashmir-based Harkat-ul-Mujahideen on the outskirts of the city.

The Crime Branch did not identify the four youths, but said their objective seemed to have been to "establish a terror network and target VVIPs, public and religious places".

The encounter, which took place around 3 am in a house near Vatva, left a constable injured. All four men were alive when taken to hospital but died later.

The Crime Branch, which led the operation, said it had also recovered four pistols, some ammunition, detonators, three mobile phones (two with local SIM cards and one roaming) and a plastic bag containing some explosive material, with 'Mission Kashmir' printed on it. "Jehadi" literature and Rs 1 lakh cash were reportedly also found in one room.

Incidentally, while police claim there was a gunbattle

when police asked the four men to surrender, the neighbours said they heard not more than five bullets being fired and that the encounter lasted barely 30 seconds.

Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime) P P Pande was vague when asked about the identity of the four. "They belonged to the north and surrounding regions. All four were below 30 years of age and we are yet to confirm their identities," Pande said.

He added that *prima facie* it appeared the men belonged to the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. "Their objective appears to have been to establish terror links and a network to target VVIPs, the public and religious places. We think they were also trying to recruit youngsters," Pande said.

Officials said that after the recent Varanasi blasts and the RDX blast at Ahmedabad railway station, vigilance had been stepped up in the city. Crime Branch officials said they were investigating if the four militants had a hand in the Varanasi and Ahmedabad station blasts.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

4 Harkat men shot

Police said they had received a tip-off that armed militants had rented a two-bedroom house in Ganga Row House Society, near Vinzol railway station. According to police, the four moved into the colony almost three months back, renting the house with the help of security guard Dineshbhai.

The house was empty today except for four mattresses, a pot and a bucket in the kitchen. Pistols allegedly used by the men to fire at police and empty shells were strewn all over the two bedrooms.

The four appear to have been sleeping when police raided the place early morning.

Neighbours, who woke up to the gunfire, said they didn't know much about the four youths as they left early morning and returned very late in the night.

Shams Parvez, the builder of the colony who rented out the house, also claimed to know little.

"I rented the house on the guard's recommendation since he brought them to me," Parvez said.

4 terrorists shot dead in Ahmedabad

Varanasi Blast Link Not Ruled Out

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Four terrorists, suspected to be of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, were killed in a police encounter early on Friday. Four policemen were injured in the operation. Gujarat police sources said two of the militants were from Pakistan while the rest have roots in Kashmir.

This is the first module of this terrorist outfit to be busted outside its usual region of operation—Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. The operation was carried out by the Ahmedabad crime branch on basis of a tip-off from central intelligence agencies.

At 3 am a quiet locality of Vatva, next to railway tracks in Vinzol, got a rude awakening with the crossfire between the terrorists and the cops. Teams of crime branch headed by assistant commissioner of police G L Singhal opened covering fire for another team to break into the Ganga row house, where the terrorists were holed up.

Four automatic pistols with some magazines, about 1 kg of pale-yellow explosive substance that the police believe could be RDX, an IED and a detonator were recovered from the encounter spot.

Crime branch officials also did not rule out the pos-

sibility of this terrorist module being linked to the Ahmedabad and Varanasi blasts. Police sources say that names of at least three of the gunned down terrorists figure in the list of most wanted terrorists in Kashmir.

"Photographs of the terrorists have been sent to central police agencies to confirm their identities," said joint commissioner of police, crime, P P Pandey.

Forensic officials said that the explosive substance recovered could also be potassium chlorate or potassium nitrate. "The substance has to be chemically analysed to ascertain the type of explosive," said forensic officials.

"Some pamphlets, booklets in Urdu and a CD of jihadi literature were recovered from the house. Three mobile phones, cash worth Rs 1.21 lakh, some sensitive documents and a telephone diary have also been seized," said DCP (crime), Manoj Sashidhar.

Crime branch officials caught up with the militants, who were planning a terrorist strike like blasts or VIP killings. "Our intelligence inputs led us to the gang hiding in Vatva. The team first cordoned off the house and then asked them to surrender. The militants opened fire in reply and we fired back," said Pandey.

18 MAR 2006

Varanasi blast suspects released

Press Trust of India

VARANASI, March 12. — The two persons, who were detained by Uttar Pradesh police in connection with the twin blasts here, were freed today after eye-witnesses failed to identify them, official sources here said.

Ali and Ansar, whose faces resembled the sketches of the suspects released by police, were paraded a number of times before the two witnesses at a hotel in the temple town yesterday, the sources said.

After the identification parade, the two eye-witnesses said they were not the same persons who had allegedly kept a bag containing the bomb at Godaulia market on 7 March.

The two, along with six others, were picked up from a marketplace in Hardoi on Friday evening. Shopkeepers of Godaulia market were called to the hotel to identify the two suspects.

Both Ali and Ansar have been

asked to report to the police about the movement and not to leave the place without prior information of the police, they said.

Police had prepared the sketches on the basis of information provided by the shopkeepers who had watched the movements of the suspects. Hardoi police station in-charge Mr VK Mishra said the two had booked rooms in the rest house where they had checked in on Thursday in the name of Javed, a resident of Dulaipur in Jaunpur district.

Pakistan-based militant outfit Lashkar-e-Taiyaba today denied its involvement in last week's Varanasi blasts and said it had no connection with those arrested in Uttar Pradesh and Goa. "The blasts at Varanasi were aimed at defaming 'jehad' in Kashmir," LeT spokesman Mr Abu Huzaifa told Kashmir News Service, a local news agency, in Srinagar.

He claimed that the blasts at public places in the country, including Jammu and Kashmir, were being

engineered by "Indian secret agencies". "We have no hand in such acts," the spokesman said. The LeT spokesman also denied that those arrested in Uttar Pradesh and Goa had any connection with the outfit.

The LeT statement comes four days after a hitherto unknown group Lashkar-e-Qahab owned responsibility for the twin blasts in Varanasi. A caller introducing himself as a spokesman of the outfit, Abu Feroz, contacted a private TV channel in Srinagar and claimed his outfit was responsible for the twin blasts.

The arrest of a militant in Goa has foiled plans of Pakistan-based militant groups to carry out terror strikes in the tourist state, similar to the 2002 Bali blasts in Indonesia, officials sources said in Delhi today.

The militant, Tarique Jalal, was tasked by his masters from across the border to create "sleeping cells" in Goa to enable ultras to attack hotels and other places frequented by foreigners.

Bomb defused, terror stalks Mumbai & Goa

HT Correspondent
Mumbai, March 11

A DAY before the 13th anniversary of the Mumbai serial bomb blasts, a major terrorist strike in the city was averted on Saturday with the timely detection of two kg of ammonium nitrate from Byculla railway station in central Mumbai. Similar explosives were used to trigger the blasts in Varanasi.

Mumbai Police's Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) on Saturday morning defused components of an 'incomplete' IED (improvised explosive device) — two kg of ammonium nitrate of explosives grade — after having recovered the stuff with other electronic components from a toilet at Byculla railway station.

Police commissioner A.N. Roy told *Hindustan Times* that an ATS team found an 'incomplete' IED package from the roof of a toilet block on platform No. 1 between 9.45 am and 10 am.

"It was an incomplete IED, but had material and other electronic parts that are necessary to assemble and detonate an IED, which could have been quickly assembled. When we found it, it wasn't in a position to be used", Roy said.

"We have to find out who kept it at the railway station", Roy said. He clarified that nobody had alerted the ATS.

But the railway police had a different story to tell. "The Central Railway's divisional control room received a message at about 10.30 am about a bomb in the gents public toilet at Byculla station. The Government Railway Police was immediately informed and they swung into action", A.K. Singh, PRO, Central Railway, told



Cops defuse the bombs at Girgaum Chowpatty

HT. "We promptly cordoned off Byculla station and stopped all movement of down trains on platform No. 1", he added.

Goa too on the edge

POSSIBLE TERRORIST strikes at popular tourist locations in Goa, too, were prevented with the arrest of a militant with explosives, including one kg of RDX, and firearms from Margao railway station.

Identifying the militant as Tarique Jalal, alias Tarique Batlo, DGP Neeraj Kumar said the police recovered one kg of RDX, two Russian-made hand-grenades, two electronic detonators, two cameras, a mobile phone and a CD from him after his arrest on Friday night.

The DGP said Tariq was a member of Pakistan-based group Tehriq-e-ul-Mujahiddin, which works under Lashkar-e-Tayyeba.

Varanasi blasts: Suspects paraded, p2

বারাণসীতেও আঙুল উঠছে লঙ্করের দিকে

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা, নয়াদিল্লি, ৮ মার্চ: সন্দেহটা আগেই হয়েছিল। তদন্তে নেমে সেটাই আরও স্পষ্ট হয়ে উঠেছে গোয়েন্দাদের কাছে। মন্দিরনগরী বারাণসীতে বিস্ফোরণের পিছনেও পাক মদতে পুষ্ট লঙ্কর-ই-তইবার হাত আছে বলে মনে করছেন গোয়েন্দারা। স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী শিবরাজ পাটিলের কাছে তাঁরা যে রিপোর্ট দিয়েছেন, তাতে বলা হয়েছে, গত অক্টোবরে লঙ্কর-ই-তইবা যে ধাঁচে দিল্লিতে বিস্ফোরণ ঘটিয়েছিল, ঠিক সে ভাবেই বিস্ফোরণ ঘটানো হয়েছে বারাণসীতে। এই ঘটনায় যুক্ত সন্দেহভাজন দুই ব্যক্তির স্কেচও তৈরি করা হচ্ছে। ইতিমধ্যেই দু'টি পৃথক ঘটনায় দিল্লি ও উত্তরপ্রদেশে তিন লঙ্কর জঙ্গির মৃত্যু হয়েছে। বারাণসীর ঘটনার সঙ্গে এদের যোগ কতটা, তা খতিয়ে দেখা হচ্ছে।

কেন্দ্রীয় স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী শিবরাজ পাটিল জানিয়েছেন, “বারাণসী বিস্ফোরণের কর্মপদ্ধতি দেখে বলা যায়, দিল্লির ধাঁচেই এই বিস্ফোরণ ঘটানো হয়েছে। তবে ঠিক কারা এই ঘটনা ঘটিয়েছে, তা পূর্ণাঙ্গ তদন্তের পরেই জানা যাবে।” স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রক সূত্রের খবর, দিল্লিতে সরোজিনী নগর বাজারে প্রেসার কুকারের মধ্যে টাইম-ডিভাইস এবং অ্যামোনিয়াম নাইট্রেট ব্যবহার করে বিস্ফোরণ ঘটানো হয়েছিল। বারাণসীর সঙ্কটমোচন মন্দিরেও একই পদ্ধতিতে বিস্ফোরণ ঘটানো হয়েছে। উত্তরপ্রদেশের স্বরাষ্ট্র দফতরের প্রিন্সিপাল সেক্রেটারি আজ জানিয়েছেন, যে প্রেসার কুকার বোমা বারাণসীতে ব্যবহার করা হয়েছে, সেগুলি সম্ভবত বিহার থেকে আনা হয়েছিল। দিল্লিতে তিনটি বোমা তিনটি ভিন্ন জায়গায় রাখা হয়েছিল, এখানেও তাই। কিন্তু বারাণসীতে সঙ্কটমোচন মন্দির, ক্যান্টনমেন্ট স্টেশনে বিস্ফোরণ হলেও তৃতীয় যে জায়গায় বোমা রাখা হয়েছিল, সেটি ফটার আগেই নিষ্ক্রিয় করা হয়। আর এখান থেকেই গোটা ঘটনার রহস্য ভেদের চেষ্টা করছেন গোয়েন্দারা।

তদন্তে নেমে পুলিশ ও গোয়েন্দারা জানতে পারেন, গত কাল বারাণসীর কাছে একটি দোকানে ঢুকে দুই ব্যক্তি একশো টাকা দিয়ে একটি পাপোষ কেনে। এর পরে দোকানের সামনেই একটি ব্যাগ রেখে তারা হটতে শুরু করে। দোকানদার ওই ব্যাগ নিয়ে যাওয়ার কথা বললে দু'জন জানায়, কিছু ক্ষণ পরেই তারা ফিরে আসবে। কিন্তু তাদের ফিরতে দেরি দেখে পুলিশকে খবর দেওয়া হয়। ওই ব্যাগের ভিতর থেকে একটি প্রেসার কুকার বোমা পাওয়া যায়। সেটি নিষ্ক্রিয় করে ফেলা হয়। ওই দোকানদারের সাহায্য নিয়ে ওই সন্দেহভাজন দুই ব্যক্তির স্কেচ তৈরি করছেন পুলিশ ও গোয়েন্দারা। এ ছাড়া, গত কাল বিস্ফোরণের সময় সঙ্কটমোচন মন্দিরে একটি বিয়ের অনুষ্ঠান চলছিল। ভিডিও ক্যামেরায় বিয়েটি রেকর্ড করা হয়। ওই ভিডিও টেপটি এখন গোয়েন্দাদের জিম্মায়। টেপে যে সমস্ত অপরিচিত লোকের ছবি রয়েছে, তাদের সম্পর্কে জানার জন্য ভিডিও টেপটি খুঁটিয়ে দেখার পাশাপাশি ক্যামেরাম্যানের সাহায্যও নিচ্ছেন গোয়েন্দারা। ক্যান্টনমেন্ট স্টেশনের কাছে পড়ে থাকা একটি অ্যাম্বাসাডর গাড়িকেও সন্দেহের তালিকায় রেখেছেন গোয়েন্দারা।

বারাণসী বিস্ফোরণের সূত্রে তল্লাশি চালাতে গিয়ে দু'টি পৃথক ঘটনায় তিন লঙ্কর জঙ্গির মৃত্যু হয়েছে। জম্মু-কাশ্মীর পুলিশ ও উত্তরপ্রদেশ পুলিশের স্পেশ্যাল টাস্ক ফোর্সের যৌথ অভিযানে লখনউয়ে মৃত্যু হয়েছে পাকিস্তানে প্রশিক্ষণপ্রাপ্ত মাজিদ ওরফে সালার ওরফে সালিম নামে লঙ্কর-ই-তইবার এক শীর্ষ স্থানীয় জঙ্গির। সূত্রের খবর, নিহত সালারের সঙ্গে দিল্লি বিস্ফোরণে প্রকাশিত স্কেচের অনেক মিল আছে। অন্য একটি ঘটনায়, উত্তরপ্রদেশ থেকে গাড়িতে দিল্লি টোকর পরে দিল্লি পুলিশের স্পেশ্যাল সেলের হাতে মারা গিয়েছে দুই লঙ্কর জঙ্গি। এর মধ্যে গুলাম ইয়াজদানি নামে এক জনকে শনাক্ত করা হয়েছে। তারই মধ্যে রটছে গুজবও। আজ সকালে জয়পুরের একটি পাবলিক স্কুলে, দিল্লির একটি সরকারি ব্যাঙ্কে ও চণ্ডীগড়ের জেলা আদালতে বোমা রাখা আছে বলে রটে যায়। কোথাওই বোমার হদিস মেলেনি।

সরকার এখন সর্বত্রই নিরাপত্তা জোরদার করতে চায়। উত্তরপ্রদেশের অযোধ্যা, মথুরা আর বারাণসীর কাশী বিশ্বনাথ মন্দিরের নিরাপত্তা কেন্দ্রীয় আধা সামরিক বাহিনী দিয়ে থাকে। কেন্দ্রীয় গোয়েন্দারা বিভিন্ন জনবহুল এলাকায় জঙ্গি হানার আশঙ্কার কথা বললেও, সঙ্কটমোচনের মতো মন্দিরে সে রকম কোনও নিরাপত্তা ছিল না। স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রক সূত্রে জানানো হয়েছে, আগে থেকে নির্দিষ্ট খবর না থাকলে সর্বত্র যথাযথ নিরাপত্তা দেওয়া কেন্দ্র বা রাজ্যের পক্ষে সম্ভব হয় না। সে কারণে আজ এক উচ্চপর্যায়ের বৈঠকে স্থির হয়, প্রত্যেক রাজ্য থেকে এ রকম স্পর্শকাতর এলাকার তালিকা নতুন করে চাওয়া হবে। মন্দির-মসজিদ-গুরুদ্বার-গির্জায় বেসরকারি নিরাপত্তা রক্ষীর সংখ্যা বাড়ানো নিয়ে প্রস্তাব পাঠানো হবে।

● সংযত থেকেই সঙ্কট মোচনের অপেক্ষায় বারাণসী...পৃঃ ৫

Varanasi unfazed by terror attacks

Manhunt On To Nab Culprits, Temple Security Beefed Up

Varanasi: Unfazed by overnight blasts, people in large numbers thronged the Sankat Mochan temple and the Cantonment Railway Station on Wednesday morning as the authorities launched a probe and a vigorous manhunt to nab the perpetrators of the dastardly act.

Security has been beefed up across the city, specially in the temple areas, with the deployment of additional police and paramilitary personnel in the wake of BJP-VHP-sponsored general strike across the state.

Union home minister Shivraj Patil, who visited the town late

bring perpetrators of the blasts to justice.

A Lashkar-e-Taiba militant, suspected to be involved in the conspiracy behind the blasts, was killed in an encounter jointly carried out by Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force and Jammu and Kashmir Police in Gosaiganj area of Lucknow.

Patil, in a statement to Parliament, said that the temple was targeted to create communal tension in the country. He said additional forces— five companies (500 personnel) of Rapid Action Force and 10 companies (1000 personnel) of PAC have been deployed in Varanasi for maintaining peace and public order.

Security across the country, especially at places of worship, was tightened to ensure that there was no communal flare up. Investigators, trying to collect evidence from the blast site, found melted parts of a pressure cooker in which the bomb was kept.

Markets wore a deserted look and educational institutions and business establishment across the city remained closed. Police resorted to lathi-charge to disperse a mob which showed black flags when chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav visited the city to take stock of the situation.

Special squads were pressed into service at the railway station and passengers were subjected to extensive checking before being allowed in the station premises. The blast at the hall of platform number one was so powerful that it completely destroyed the tourist information centre, PCO booth and the central enquiry counters. The impact of the blast was such that patches of cement from the roof fell off and a three-foot crater was formed on the floor.

The inflow of passengers was comparatively less than on other days, station master R S Dubey said. Agencies

2 LeT ultras shot dead in Delhi

New Delhi: Two suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists were killed in an encounter in north-west Delhi in the wee hours of Wednesday. One of the terrorists has been identified as Ghulam Yazdani, who was linked to several recent terror attacks, joint commissioner (special cell) Karnal Singh said. The terrorists were gunned down in Bawana area by a team of special cell sleuths in an encounter at around 5.45 am. Some arms and a vehicle have been recovered from them, Singh said. Agencies

Tuesday night along with Congress President Sonia Gandhi, said explosives hidden inside a pressure cooker and a timer device were used to trigger the blast at Sankat Mochan temple.

At least 20 people were killed and over 50 injured in the twin blasts which UP principal secretary (home) Alok Sinha said was the handiwork of terrorists. Calling it a "very sad moment", Gandhi asked people to maintain communal harmony. She said that the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh government would work jointly to



Security personnel inspect the bomb blast site of Sankat Mochan temple in Varanasi on Thursday. Another picture on page 10

09 MAR 2006 THE TIMES OF INDIA

The New York Times
nytimes.com

March 9, 2006

Indian City Shaken by Temple Bombings

By SOMINI SENGUPTA

VARANASI, India, March 8 — Their hushed voices were drowned out by the howls of demonstrators. Just a stone's throw away lay the gory wreckage of Tuesday's temple blast.

But inside a small square chamber on the compound of the Sankat Mochan temple on Wednesday afternoon sat four men facing their monkey god and carrying out a job they had been paid to do: chanting the name of a Hindu god as a prayer for a stranger who was sick.

"Om Sri Ram, jai Ram, jai jai Ram," the men muttered through the din and sensation. An interruption of the incantation could not be allowed.

Modern terror more than interrupted the rhythm of this 400-year-old institution, as it did, in smaller ways, the rhythm of daily life in this 2,500-year-old city. A pair of homemade bombs on Tuesday evening tore through the Sankat Mochan temple and the nearby city railway station, killing at least 14 and injuring more than 100.

Law enforcement authorities on Wednesday said explosives had been stuffed inside a pressure cooker and left inside an inconspicuous bag at each site. The police found a similar unexploded device at a busy city market. The bomb at the train station left a wide shallow crater at the terminal; shrapnel pockmarked the ceiling above. The police said they did not know who was responsible.

The other bomb was set off at dusk in the courtyard of the Sankat Mochan temple, dedicated to the Hindu monkey deity, Hanuman, as thousands of worshipers gathered for the evening oil-lamp prayers. Tuesday is the most auspicious day at the Hanuman temple, and dozens of couples had come to be blessed in marriage.

The blast forced all services to be suspended for four hours. "For us what could be a more shattering experience?" the temple's head priest and administrator, Veer Bhadra Mishra, 68, wondered aloud on Wednesday. Hindus believe the temple compound, surrounded by woods, is Hanuman's home.

Clashes between Hindus and Muslims did not come to pass, as feared, despite protest marches called by Hindu radicals and their politician allies. Varanasi, also known as Benares, was free of violence Wednesday.

But the city was also missing its usual chaotic, vibrant and intense character. With a strike called by a number of Hindu nationalist groups, schools and businesses across the city were closed. Boatmen at the Ganges River, a daily draw for pilgrims and tourists, complained bitterly that business had dropped off. Varanasi's narrow, normally impassable streets could be easily navigated.

Several Muslim shopkeepers said they had shuttered their businesses as a gesture of respect for the dead

and their families, and they sat on the stoops of their shops chewing betel leaves, chatting, watching the day pass. Riot police officers stood at street corners.

Politicians quickly seized upon the Varanasi blasts, coming as they did in India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, where elections are expected to be held later this year.

L. K. Advani, the leader of the opposition Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, on Wednesday accused the government, led by the Congress Party, of not being tough enough on terrorists and announced a procession to denounce the blasts.

Sonia Gandhi, leader of the Congress Party, wasted no time in rushing to the city to commiserate with victims and their families and review the damage. With Congress eager to reclaim Uttar Pradesh from a local rival political party, Mrs. Gandhi pressed both the state and federal governments to capture the culprits and mete out "very strict punishment." The Congress Party's main rival, Uttar Pradesh's chief minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav, called for unity.

Meanwhile, state officials announced that the police in the town of Lucknow, also in Uttar Pradesh, had shot and killed a wanted man suspected of being a militant and for having links to Kashmir insurgents. They offered no concrete evidence linking the dead suspect to the Varanasi bombing. "We are collecting evidence," said Yashpal Singh, the state police chief. "We do not have any solid proof to move in a particular direction."

At the normally bustling commercial strip called Bengali Tola, the shopkeepers, most all of them Muslims, had closed their shops and headed home Tuesday night as soon as the news of the blasts came. By the end of the night, they said they had resolved to take the day off. There was no telling, they said, what violence could flare up.

"We want that you should write we also regret this very deeply, we also feel the sorrow," said Muhammad Yusha, 45, who makes his living as a polisher of Varanasi's famous silk saris.

Never before, said a sari shop owner, Mumtaz Ahmed, 38, had he seen virtually every Muslim-owned shop closed for the day. "This kind of shutdown has never happened before," he said. "But nor has this kind of attack."

By midafternoon, Sankat Mochan was thick with visitors, but they were by and large visiting politicians, gawkers, journalists from afar and crowds of Hindu hard-liners who noisily denounced their political opponents and waved flags.

A small stream of worshipers sat before the altar, mumbling quiet prayers amid the bustle. "For a devotee there's no disturbance," Surrender Singh, a timber merchant, said. "I'm doing my worship in God's house." He said he could not be bothered with protests.

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2006

Facing terrorism

HO-10
9/3

Behind the inhumanity of the terrorist strikes in Varanasi's Sankat Mochan temple and a railway station there was a clear plan and mission – to generate communal tension and conflict. Responding effectively to the challenge of terrorism demands clarity of understanding as well as intellectual and technological resources. In a recent article, a terrorism analyst pointed to the “unfortunate tendency – more pronounced in India than elsewhere – on the part of political parties to exploit acts of terrorism to highlight or promote their own political agenda.” Chauvinistic efforts to draw political mileage from the Varanasi tragedy illustrate this point. No great imagination is needed to determine that the terrorists of the Lashkar-e-Taiba or kindred organisation who bombed the ancient city wished to provoke communal trouble, as Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil has pointed out. But that apparently is not the understanding of the BJP leader of the Opposition and former Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, who sees the bombings as the outcome of “competitive minority appeasement.” He could have addressed Pakistan's unwillingness to eliminate the infrastructure of terror groups operating from its soil, a problem that has had tragic consequences not just for India but also Afghanistan, Bangladesh, swathes of east and central Asia, Europe, and the United States. But Pavlovian Conditioning produced the BJP response that the Congress and its ‘pseudo-secular’ allies were to blame.

The reluctance to address security issues seriously cuts across party lines. Few politicians have shown an abiding interest in the complex challenges posed by terrorism and low-intensity conflict, a problem painfully demonstrated by the errors of fact made by Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav during his press conference on the Varanasi bombings. Without an informed political debate on these issues, desperately needed infrastructural reform of the counter-terrorism apparatus will continue to be stalled. Alone among major countries, India is yet to build a countrywide online criminal database. Hypothetically, had police personnel in a southern city arrested Mohammad Salim bin Aziz, the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist shot dead in Lucknow yesterday, they would have had no idea that he was wanted in Srinagar; Jammu and Kashmir authorities, in turn, would have had no knowledge for days or even weeks that he had been detained. Barring the Intelligence Bureau's poorly funded Joint Task Force and Multi-Agency Centre, there is no institutional mechanism for sharing information across State lines. For years, experts have called for these reforms, along with better training in both physical security procedures and intelligence-gathering. The Varanasi bombings, which snuffed out 20 innocent lives and injured a large number of people, must not become one more grisly footnote in the history of a diabolical terror campaign that has claimed several hundreds of lives across India.

09 MAR 2006

THE HINDU

09 MAR 2006

Bomb blasts rock Varanasi, 20 killed

Over 50 injured; Sankat Mochan temple, railway station targeted: security stepped up nationwide

VARANASI: Three bomb explosions rocked this holy city on Tuesday claiming 20 lives and injuring over 50.

Immediately after the blasts, the police were put on high alert in several parts of the country and security was stepped up at places of worship, vital installations and government buildings.

The first blast took place inside the Sankat Mochan temple adjacent to the Kashi Vishwanath temple. The bomb went off when the temple was teeming with devotees during the evening "aarti."

Minutes later, at 6.25 p.m., another bomb went off in the holding area of platform number one of the Varanasi Cantonment railway station.

The third blast occurred in a crowded coach of the Shiv Ganga Express minutes before it was to set off for New Delhi. The compartment was packed with people going on vacation ahead of the Holi festival.

CRPF to be deployed

A report from New Delhi said the Centre placed for deployment 200 CRPF personnel in Varanasi and another 300 elsewhere in Uttar Pradesh. Security at temples and vital installations in the State, Delhi and Mumbai was stepped-up.

The Union Home Ministry reviewed the security situation and alerted all States to be extra vigilant.

Kalam appeals for calm

President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam condemned the blasts and ap-

pealed for calm and peace.

A Rashtrapati Bhavan spokesman said the President condoled the loss of lives in the blasts and conveyed his sympathies to the families. He also wished the injured a speedy recovery.

"The President is sure that the State Government is taking all possible steps to help the victims and to maintain peace there," he said.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi said the incidents were "mindless acts of terrorism" and expressed her deep concern and anguish at the loss of lives.

Soft policies: BJP

The BJP alleged that "soft" policies of the UPA Government towards terrorism and the "minority appeasement politics" of the Samajwadi Party Government in Uttar Pradesh were responsible for the blasts.

Spokesman Prakash Javadekar said party president Rajnath Singh was leaving for Varanasi to study the situation.

The RSS termed the blasts "shocking and disturbing" and accused both the Central and State Governments of being "incapable" of dealing with the menace of terrorism.

"It is a shocking and disturbing incident. Hindu auspicious occasions and sacred places such as Ayodhya and Varanasi have of late been becoming targets of terrorists.

"Both the Central and Uttar Pradesh Governments have proved to be totally incapable in containing this menace of terrorism which is spreading like

wildfire all over the country," RSS national executive member Ram Madhav told PTI over phone from Hyderabad.

War against nation: VHP

The VHP described the blasts as a "war against Indian nation," and announced a bandh in the holy city in protest against the incident.

"The VHP condemns the Jehadi terrorist attack. It is a war against the Indian nation. We should together fight this Jehadi terrorism," general secretary Praveen Togadia said in a statement from Valsad in Gujarat.

He also announced a "Varanasi Bandh" in protest against the blasts.

Ex-gratia

A red alert has been sounded in Uttar Pradesh. Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav announced ex-gratia relief for the victims and appealed to the people to maintain peace and order.

In a statement issued in Lucknow, Mr. Yadav said the culprits would not be spared.

"Stern action will be initiated against all those found involved in the incident."

He announced an ex-gratia of Rs. five lakh to those killed in the blasts, Rs. one lakh to those seriously injured and Rs. 50,000 to those with minor injuries.

Patrolling has been intensified throughout the State, especially in those areas where communal clashes had taken place last Friday last. — PTI, UNI, AFP



OUTRAGE IN TEMPLE TOWN: Blood and clothes scattered at the Sankat Mochan temple at Varanasi on Tuesday following a bomb explosion. — PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

■ 50 INJURED ■ KALAM, MANMOHAN APPEAL FOR CALM ■ 500 CRPF PERSONNEL DEPLOYED IN UP

Twin blasts kill 20 in Varanasi

8/13



Blood stains on the floor of the Varanasi Cantonment railway station where a bomb exploded near a waiting room: (Above) Men carry the body of a victim out of the Sankatmochan temple complex soon after an explosion rocked the place of worship. In Varanasi on Tuesday. — AFP

SNS & PTI

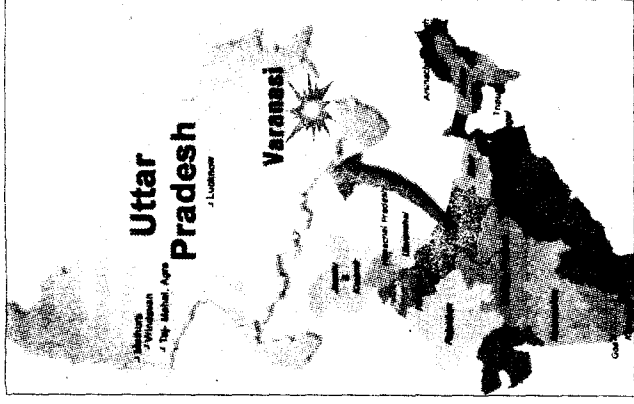
VARANASI/NEW DELHI, March 7. — Two blasts in quick succession rocked Sankatmochan temple and the Varanasi Cantonment railway station here this evening, killing at least 20 people and injuring more than 50, some of them seriously. Bomb disposal squad personnel helped avert a third at Dashashwamedh Ghat, two km off Kashi Vishwanath temple, where four bombs were found and subsequently defused.

Soon after the blasts, police were put on high alert in several parts of the country and security was beefed up at places of worship, vital installations and government buildings. The Centre also issued advisories to all states instructing their governments to ensure there was no law and order violation and any communal flare-up.

The first explosion occurred inside the Sankatmochan temple complex when it was teeming with devotees who had come to attend the evening prayers. It killed at least six persons and left 25 injured.

Minutes later at 6.25 p.m. a blast rocked the railway station. Fourteen people were killed and 30 were injured when a bomb went off near the waiting room on platform no. 1 at a time when the Delhi-bound Shivaganga Express was berthed there, an official source said. The explosion was so powerful that it left a one-foot deep crater on the blood-splattered platform where parts of bodies lay scattered. The impact caused window panes to shatter and flattened wooden structures. There was an unconfirmed report of a second blast at the railway station. The Shivaganga Express was thoroughly checked before it was allowed to leave for Delhi.

Two weddings were being solemnised at the Sankatmochan temple complex when the bomb exploded



FACT FILE

- **First blast at Sankatmochan Temple where marriages were being solemnised**
- **Varanasi Cantonment railway station reports the maximum casualties — 14 — when a bomb explodes there minutes later at 6.25 p.m.**
- **Centre issues security advisories to states. Red alert sounded in Somnath, Dwarka and Hardwar**
- **UPA chief Mrs Sonia Gandhi and Union home minister Mr Shivraj Patil leave for Varanasi**

there. People were seen ferrying bleeding persons, including several old women, to hospitals. While a police officer said four persons had been killed, an eyewitness, Mr Umeshwar Dube, said six persons had died and 25 others had been seriously injured. A newly-wed man, who had

come to the temple to be blessed by the priests, was among those killed, another eyewitness said. The persons injured in Sankatmochan temple were rushed to nearby Sir Sunderlal Hospital, where doctors put the condition of some of them as critical, a source said. Abandoned slippers and shoes lay in a pool of blood at the temple complex which was cordoned off by policemen. Hundreds of Sangh Parivar activists converged outside the temple to condemn the blast and demand action against the culprits. The BJP and VHP have called a bandh in UP tomorrow.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, who is monitoring the situation, condemned the blasts and appealed to the people to remain calm. President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam made a similar plea. Dr Singh also spoke to the state chief minister, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav. The Union home minister, Mr Shivraj Patil, and the UPA chairperson, Mrs Sonia Gandhi, left for Varanasi to assess the damage. The Centre has put 500 CRPF personnel at the state government's disposal. Of them, 200 will be deployed in Varanasi alone. The USA sent condolences and wishes for quick recoveries to the victims. "Clearly, our hearts go out to those who've lost loved ones," state department spokesman Mr Sean McCormack said.

The chief minister announced an ex-gratia of Rs five lakh to the next of kin of each deceased, Rs one lakh to each seriously injured person and Rs 50,000 to each person with minor injuries. A red alert has been sounded across Uttar Pradesh. The home ministry sounded a red alert in Somnath, Dwarka and Hardwar besides other important religious places.

Police across West Bengal have been asked to intensify vigil at all places of worship. Mr Raj Kanojia, IG (law and order), said: "We have not sounded a red alert."

CHHATTISGARH ■ Target iron ore exports; damage station in Dantewada dist, abduct six railway officials

Naxals blast railway engine in Chhattisgarh

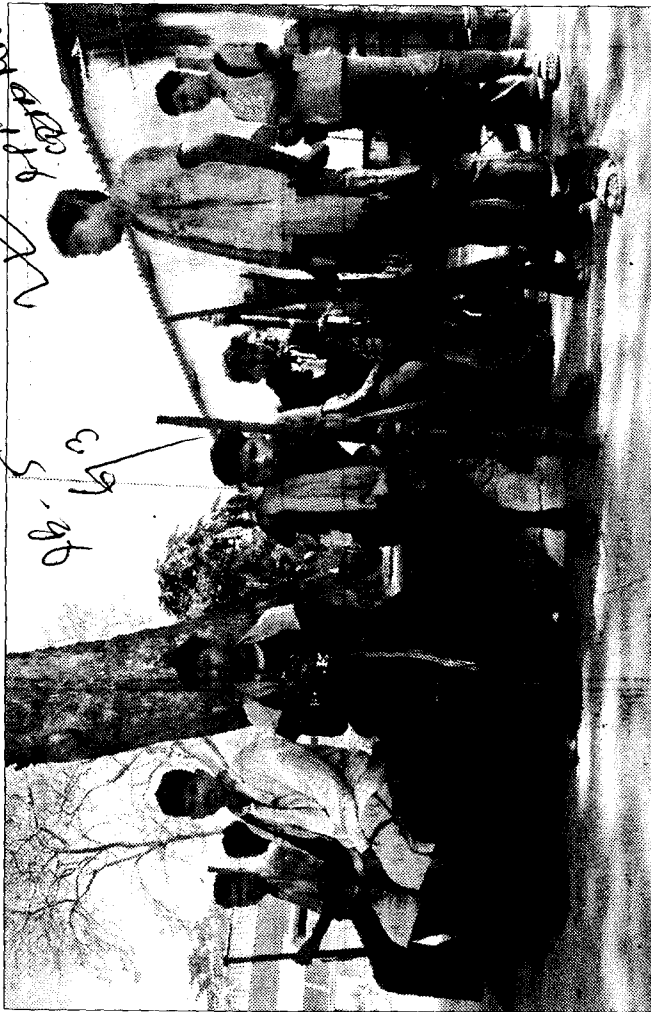
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
RAIPUR, MARCH 5

ARMED Naxalites today blasted a railway engine and damaged a railway station in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh, in an apparent attempt to stop iron ore export from Bailadila, and abducted half a dozen railway officials, police said.

However, no one was injured and the railway personnel were also later released with a warning, they said.

About 50 armed Naxalites came to Bhansi Railway station, about 500 km from Raipur, early morning and after taking hostage all the railway staff present there, planted a landmine on the main building, which however, failed to detonate, police said.

The rebels also took hostage an engine driver waiting at the platform, and took away two wireless sets before exploding the



Armed Naxals at a Chhattisgarh village. Express photo

electric engine, they said.

The engine was badly damaged by the impact of the blast and the railway platform was also

damaged, they said.

The Naxalites later took away with them six railway staff to about half a kilometre but re-

leased them after warning them

not to transport iron ore from that station or else to face the consequences, police said.

Meanwhile, 3 Maoists gunned down in Bihar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GAYA, MARCH 5

THREE members of the proscribed CPI(Maoist) were killed and two constables injured as police foiled a bid by Naxalites to loot firearms from a police station in Bihar's extremist-hit Gaya district, official sources said today.

DIG (Magadh range) Arvind Pandey claimed three Naxalites were shot dead when over 100 extremists of the underground outfit attacked Umaria police station

close to Jharkhand border late last night in an apparent attempt to loot firearms leading to fierce encounter that lasted nearly four hours.

Hundreds of rounds of fire were exchanged and scores of bombs exploded in which two policemen were injured, he said, adding, the Naxalites were seen dragging the bodies of their comrades leaving blood trails on the ground at the scene of the incident. The building of the police station and adjoining residence of the officer in-charge were partially damaged.

Sources from Bastar said the Naxalites have left some literature asking the government to withdraw CRPF personnel and ment to 'stop atrocities on tribals'.

মাওবাদীদের রুখতে উপজাতি এলাকায় শিক্ষা বিস্তারে গুরুত্ব

সুপ্রকাশ চক্রবর্তী

খাতে কেন্দ্রের কাছ থেকে প্রায় ৬৪ লক্ষ টাকা পাওয়া গিয়েছে।

শিক্ষাকেই এ বার মাওবাদীদের বিরুদ্ধে অস্ত্র করতে চাইছে রাজ্যের বামফ্রন্ট সরকার। তাই মাওবাদীদের মোকাবিলায় তফসিলি উপজাতির মানুষের কর্মসংস্থানের সুযোগ বৃদ্ধির পাশাপাশি তাঁদের পরিবারের ছেলেমেয়েদের মধ্যে শিক্ষা বিস্তারের উপরেই বেশি জোর দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

এই লক্ষ্যে তফসিলি জাতি ও উপজাতি শ্রেণির মানুষের জন্য ২০০৫-'০৬ সালে গৃহীত ন'দফা কর্মসূচি পরবর্তী আর্থিক বছর ২০০৬-'০৭ সালেও চালিয়ে যাওয়ার সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েছে রাজ্যের অনগ্রসর শ্রেণি কল্যাণ দফতর। তার মধ্যে ছ'দফা কর্মসূচিই তফসিলি উপজাতি বা আদিবাসী ছেলেমেয়েদের মধ্যে শিক্ষার প্রসার সংক্রান্ত। এই উদ্দেশ্যে প্রথমত বাঁকুড়া, পুরুলিয়া, পশ্চিম মেদিনীপুর-সহ ছ'টি জেলায় আদিবাসী ছেলেমেয়েদের পঞ্চম থেকে দ্বাদশ শ্রেণি পর্যন্ত পড়ার ন'টি বিদ্যালয় স্থাপন করা হবে। বাকি যে-তিনটি জেলা এই কর্মসূচির আওতায় আসবে, সেগুলি হল বর্ধমান, পূর্ব মেদিনীপুর ও দক্ষিণ দিনাজপুর।

ঝাড়গ্রামের ঈশ্বরচন্দ্র বিদ্যাসাগর পলিটেকনিকে ৬০ জন আদিবাসী ছাত্রের জন্য আলাদা করে ইলেকট্রিক্যাল, সিভিল ও মেকানিক্যাল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিংয়ে চার বছরের আংশিক সময়ের যে-ডিপ্লোমা কোর্স চালু করা হয়েছে, ভবিষ্যতে সেই ধরনের কোর্স অন্য কিছু পলিটেকনিকেও চালু হবে। স্বনির্ভর করে তুলতে ৪০০ আদিবাসী ছেলেমেয়েকে বিভিন্ন পেশায় এক বছরের জন্য প্রশিক্ষণ দেওয়া হবে। ঝাড়গ্রামের ওই পলিটেকনিক ছাড়াও এই প্রশিক্ষণ চলবে বাঁকুড়ার বিষ্ণুপুরের কে জি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ইনস্টিটিউট, পুরুলিয়া পলিটেকনিক ও জলপাইগুড়ি পলিটেকনিকে। এই

কলকাতায় বঙ্গ মন্ত্রকের অধীন পোশাক ও ডিজাইন তৈরির প্রশিক্ষণ কেন্দ্রে ওই কাজ শেখানো হবে ৬০ জন আদিবাসী ছাত্রকে। এই খাতে কেন্দ্রের কাছ থেকে ২৩ লক্ষ টাকা পাওয়া গিয়েছে। ইতিমধ্যে ৬০০ জন আদিবাসী ছেলেমেয়েকে বিভিন্ন পেশায় ছ'মাসের প্রশিক্ষণ দেওয়া হচ্ছে। মাসে ২৪০ টাকা ভাতাও দেওয়া হচ্ছে তাঁদের। বিশেষ জোর দেওয়া হয়েছে আদিবাসী মেয়েদের কর্মসংস্থান ও তাঁদের স্বনির্ভর করে তোলার উপরে। ৩২ জন আদিবাসী মেয়েকে বি এড শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ভর্তি করানো হয়েছে। নার্সিং ও খাত্ত্রীবিদ্যায় প্রশিক্ষণ নিচ্ছেন আরও ২১ জন তফসিলি উপজাতিভুক্ত মেয়ে।

তফসিলি উপজাতির উন্নয়নে বৃহত্তর কিছু কর্মসূচিও নেওয়া হয়েছে। পুরুলিয়ার বান্দোয়ান ও বাঁকুড়ার রানিবাঁধ ব্লকে ২০০টি করে আদিবাসী পরিবারকে আগামী আর্থিক বছরে 'ওয়াদি' প্রকল্পের আওতায় আনা হচ্ছে। তাতে তাঁদের নিজস্ব জমিতে অর্থকরী ফল চাষে সাহায্য করা হবে।

উত্তরবঙ্গে ১৭০টি বনবস্তির বাসিন্দাদের উন্নয়নে চলতি বছরে কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারের দেওয়া ১৪ কোটি টাকা বন দফতরের মাধ্যমে খরচ করা হবে। ওই প্রকল্প রূপায়ণের ব্যাপারে বনমন্ত্রী যোগেশ বর্মন সম্প্রতি মহাকরণে তাঁর দফতরের শীর্ষ অফিসারদের সঙ্গে বৈঠক করেন।

পুরুলিয়া, বাঁকুড়া, পশ্চিম মেদিনীপুর, বর্ধমান, উত্তর ২৪ পরগনা, দক্ষিণ দিনাজপুর, জলপাইগুড়ি ও দার্জিলিঙে তফসিলি উপজাতিভুক্ত কৃষকদের চাষের সুবিধার জন্য বিভিন্ন ক্ষুদ্রস্কে প্রকল্প রূপায়ণ করা হবে। এই খাতে কেন্দ্রের কাছ থেকে সাড়ে আট কোটি টাকা পাওয়া গিয়েছে।

03 MAR 2006

ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA

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হানার কৌশল পাতে পুলিশকে বিপাকে ফেলছে মাওবাদীরা

দেবজিৎ ভট্টাচার্য

একের সঙ্গে অন্যের মিল নেই। প্রতিটি অপারেশনেই বদলে যাচ্ছে আক্রমণের কৌশল। যে ভাবে হামলার ছক বদলাচ্ছে মাওবাদীরা তাতে পুলিশ কার্যত দিশেহারা।

মাওবাদী-হানার ধাঁচ জানতে ইতিমধ্যে বাঁকুড়া, পুরুলিয়া ও পশ্চিম মেদিনীপুরে একাধিক প্রশিক্ষণের ব্যবস্থা করেছে পুলিশ। সেখানে মাওবাদীদের ছবি একে ও ক্যাসেট শুনিতে তাদের আক্রমণের কৌশল সম্পর্কে সম্যক ধারণা দেওয়ার চেষ্টা করেছেন পুলিশকর্তারা। কিন্তু একটি ঘটনা ঘটিয়ে যে দ্রুততার সঙ্গে পরবর্তী আক্রমণের পদ্ধতি নির্দিষ্ট করে ফেলছে মাওবাদীরা তার সঙ্গে পুলিশ তাল মেলাতে পারছে না। সেই কারণে কার্যত একতরফা আক্রমণে প্রাণ যাচ্ছে পুলিশের। এখনও পর্যন্ত রাজ্যে যে ক'টি ঘটনায় পুলিশকে টার্গেট করেছে নকশালেরা তার মধ্যে খুব কমই পাল্টা গুলি চালানোর সুযোগ মিলেছে।

মাওবাদী প্রভাবিত তিন জেলায় বর্তমানে ৪৭টি পুলিশ ক্যাম্প রয়েছে। এর মধ্যে পশ্চিম মেদিনীপুরের বেলপাহাড়ি, বিনপুর, লালগড়, শালবনি ও গোয়ালতোড়ে রয়েছে ১৯টি। বাঁকুড়া ও পুরুলিয়ার জঙ্গল লাগোয়া এলাকায় রয়েছে যথাক্রমে ১৫টি ও ১৩টি। এর অধিকাংশ খোলা আকাশের নীচে থাকলেও পুলিশ পাহারা আঁটোসাটো। তার ফাঁক গলে শ্রেফ কৌশল খাটিয়ে ১৩ ফেব্রুয়ারি পুরুলিয়ার কাঁটাডি ফাঁড়ি থেকে আন্নেয়াজ্ঞ লুঠ করে পালিয়ে গিয়েছে মাওবাদীরা। ওই ফাঁড়িটি স্থানীয় স্বাস্থ্যকেন্দ্র চত্বরে। সন্ধ্যা নাগাদ দুই যুবক মাথায় ব্যাণ্ডেজ বেঁধে কাঁটাডি স্বাস্থ্যকেন্দ্রে ঢোকে এবং কর্তব্যরত পুলিশকর্মীরা কিছু বোঝার আগেই মাওবাদীরা তাঁদের নিজেদের কজায় নিয়ে নেয়। তার পরে বিনা বাধায় আন্নেয়াজ্ঞ লুঠ করে পালিয়ে যায়।

তার ১৩ দিনের মাথায় ২৬ ফেব্রুয়ারি বেলপাহাড়িতে মাইন বিস্ফোরণ ঘটিয়ে চার পুলিশকর্মীকে হত্যা করে মাওবাদীরা। এখানে তারা অন্য কৌশল খাটায়। স্থানীয়

ভেলাইডিহা গ্রামে জনসংযোগের খাতিরে ওই দিন পুলিশ স্বাস্থ্যশিবিরের আয়োজন করে। ওই উদ্যোগ যাতে সফল হয় তার জন্য চার-পাঁচ দিন আগে থেকে বেলপাহাড়ির পুলিশ আশপাশ এলাকায় ঘুরে মাইকে স্বাস্থ্যশিবিরের কথা প্রচার করে। মাওবাদীদের কাছেও সে কথা পৌঁছয়। সে দিন থেকেই নকশালেরা হামলার ছক কষতে শুরু করে বলে পুলিশের অনুমান। ওই স্বাস্থ্যশিবিরে প্রায় ৩০০ মানুষ জড়ো হয়েছিলেন। ওই ভিড়েই লুকিয়ে ছিল মাওবাদীরা। পুলিশের অনুমান, রোগী সেজে তারা পুলিশের স্বাস্থ্যশিবিরে এসেছিল।

পুলিশি তদন্তে জানা গিয়েছে, ওই দিন দুপুরেই মাইনের তার পুঁতেছিল মাওবাদীরা। যে তারের মাধ্যমে বিস্ফোরণ ঘটানো হয় সেটি দিন কয়েক আগের কেনা। স্বাস্থ্যশিবিরের জন্য সকাল থেকে জেলা পুলিশের কর্তারা পৌঁছে গিয়েছিলেন ভেলাইডিহায়। তদন্তকারী অফিসারদের অনুমান, স্বাস্থ্যশিবিরে যোগ দেওয়ার থাকার কারণে পুলিশ বাহিনী কখন ফিরবে মাওবাদীরা তা জেনে গিয়েছিল। সেই মতো বিস্ফোরণ ঘটানোর সমস্ত ব্যবস্থা তারা সেরে রেখেছিল। স্বাস্থ্যশিবির থেকে ফেরার পথে বেলপাহাড়ির পুলিশ সেই ফাঁদেই পা দেয়।

প্রতি বারই হামলার দু-তিন আগে থেকে এলাকায় ঘাঁটি গাড়ে মাওবাদী জঙ্গিরা। পুলিশ এ কথা জানে। সেই কারণে বেলপাহাড়িতে তারা ওই পথ মাড়ায়নি। ভেলাইডিহায় স্বাস্থ্যশিবির উপলক্ষে অনেক বেশি সংখ্যক পুলিশ হাজির থাকবে এবং ঘটনার পরে ধরা পড়ে যাওয়ার প্রবল সম্ভাবনা রয়েছে মাওবাদীরা সে কথা জানত। সেই কারণে অ্যাকশন স্কোয়াড নয়, দলীয় সমর্থকদের সাহায্যে সে দিন বিস্ফোরণ ঘটায় মাওবাদীরা। তদন্তকারী অফিসারেরা দেখেছেন, বিস্ফোরণ ঘটেছিল গাড়ির সামনের দিকে। অর্থাৎ সময়ের হেরফেরের পুলিশকর্মীরা আরও বড় বিপদ থেকে বেঁচেছেন। পুলিশের অনুমান, কাঁচা হাতে মাইন বিস্ফোরণ ঘটানো হয়েছে। এবং স্থানীয় মানুষই যে ওই ঘটনা ঘটিয়েছে পুলিশ এই ব্যাপারে আরও নিশ্চিত হয়েছে।

আত্মঘাতী হিনায় না দমে বৃশ বললেন, পাকিস্তানে যাবেনই

করাচি, ২ মার্চ: সকালে নয়াদিল্লিতে মনমোহন সিংহের সঙ্গে আলোচনার আগে জর্জ ডব্লিউ বৃশ তখন রাজঘাটে, গাধীজির সমাধিস্থলে। সেই সময় করাচিতে মার্কিন কনস্যুলেট কঁপে উঠল গাড়িবোমা বিস্ফোরণে। কনস্যুলেটের সামনে এক আত্মঘাতী জঙ্গি গাড়ি বোমাই বিস্ফোরক নিয়ে সোজা ধাক্কা মারে এক মার্কিন কূটনীতির গাড়িতে। বিস্ফোরণে প্রাণ হারিয়েছেন সেই মার্কিন কূটনীতিক ও জঙ্গি-সহ পাঁচ জন। জখম পঞ্চাশেরও বেশি।

এর ঘটনা দুয়েক পরে নয়াদিল্লিতে সাংবাদিক সংঘলানে অবধারিত ভাবেই এই নিয়ে প্রশ্নের মুখে পড়তে হল মার্কিন প্রেসিডেন্টকে। জবাবে বৃশ সাফ জানিয়ে দেন, তিনি পাকিস্তানে যাবেনই। বৃশ বললেন, "সন্ত্রাসবাদী এবং হত্যাকারীরা আমাকে পাকিস্তানে যাওয়া থেকে আটকাতে পারবে না।" একই সঙ্গে আরও এক বার ঘোষণা করলেন, সন্ত্রাসবাদের বিরুদ্ধে লড়াইয়ে আমেরিকার ঘনিষ্ঠ সহযোগী পাকিস্তান। উদ্ধৃত্তিত প্রশংসা করলেন প্রেসিডেন্ট মুশারফেরও।

সফরসূচি অনুযায়ী দু'দিন পরে রাওয়ালপিন্ডির চাকলালা বিমানঘাটিতে নামার কথা বৃশের বিমান এয়ারফোর্স ওয়ালের। সেখান থেকে তিনি যাবেন ইসলামাবাদ। সফরসূচিতে করাচি নেই। তবে এই ঘটনার পরে মুশারফ প্রশাসন কোনও ঝুঁকি নিতে নারাজ। ইসলামাবাদ নিরাপত্তারক্ষীদের আগেই সতর্ক করা হয়েছিল। এ বার সব ক'টি উত্তেজনাপ্রবণ এলাকায় বাড়তি আধা সামরিক বাহিনী মোতায়েন করা হচ্ছে।

আজকের ঘটনার সঙ্গে বৃশের উপহাসে সফরের প্রত্যক্ষ যোগসূত্র অবশ্য দেখতে পাচ্ছে না পাক প্রশাসন। প্রশাসনের কর্তব্যাক্ষিরা বলেছেন, এমনটা মনে হওয়াই স্বাভাবিক। কূটনৈতিক বিশেষজ্ঞেরা অবশ্য বলছেন, কাল কাবুলে লাদেন নিয়ে যে সব কথা বলেছেন বৃশ, এটি তারই পরিণাম হতে পারে। হামিদ কারজাইয়ের দেশে বৃশ বলেছিলেন, লাদেন আর মোল্লা ওমর,

দু'জনকেই কাঠগড়ায় দাঁড় করানো হবে। কেনও জঙ্গি সংগঠন এমনও বিস্ফোরণের দায় স্বীকার করেনি। কারা এর পিছনে, তাই নিয়ে পুলিশ-প্রশাসনও নিশ্চিত নয়। করাচি এমনিতেই উত্তেজনাপ্রবণ শহর। এর আগেও জঙ্গিদের আক্রমণের লক্ষ্য হয়েছিল মার্কিন কনস্যুলেট।

সকাল সোয়া ন'টা নাগাদ (ভারতীয় সময় পৌনে দশটা) করাচিতে বিস্ফোরণ হয়। শুধু



সন্ত্রাসের আশঙ্ক। করাচির মার্কিন কনস্যুলেটের সামনে। বৃহস্পতিবার। — এ এফ পি

কনস্যুলেটের সামনেই নয়, ম্যারিয়ট হোটেলের সামনে দাঁড়িয়ে থাকা গাড়িগুলিও যথেষ্ট ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত। আত্মঘাতী জঙ্গিটি গাড়ি নিয়ে হানা দিতে গেল। তাকে আটকাতে যায় পাক রেঞ্জারদের একটি গাড়ি। বিস্ফোরণে এক রেঞ্জার মারা গিয়েছেন। গাড়িটিও ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত হয়। নিহতের তালিকায় আছেন মার্কিন কূটনীতিকের গাড়ির চালক এবং এক সহীলাও। বড় মাপের ক্ষতি হয়েছে কনস্যুলেট এবং ম্যারিয়ট হোটেলের। বাদ যাবনি নিকটবর্তী শেরাটন হোটেল, পাক লৌ বাহিনীর হাসপাতাল এবং কয়েকটি দোকানও।

করাচির বিস্ফোরণ থেকে ফায়দা তোলায় চেষ্টায় দিল্লি

২ মার্চ: করাচি-বিস্ফোরণকে সামনে রেখে কূটনৈতিক লড়াইয়ে এগোনোর চেষ্টা করল দিল্লি।

আজ করাচিতে বিস্ফোরণে যারা প্রাণ হারালেন, তাঁদের এক জন মার্কিন কূটনীতিক। তাই পাকিস্তানে সন্ত্রাসবাদের আঁচ এসে লাগল হোয়াইট হাউসে, সে দেশে বৃশের সফরের আঙ্কলেই।

মদতপুষ্ট সন্ত্রাস নিয়ে ভারতের এই উদ্বেগের প্রসঙ্গ তিনি পাক সফরে তুললেন।

তবে করাচির বিস্ফোরণের পরেও পাকিস্তানে রাত কাটাবেন বৃশ। নিরাপত্তার খাতিরে তিনি সে দেশে রাত কাটাবেন না বলে আগেই ঠিক ছিল। বিশেষত করাচির ঘটনার পরে সেই আশঙ্কা আরও বাড়ায় ভারতীয় মহলেশ্বর একাংশ ভেবেছিল, কূটনৈতিক ভাবে আরও ফায়দা তোলা যাবে। কিন্তু সন্ত্রাসবাদের বিরুদ্ধে লড়াইয়ে নিজের দৃঢ়তা দেখাতে বঙ্গপারিকর মার্কিন প্রেসিডেন্ট ভারতকে সেই সুযোগ দিলেন না। বেশি রাতে মার্কিন জাতীয় নিরাপত্তা উপদেষ্টা স্টিফেন হ্যাডলি জানান, পূর্ব নির্ধারিত সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী শনিবার নয়, বরং শুক্রবার দিল্লির পুরানা কিলার বক্তৃতা সেরেই রওনা হবেন বৃশ। পাকিস্তানে রাত কাটাবেন।

তবে করাচির বিস্ফোরণের উত্তাপ সাংবাদিক সম্মেলনেও বৃশের পিছু ছাড়েনি। "যে পাকিস্তানকে সঙ্গে নিয়ে বৃশ সন্ত্রাসবাদের মোকাবিলায় কথা বলছেন, সেখানেই তো সন্ত্রাসবাদের সঙ্গে যৌথ জানান, সন্ত্রাস দমনে পাকিস্তানের সঙ্গে যৌথ কর্মসূচি জোরদার করতেই তাঁর এই সফর গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। পারভেজ মুশারফ সম্পর্কে বৃশ প্রশাসন যে কিছুটা নরম মনোভাব নিয়েই চলেছে, তা স্পষ্ট। সেই প্রেক্ষিতেই প্রতিনিধি পর্যায়ের বৈঠকে দিল্লি আজও জানিয়েছে, আমেরিকার চোখে মুশারফ 'গুড বয়' হতে পারেন, কিন্তু পাকিস্তানের রাজনৈতিক পরিস্থিতির বেশিরভাগটিই মৌলবাদী শক্তির কক্ষিণত।

পাকিস্তানের ওপর মার্কিন চাপ বাড়ানোর লক্ষে মনমোহনের সঙ্গে দায়িত্ব ভাগ করে নিয়েছিলেন লালকৃষ্ণ আডবাবীও। বিকেলে বৃশকে আডবাবী বলেন, ভারতের মাটিতে সন্ত্রাসবাদী কার্যকলাপ চালানো পাকিস্তানের বহু দিনের নীতি। তা বন্ধ করতে পাক প্রশাসনের ওপর আন্তর্জাতিক চাপ সৃষ্টি ছাড়া পথ নেই। বৃশের মন্তব্য, "আপনি দেখাচ্ছি এখনও কূটনৈতিক পন্থা। তবে আপনার এই উদ্বেগ আমি পাক সফরে গিয়ে তুলব না।"

Bangla serial blast catch

Dhaka, March 2 (Reuters): An Islamist militant leader blamed for a string of deadly blasts across Bangladesh surrendered today after a house he was hiding in was besieged by security forces for over 24 hours, officials said.

They said Shayek Abdur Rahman gave himself up in the northeastern city of Sylhet and was whisked away to the capital, Dhaka, for interrogation.

"Shayek Abdur Rahman along with two of his associates have come out of hiding and surrendered," said Lieutenant-Colonel Nurul Momen of the elite Rapid Action Battalion.

Authorities tightened security across the nation, fearing a backlash by Shayek's supporters.

Shayek was taken to the headquarters of the Rapid

Action Battalion under tight security after a magistrate ordered him remanded for 10 days. He was not allowed to talk to the media or to pose for photographers.

After Shayek's initial interrogation, security forces raided another house in Sylhet and seized explosives and bomb-making materials.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in an unscheduled televised address thanked friendly countries and organisations for assisting local forces in capturing Shayek.

In Washington, state department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli applauded Shayek's arrest and said it was the result of bilateral security cooperation against extremism and terrorism.

"His capture is an important step in confronting extremism in Bangladesh," Ereli told reporters, adding that Washington would strengthen counterterrorism cooperation with Dhaka.

Shayek led the outlawed Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, which along with another Islamic group, Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh, has been accused of waging a violent campaign for the introduction of Shariat law in Bangladesh.

The bombings in Bangladesh have killed at least 30 people, including two judges, since August 2005.

Security forces surrounding a two-storeyed building in Sylhet since Tuesday night fired tear gas shells and pumped in water to flush out Shayek. A witness said he walked slowly out to the street escorted by commandos.

The hunt for Siddikul Islam Bangla Bhai, the fugitive chief of the Jagrata Muslim Janata, will now be intensified, the officials said.

03 MAR 2006

THE HINDUSTAN

Ruckus in Parliament over Maoist violence

IB had alerted Chhattisgarh about the possibility of an attack

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The naxal attack on civilians in Chhattisgarh led to frayed tempers in both Houses of Parliament with the ruling coalition demanding the resignation/dismissal of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led State Government, accusing it of "criminal negligence" in failing to provide security to innocent tribals.

Brief adjournment

The verbal exchanges in the Lok Sabha, led to a brief adjournment after the members insisted that each party be provided a chance to express its views. The issue was raised during zero hour.

Ramjilal Suman (SP) demanded the resignation of the Chhattisgarh Chief Minister owning moral responsibility. Ajit Jogi (Congress) demanded dismissal of the State Government and an immediate halt to the *Salva Judum* anti-naxalite campaign.

- 26,000 police personnel despatched to the States
- Centre extending all cooperation to tackle the situation

Devendra Prasad Yadav (RJD) said the State Government pitted the unarmed tribals against the naxalites with the police taking a backseat.

Karuna Shukla (BJP) countered this and charged that the situation had deteriorated in Chhattisgarh under the previous Congress rule. She claimed the *Salva Judum* was a peaceful movement. Her party leader, Vijay Kumar Malhotra objected to the tendency of politicising an issue that required national response.

Responding to the concern of the members, Home Minister Shivraj Patil said the Centre had given prior information to the State Government.

Mr. Patil said that while apportioning blame would not solve the problem, the Centre was extending all cooperation and had also drawn plans with adjoining States. He said 26,000 central police personnel had already been placed at the disposal of the States. The Home Minister said it was for the States to utilise these forces and the Centre would not like to direct them since it would amount to interference. He also elaborated on the various measures being taken to meet the challenge.

In the Rajya Sabha, BJP members sought to counter the charges against the Chhattisgarh Government. Nilotpal Basu (CPI-M), Digvijay Singh and Motilal Vora (Congress) sought adequate compensation by both the Centre and the State to the families of those killed.

Report sought

Union Home Secretary V. K. Duggal has written to the Chhattisgarh police chief O.P. Rathore,

seeking a report. Drawing attention to certain lapses on the part of the State Police in view of the specific alert given by the Intelligence Bureau on February 25, the Home Secretary said the Centre had taken a serious view of the attack and the reported lapses.

IB advisory

Mr. Duggal pointed out that the advisory, sent by the IB, had referred to the movement of the cadres of the CPI (Maoists) of Korta between Errabore and Dornapal areas of Dantewada district. It had specifically referred to the possibility of an attack by CPI (Maoists) on the *Jan Jagran* activists and leaders returning from the *yatra* from Errabore to Dornapal.

The advisory was sent to the Additional Director General of Police (Intelligence) who also happens to be the nodal officer and member of the Home Ministry's task force on naxal violence.

THE HINDU

Pak crackdown on Qaida camp

Nearly 30 Militants Killed Or Wounded In Army Raid

Miranshah (Pakistan): Pakistani army troops backed by attack helicopters on Wednesday destroyed a suspected Al Qaida camp near the Afghan border, killing or wounding up to 30 mainly foreign militants, officials said.

At least 10 soldiers were injured and evacuated to a military hospital after a firefight with militants near the village of Saidgai in the remote North Waziristan tribal region.

The troops surrounded the compound of eight houses after it had been severely pounded by helicopters which, according to local officials, killed or wounded up to 30 suspected Al Qaida fighters.

"Between 25 to 30 foreign militants were killed or wounded in the raid," the region's top administration official Zabeerul Islam said.

A senior security official said the raid was conducted on specific information that Al Qaida was using the compound as a base to launch attacks across the border.

"It was an Al Qaida camp and a training centre," the official, who declined to be identified, said.

Military officials said they were unable to give the exact casualty toll because the troops were facing resistance in clearing the area. "The operation is still going on and we do not have an exact casualty toll," military spokesman Major General Shaukat Sultan said.

He said the operation followed intelligence that there was a big gathering of foreigners in the compound owned by a local named Noor Payo Khan and located a few kilometres from the Afghan border.

"We struck it this morning," Sultan said. He said militants had stored a big cache of ammunition in the compound which caught fire after the

air strike. Explosions were heard an hour after the raid.

The attack, the latest in an ongoing military campaign to flush out Al Qaida and Taliban militants in the tribal territory, came two days before US President George Bush is due here on a two-day visit starting late Friday.

Bush is expected to press his Pakistani counterpart Pervez Musharraf to step up operations against militants whom Afghan officials blame for an insurgency in their country.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Musharraf earlier this month agreed to intensify security co-operation. Afghan officials handed over a list of 40 wanted Taliban militants

whom they said were hiding in Pakistan.

Pakistani forces have been battling Al Qaida and Taliban militants who sneaked across the border in late 2001 after the US-led invasion of Afghanistan.

Pakistan's military says it has killed hundreds of Al Qaida-linked militants in operations throughout the semi-autonomous tribal areas since late 2003. More than 500 Pakistani soldiers have also died. AFP

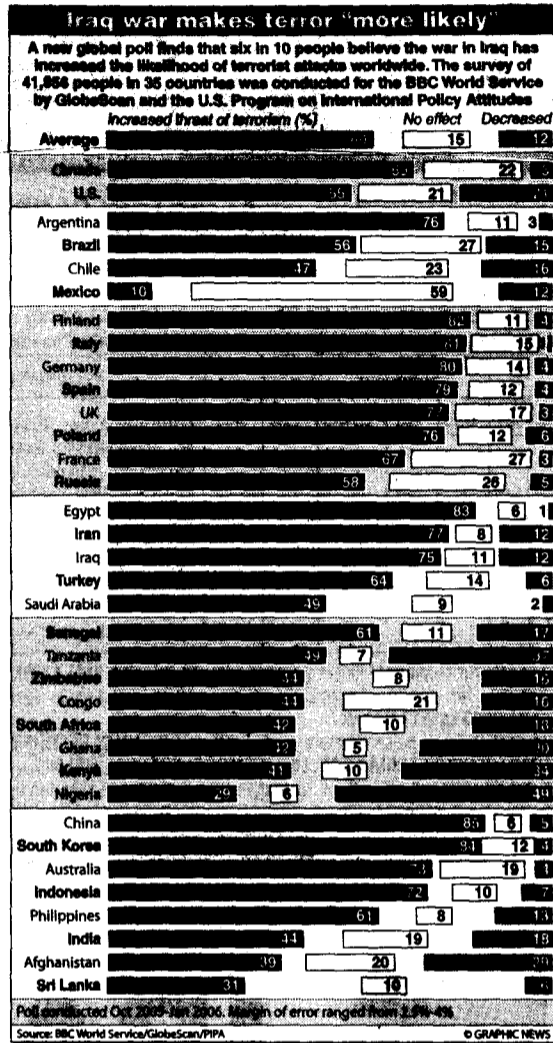
Threat to US inmate in Afghan jail



A soldier prays outside the Policharki Prison

Kabul: One of three Americans detained at Kabul's main Policharki prison said on Wednesday that rioting inmates were holding him in his cell and had threatened to cut off his head. Speaking to The Associated Press by mobile phone, Edward Caraballo said the prisoners made the threat on Tuesday, but that they had since backed off. Caraballo, from New York, is one of three Americans held at the prison, where inmates, reportedly incited by Al Qaida and Taliban prisoners, rioted late on Saturday and are still retaining control of much of the jail. At least five inmates have died in the uprising. Caraballo was arrested in July 2004 for running a private jail in Kabul as part of a freelance hunt for terrorists.

02 MAR 2006



40-16 Genovese

30 die in Iraq blasts

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BAGHDAD: Bombs on Tuesday killed at least 30 persons in Baghdad as the former leader, Saddam Hussein, attended court proceedings for the first time since days of sectarian violence pitched Iraq toward civil war.

Mr. Hussein's two lead defence counsels walked out within minutes of the trial restarting after a two-week pause when requests for a further adjournment and the removal of the chief judge were rejected. Offi-

cials said court-appointed lawyers would defend Mr. Hussein.

A subdued Mr. Hussein, who ended a hunger strike before the resumption, said little during the three-hour hearing but his half-brother objected loud and long on one occasion — a pattern throughout the four-month-old trial, which has been troubled by charges of political bias and killings of two defence attorneys. — Reuters

THE HINDU

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THE HINDU

Al-Qaeda claims responsibility for attack on Saudi oil complex

Analysts say the timing of the attack was calibrated for maximum impact on prices

Atul Aneja

DUBAI: The Al-Qaeda network has claimed responsibility for Friday's foiled attack on the Abqaiq refinery complex, the world's largest, in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi security forces had foiled the attack more than a kilometre away from the core of the Abqaiq complex, through which nearly 10 per cent of the global oil supply is released. Nevertheless, there has been a spurt in oil prices that jumped by nearly three dollars a barrel to \$62.91, during electronic trading at the New York mercantile exchange.

In a statement posted on the internet, Al-Qaeda said that two persons had targeted the facility and the purpose of the attack was "to rid the Arabian Peninsula of the infidels."

Energy analyst, A.F. Alhajji, based in Ohio, told *The Hindu* that the timing of the attack had been carefully calibrated for maximum impact on prices, because it raised on-going concerns on global oil supply to a

new level. "Traders were already nervous on account of turmoil in Nigeria and the possibility of increased tension with Iran," he said.

Reduction in supply

At the time of the attack, the flow of oil from Nigeria, the eighth largest oil producer in the world had dropped by 455,000 barrels per day, a 20 per cent decline in output. There was also a threat of sharp reduction in Iranian oil in the global supply chain, in case sanctions were im-

posed on Teheran on account of its controversial nuclear programme, after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) board meets in Vienna on March 6. Besides, the attack took place on Friday, a weekly holiday in Saudi Arabia, because of which Saudi authorities found it difficult to mobilise the international media in order to effectively demonstrate with visual impact that supplies had not been disrupted.

Markets in the U.S. were also closing for the weekend, and

were thus unable to respond to the initial shock of the event, which led to a sharp escalation in prices.

Analysts, however, point out that psychological impact of the attack would last for some time, but the ability of the Saudi security forces to counter the attack would also weigh in, preventing prices from going upwards in an uncontrolled spiral.

The attack at Abqaiq was the first after Al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden had given a call in December 2004 for attacking oil installations in the Persian Gulf countries.

Some observers see the strike as serving a reminder to the Saudi Arabian authorities that the Al-Qaeda was still active, despite a stringent clampdown on the organisation by the security forces for the last three years. Youssef Ibrahim of the Dubai based Strategic Energy Investment Group told the Associated Press that Friday's attack illustrated the seepage into Saudi Arabia of tactics adopted by Al-Qaeda in neighbouring Iraq.

More attacks threatened

MANAMA (BAHRAIN): Al-Qaeda suicide bombers will attack more Saudi oil facilities, the terror group purportedly threatened on Saturday in an Internet statement that claimed responsibility for the foiled attack on the Abqaiq plant in eastern Saudi Arabia. Two suicide

bombers tried to drive cars packed with explosives into Abqaiq, the world's largest oil processing facility, on Friday afternoon, but security guards opened fire and the vehicles exploded outside the gates, killing the bombers and fatally wounding two guards. — AP

26 APR 2006

THE HINDU

11-14
2/2

You won't get me alive, says Osama

Remaining

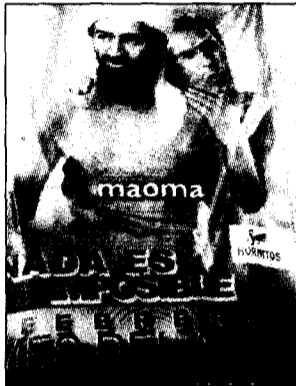
Calls US Army, Saddam Equally Criminal

Cairo: Osama bin Laden promised never to be captured alive and declared that the United States had resorted to the same "barbaric" tactics used by Saddam Hussein, according to an audiotape, purportedly by the Al Qaida leader, posted on Monday on a militant web site.

The tape appeared to be a complete version of the one broadcast on January 19 on the Arabic Al Jazeera TV channel, in which bin Laden offered the US a long-term truce but also said Al Qaida would launch a fresh attack on American soil.

"I have sworn to only live free. Even if I find bitter the taste of death, I don't want to die humiliated or deceived," he said in the 11-minute, 26-second tape.

In comparing American military behaviour in Iraq to that of Saddam's, the speaker said: "The jihad is continuing with strength, for Allah be all the credit, despite all the barbarity, the



An ad for a bar in Mexico, shows George W Bush and Osama bin Laden in an embrace with the slogan 'Nothing is impossible. February, month of Love'

repressive steps taken by the American army and its agents, to the extent that there is no longer any mentionable difference between this criminality and the criminality of Saddam's."

By using that language to describe Saddam, bin Laden appeared to deny assertions

by the Bush administration that the former Iraqi leader had ties with Al Qaida—ties that were given as one rationale for invading Iraq.

Bin Laden also mocked US President George Bush's declaration in April 2003 that major conflict in Iraq had ended.

"The Pentagon's figures indicate an increase in the number of your killed and injured in addition to the massive material losses, not to mention the collapse of troop morale and the increase of the suicide rates among them," the bin Laden voice said.

To the American people, the speaker said: "You can rescue whatever you can from this hell. The solution is in your hands, if their (US troops') situation matters to you at all."

The CIA last month authenticated the voice on the January 19 recording as that of bin Laden's, an agency official told AP at the time. AP

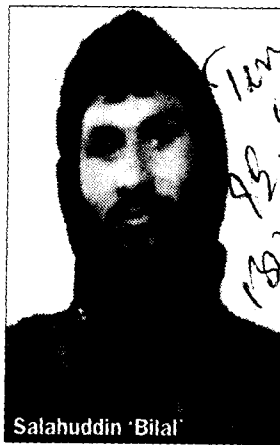
J-K police to move Interpol against Pak-based militants

Security agencies working to prepare foolproof cases against Mohammad Sayeed, Salahuddin, Moulana Masood Azhar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 12

TAKING a cue from the Abu Salem case, the Jammu and Kashmir Police have decided to launch a legal offensive against top Pakistan-based militant leaders, including Lashkar-e-Toiba boss Hafiz Mohammad Sayeed, his Kashmir operational chief Salahuddin, alias Bilal, and Jaish-e-Mohammad supremo Moulana Masood Azhar.

"We are planning to use all our resources to get Interpol warrants against them," a senior police officer told *The Indian Express*. "This will make a strong case against them in future



Salahuddin 'Bilal'

and will also limit their movement even within Pakistani territory."

Sources reveal that the J-K Police has already prepared dossiers on most of the top militant commanders, especially the ideologues who spearhead the

violent campaign in Kashmir from across the border.

"We will go step by step to seek international legal sanction against them," a senior police officer said. "This is a very complex and time-consuming process and we are seeking support from the Union Home Ministry and other security agencies and police forces across the country."

The officer said that most of these leaders travel to the Middle East and especially to Saudi Arabia for the Haj and Umrah. "Once there is an Interpol warrant against them, India can take the matter up with other governments. We can arrest them and push for their extradition," the officer said.

Working to put together

a fool-proof case against the militants, J-K Police are currently vexed by the difficulty of locating the real name and address of Pakistani militant commander Salahuddin, alias Bilal, alias Hyder Karar, who has been leading the Lashkar's Kashmir operations from the jungles of Bundipore for the last six years.

"We have been trying our level best to get information about him," a police officer said. "His real name and actual address in Pakistan are essential for us to pursue an Interpol warrant. We apprehend that he might escape to Pakistan; if he does so, it will be a problem as his mysterious ways have made him quite well-known in militant circles."

INDIAN EXPRESS

Alleged Al-Badr militants held; arms seized

Arms consignments frequently received from J&K

*Remotism
HD-1
11/2*

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: The Special Cell of the Delhi police has arrested two young men allegedly belonging to the Al Badr terrorist outfit. They were allegedly smuggling in a consignment of arms and explosives from Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday. Two kg of RDX, three detonators, two timers and two Chinese pistols were reportedly recovered from them.

Last month, intelligence agencies tipped off the Special Cell that some Kashmir-based militants had set up a base in the Capital and Irshad Ali aka Deepak, a resident of Sultanpuri in North-West Delhi, was part of the module.

Investigations revealed that Irshad had been visiting different parts of the country to expand the Al Badr network. The police learnt that Irshad's friend Mohammad Muarif Qamar, a resident of Bhajanpura in North-East Delhi, was also working for the militant outfit. The duo made frequent visits to Jammu and Kashmir to receive consignments of arms and explosives.

Acting on a specific tip-off that the suspects were on their

• **One of the militants toured the country to expand network**

• **Handsome payment made for carrying out explosions**

way back from Jammu with yet another consignment, a team under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner of Police Sanjeev Yadav laid a trap at Mukarba Chowk and arrested them. Apart from the explosive and firearms, the police recovered an ABCD timer and an AB timer.

Brother also involved

During interrogation, Irshad is reported to have said that his elder brother, Naushad, worked for the erstwhile terrorist organisation, Harkat-ul-Ansar (HuA). He was arrested along with the Muslim Mujahideen chief, Bilal Siddiqui and Nadeem of HuA in 1996. They were arrested when they were smuggling in a large quantity of explosives from Bangladesh. The police said in 1996, Naushad and Nadeem had killed a resident of Assam at Jahangirpuri.

According to Joint Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Karnal Singh, Irshad used to meet his brother in Tihar Central Jail, where he came in contact with Sajjad, a resident of Srinagar, who motivated him to join militancy to make a quick buck. In 2003, Irshad went to Kashmir along with Sajjad and Sheikh Parvez, who arranged his meeting with the then chief of Al-Badr, Wasim Bari, a Pakistani national who was killed in an encounter with the Army in December last year.

Wasim directed Irshad to carry out blasts, for which he would be paid handsomely. In 2005, Irshad allegedly received Rs. 90,000 through the Western Union Money Transfer, after which Sajjad and Sheikh Parvez provided him the explosives with the instruction to trigger explosions in the busy market places in Delhi.

"Irshad and Muarif are childhood friends. Recently, he contacted Irshad for a loan of Rs. 5,000 at which the former offered him Rs. 50,000 if he joined militancy," said Mr. Singh, adding that Muarif was also in regular contact with two Dubai-based gangsters, Fazlu and Sunny.

জঙ্গিরা যখন গণতন্ত্রে

প্যায়েলোস্টাইনের প্যারলিমেন্ট নির্বাচনে উগ্রপন্থী গোষ্ঠী হামাস-এর চমকপ্রদ বিজয় এবং নরমপন্থী ফাতাহ গোষ্ঠীর পরাজয় পশ্চিম এশিয়ার শান্তি-প্রক্রিয়াকে প্রাঙ্গ-কটকিত করিয়া তুলিয়াছে। হামাস ইজরায়েলের অস্তিত্বেরই বিরোধী। হামাসের নেতা ও সমর্থকদের উপর ইজরায়েল নিয়মিত বোমারু হামলা চালায়। হামাসের স্বেচ্ছাসেবকরাও মানববোমা হইয়া ইজরায়েলে বিস্ফোরিত হয়। ইজরায়েল ধরিয়া লইয়াছিল, প্রেসিডেন্ট মাহমুদ আব্বাসের নরমপন্থী ফাতাহ-ই নির্বাচনে গরিষ্ঠতা পাইবে। কিন্তু প্যায়েলোস্টাইনিদের নিকট ফাতাহর নেতৃত্ব উত্তরোত্তর আপসপন্থী রূপে শনাক্ত হওয়াতে জনাদেশ উগ্রপন্থী হামাসের অনুকূলেই গিয়াছে। ১৩২টি আসনের মধ্যে ৭৬টি আসনে জয়ী হইয়া হামাস গাজা, ওয়েস্ট ব্যাংক ও পূর্ব জেরুজালেমের অধিকাংশ প্যায়েলোস্টাইনির আস্থা অর্জন করিয়াছে। আপাতদৃষ্টিতে ইহা এক সঙ্কটের সূচনা। ইজরায়েল তো বটেই, মার্কিন যুক্তরাষ্ট্র, ব্রিটেন, রাশিয়া ও ইউরোপীয় ইউনিয়নও এই ঘটনায় শান্তি-প্রক্রিয়ায় অশুভার্থের আশঙ্কা ব্যক্ত করিয়াছে। বৃশ সহ অনেকেই অল্পতাগ না করিলে হামাস নেতৃত্বের সঙ্গে লেনদেনে অস্বীকৃত।

অথচ নির্বাচনটি যে অবাধ, নিরপেক্ষ ও সুষ্ঠু হইয়াছে, আন্তর্জাতিক পর্যবেক্ষকরা তাহা স্বীকার করিয়াছেন। তথাপি প্যায়েলোস্টাইনি জনতা যদি জঙ্গি মতাদর্শের অনুগামীদেরই নিজেদের প্রতিনিধি নির্বাচিত করেন, তবে সেই প্রতিনিধিত্বের বৈধতা লইয়া সংশয় তোলা অর্থহীন। বরং সংশয়বাদীরা অন্য একটি বিষয়ে নজর দিতে পারিতেন। হামাসের অবস্থান কিন্তু ইয়াসার আরাফতের সময় হইতে অনেক পরিবর্তিত। গত বেশ কিছু কাল, বিশেষত নির্বাচনে অংশগ্রহণের সিদ্ধান্ত লওয়ার পর হইতে হামাস জঙ্গি হামলা হইতে মোটের উপর নিরস্ত থাকিয়াছে। এমনিতে প্যায়েলোস্টাইনিদের মধ্যে সামাজিক-আর্থিক-শিক্ষাগত বিকাশের নানা কর্মসূচি ও স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থা হামাস চালায়। ইহাই তাহার জনপ্রিয়তার রহস্য। বৃশ বা ক্লেয়ার যাহাই বলুন, গাজা, ওয়েস্ট ব্যাংকের প্যায়েলোস্টাইনিদের চোখে হামাসের জঙ্গি হামলা প্রায়শই ইজরায়েলের আক্রমণের বিরুদ্ধে প্রতিরোধ বা প্রতি-আক্রমণ। তাই হামাসকে একতরফা অস্ত্র ত্যাগ করার পূর্বশর্ত দিয়া ইজরায়েল ও তাহার আততায়ী দলকে ক্রমাগত অস্ত্রসজ্জিত করার প্রক্রিয়া আদপেই গণতান্ত্রিক নহে। তা ছাড়া হামাস নিশ্চয় ইজরায়েলকে উচ্ছেদ করার সশস্ত্র লড়াই চালাইতে প্যায়েলোস্টাইনি প্যারলিমেন্টে প্রার্থী দেয় নাই। নির্বাচনী জয়ের পর বরং প্যায়েলোস্টাইন সরকার গড়ার দায় লইয়া হামাস নেতৃত্বকেই ইজরায়েলের সঙ্গে দরকষাকষি করিতে হইবে। প্যারলিমেন্টের মতো গণতান্ত্রিক মধ্যে হামাসের মতো জঙ্গিদের তৎপরতাকে সীমাবদ্ধ রাখিতে পারিলে ইজরায়েলেরই লাভ।

বস্তুত শুধু হামাস নয়, সব জঙ্গি সংগঠনের মধ্যেই আলাপ-আলোচনার শান্তিপূর্ণ পথে অগ্রসর হওয়ার প্রবণতা লক্ষণীয়। হয়তো এখনই অস্ত্র তাহারা ভবিষ্যতের রক্ষাকবচ হিসাবে রাখিয়া দিতেছে, যাহাতে আলোচনা ব্যর্থ হইলে সন্ত্রাসবাদে ফেরা যায়— কিন্তু সমান্তরালে গণতান্ত্রিক পথে চলার আগ্রহও দেখা যাইতেছে। সন্ত্রাসবাদ যে প্রতিনিধিত্বমূলক গণতন্ত্রের বিকল্প নয়, এই বোধটি জাগ্রত হইতেছে। যাহারা সন্ত্রাসবাদের অবসান চান, তাহাদের উচিত এই বোধোদয় আরও উস্কাইয়া দেওয়া। আলফা যখন কেন্দ্রের কাছ হইতে সাড়া না পাইয়া সন্ত্রাসের মাধ্যমে অস্তিত্ব জাহির করে, তখন তাহারা সরকারকে আলোচনা শুরু করার প্রতিশ্রুতিটিই স্মরণ করাইয়া দেয়। ইহাকে অজহাত খাড়া করিয়া আগে অস্ত্র ত্যাগ করিতে হইবে, তবে কথা বলিব, এমন মনোভাব শ্রেয় নহে। জঙ্গিদের উগ্রপন্থা পরিহার করিয়া গণতন্ত্রে আসার সুযোগ দিতে হইবে। শ্রীলঙ্কাতেও তামিল গেরিলারা উপর্যুপরি জঙ্গি হামলা চালাইতেই প্রেসিডেন্ট রাজাপক্ষ নরওয়ারের মধ্যস্থতাকারীদের জরুরি ভিত্তিতে শান্তি আলোচনা শুরু করিতে অনুরোধ করেন। তাহার আগে কিন্তু সরকার বেশ গয়ং গচ্ছ ভাবে চলিতেছিল। গণতন্ত্রে আত্মীকৃত হওয়ার অভিপ্রায় যে হামাসও দেখাইবে না, আগাম তাহা ধরিয়া লওয়া বিচক্ষণতার পরিচয় নয়।

AJJKAL

28 JAN 2006

12 JAN 2006

Zawahri praises Islamic fighters on tape

Dubai, Jan. 21 (Reuters): Al Qaeda's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri, praised Islamic fighters in Afghanistan, according to an Internet audiotape posted yesterday, a day after Osama bin Laden warned of attacks in America.

In Washington, a CIA spokeswoman said it was Zawahri's voice on the tape.

A US counter-terrorism official initially said the tape was several years old but then retracted the statement, saying that the date of the recording was uncertain.

"I am honoured to recite this jhadiist poem," Zawahri said, praising mujahideen

fighters. "We shall remain true to our oath (with the Afghan mujahideen)."

The message emerged one day after bin Laden, al Qaeda's leader, said the group was preparing attacks in the US but was open to a conditional truce with the Americans, according to an audiotape attributed to him.

In his 17-minute tape, Zawahri praised an Islamist Afghan poet, Mohebullah Kandahari: "The owner of the sword and pen, who carried both a machine gun and the Koran, known in scholarly circles ... and who could be seen in jihadi arenas from the time of the Russian communist at-

tack on Afghanistan until the crusader raid (led by the US in 2001)."

The CIA spokeswoman said: "After conducting a technical analysis, the CIA concludes with high confidence that the voice on the tape is that of Ayman al-Zawahri."

The little-known website which carried the tape said it was new, but the US counter-terrorism official cast doubt on that assertion. "There is no reason to believe it was done recently. It could have been done at any time," the official said. The US conducted an air strike in Pakistan last week, which officials said was aimed at Zawahri.



Ayman al-Zawahri: Shadowy

Osama boost for book

Washington, Jan. 21 (Reuters): An unexpected endorsement from al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden has resulted in a huge jump in sales for a book by a critic of US foreign policy.

William Blum's *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower* was ranked 209,000 on *Amazon.com's* sales list before bin Laden mentioned it in an audiotape released on Thursday. By yesterday, the book was number 30 on the *Amazon.com* list.

Bin Laden said al Qaeda group was preparing more attacks in the US but also told Americans: "It is useful for you to read the book *The Rogue State*."

"I was quite surprised and even shocked and amused when I found out what he'd said," Blum said yesterday in an interview with Reuters Television in his Washington apartment.

"I was glad. I knew it would help the book's sales and I was not bothered by

who it was coming from. "If he shares with me a deep dislike for the certain aspects of US foreign policy, then I'm not going to spurn any endorsement of the book by him. I think it's good that he shares those views and I'm not turned off by that."

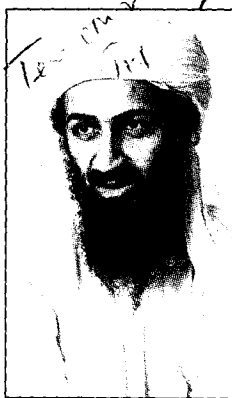
Blum said some friends and family members were afraid the bin Laden endorsement might endanger him but he said there had been no threats and he was not concerned.

US dumps Osama truce offer in bin

Washington: The United States has said it does not negotiate with terrorists and vowed to intensify efforts to track down Osama Bin Laden after a new audiotape was aired by Al Jazeera in which the terror chief offered a truce but also said his organisation was planning new attacks against the US.

US Vice President Dick Cheney told Fox News: "I'm not sure what he's offering by way of a truce. I don't think anybody would believe him.... It sounds to me like it's some kind of a ploy, but again, not having seen the entire text or validated the tape and the timing of it, I'm reluctant to draw any conclusions." He added, "Al Qaida was unlikely ever to sit down and sign a truce. I think you have to destroy them. It is the only way with them."

CIA analysts have verified the recording as Bin Laden's voice, but Cheney said the tape's significance depends on whether it was produced in recent days or weeks, or pieced together from the more distant past. The CIA offered no details about how they verified the



voice, but in the past the agency has verified authenticity by comparing new recordings to earlier messages.

The tape, which intelligence officials believe was recorded last month, represents Bin Laden's first public communication since December 2004. Since then, Al Qaida's No 2 leader, Ayman al-Zawahri, has served as the terror network's public face.

The recording was released only days after US missile attacks in Pakistan that Pakistani officials said killed four senior Qaida operatives. Cheney said the tape showed that Al Qaida has been hobbled, because "they didn't have the ability to do anything on video" and because it had been so long since Bin Laden had been heard from.

The White House made it clear that there would be no let-up in the war on terror. "We do not negotiate with terrorists. We put them out of business," spokesman Scott McClellan said. "The Al Qaida leaders and the terrorists are on the run. They are under a lot of pressure." Agencies

Al-Qaeda operatives believed killed in US strike

SIMON CAMERON-MOORE
ISLAMABAD, JANUARY 19

AN AL-Qaeda bomb expert with a \$5 million bounty on his head and a son-in-law of the group's No 2 were among four militants believed killed by a US airstrike last week, Pakistani intelligence sources said on Thursday.

Pakistani Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed acknowledged that "a few militants" had been killed in Friday's attack, which also killed 18 civilians, but said their bodies had not been recovered and their identity was under investigation.

However, intelligence sources said they believed they knew the names of three men killed in the attack, which US officials say was aimed at Al-Qaeda second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahri.

Pakistani intelligence sources said Al-Zawahri was not at the scene of the attack, but one of the dead was thought to be one of his sons-in-law, Abdul Rehman al-Misri al-Maghribi, who was responsible for Al-Qaeda's media department.

Another was Midhat Mursi al-Sayid Umar, an expert in



Pakistani intelligence sources said one of the dead was Al-Zawahri's son-in-law Abdul Rehman who was responsible for Al-Qaeda's media department. Reuters

explosives and poisons who carried a \$5 million on his head from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"If this person is gone, it is significant. His loss, and the loss of people like him, would certainly be a blow to Al-Qaeda in the region," said a US counter-terrorism official.

The third man identified by Pakistani intelligence officers was Abu Obaidah al Misri, Al Qaeda's Chief of operations in Afghanistan's eastern Kunar province, where US and Afghan forces regularly come under militant attack.

One Pakistani intelligence official said Khalid Habib, head of Al-Qaeda's operations in Pakistan and Afghanistan, may have also been among the dead, but another official said there was no evidence to prove this.

The officials said they were still trying to identify one other Al-Qaeda member believed to have been killed. Despite Pakistan's diplomatic protest, intelligence sources believe the US has Pakistan's tacit agreement to conduct such operations on its territory. —Reuters

Imam was in touch with LeT for one year: Cops

Maulana's passport documents being probed; he is also alleged to have channelised more money to Kashmir than earlier suspected

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, JANUARY 18

THE Mumbai Police yesterday said they suspect imam of Haj House Maulana Ghulam Yahya Ilahi had been in touch with Bandipore-based Lashkar-e-Toiba commander of northern India Salah-uddin for the past year.

The police are now investigating whether the imam lived in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, where his brother said he acquired his degree in *immamat*.

The police have also found that he may have channelled more money to Kashmir than earlier suspected. According to the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS), which is looking into the financial transactions of the imam, he channelled Rs 12 lakh, Rs 25 lakh and Rs 50 lakh in June, July and December 2005, respectively. The police are now trying to trace the source of the money.

"We have some leads," said an ATS official. "When we track down the person, we



The imam of Haj House, Maulana Ghulam Yahya Ilahi, was arrested on January 14 for allegedly harbouring three suspected LeT operatives. Express photo

hope to get to the other operatives in the city as well."

According to the police, the imam also got a 10-year passport made in Kolkata in September 1995, on which he travelled to Saudi Arabia. In September 2005, he applied for renewal of the passport in

Mumbai. The renewal was not granted.

"We have asked for the documents from the Security Branch," said an ATS official. The police suspect the imam got involved with the LeT for monetary reasons.

The imam was arrested by

the ATS on January 14 on the charge of harbouring alleged Lashkar-e-Toiba terrorists Haji Mohammad Ramzan, Khursheed Amhad Lone and Arshad Badroo, who were arrested on January 6 for illegal possession of detonators and timers.

19 JAN 2006

INDIAN EXPRESS

Arrested Imam was in touch with Lashkar-e-Taiba, say police

"Arrest based on solid evidence"

Special Correspondent

MUMBAI: The Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of the Mumbai police says there is strong evidence that an Imam of the Haj House in Mumbai, who was arrested last Saturday, was in contact with one of the commanders of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

Ghulam Elahi Yahya Baksh's arrest is based on solid evidence and not merely the fact that he provided accommodation to one of the three suspected terrorists arrested in Mumbai on January 6, said Joint Commissioner of Police, ATS, K.P. Raghuvanshi. The Imam leads the prayers at the Haj House and has been a resident of Mumbai for over a

decade. His arrest has shocked the community, while many voluntary organisations have voiced protests.

The ATS, which has made all four arrests, says it has concrete evidence of the links of the Imam and the other three with LeT. Mr. Raghuvanshi said police are tracing his origins in West Bengal. The Imam was arrested under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, which was used in Mumbai for the first time.

Remanded to custody

On January 6, the ATS arrested three persons from the Nagpada area in South Mumbai and seized 20 detonators, five time-

- Imam's origins being traced in West Bengal, say police
- He was arrested under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act
- Kashmir police expected to take custody of three suspected terrorists

rs, a revolver and some electronic circuits. They were identified as Khursheed Ahmed (29) and Mohammed Ramzan Abdul Kazi, both residents of Baramulla and Arshad Ghulam (27) of Sopore. Khursheed Ahmed is wanted by the Kashmir police in a case of a bank robbery and a blast.

The three have been remanded to police custody till January 20.

Mr. Raghuvanshi said the

Kashmir police were expected to take custody of the three shortly. After interrogating them, the police got to know the Imam's role, who arranged accommodation for Kazi at Haj House.

Though LeT does not have a base in Mumbai, the arrests reveal they may have been in the process of setting up one.

The police are now questioning the Imam for information on explosives suspected to have been sent to Mumbai.

18 JAN 1999

THE HINDU

Terrorism, human rights, and development

C. Raj Kumar

TERRORISM IN all its dimensions has a long history in India; the attack at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, was only the latest incident. Every time a terrorist strike takes place on Indian soil or elsewhere in the world, governments tend to formulate similar responses. There are enthusiastic calls for strengthening the law enforcement regime, possibly advocating greater powers of investigation for the police and intrusive measures such as telephone tapping that undermine privacy.

The need to increase the period of detention, pass new laws that would strengthen the anti-terrorism framework, tighten immigration policies, and keep an eye out for disloyal persons is also emphasised. Rarely do governments think of addressing the problem of terrorism from human rights and development perspectives.

The randomness of a tube station attack or a roadside bomb carries a very powerful scare message — practically anyone who is unlucky enough to be at the spot can get killed or be seriously injured. A society that lives in fear cannot achieve the kind of goals its people want. Whenever there is a terrorist attack, victimisation takes place.

The direct consequences of terror attacks are: one, they result in victimisation of the people who get killed, are injured or otherwise affected. Two, the family members of the victims are also affected because of their loved ones being directly involved. Three, the society in which the terrorist attacks take place becomes a victim as the people develop a sense of fear and lack of freedom to pursue their goals.

Some of the indirect consequences are: the

Responses to terrorism ought to be based on a holistic understanding of security, within the human rights and rule of law framework.

strengthening of the law enforcement and intelligence machinery, including passing of draconian laws that violate human rights and civil liberties, and compromise privacy rights. Racial profiling and hate crimes against people belonging to certain religious and racial groups. Undermining of the rule of law both domestically and internationally due to certain responses adopted by governments with a view to ensuring national security, including use of torture and other extreme measures in interrogating suspects. And, relegation of development to the backburner.

Once a terrorist attack takes place in a country, regardless of its human consequences, the entire legislative, executive, and judicial apparatus tends to focus on the problem. This is because terrorism challenges the state's legitimate monopolisation of violence and threatens its claims to be the protector of citizens. Micro and macroeconomic problems, poverty, third world debt, and even other major issues that affect humanity at large, like global warming and climate change, tend to become secondary. Resources that would have been otherwise directed at solving these issues are diverted to fighting terrorism.

Sadly, the resources (financial and human) that are pumped into tackling terrorism have not even closely matched the results gained in terms of ensuring greater security. Sometimes

the strategies used may actually incite greater threats. While it is possible that many potential terrorist attacks might have been averted, given the fact that the approach has not helped in providing a sense of greater security, there is a need for a serious reassessment.

In March 2005, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan submitted a report to the General Assembly titled *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*. The Executive Summary of the report notes: "The world must advance the causes of security, development and human rights together, otherwise none will succeed. Humanity will not enjoy security without development, it will not enjoy development without security, and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights ... Hence, the cause of larger freedom can only be advanced by broad, deep and sustained global collaboration among states."

The response to terrorism ought to be based on a holistic and inter-related understanding of human security, rights, and development. It should always be within the human rights and rule of law framework. The domestic and international legal framework being put in place as a response to terrorism is desirable. But what is not acceptable is individual states resorting to unilateral actions that are not justified within the international law framework, or committing

acts that violate the Geneva Conventions or the Convention Against Torture.

Use of force should not be the sole response as is believed in the "war on terror." Individual states, while passing counter terrorism legislation, ought to take into consideration human rights implications and the potential for abuse by law enforcement authorities. The fact that young people in different parts of the world are ready to die for a cause (however illegitimate it may be) shows there is something fundamentally wrong.

Under these circumstances, there is a more urgent need for the international community to help in building societies based on principles of democracy, good governance, human rights, and development so that they do not serve as recruiting grounds for terrorists.

A number of issues need to be considered. It is important that the international community distinguish between two aspects of terrorism-related violence. The first aspect relates to individuals or organisations involved in organised crime, money laundering, using the resources they generate for terrorist activities.

The other aspect is the need for greater caution, creativity, and political judgment in handling the growth of religious fundamentalism and extremism. Here, the battle takes place in the minds of the youth in many parts of the world. It is clearly an ideological issue, with a huge dose of religious extremism. The result is there is a proliferation of thinking and even discourse that advocates certain acts, or glorifies or tolerates acts, that are totally unacceptable in a humane society.

The traditional law enforcement approach of dealing with crimes, including crimes relating to terrorism, will not be entirely successful. There is need for greater engagement within a particular community and in particular to involve the right-thinking members of the community. The change has to come from within and an environment ought to be created in which violent acts of any kind are not tolerated.

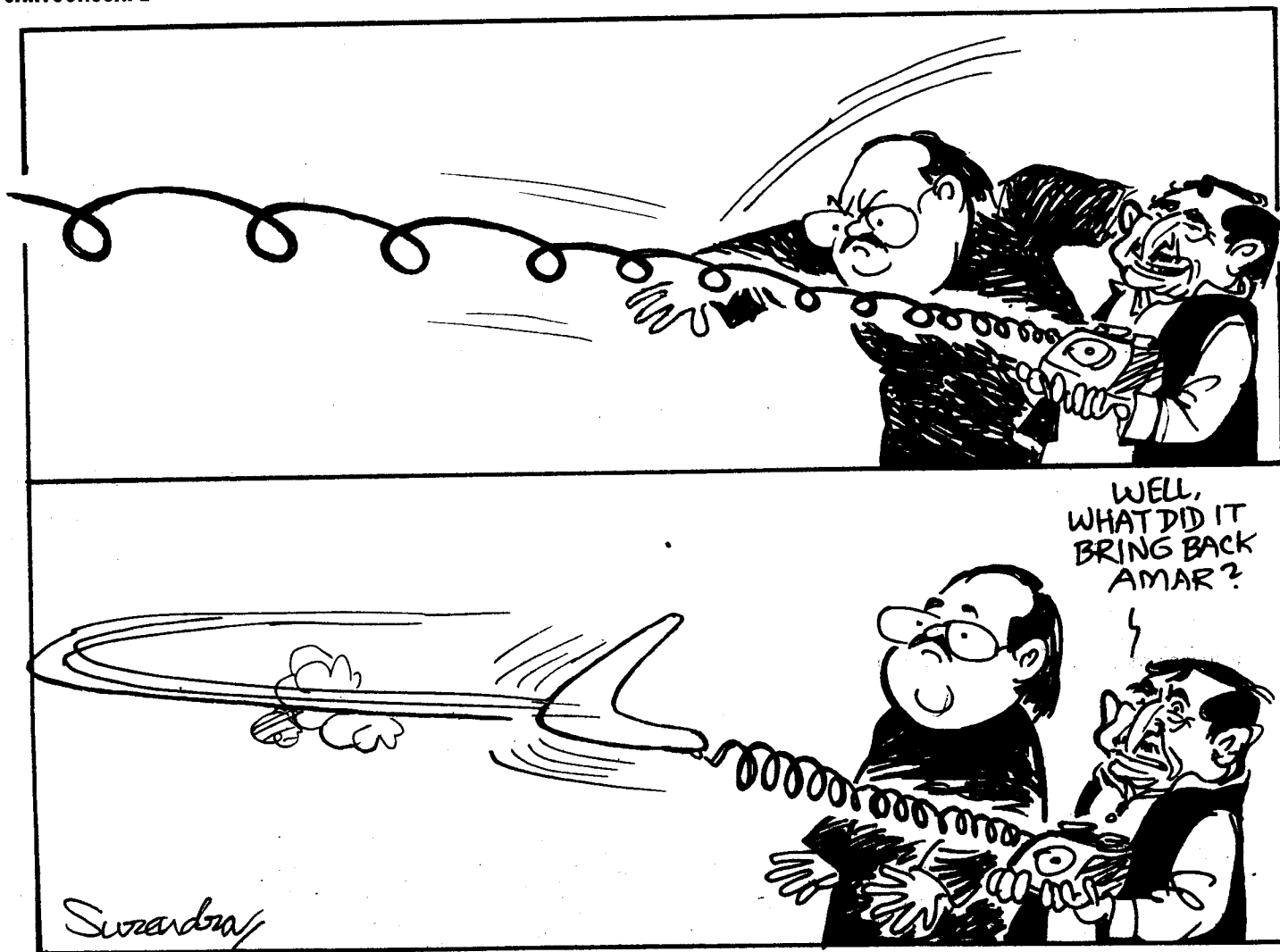
But for this to happen, the powerful countries have to take responsibility for their actions. Along with this, efforts need to be taken to address development issues, including third world aid and debt. The partnership between developing and developed countries should be based on a sense of common humanity so that threats of all kinds are jointly addressed.

Thus, national security strategies should bear in mind that human security threats are much wider. Countries formulating them should consider the notion of 'larger freedom.' Domestically, it is important to recognise that the fight against terror should not get any undue priority, leading to the neglect of other equally important issues relating to development and governance. The counter terrorism laws and practices that are being developed should be based on greater respect for human rights and should be within the rule of law framework. The domestic constitutional commitment and laws ought to be protected in the fight against terrorism so that civil liberties are not undermined.

Larger freedom is about ensuring people have a variety of choices in their life. These choices are possible only if their security, development, and human rights are assured. Values of non-violence and fraternity are essential to the progress of societies and for the common good of humanity. The present state of anti-terrorism efforts worldwide, including in India, has given little assurance to people who are living without any hope of development and whose human rights are violated day in and day out.

(The author is Assistant Professor, School of Law, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong; and Chief Executive Officer, Legal Education and Research Society (LEARS), India.)

CARTOONSCAPE



Encounter in Kashmir, arrest in Bangalore

N-plant plot busted

Diwali blasts suspect killed

MUKHTARAHMAD AND AGENCIES

Srinagar, Jan. 16: Jammu and Kashmir police today said they have shot dead the mastermind behind the Diwali-evening blasts that killed over 60 people in the national capital.

The police also said another conspirator was injured in the north Kashmir encounter that followed specific information from Delhi police.

Kashmir zone inspector-general K. Rajendra said Abdullah Bhai, a senior commander of the Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Toiba, and the injured rebel, Ali Mohammad, were cornered in Khour, a village in Baramulla district, 40 km from Srinagar.

"On specific information passed on to us from Delhi police, a well-coordinated operation was launched here by the state police and troops of the Rashtriya Rifles. The operation in Khour village started ea-

rially Monday morning. We have killed Abdullah Bhai alias Abu Haziifa, a top Lashkar-e-Toiba commander, and another terrorist, identified as Ali Mohammad alias Abu Zarrar, who was injured and searches are on to locate him," he said.

"Abdullah Bhai was the chief conspirator of the Delhi blasts," the officer added. The bombs were set off last October in two bustling Delhi markets as people shopped days before Diwali.

Rajendra said Abdullah Bhai and Ali Mohammad were hiding in a house. "They were challenged to surrender, but... started firing indiscriminately on the surrounding troops."

Abdullah Bhai's killing came as police in Bangalore, the country's tech hub, said they had arrested a second suspect, also a Lashkar member, in connection with the shooting at the Indian Institute of Science last month in which a professor was killed.

ANIL BUDUR LULLA

Bangalore, Jan. 16: Bangalore police have arrested another Lashkar-e-Toiba militant in connection with last month's terror attack on the Indian Institute of Science campus and seized explosives from him.

Bangalore police commissioner Ajai Kumar Singh told reporters today that Habeeb, arrested from Almatti in Bagalkot district of north Karnataka yesterday, was an important catch with Lashkar links.

The 35-year-old accused used two aliases — Mehaboob Ibrahim and Chopdar — and interrogation had revealed that he was planning explosions at the Kaiga nuclear plant near Karwar, Almatti dam in Bagal-



Habeeb. Militant mechanic

kot and wanted to disrupt power transmission lines from the Sharavathy project in Shimoga district, Singh said.

The police are on the lookout for some of his associates. "The explosives seized from Habeeb were gelatin sticks. Some incriminating documents have also been seized," the commissioner said.

This is the second Lashkar militant arrested in connection with the science hub attack. Habeeb, a fabrication mechanic and a native of Guledagud in Bagalkot, was working in Saudi Arabia between 1993 and 2001 and allegedly in touch with Abdul Rehman, who was arrested earlier.

The police latched onto Habeeb after Rehman went through a narco analysis while in custody. Habeeb would be produced before the court later in the day.

"He is an important Lashkar activist in Karnataka who worked under Rehman. Even if he is not linked to the IIIS attack, his intention to use explosives exposes him to the charge of waging war against the country," Singh said.



Army jawans drag the body of Abdullah Bhai alias Abu Haziifa after the encounter. (AFP)

In Kashmir, the police said Abdullah Bhai, Ali Mohammad and another Pakistani had "tasked" arrested Kashmir resident Tariq Ahmad Dar, who

worked as a sales executive with a multinational company, said Abdullah Bhai was traced to Khour by a police team sent to Srinagar to hunt for the terrorists behind the blasts.

In Delhi, joint commission-

CHANGING FACE OF TERROR

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: With a paunch that defined prosperity, Tariq Dar did rather well as a sales executive of Johnson & Johnson. Digging his head all the time in serious books at Kashmir University, friends of PhD student Majid Qadiri thought he would come out with flying colours in life. Then there is Manzoor Chiloo, a sharp looking man doing his MBBS from a college in Pune. His family was looking forward to calling him a doctor.

That is the frightening part. Terrorists in India are no more haggard, pheran-clad, bearded men who trudged miles through snow and river to get into India and create havoc in J&K. Increasingly they are being identified as executives, trendy students and i-pod enabled professionals who are homegrown. And in their deadly radar is not just the Valley but the entire sub-continent.

According to informed sources, places like Chandigarh, Pune, Noida, Gurgaon and Indore in the north and Visakhapatnam, Mysore and Madurai in the south figure in the hit-list of terrorists. The DGPs of the respective states and the police commissioners of these cities have been alerted about the new strategy. This is not an empty threat to sock a lethargic police and administration into wide-eyed proactivity. This information is based on confessions extracted from LeT and JeM agents arrested in Delhi, Hyderabad and Bangalore in recent weeks.

The other danger is that in keeping with new targets, terrorist groups are recruiting new soldiers, indoctrinated in hate and sucked in through greed. And India is just the right hunting ground, providing anonymity in large cities with larger unmonitored populations. It is easy to mingle and disappear in India, like the 11 Pakistani "cricket fans" who came here for the Indo-Pak series in March 2005.

Latest intelligence is troubling. J&K, it seems, has metamorphosed from a "summit" to a "base camp". From a final destination to an initial corridor. There is insidious history

Terrorists in India are no more haggard, pheran-clad, bearded men who trudged miles through snow and river to get into India and create havoc in J&K. Increasingly they are being identified as executives, trendy students and i-pod enabled professionals who are homegrown

and reason to bear this out. Mohammed Saeed, Lashkar-e-Toiba's Amir, had declared in July 2005 "the jihad in Kashmir would soon spread to entire India. Our mujahideen would create three Pakistans in India". Six months after the statement appeared in the Pakistani media, India witnessed a series of terror attacks beyond J&K—in Ayodhya, the Shramjeevi Express blast in Jaunpur, Delhi Diwali explosions and IISc killing in Bangalore.

Intelligence agencies have since cracked 17 ISI-backed terror modules in different



WANTED: The sketch of the terrorist who attacked at the IISc

cities including Hyderabad, Mangalore, Delhi, Lucknow, Coimbatore, Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Jalgaon.

According to data compiled by the Institute for Conflict Management, at least 54 ISI-jehadi modules have been dis-

Terror At Our Door

THE BIG THREE



Jaish-e-Mohammad
(Army of Mohammad)

Pak-based Jaish formed in 2000 by Masood Azhar. Aligned with Fazlur Rehman's Jamiat Ulema-I-Islam. Aims to unite Kashmir. Follows De-obandi school
Funding: Mostly from Taliban and later Osama bin Laden



Lashkar-e-Taiba
(Army of the Righteous)

Armed wing of Pak-based Markaz-ud Dawa-wal-Irshad – an anti-US group formed in 1989. Led by **Hafiz Muhammad Saeed**, the group has focused on Kashmir. Follows Ahl-e-Hadi school of thought
Funding: Pakistani community in Persian Gulf and UK, Islamic NGOs



Hizbul Mujahideen

Founded in 1989 and supports J&K's liberation and accession to Pak. Led by **Syed Salahuddin**, it is the militant wing of Pakistan's Islamic party Jamaat-e-Islami. It has conducted operations with other Kashmiri militants
Funding: Sources of aid unknown

BIG STRIKES

1 Oct 2001: Jaish claims responsibility for suicide attack on J&K Assembly in Srinagar that killed 31 people



13 Dec 2001: India implicates Jaish and Lashkar for Parliament attack

2002: Pakistan suspects Jaish hand in deadly anti-Christian attacks in Islamabad

Dec 2003: Pakistan blames Jaish for assassination attempts against Musharraf



Sep 2004: India holds Jaish terrorists responsible for attack on makeshift temple in Ayodhya

that between 1998 and 2003, security agencies had neutralised more than 180 ISI-backed terrorist modules across the country (excluding J&K and the North-East), who had been tasked to target vital installations, communication links, and commercial and industrial centres. They were also asked to provoke instability by circulating large quantities of counterfeit currency and drug trafficking.

The Gujarat police believes the state has become a nodal recruitment centre for terrorists. Officers say a number of terror modules busted by the crime branch and anti-terrorist squads. "We have boosted our vigil and intelligence network to counter this," said Gujarat DGP AK Bhargava.

In Srinagar, a J&K police officer said on Friday that Pakistan-based terror outfits Lashkar and Al-Badr

are driving hard to establish bases in Delhi and other metropolitan cities.

In the south, various agencies are working overtime to determine the extent and reach of terror networks. There was always the LeT, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Hizbul Mujahideen. Now, there may be newer, more local groups. Data is being collected on the groups and the logistic support they are getting in the south.

"It is very obvious," a senior intelligence officer explained in Srinagar. "It is a bigger canvas terrorists are looking at. It is what the Americans are calling global terror. There are links, within groups, people, continents. Increasingly, various terrorist agenda is coalescing into one main agenda. They are saying 'it is us versus them and those not with us will have to die'."

3 Lashkar men held in Mumbai

Weapons, Bomb-Making Material Seized From Trio Wanted In J&K

Mumbai: Three suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists from Jammu and Kashmir were arrested by the anti-terrorist squad (ATS) of the city police from Nagpada on Friday. Arms and other material used to make bombs have been seized from them.

Identifying them as Qurshid Ahmed alias Lala (29), Arshad Ghulam Ahmed Hussain Badru (27) and Mohammed Ramzan Abdul Kazi (50), police commissioner A N Roy said they were involved in various crimes in Jammu and Kashmir and the J&K police had provided their Mumbai counterparts information on them.

The trio was arrested by the ATS outside a hotel in Nagpada. Twenty detonators, five timers, an .32 bore revolver of foreign make and five remote control electronic timer devices have been seized from them.

While Qurshid was found carrying the revolver, six live rounds and one electronic cir-



Police chief A N Roy (centre) displays the weapons seized from the three terrorists arrested at Nagpada on Friday

cuit in his bag. Arshad had concealed two electronic circuits in his bag. The rest of the stuff had been concealed by Kazi in his

clothes. Preliminary inquiries have revealed that Qurshid belonged to Satia Ahmed Shah Arim vil-

lage in Bandipura taluka of Baramulla district while Ashraf Badru hailed from Sopar. Kazi comes from Navpur village, also in Bandipura.

Roy said although the police were still to ascertain how the suspected militants had sneaked into the city, it, however, appeared that they had come here to spread their terror network. "While they were carrying material to make bombs, they had no explosives. Perhaps the explosives were to arrive in the city later or may be they had not collected them from their sources. Everything will be ascertained after they are questioned," he said.

Qurshid is wanted in a Srinagar bank robbery case in which Rs 11.7 lakh was stolen and is also involved in bomb blasts in the Valley. The accused have been arrested under the Explosives Act, Indian Arms Act and Unlawful Prevention of Activities Act. Agencies

7 JAN 2006

Setback and warning for terrorists

Lashkar's South leader arrested ■ PM vows not to let morale flag

B.R. Srikanth and ASHOK Das
Bangalore/Hyderabad, January 3

THE NATION on Tuesday struck back at terrorists targeting the scientific community, with cops making a major arrest following the attack on IISc and the Prime Minister vowing that national resolve wouldn't be weakened by the attack. Cops also busted a possible terror plot by seizing 47 gelatin sticks from a bus station in Kerala.

Six days after the campus attack, the Bangalore police arrested Abdul Rehman (35) and described him as the leader of Lashkar-e-Tayyeba's operations in South India. What is not clear, however, is Rehman's exact role in the attack. Had he fired on IIT professor M.C. Puri and other scientists?

Was he the brain behind the attack, or was he just an accomplice? The police fended off such queries.

What the cops did seek to make clear was the importance of the arrest. "The arrest could deter further attacks in the south. It will also lead to a major breakthrough in the investigations. We have information that he is the leader of Lashkar's operations in the south, but it is too early to say whether he was the attack's mastermind or just an abettor," police commissioner Ajai Kumar Singh said.

"We are not releasing his picture at this juncture. If we do, links may be lost. Many people know him by other names, such as Abdul Razzak and Akthar, and we don't want these links to be alert-

All our knowledge workers will close ranks...
No force on the earth can weaken this resolve of the Indian people

— Manmohan Singh

ed by news of the arrest," the police commissioner said.

Chief minister N. Dharam Singh too vowed, "The entire case will be cracked soon."

The police did not release the terrorist's photograph. But they set the record straight: Rehman's

was not the face on the computer portrait they had released.

Rehman was picked up at Nalagonda, a town between Bangalore and Hyderabad, another hotspot due to a foiled terror plot and the ongoing science congress.

Manmohan Singh inaugurated the congress and warned terrorists that their attacks could not weaken national resolve. And the fact that an attack had taken place, he felt, only signified how important India had become as a scientific force.

"It is a symbol of the success of our emergence as a knowledge power, that the symbols and templates of our knowledge society are today being targeted by terrorists," the Prime Minister said.

"All our knowledge workers will close ranks and join the struggle to make India a great nation, a humane and modern nation, a knowledge power. No force on the earth can weaken this resolve of the Indian people."

He paid homage to the slain professor. "He was a soldier of knowledge who lived a life of peace dedicated to science and education."

Amartya Sen felt the scientific community had never expected such an attack. "One would not have thought that unarmed scientists in a purely scientific meeting would be a good target for terrorists. But it is very difficult to guess the minds of terrorists," the Nobel laureate said.

See also Page 4

120 killed in spate of bomb attacks across Iraq

Blasts in market area, police recruitment centre; three car bombs explode in Baghdad

BAGHDAD: At least 120 persons were killed in bomb attacks across Iraq on Thursday, fueling sectarian tensions as the country waits to form a new government.

In Iraq's bloodiest day for months, twin suicide bombers struck the restive Sunni city of Ramadi and the Shia holy city of Karbala, while a roadside bomb hit a U.S. military patrol.

More than 200 persons were also wounded in the onslaught, which politicians said was meant to impede the setting up a government of national unity in the wake of elections to establish the first long-term Parliament since the fall of Saddam Hussein in April 2003. "It's an odious crime

which shows the savagery and sectarianism of these criminals," said Jawad al-Maliki, a top leader from Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari's Dawa party, speaking of the attack in Karbala, one of Iraq's holiest cities, 110 km south of Baghdad.

"They are trying to change the results through terror," he said in a veiled reference to complaints by Sunni-based parties of ballot-rigging in the poll.

President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, however said the bombings would not affect attempts to put together a government of national unity.

In the deadliest attack, a suicide bomber wired with explosives killed at least 67 persons and injured more than 100 when he blew himself up outside a police recruitment centre in the western city of Ramadi.

Less than an hour earlier, another suicide bomber detonated his charge in the middle of a busy market area in Karbala next to

the Iman Hussein shrine, killing at least 44, mainly vendors and pilgrims, and wounding 85 others.

Ambulances rushed to ferry away the dead and wounded in an all-too familiar scene of carnage. A number of Iranian pilgrims were among the victims, hospital officials said.

Karbala has been relatively quiet for the past year but the peace was shattered on Wednesday when a car bomb exploded in the city, wounding two persons.

Three car bombs — two of them driven by suicide bombers — also exploded in Baghdad, but only left one policeman and two Iraqi soldiers injured. — AFP

Five U.S. soldiers killed

BAGHDAD: A roadside bomb killed five U.S. soldiers on Thursday after exploding near an American convoy, the military said.

The U.S. statement said only that the soldiers were patrolling in the Baghdad area. Iraqi police Capt. Rahim Slaho said earlier that a U.S. convoy headed

for the Shia holy city of Karbala had been attacked 35 km south of the city and that five soldiers were killed. The latest casualties took the death toll for the U.S. military personnel in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion to at least 2,186, according to figures from the Pentagon. — AFP

LeT ultra held in B'lore terror attack

Bangalore: In a major breakthrough, a top militant of the Pakistan-based terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba has been arrested in connection with the terror attack at the Indian Institute of Science here.

Identified as the man in charge of LeT's operations in South India, 35-year-old Abdul Rehman was arrested at Nalgonda in Andhra Pradesh on January 1 by Bangalore police who had cast a countrywide net to nab perpetrators of the December 28 terror strike.

Rehman's links with LeT had been established and his arrest would "certainly" lead to a major breakthrough in the case, Bangalore police commissioner

Ajay Kumar Singh told a crowded press conference here. "He was one of the top operatives in the LeT hierarchy," Rehman, said to be in charge of "violent" LeT operations in South India, was produced before a Magistrate who remanded him to 14 days' police custody on Tuesday, Singh said. An Indian citizen, Rehman frequented Saudi Arabia, where he had also stayed for a few years, the city police chief said. Singh said Rehman's role in the terror attack was being investigated and it was premature to say if he was the prime accused or an abettor. "We have reasons to arrest him," he said.

The police did not release Rehman's photo, saying investigation would be hampered but said it did not match the computer-generated sketch of the suspect released by them earlier. Rehman, a resident of Nalgonda, was brought to Bangalore by the special team which is prob-

ing the case. The attack outside a conference hall in the IISc campus last Wednesday left an emeritus professor of IIT Delhi dead and four others wounded. Singh said such militants operate with different names, adding, the release of the photo will lead to "loss of links." He said Rehman's role in the attack was being investigated. Singh added that the team had not arrested anybody in connection with the case except Rehman.

Responding to a query, he said Rehman would be subjected to narco-analysis test, if necessary. The special team which went to Hyderabad had returned with "lot of background, useful material." Agencies



Bangalore police commissioner Ajay Kumar Singh addressing a press conference

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Brain behind IISc attack linked to LeT

HTC and Agencies
New Delhi, January 1

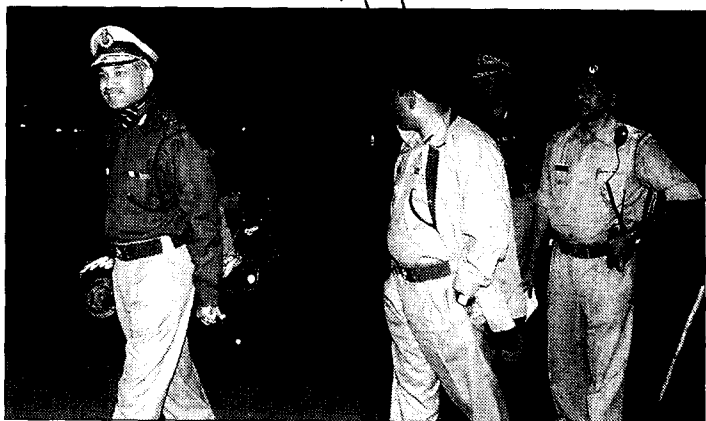
CENTRAL SECURITY agencies have established a link between the mastermind of the attack on the Indian Institute of Sciences in Bangalore and Pakistan-based terrorist group Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, sources said here on Sunday.

Meanwhile, asserting that they were "very confident" of cracking the case, the police have said that the probe into the terrorist attack at the IISc here was moving "in the right direction". Bangalore police commissioner Ajay Kumar Singh said the police were "very confident" of detecting the case "as soon as possible", but could not set any deadline considering the "seriousness" of the incident. He said several people had been questioned, but none had been arrested. Describing the progress as "good", he said, "We should succeed (in detecting the case)".

Asked about the possible link of terrorists involved in the attack on the special task force office in Hyderabad in October with the Bangalore terrorist strike, he said a team from Bangalore was in the Andhra capital, but "no conclusion has been drawn (linking the two)".

Delhi Police recently arrested three Harkat-ul-Jehad militants in connection with the Hyderabad blast.

Shrugging off fears of fresh terrorist attacks, Bangaloreans late on Saturday night ushered in the New Year with the usual revelry associated with it, as nearly 4,000 policemen, aided by "quick reaction forces", including a team from the army, and bomb disposal squads kept strict vigil. The city remained on high



Police patrol a street in Bangalore in the wee hours of Sunday.

UNI

alert following Wednesday's IISc attack.

Andhra security stepped up

Taking note of the recent attack in Bangalore in which a scientist was gunned down by a suspected terrorist, the Andhra Pradesh government has assured all IT firms that it will provide them with sufficient security.

Talking to the media during his brief stay in the city, chief minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy said on Sunday morning that his government would provide full security to IT companies. The state government was taking all possible steps to protect the IT sector from such possible threats, he added.

While Satyam has already started constructing its office in the city, others likely to follow in near future include Wipro, TCS and Infosys. The CM was on his way to Vizianagaram to inaugurate rubber dam built across the Jhanjavathi river.

Replying to a media query,

Reddy said that the government has already taken steps to keep a keen watch on the activities of various terrorist organisations suspected to have been operating from Hyderabad. He claimed that the state boasted the best intelligence set-up in the country which was even appreciated by the Union home ministry.

He informed that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was likely to lay the foundation stone for the expansion of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant at an outlay of Rs 8,700 crore, for which approval has been given by the Centre. The project promises to double the production capacity of the plant on completion of the first phase of expansion.

The government is set to complete 11 irrigation projects before the kharif season begins. "We had promised to complete eight projects when we came to power two years ago, however, now we will be completing 11, this should be considered as a very good achievement," said Reddy.

THE HINDU

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